

# Community Payback

**An annual report in words and pictures –  
Looking back at our achievements in 2010**

Community Payback is the most visible aspect of probation work with about a third of the offenders Thames Valley Probation deals with each year sentenced to it.

This equates to around 2,000 offenders, each carrying out between 40 and 300 hours of unpaid work for the community. Almost 300,000 hours is completed in an average year, which equates to £1.5m worth of free labour. This has a hugely beneficial impact on communities in Thames Valley.

We strive hard to ensure projects we work on give something back to the wider community.

Offenders undertaking Community Payback are being punished – by the courts – for wrongs they have committed in our society. It is only fair that the free work they do as part of their sentence puts something back into the communities from which they have taken.

It's also important that the work gives the offender something positive to take forward in life. Often this is a skill – or skills – most of us take for granted.

Learning how to work with others, listening to instructions and carrying them out properly, making the effort to turn up on time, every time – these are all things most of us do without thinking.

But often, when an offender's lifestyle becomes chaotic, these fundamentals do too. The regime of Community Payback can help restore or teach the skills a person needs to get a job and work effectively as part of a team.

There are other benefits such as practical, social or communication skills – all elements

of society that give offenders a fresh start and a crime-free perspective on life. We view this aspect of Community Payback as equally important as the punishment. Rehabilitation of offenders is essential if the crime cycle is to be broken.

We also view the changes Community Payback has made to the Thames Valley landscape over the past 12 months with immense pride.

There are communities benefiting from beautiful open spaces that were previously overgrown 'no-go' areas; there are schools brightened up by a fresh lick of paint or a new feature, such as a wildlife garden, vegetable plot or sensory garden.

Underpasses have been transformed from dark, frightening places to bright, clean shortcuts now used by the whole community. These are just a few examples.

Offenders on individual placements have learned the same social and organisational skills and timekeeping – gently reinforced by work providers from charities such as the British Heart Foundation, Sue Ryder, Oxfam, Age Concern and Cancer Research.

Without our partners – the work providers who agree to supervise individual offenders on our behalf and those who provide us with community projects – we wouldn't be able to concentrate on helping offenders move forward to crime-free lives in the future.

We commend this report and hope you enjoy reading about and seeing the variety and scope of work we have been involved in across Thames Valley over the past year.



Gerry Marshall, Chief Executive



Malcolm Fearn, Board Chair

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Thames Valley Probation was awarded Trust status in April 2010. We have almost 700 employees and cover Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire, which have a combined population of 2.2 million.

We work with:

- 7 unitary authorities and 2 county councils
- 9 local justice areas with 14 magistrates' courts and three crown courts
- 4 adult prisons (1 high security) and 2 young offenders' institutions
- 16 local policing areas
- 9 drug and alcohol action teams
- 16 community safety partnerships
- 164 neighbourhood action groups



# Overview

Community Payback doesn't just happen. It takes commitment from staff, partner agencies and the offenders themselves to make it work effectively. When it all comes together, it's something to be really proud of.

How Community Payback is organised is the responsibility of Thames Valley Probation's Unpaid Work teams.

There are three different ways an offender can be supervised while carrying out Community Payback. The right choice is made after a thorough risk assessment by Thames Valley Probation staff.

Option 1 is where an offender poses a very low risk of harm to the public and is assigned to an individual placement, working alongside volunteers, for instance, in a charity shop, with supervisory responsibility being taken by the shop's manager. Support and training is given to the work providers by our own staff.

Option 2 is where an offender is low to medium risk and is assigned to a group which is supervised by one of our partner agencies, on our behalf. This arrangement works very well in, for instance, Reading, where Reading Borough Council staff supervise offenders working on the gardens on Forbury Park and other locations around the city.

It also works well in smaller towns such as Bicester, where town council staff supervise offenders working in public spaces such as Garth Park, which has won awards for its beautiful gardens.

Option 3 is for all other offenders, again in the medium risk category, or those who need a more robust arrangement or, perhaps, additional support. They work in a group

supervised by one of our own members of staff.

All three types of arrangement work well and training is given to all concerned.

Contrary to popular belief, Community Payback is not an easy option. We take our responsibilities very seriously. If offenders don't stick to the rules we set, then we take them back to court and let the courts decide what happens next.

This report gives positive examples of the way Community Payback operates in Thames Valley and how we organise what we do.

I am immensely proud of our staff and am eternally grateful to have so many excellent partnership arrangements in place.

I am also constantly impressed by the number of offenders who maximise the chances this kind of punishment can offer if they view it as a positive way to learn new skills and contribute to their local communities.

Those who take this opportunity and turn their lives around make all of our jobs worthwhile.



**Sue Pearce, Community Payback Director, December 2010**



# UNPAID WORK

paying back to  
the community

## Community Payback

projects range from litter removal to clearing dense under growth, and environmental projects through repairing and redecorating community centres or removing graffiti. Offenders usually work as part of a team, monitored by a supervisor, and will work all day with short breaks, although there are some opportunities for individual placements.



Each year Thames Valley Probation's Community Payback Teams supervise more than 2,000 offenders sentenced by the courts to Unpaid Work. This equates to around £1.5 million of free labour being 'paid back' to the community.

In 2010,  
offenders under  
Thames Valley  
Probation  
supervision  
completed  
more than.....

200 Projects

What does Community Payback do?

### Unpaid work offender hours in Thames Valley per year

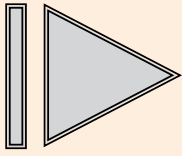
	2008	2009	2010
<b>Total <i>groupwork</i> hours completed</b> (supervised by partners or ourselves)	172,119	170,848	173,928
<b>Value to community at minimum wage*</b>	£1,020,665.60	£1,013,128.60	£1,031,393.00
<b>Total <i>individual</i> placement hours completed</b>	78,180	89,568	91,964
<b>Value to charities at minimum wage*</b>	£463,607.40	£531,138.24	£545,346.52
<b>Total Unpaid Hours completed</b>	250,299	260,416	265,892
<b>Total value at minimum wage*</b>	£1,484,273.07	£1,544,266.88	£1,576,739.56

\*calculated at £5.93 – the main rate for workers aged 21 and over)

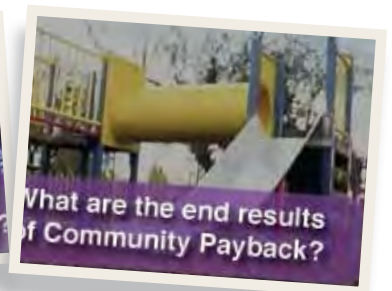
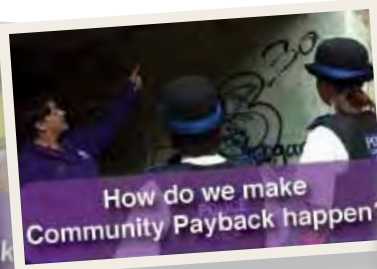
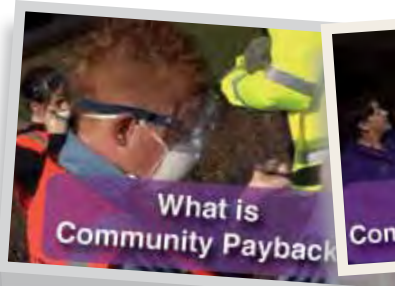
### Offender hours used on Education, Training & Employment (ETE)

	2008	2009	2010
<b>Unpaid Hours used in conjunction with Education, Training and Employment</b>	838	906	729

When offenders are sentenced by the courts to an Unpaid Work Requirement, up to 20 per cent of their hours can be used to work on ETE. This could include attendance at learning skills for life classes, budget control, CVs or employability skills. They do this with trained advisers from our Bridge to Employment (B2E) dept and can attend colleges or access mainstream learning provision. In the past year, there's been a slight reduction in recorded hours used on ETE, as colleges don't receive offender-focused funding now so don't return the attendance information to us. This doesn't mean that offenders aren't accessing the further learning opportunities we recommend.



Click to play



## Innovative DVDs

In January 2010, Thames Valley Probation launched an innovative way of helping the general public, partner agencies and community safety groups understand Community Payback better.

Working with local charity Thames Valley Partnership, which sourced the funding through the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, we made three lively 2-minute videos, which we turned into DVDs and also placed on our website at:

[www.thamesvalleyprobation.gov.uk](http://www.thamesvalleyprobation.gov.uk)

Called 'What is Community Payback?', 'How do we make Community Payback happen?' and 'What are the end results of Community Payback?' the videos help everyone understand what we do for communities, how Community Payback both punishes and rehabilitates offenders and how we work with partners to deliver the work in communities.

The videos have proved very popular with the public and have attracted some new projects, via the work request form on the same web page.

They're also used by Thames Valley Police to train their PCSOs and by local Neighbourhood Action Groups to target projects for us to work on to improve local communities.



Thames Valley Probation is very good at reacting to local needs, as and when things happen.

In 2010 we responded to calls for snow clearance during the bad weather (see below) and, in September, worked with a local flood protection group to protect villages in Oxfordshire from further flood damage.

Most recently, we've initiated our first working relationship with the armed forces, working with RAF Benson, an active site, where supervised offenders are clearing garages, painting, clearing overgrown paths and repairing and painting fencing – all of which would otherwise not have been done.

RAF personnel will soon take over the supervision for us and we're also working closely with local Army barracks to recruit weekend supervisors.

New initiatives



## Punishment....

*Jason was on an Unpaid Work Requirement for 120 hours after being caught drink driving. 'It's not nice and it's not a soft touch. It's more of a punishment than going to prison – you have to go once a week for 7-8 hours a day. It's embarrassing, wearing an orange vest and the public knowing you've committed a crime. I won't be doing it again.' Jason completed his order in early 2010 and hasn't been in trouble since.*



*Jason worked to repair and repaint playground equipment in Banbury*



*Arborfield and Newland Parish Council asked us to help plant 100 tree saplings, including blackthorn, rowan, beech and hawthorn*



## ....Community benefit

Offenders spent more than 55 hours measuring out and planting 100 hedgerow trees donated by the Woodland Trust. *Derek Butterfield, Chairman of Parks for Arborfield and Newland Parish Council, said:* 'Working with the probation service has been a very positive experience. The offenders have worked extremely hard and have been pleasant and courteous at all times.'

## ....Rehabilitation

*Kim Macdonald, adult services manager for Guidepost in Witney, Oxfordshire, has been employing offenders after they finish placements with her organisation for years.*

*'I run three projects for adults with learning disabilities. You either love or hate this kind of work but we've been lucky with the offenders we've supervised on individual placements. A lot of the offenders have found they enjoy the work and have got a lot out of it.*

*'We've employed quite a few ex-*

*offenders and they've been great. We have two full-time during the week, plus those who work on the weekend project and others who work in the evenings.*

*'We consider them to be part of the team and we treat them like that. They've been punished by having to put in the hours but we help them to turn their lives around and start anew. We help them move on with life. It's good to be part of their reform and to give people a direction and work that they actually enjoy and find rewarding.'*



# Where we have worked

Great Linford Parish Council  
 Mind Shop  
 Milton Keynes Council  
 RSPCA, Newport Pagnell  
 Age Concern Furniture Warehouse  
 Belfounder Sheltered Housing  
 City Discovery Centre, Milton Keynes  
 Jesus Celebration Centre  
 Heelands Community Project  
 Re-use Centre  
 Radcote Lodge  
 Extracare  
 Everglades Sheltered Housing  
 Bletchley Park  
 Age Concern, Stony Stratford  
 Radcote Lodge  
 Cancer Research, Bletchley  
 Great Linford Parish Council  
 Heelands Community Project  
 Newport Pagnell Youth Centre



**Cosgrove Scout Camp, Milton Keynes**  
*Creating and making safe equipment for the scouts and cubs*



**Milton Keynes General Hospital**  
*Changing the hospital grounds into areas for reflection*



**Small Wonders Pre School**  
*Transforming the garden in a play area for the children*

Milton Keynes

More than 300,000 hours of Unpaid Work through Community Payback are carried out each year. This equates to £1.5 million of free labour each year

## Cosgrove Scout Camp, Milton Keynes

*Chris Bardell, Site Manager, said:* 'The work that has taken place over the last year has been fantastic. Without the help of Thames Valley Probation the work would have taken our voluntary group another two to three years to complete. We are all delighted and it has made a big difference to the camp site.'

# Where we have worked



Salt Hill Park, Slough  
*Creating flowerbeds in public spaces*



Stoke Park Trust, Slough  
*Weeding, pruning and painting*



Braybrook Park, Bracknell  
*Transforming a children's playground*

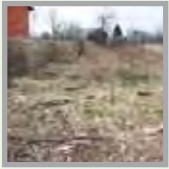
- Age Concern
- Keel Drive Allotments
- Birch Hill Community Centre/  
Primary School
- The Look Out Discovery Centre
- Oxfam, Slough
- Ascot Nursing Home
- Cox Green School, Maidenhead
- Britwell Youth and Community  
Centre
- Banstock Riding Stables,  
Maidenhead
- Cancer Research, Windsor
- All Saints Church, Wokingham
- Deerwood Park
- Oxfam, Windsor
- Thames Hospice Care, Maidenhead
- Wildridings Primary School
- Ragstone Road Allotments

We work with offenders sentenced by the courts to 40-300 hours, to be completed in 12 months. Their crimes range from theft, motoring offences, shoplifting, benefit fraud and drug related crime

## Salt Hill Park, Slough

'Teams of offenders have 'paid back' tens of thousands of hours to the community through the work they have completed. Our work in cutting back overgrown areas of the park has reduced criminal activity and we are proud to have contributed to this,' *said Andrew Mondaye, Berkshire's Community Payback Scheme Manager*

East Berkshire



"I've learned this time."

“ I enjoyed the work, felt part of a team and appreciated by those I was working with. I felt able to contribute and give something back in order to go some way in making amends for my mistakes. ”  
*Offender*

'The offenders did a fantastic job and were really helpful and co-operative. We would never have got round to doing the amount of work that took place,' *said Rev. Robin Grayson, Vicar of St Mary the Virgin Church, Langley.*

Small Wonders Pre-School, Bucks  
*Sue Stephenson, parent and garden project manager, said:* 'The children adore the sandpit and decking. The awning is providing fabulous shade from the summer sun. Thank you so much.'

Cox Green School, Maidenhead, Berks  
'Offenders have been working on a major redecoration of areas within the school; canteen, corridors and classrooms. This project takes place on Sundays with 100 hours of Community Payback carried out per month.'



**Tree planting Arborfield, West Berkshire**  
'We are really pleased to have been asked to help out with this project. Working for communities, in an unpaid capacity, means the offenders are giving something back as punishment for their crimes and this is a perfect example of that. The offenders will be able to take pride in a job well done and the people of Arborfield will benefit as the hedgerow grows and flourishes,' *said Andrew Mondaye, Thames Valley Probation's Community Payback Scheme Manager for Berkshire.*

'Learned some new skills, I'm glad to have my weekends back. Won't be in trouble again.'  
*Offender*

# Offender and Beneficiary Feedback

# Media

We reach out to more than 78 media outlets across the Thames Valley, plus hundreds of websites.

You can find out more at:

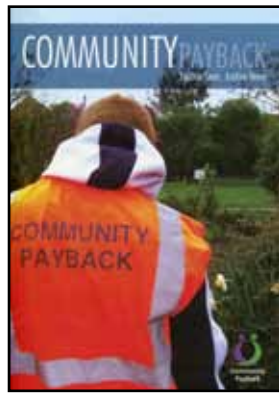
[www.thamesvalleyprobation.gov.uk](http://www.thamesvalleyprobation.gov.uk)



DJ Max, from Radio 1Xtra, interviews our staff for a piece on Community Payback, which ran during a drugs awareness week



Samples of the leaflets, magazines and information packs we provide for offenders, courts, partner agencies and the general public



# Where we have worked

Willen Hospice Warehouse  
 Aylesbury Vale Football Club  
 Buckingham Town Council  
 Ian Rennie Hospice Shop  
 Thames Valley Hospice Shop  
 Scope, Aylesbury, Buckingham and High Wycombe  
 Misbourne School  
 Longridge Scout Camp  
 Oxfam, Amersham  
 Hughendon Valley Village Hall  
 Bletchley Park  
 Bankside Sheltered Housing  
 Age Concern, Little Chalfont  
 Cancer Research  
 Langlands School  
 Prestwood Nature Reserve  
 Quarries Scout Camp  
 West Bletchley Neighbourhood Action Group  
 Shaw Trust



Marlow Town Council

*A variety of work including graffiti removal and clearing overgrown areas*



Chepping and Wycombe Parish Council

*Cutting back overgrown weeds and debris along the stream banks*



Nugent Court, Chesham

*Graffiti was removed and the garages repainted to tidy up a local estate*

Buckinghamshire

'I am going to see about giving up some of my time on a voluntary basis to my placement. It is good to put something back into the community'

(offender)

## Marlow Town Council

'We are really pleased to have been asked to help out with this project. Working for communities, in an unpaid capacity, means the offenders are giving something back as punishment for their crimes.'

*Erica Swift, Buckingham and Oxfordshire's Community Payback Scheme Manager*

# Where we have worked



Robert Piggott Junior School, Wargrave  
*Creating a learning and educational garden for school children*



Sue Ryder Hospice, Nettlebed  
*Restoration project on the large pond in the Hospice's grounds*



Oxford Road, Reading  
*Community clean up day removing weeds and overgrown bushes*

British Heart Foundation  
Help the Aged, Caversham  
Reading Town Football Club  
Robert Piggott Primary School  
Scope, Newbury & Thatcham  
Thames Hospice Care Shop  
West Berkshire Council  
St Mary The Virgin Church, Speen  
Reading Rugby Club  
Community Furniture Project,  
Newbury  
Newtown Road Cemetery  
Elm Farm Organic Research Centre  
St Nicholas Church, Hurst  
Wash Common Playing Field/  
Allotments  
Triangle Field, Hungerford  
Forbury Gardens, Reading

West Berkshire

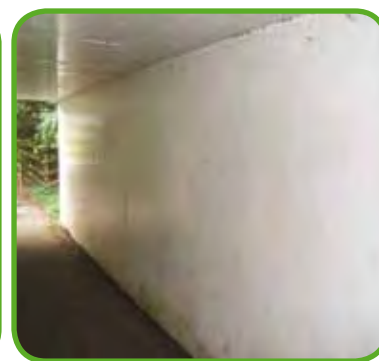
The work benefits a wide range of groups including councils, churches, schools, beneficiaries, including scout/ cub huts and community groups

## Oxford Road, Reading

*Teresa Colliass, Oxford Road Neighbourhood Action Group Chairman said:* 'The visual impact after the Community Payback team has completed their work has been amazing and I have received nothing but positive feedback from not only the Oxford Road NAG members, but also from the local Neighbourhood Policing team, local residents and Councillors.'

# Where we have worked

Banbury Town Council  
Sue Ryder  
Skidz Workshop  
Guidepost Trust  
Benson Parish Council  
Helen and Douglas House  
Sir Henry Floyd Grammar School  
Katharine House Hospice  
Oxford Community School  
Barnardos  
Watlington Church  
Oxford Community School  
PDSA  
Oxford City Council  
Clic  
Island Farm Donkey Sanctuary  
St Frideswide Church, Oxford  
YMCA  
Cancer Research



**Bicester Town clean up day**  
*Taking action to sort out local problems*



**Viking House, Oxford**  
*Building a sensory garden for children with disabilities*



**Southam Road Cemetery, Banbury**  
*Ground clearance and weeding to tidy up the cemetery*

Community Payback work includes landscaping, weeding, gardening, painting and decorating, general maintenance, graffiti removal, ground clearance and improvement to parks and community facilities

Oxfordshire

## Bicester Town

'Members of the Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) were delighted at the response to the Bicester Clean-up initiative. It was a really good example of cooperation and joint working across the town involving Bicester Town Council, youth groups, neighbourhood police, probation, street wardens and NAG members.'

*Bicester NAG Group Chair, Jill Green*



## Further Information

We hope this Community Payback annual report has helped you understand the breadth and scope of work carried out by offenders on Unpaid Work orders in the Thames Valley.

**If you want to nominate a project in your community, log on to:**

[www.thamesvalleyprobation.gov.uk](http://www.thamesvalleyprobation.gov.uk)

or contact your local **Community Payback Team:**

**Andrew Mondaye**, Berkshire (including Slough)

Telephone: 0118 956 0466

[andrew.mondaye@thames-valley.probation.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.mondaye@thames-valley.probation.gsi.gov.uk)

**Erica Swift**, Oxfordshire,

Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes

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