



**ANNUAL REPORT**

**April 2007— March 2008  
(Abbreviated)**



Welcome to the Northern Community Justice Authority's first Annual Report which covers the period from 1 April 2007 – 31 March 2008.

Community Justice Authorities in Scotland were created by virtue of the Management of Offenders Etc. (Scotland) Act 2005. Following on from a shadow year in 2006/2007 the Northern Community Justice Authority's first proper year began on 1 April 2007.

Cllr Anne Robertson  
Convener  
Northern Community  
Justice Authority

Community Justice Authorities comprise of elected councillors from the constituent local authorities. The local authorities who combine to form the Northern Community Justice Authority are Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen City, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Highland, Moray, Orkney and Shetland.

The primary challenge for Community Justice Authorities is the reduction of re-offending and improving the way local agencies - councils, Scottish Prison Service, the police, health boards and others - work together to tackle Scotland's re-offending rates.

## Northern CJA Members



Cllr Norman A Macdonald  
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar



Cllr Roderick Macleod  
NCJA Vice Convener  
Orkney Islands Council



Cllr Margaret Davidson  
Highland Council



Cllr Florence Grains  
Shetland Islands Council



Cllr Gordon Leslie  
Aberdeen City Council



Cllr John Divers  
Moray Council

## Introduction

This is an abbreviated version of the first Annual Report of the Northern Community Justice Authority (Northern CJA). The aims of the Northern CJA are to contribute to reducing re-offending and increase community safety and public protection.

In this report we will demonstrate what has been achieved during the 2007/2008 year set against our previously published action plan. If we have not met all our objectives we will report this and state how we intend to address outstanding issues.

Our 2007/2008 Action Plan identified 5 Strategic Outcomes. These were;

- Reduction in Re-Offending
- Improving the Management of Offenders
- Developing a Strategic Approach
- Improving Performance Management
- Improving Communication

Under each of these headings were a number of identified actions and performance measures. By far the majority of actions were completed but a few will continue into the current year.

Six key themes were identified nationally to assist in the production of our Annual Report. These are detailed below with a brief outline of how they apply to the Northern CJA.

## Who are we and what is our focus?

The Management of Offenders etc (Scotland) Act 2005 provides the legislative framework for Community Justice Authorities in Scotland. Against this background the Northern CJA is committed to ensuring the protection of our communities, reducing re-offending through effective offender management and through the provision of strategic direction.

Both the legislation and the Northern CJA recognise that this is a complex landscape and that no single agency can manage a reduction in re-offending. Therefore, the primary purpose of Community Justice Authorities is to bring together a broad range of agencies to achieve a more co-ordinated approach to delivering quality services for offenders and their families at a local level, with the jointly agreed task of reducing re-offending.

The objectives of the Northern CJA are the promotion of better quality, more co-operative and integrated services to manage offenders. Throughout the planning process a number of priorities were identified including:

- the continuous improvement of the assessment and management of sexual and serious violent offenders

- the formation of a strategic alliance between the Northern CJA and Alcohol and Drug Action Teams to more effectively address the issue of alcohol and drug misuse and its impact on local communities
- greater co-operation between prison and community based services in respect of prisoners and their families
- creating increased access to services
- the development of a more co-ordinated approach to involving offenders, their families and the community which will enable services to develop a more responsive culture in respect of the shaping and planning of services.

### What difference are we making?

The Northern CJA Area Plan for 2007/08 was developed by the Chief Officer in consultation with members and partners. National guidelines were followed in terms of the Outcomes for the year. These were:

- Reduction in Re-offending – making more use of offender programmes
- Improved Management of Offenders – continued implementation of Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) across the Northern CJA area.
- Developing a Strategic Approach – developing strategies in partnership e.g. with Alcohol and Drug Action Teams (ADATs), the NHS Boards, the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) and local Community Planning Partnerships.
- Improve Performance Management – oversee the performance of local authorities, SPS, Voluntary Sector providers, and contribute to the national model.
- Improving Communication – the production of Newsletters, a Community Service Bulletin, press releases and website development.

Within each outcome a number of actions were developed and, where possible, realistic performance measures put in place.

### How are we making a difference?

With the delivery of the Northern CJA Area Plan for 2007/08 we have driven forward a number of key priorities designed to achieve the national and local objectives. The main annual report detailed a variety of performance information relating to the Northern CJA. This focussed on Criminal Justice Social Work performance and Scottish Prison Service statistics.

#### **Service Delivery**

"The authority has shown a strong performance in relation to adherence to National Standards, achieving 100% compliance in a number of important aspects and a generally high standard across the board."

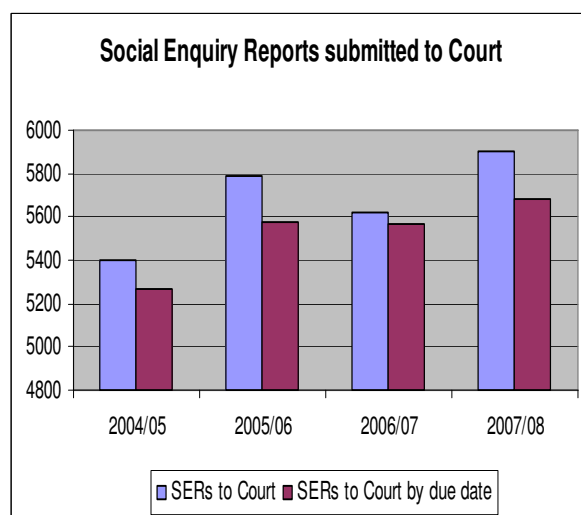
**Social Work Inspection Report of Shetland Criminal Justice Services  
2007**

Some examples include;

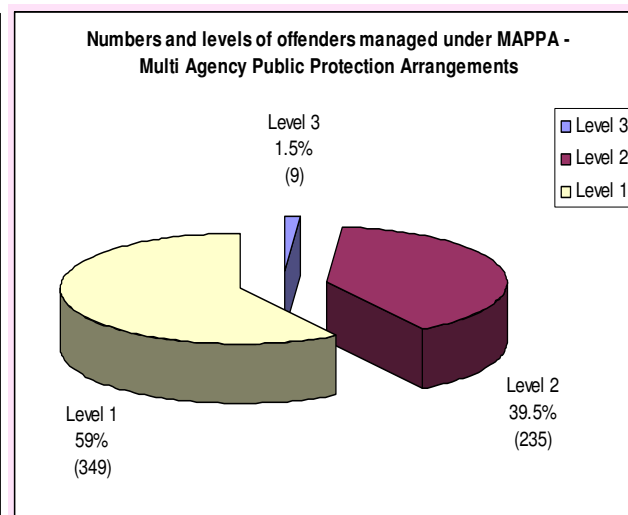
Local authority	2005/06	Clear up %	2006/07	Clear up %	2007/08	Clear up %
Aberdeen City	24,602	35	23,322	42	21,903	47.50
Aberdeenshire	11,345	35	10,527	42	8,493	47.25
Moray	5,655	43	5,900	41	5,292	45.50
Highland	12,854	61	14,872	64	13,988	65.4
Orkney	578	74	497	73	418	64.4
Shetland	851	69	782	72	758	70.7
Eilean Siar	1,130	82	1,125	73	970	72.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>57,015</b>	<b>43.5%</b>	<b>57,025</b>	<b>48.9%</b>	<b>51,822</b>	<b>53%</b>

**Recorded crime and clear up rates for each local authority area.**

The above table shows a decrease in crime numbers with an overall increase in clear up rates.



**Number of Social Enquiry Reports submitted to courts**



**Numbers and levels of offenders managed in the community**

Across the Northern CJA the authorities, agencies and partners are working together to ensure that all registered sex offenders are jointly risk assessed and have an appropriate plan in place to manage the risk they pose. These Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) are primarily operated by specialist police staff and Criminal Justice Social Work staff. Similar process will be put in place for violent offenders in the near future.

	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
New Probation orders	1420	1487	1509	1360
Probationers seen within 1 week	559	612	694	775
New Community Service Orders	653	624	616	752

Whilst the numbers of probation orders have decreased slightly there has been a rise in community service orders. The use of community sentences is

an important aspect of criminal justice and the increased use of community penalties is a Scottish Government goal.

As Justice reforms take effect the numbers of persons serving community based sentences should increase as Scotland strives to reduce the numbers of persons in prison serving short sentences. All local authority areas have developed processes for identifying community service workplaces ensuring that offenders complete their required unpaid work giving the community 'payback'.

### **How we manage our resources**

The National Strategy for the Management of Offenders makes clear that we target our efforts and resources for maximum community benefit. The key vehicle for implementing this aspect of the national strategy is the area plan which was prepared following the full involvement of planning partners and their agreement to the Northern CJA's priorities and objectives. This plan lays out how resources will be managed across the Northern CJA.

### **Funding**

From April 2007 the Northern CJA has had a duty to allocate funding for the delivery of criminal justice social work services by the seven constituent local authorities. Continuity of funding during the first operational year was key to ensuring that there was stability during a significant transitional period. Over £11.5 million pounds of criminal justice funding was distributed to the authorities.

Core funding provides grants for those mainstream services which are available throughout Scotland e.g. Community Service, Probation and Court Reports. On-going funding is also provided for a range of non-core expenditure including: Supported Accommodation, Drug Treatment and Testing Orders, Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements and a range of pilot initiatives.

### **Training**

A crucial feature of delivery on national policies and local priorities is that frontline staff and their managers are supported to provide quality services and ensure the most effective use is made of our human resources. The Northern CJA commissioned a training needs analysis in order to identify the existing levels of knowledge and skills amongst practitioners and their managers in criminal justice social work. The analysis also provided detailed information on future training and development needs of staff and allows for plans to be developed which meet these needs in a consistent manner across the CJA area. Funding from the Scottish Government to create a Training and Development Officers post in the CJA is welcomed.

### **Communication**

Over the past year the Northern CJA has worked hard to facilitate and promote clear and appropriate communication between all criminal justice agencies, related partners and the public.

Activity in this area has taken place at a number of levels across a large geographical region including:

**Inter-agency** - Between local authorities and the Scottish Prison Service which has resulted in services becoming more effective in providing the right service to those persons being released from prison and returning to the community.

Between the police, local authorities, Alcohol and Drug Actions Teams and the voluntary sector in successfully targeting resources on some of the most prolific young offenders and those whose high levels of offending is linked to the misuse of alcohol and drugs

**Victims** - Information on services for victims of crime is available on our website and Victim Support (Scotland) plays an active part in the work of the CJA in ensuring victims are at the centre of our work.

**Sentencers** – Locally the CJA's Chief Officer regularly attends meetings with the Grampian and Highland & Islands Local Criminal Justice Boards chaired by the Sheriff Principal. Nationally there are some major developments for sentencers in the pipeline on the back of the Prisons Commission Report.

**Offenders and families** - One criminal justice social work service has carried out a pilot exercise designed to gain the views of offenders on how they experienced the services. The findings have been very positive and this initiative has been extended to include the views of families with the purpose of informing future service design.

### How we work with others to achieve more

The Northern CJA seeks to identify gaps in current services and opportunities for partnership working and training. We will link with existing planning processes and oversee improved communication with victims and communities. We intend to remove barriers between services and bring people together in a sustained and co-ordinated effort to reduce re-offending, and raise the quality of service provision through the development of effective performance management and quality assurance systems.

### Where we need to improve

Key themes for future improvement within the Northern CJA are;

- Continued delivery of the communication strategy
- Develop closer links with Community Planning Partnerships
- Develop closer links between CJA, Social Work and the Community
- Continue to improve links between the CJA and Alcohol and Drug Action Teams
- Improving local performance framework
- Progressing the outcomes of the Prisons Commission report to the Scottish Government

### Supervision

"We observed some very good examples of planned and structured work delivered by an enthusiastic group of staff. These included sessions with young people on probation that used imaginative materials produced by the Geese Theatre Company to engage their interest and those with offenders convicted of driving offences that used locally developed drink-driving materials. We also saw evidence of a robust approach to non-compliance."

**Social Work Inspection Report of Orkney CJSW 2007**

Northern CJA Substitute members:-



Cllr Nan Cullinane  
Aberdeenshire



Cllr Russ Madge  
Orkney



Cllr Leslie Angus  
Shetland



Cllr Ron Shepherd  
Moray



Cllr Robbie Rowantree  
Highland



Cllr James Kiddie  
Aberdeen



Cllr Kenneth Murray  
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

The full Northern CJA Annual Report can be viewed on our web site at

[www.northerncja.org.uk](http://www.northerncja.org.uk)