



PRESS RELEASE

<http://lcjb.cjsonline.gov.uk/West%20Mercia/home.html>

Contact: Sarah Hickerton

Ref: West Mercia IJW27

Date: Tuesday 28th October 2008

Telephone: 01905 825108

JUSTICE WORKS WITH CHARITY

Her Majesty Courts Services Area Director for the Black Country, Staffordshire and West Mercia, Peter Hammersley, joined a Telford and Wrekin unpaid work party on community sentences at local charity CARE that provides support services for adults with learning disabilities to help with the refurbishment of a house at Ironbridge, all in aid of 'Inside Justice Week 2008'.

Mr Hammersley arrived early at Telford Probation, dressed down in jeans, boots and a waterproof coat; unbeknown to him what unpaid work he would be doing that day. He was signed in alongside the offenders and set off in the mini bus with them to CARE's site at Ironbridge, where the house that is home to thirteen residents with learning disabilities is situated.

The unpaid work party, working in conjunction with CARE West Midlands, arrived at the house and kitted out in overalls, to be given the task of painting and decorating the many rooms. This particular community sentence provided the offenders with a real opportunity to put something back into their community after committing their offence.

David Finan, Regional Manager for CARE West Midlands said 'the opportunity to work with Telford Probation and to welcome an unpaid work party into one of our houses has saved the Charity a considerable cost in labour. The level of service that has been provided is top quality, so too the speed, efficiency and professionalism in which it was delivered, from both Probation and the offenders.

'This opportunity has really opened up all of our eyes, both ours and the work party's, to the value of this kind of involvement and the results that can be achieved within the community. More projects like this should be undertaken. What the offenders are doing here is really worthwhile, and they can also see for themselves what a difference they are making to people's lives. We are hoping that this relationship can be maintained as it is proving so mutually beneficial. We have certainly got more work for them to do!'

Mr Hammersley said of his experience with the work party that it was 'a real opportunity to see how it all works for myself, rather than being told. I am very impressed with the way that these projects are carried out by Probation, the beneficiaries and how much the unpaid work party contribute. On this particular work party, I got a real sense of commitment, but I also realised very early on that this isn't an easy option, but one requiring time and commitment that impacts on



PRESS RELEASE

<http://lcjb.cjonline.gov.uk/West%20Mercia/home.html>

people's lives. This was reflected heavily when speaking to each participant about their individual circumstances.'

Wendy Richardson, work party supervisor for Telford Probation said, "it's really nice that someone is taking an interest and the time out to see what goes on. This particular project is a real opportunity for the offenders to put something back, it's a really worthwhile project and I just wish we had more like this one.'

One offender said, 'It gives us the opportunity to get rehabilitated, but also make you realise what you've done. Its punishment, but also an opportunity to benefit the community with the unpaid work we are doing.'

END



PRESS RELEASE

<http://lcjb.cjsonline.gov.uk/West%20Mercia/home.html>

Notes to editors:

1. Community sentences allow offenders to undertake rehabilitative programmes and work in the community whilst under the supervision of the probation service. The Criminal Justice Act 2003 brought into force from April 2005 the 'generic community sentence', also known as the community order. This allows judges and magistrates to combine what previously would have been different orders and tailor the sentence to fit the needs of the offender. In the West Mercia counties of Herefordshire, Shropshire, Telford/Wrekin during 2007 approximately 120,000 hours of unpaid work also known as community payback was carried out for the benefit of local communities. At least five million hours are carried out nationally.

For more information on Community Sentences/ for an interview with Peter Hammersley please contact: Sarah Hickerton Sarah.hickerton@cps.gsi.gov.uk

For information about CARE West Midlands please contact; ann.spencer@care-ltd.co.uk

2. For all the events that have taken place this year during Inside Justice Week (18-25th October) in West Mercia

Please visit <http://lcjb.cjsonline.gov.uk/WestMercia/home.html>:

3. West Mercia Criminal Justice Board is responsible for the running of the Criminal Justice System in West Mercia.

For further information please visit: sarah.hickerton@cps.gsi.gov.uk

For further information please contact:

E Sarah.hickerton@cps.gsi.gov.uk

T 01905 825108 M 07826 510248