

Criminal Justice Forum
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- A third of all men have at least one criminal conviction by the time they reach 40.
- The average age a male commits his first crime is 18.
- The average age a female commits her first crime is 16.
- The 'top' crimes for males are car related

Currently in Dorset the Probation Service supervises over 2000 offenders a year.

- Offenders will often ask in court for a short prison sentence INSTEAD of Probation as it is often considered to be LESS onerous.
- 7 out of 10 reoffend that served a prison sentence, 5 out of 10 that received a Community Order (3 out of 10 in Dorset)
- It costs less than £3,500 to put someone on a medium intensity community penalty for a year. It costs more than £37,000 to keep them in prison for the same amount of time.
- 72% of offenders are fined – nearly three quarters of crimes that come to court are in the 'less serious' category.
- 13% of offenders are given community sentences.
- 8% of people convicted of an offence receive a conditional discharge.
- 7% of offenders are sentenced to prison.
- Two thirds of them receive sentences of less than 12 months.

The Probation Service considers the 11 main pathways to offending to be:

- Accommodation
- Education and employment
- Finances
- Relationships
- Lifestyle and associates
- Emotional well being
- Thinking behaviour attitudes
- Health – both physical and mental health
- Alcohol
- Drugs

Nationally 8 million hours of unpaid work are completed through community sentences. In Dorset 85,000 hours are completed which equates to over a million pounds of free labour for local communities.

- There are approximately 30,000 Magistrates in England and Wales.
- Magistrates deal with 95% of crimes. The remaining 5% are heard in the Crown Court.
- Over 90% of people appearing before a Magistrates' court plead guilty.
- The maximum sentence that a Magistrates' court can impose for a single offence is 6 months in prison.
- Magistrates are unpaid volunteers. Anyone between the ages of 18 and 65 can apply to become a magistrate