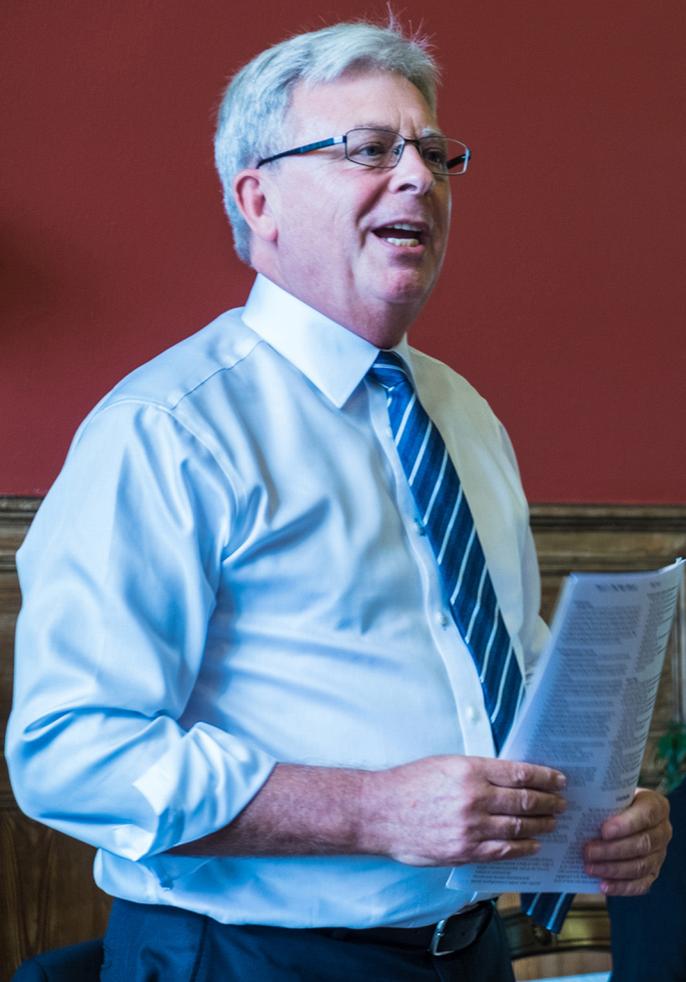


THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND  
DIOCESE OF  
WORCESTER

Worcester Diocesan  
Criminal Justice Affairs Group  
*Annual Review and Report*  
2017 ~ 2018



## Foreword by the Bishop of Worcester

Justice is one of the four key values the Diocese of Worcester embraces in its vision for what a Jesus-shaped, God-governed church should be doing. I am, therefore, particularly delighted to commend the work of the Criminal Justice Affairs Group, with its focus on how Christian understandings of justice can contribute to the continuing improvement of England's criminal justice system.

A concern with how the system works for individuals is central to a Christian understanding of justice. Such individuals may be victims of crime, criminals, police officers, prisons service staff, people working in the court system and rehabilitation service, and a whole range more, paid and voluntary. Bad systems dehumanise people – a bad justice system ought to be a contradiction in terms. True justice opens up possibilities for the future, for restoration and making amends, for rehabilitation, and for forgiveness.

It's good that in the coming year the group's work will include a focus on IPP prisoners. This is a group of individuals that has been created and then left behind by poorly-thought through changes in legislation. They have indefinite sentences and they are only able to be released when they can prove they have achieved change through training and education courses. But they aren't given enough opportunities to go on those courses. Some may still need to be incarcerated, but a just system will offer them hope for change and restoration they currently don't have. Please pray for them, for the work of the group, and for all who seek to maximise justice for all.



### **Criminal Justice Affairs Group members**

**Doug Chaplin** *Diocesan Mission Development Officer* **Diana Fulbrook** *Former Probation Chief Executive and Parole Board member, and current Chair of Swindon Safeguarding Adults Board* **Toby Hooper** *Retired Circuit Judge* **Juliet Horne** *Lecturer in the School of Law, University of Warwick* **Judy Hulland** *Magistrate* **Mark Lister** *Solicitor* **Charmian Manship** *(Chair) Volunteer in HMP Hewell Chaplaincy* **Derek Markie** *Worcestershire Voices* **Lorraine Preece** *CEO of YSS Charity* **Andrew Prickett** *Former Chief Crown Prosecutor (until June 2017)* **Stephanie Watson** *HMP Hewell Chaplain* **Paul West** *Bishop's Advisor on CJ Affairs, former Chief Constable, West Mercia Police*

**Cover photos illustrating the autumn workshop on Criminal Justice and Mental Health.** *Top left:* participants reflecting at tables; *top right,* DI Lesley Williams addressing workshop; *middle row,* a mix of conversation and listening; *bottom of page,* Lord Bradley reflecting with the workshop on his report and its reception. *All photos copyright © 2017 Doug Chaplin*

## Introduction

This is the third report of the Criminal Justice Affairs Group (CJAG) outlining the activity and achievements over the past year. CJAG was formed in March 2015 for the purpose of offering a Christian perspective and advising the Diocese of Worcester on criminal justice matters.

From the outset the Group sought to be proactive in its approach to its two main aims:

- ~ internally within the Diocese to offer a Christian perspective and provide expert advice on criminal justice matters, and
- ~ externally to raise public awareness and be catalysts of criminal justice-related social action

It also wanted to ensure its membership reflected all aspects of the criminal justice system from key agencies, the voluntary sector, and those with expertise in CJ issues.

CJAG has done much to raise the profile of criminal justice over the past year. and has focused on specific issues with more collaborative working with other existing organisations/groups. CJAG presents this annual review that covers not only the Group's activities in its third year of operation but also contains its reflections on the way ahead including particular areas of concern for our Diocese and society to consider.

## Part 1: Key Events and Activities

### **Linkages with other bodies**

CJAG has continued to develop links with other bodies and to that end is connected with the following, either through membership or shared activities:

- Diocesan Commission for Social Responsibility
- West Mercia Criminal Justice Board
- HMP Hewell
- HMP Long Lartin
- University of Worcester
- Willowdene Care Farm
- Worcester Cathedral
- Worcestershire Interfaith Forum
- Holland House retreat and Conference Centre
- YSS Charity
- Police and Crime Commissioner

### **Events/Activities**

The CJAG's third year was busy and focused on the following events:

#### **A case study presented to the University Criminology Course**

Linkages have been established with the University of Worcester's Criminology course, and CJAG was invited to present and debate the case study used at the Securing Criminal Justice in Times of Austerity workshop last year. The event took place in May 2017 and offered students an opportunity to highlight the different role of agencies within the criminal justice system. Led by Paul West and Mark Lister, and supported by other CJAG members, the presentation was of a case from police investigation and interview through to conviction and sentence. The students gained insight not

only into the way the system operates but also on the impact of the unprecedented resourcing challenges to the criminal justice system and its workers.

### **Mental Health Workshop**

This was held in September 2017 with selected professionals/ parties interested in mental health issues within the criminal justice system. CJAG had identified concerns about the lack of mental health resources generally and the impact of this on those in the criminal justice system.

The statistics speak for themselves: 39% of those in police custody have a mental health problem; 33% of all demands on the police are connected with mental ill-health; and it is estimated that 72% of prisoners have two or more mental disorders. This is against a background of only 11% of the overall health budget being spent on mental health (6% for children) which is clearly insufficient to meet the needs of the general population.

The keynote speaker was Lord Bradley on progress made since the publication of the 2009 Bradley Report: a review of people with mental health problems or learning disabilities in the CJS. He identified the issues that led to his recommendations and the progress made since.

Other speakers included Andy Hunt (National Programme Manager for Temporary Estate and Sexual Assault Referral Centres, NHS England with a police background) who spoke of the national programme to establish liaison and diversion schemes; Detective Inspector Lesley Williams (the Strategic Safeguarding and Mental Health lead for West Mercia Police) who spoke of the disproportionate impact on the police of the lack of community resources; and David Palfreyman (Approved Mental Health Professional Lead with Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust) who talked of the crucial importance of agencies working together.

Overall, it was recognised that whilst the problems were immense, progress is being made, with some of this making a real difference that needs to be built on. There are significant challenges but in order to meet the high level of need, agencies and people must work together to do better and to hold

authorities to account for improved services and outcomes. A number of actions were identified which will be progressed over the next few months

### **Prisons Week**

This took place in October and CJAG worked with the Cathedral to shape the readings, prayers and sermon on Prisons Sunday. The theme of the service was the children and families of prisoners and the work of the team at HMP Hewell. The team provided a display in addition to supporting the service. The sermon was particularly poignant as it consisted of the Dean asking questions of Charmian Manship (Anglican Chaplain) and the Imam from HMP Hewell whose views were powerfully complementary.

Also during Prisons week, CJAG members spent a day visiting HMP Hewell comprising a tour of the prison, discussion with prisoners, the Governor, the Chaplaincy Team and the Children and Families Team. General impressions included good chaplaincy facilities and team working; generally welcoming, respectful and engaged prisoners; noisy and overcrowded making it difficult to find any peace and quiet; many cells small, cramped and with sub-standard toileting/hygiene arrangements; a significant number of older people; and the impact of the smoking ban. Overall it was difficult to see how anyone could come out changed for the better from prison, and the group had huge respect for all those working/volunteering in there trying to produce positive change. The Governor offered facilities and support for an IPP conference which is being taken forward to the Autumn of next year. This issue was brought to life during the visit when prisoners talked about the impact on them and their families of serving an indeterminate sentence.

### **Justice Committee Transforming Rehabilitation Inquiry**

CJAG submitted a response to the Justice Committee's consultation on Transforming Rehabilitation and this has been published on their website, and is referred to in their report which expressed concern about the new probation arrangements.

*Listening to Lord Bradley*



## Part 2: The Way Ahead – Reflections and Prospective Thinking

### Reflections

Last year, CJAG reported on its reflections from the year's activities and on the criminal justice issues it had identified from its work. These remain largely unchanged, above all the recognition of the need to see the criminal justice system as a whole and its role in society; to better understand the way it operates; and its impact on individuals and communities. The issues and challenges for consideration include:

#### Societal/Systemic Concerns

- ~ Impact of resource cuts on all agencies and increasing regionalisation of services
- ~ The impact of the increasing politicisation of criminal justice matters leading to continuous change and lack of stability
- ~ Criminal justice agencies are not joined-up nationally either between government departments or strategically which makes it difficult to work together effectively on the ground
- ~ Potential further court closures and the move away from local justice
- ~ Prison numbers, increase in prison violence and use of drugs, insufficient prison staff and the availability of programmes/support for prisoners prior to release
- ~ Rehabilitation in the community particularly since the splitting of the probation service and the privatisation of part of it
- ~ Lack of resources to support rehabilitation and protect victims eg victims of domestic abuse, and mental health support
- ~ Changes in Legal Aid arrangements – the impact this had on equality of access to the courts, and the closure of solicitors' firms
- ~ Very significant increase in historical offences reported for investigation particularly relating to sexual offences
- ~ Issues of staff morale in criminal justice agencies where resource reductions and staff shortages continue to affect the delivery of front line services

#### Role of the Church/Diocese

- ~ Understanding the impact of the societal/systemic concerns on local communities, offenders, victims and agency staff
- ~ Recognising the strong link between offending and poverty/social problems
- ~ Encouraging distinctive Church thinking in parishes, and increasing public awareness of the issues
- ~ Working together in the Faith Community, harnessing congregational resources to contribute and influence at Parish, Deanery and Diocesan levels

#### Criminal Justice Affairs Group

- ~ Pace events and focus on a small number of issues
- ~ Use the contact database to keep as wide a range of people informed as possible, and use the Diocesan website to communicate

- ~ Provide some focused direction/activity
- ~ Identify funding/resource support when required
- ~ Bring interested parties together to discuss a specific issue and to identify potential improvement actions

### What Next?

#### Continuing points of interest to CJAG include:

- ~ Community Chaplaincy / mentoring schemes
- ~ Equality of access in the criminal justice system to those from black and minority ethnic communities
- ~ Community Rehabilitation Company activity
- ~ Sentencing Council/policy
- ~ Mental health provision
- ~ Support for victims
- ~ Imprisonment for Public Protection prisoners (IPPs)
- ~ Foreign national prisoners (about 10% of the prison population)
- ~ Police and the community – engagement and consent
- ~ Historical sexual offences
- ~ Youth Justice

#### Key focus points for the coming year

In order to best manage the group's work over the next year, CJAG will continue to focus on just a few issues whilst also keeping in mind the bigger picture. In the coming year, these will be:

- ~ An IPP conference in October (Imprisonment for Public Protection orders)
- ~ A focus on a Prisons Sunday service in the Cathedral (14th October 2018) on IPP prisoners
- ~ Engagement and support for victims

In addition, the group will keep a watching brief on:

- ~ Linkages with the Community Rehabilitation Company (Probation)
- ~ Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) issues particularly the implications of the Lammy Review
- ~ Community Chaplaincy/mentoring developments
- ~ Inter Faith linkages through Holland House
- ~ Activities and achievements for 2018/19 will be reported at the end of the year

## Conclusion

The CJAG has had another busy and productive year and the passion for justice for all remains a driving force. Working alongside partners has been a hallmark of the year which it is hoped will be built on as a way of jointly promoting the importance of criminal justice in our communal life. We are beholden to support those working with offenders as well as with victims and with perpetrators, and we remain committed to finding ways to do this effectively. Not least, people of faith have a responsibility to encourage local communities to support those vulnerable to offending, those wanting to change their lives for the better, and to take responsibility for creating an inclusive approach to communal living. CJAG welcomes ideas to promote this approach, and values engagement with those wanting to support these aims. We thank all those who have worked with us to pursue them.