

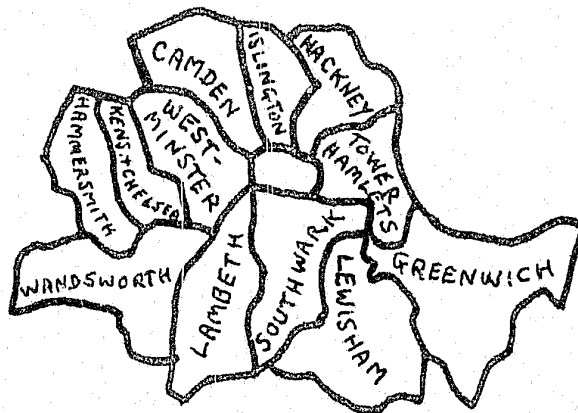
INNER LONDON PROBATION AND AFTER-CARE SERVICE

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COMMUNITY SERVICE

BY

OFFENDERS



A progress report on
the first two years'
operation of the scheme
in Inner London

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1. THE INTRODUCTION OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

The Criminal Justice Act, 1972

In June 1970 the Home Secretary's Advisory Council on the Penal System produced a report* which introduced the concept of community service by offenders as an alternative to custodial treatment. The proposals made in this report were incorporated in the Criminal Justice Act* 1972. Six Probation and After-Care services (Inner London, Kent, Nottingham, Durham, South-West Lancashire and Shropshire) were selected initially to implement the scheme on an experimental basis.

Under the community service scheme, courts may require an offender of 17+, who has been convicted of an offence punishable by imprisonment, to carry out a community task for a total of not less than 40 nor more than 240 hours within a period of twelve months. Such an order can only be made after consideration of a social enquiry report on the individual's suitability for the scheme, his willingness to conform to its demands and the availability of tasks suited to his abilities. The offender who has been placed on community service can be returned to court if he fails to carry out his work commitment. He may then be dealt with in any way that was open to the judge or magistrate when the order was originally made. Thus the court withholds but does not abrogate the full weight of its coercive powers for as long as the offender is the subject of a community service order.

* 'Non-Custodial and Semi-Custodial Penalties': Report of the Advisory Council on the Penal System, June 1970, HMSO.

* The Powers of Criminal Courts Act, 1973, consolidates previous Acts and amends slightly that part of the Criminal Justice Act, 1972, which refers to community service by offenders.

Aims of the Scheme

The principal intention of the 1972 Act was to reduce the number of persons committed to custodial institutions. Besides the introduction of community service orders as an alternative to imprisonment, provision was made for a wide range of hostel accommodation for adult offenders and for compulsory attendance for sixty days at a day training centre as a condition of a probation order.

The Act could be regarded as a tacit acknowledgement that the penal system has failed to some extent over the years to keep men and women from engaging in criminal activities. Community service must be seen as an attempt to provide a viable alternative to the shorter custodial sentence which would be acceptable to the courts and to the public in those cases where the public interest was not an overriding consideration. It is an attempt to meet the situation which occurs when judges and magistrates, finding themselves faced with an offender for whom other methods of treatment have been tried and failed, seem to have no option but to send him to prison, although they may feel that such a course will have little positive effect on his rehabilitation.

The scheme was welcomed in many quarters and for many reasons. It allows the offender to live in the community with his wife and family, supporting them by his normal work. It prevents the exposure of the offender to the negative influences of prison. It demonstrates to the offender that society is involved in, and affected by, his delinquency, but that the debt he has incurred can be repaid to some extent by work or service for the community. It attempts to show society that offenders need not be written off and that they can make a contribution to the public good.

Origins of the Scheme

The formal consideration of community service for offenders began in 1966 with the establishment of the Wootton Committee to enquire into non-custodial treatment of offenders. This committee reported on its work in 1970. A Home

Office working party was set up in 1971 to look into the particular aspect of community service. The six areas in which the scheme was to be experimentally applied were designated. In 1972 these six areas initiated their own committees to plan the application of the scheme.

The Inner London working party comprised of members of the Probation Service, local voluntary agencies and a representative of the police. Its basic philosophy was clear: community service was to be an alternative to custodial treatment. The members, however, had little to base their ideas on except their own personal views on what might be good for offenders and what might be tolerated by the community. There was no way of knowing what numbers might be involved, what procedures might be necessary, or even what sort of tasks might be available and how suitable they might be. An even more important element missing from the working party's deliberations was any form of representation of the proposed recipient of the new method of treatment - the offender.

It is not surprising, therefore, that many of the ideas entertained by the working party had to be modified in the early months of contact with reality when the scheme was put into operation. Most notable, perhaps, is that originally no restriction on the type of offender was suggested; in the first instance courts were encouraged to make orders as they thought fit. The first few months showed, as will be seen, that some selectivity in the type of offender chosen for the scheme was necessary.

Early Experiences and Development

Where so much was unknown, it was inevitable that at first the scheme should run into unforeseen difficulties. The community service centre was in the first place under-staffed in relation to the work imposed on it in the first few months. The first director, appointed three months before the scheme came into operation, had spent much of that time contacting voluntary bodies, explaining the scheme to them and obtaining from them promises of

support. The courts were made aware of the scheme, and the probation service was kept fully informed.

In the first two months of 1973 some sixty orders were made. The staff at the centre consisted of only one professional person, the director, who was supported by an executive officer whose previous experience had been in industry, and two young community service volunteers. The premises of work made earlier did not for the most part materialise, and it became apparent that the offenders were lacking in motivation, to some extent because of the service's confusion as to what the new measure was about.

The experience gained from these early difficulties was invaluable in laying down guidelines for future action. A much clearer picture was visible of what steps needed to be taken and what had to be avoided. The principle changes involved an increase of professional and supporting staff and of available facilities; the introduction of the principle of some selectivity of offenders; and the search for more suitable places for offenders to do their community service.

In June 1973 two extra probation officers were appointed to the scheme, and ancillaries were recruited. A workshop was, as had been intended from the first, installed at the centre. (The workshop was closed in February 1974, by which time it had outlived its usefulness, the staff by then having greater confidence in their own ability to place men and women in suitable work situations within the community).

Many of those first subjected to community service orders failed to carry these out satisfactorily; this was not surprising in view of their circumstances. Several were without fixed addresses, and others had been unused to regular employment. Some were in need of psychiatric treatment and others were addicted to alcohol or drugs. It was determined that as far as possible such offenders, for whom other treatment ought to be provided and who on community service were destined to fail, ought to be excluded from the scheme.

By now the centre had had sufficient experience with offenders who had been made subject to orders, and learned sufficient of their views and expectations, to form some idea of the kind of work which might engender client motivation. Very often the principal motivation when the offender gave his consent to a community service order was that he would then walk out of the court into freedom rather than into custody. Any good intentions he may have had on the day of the hearing often faded away in geometric progression to the passage of time. It seemed important, therefore, to get hold of him as soon as possible and capitalise on what motivation still remained.

It was decided to select tasks in areas where the offender could see clearly the purpose and value of what he was doing. Work was sought which would benefit the very old, the young, the mentally sick and the handicapped. These disadvantaged members of society were in obvious need of help. Accordingly, for example, tasks were sought and found within an agency concerned with the elderly in south-east London, and at a psychiatric hospital in north-east London. A determined effort was made with the co-operation of members of the agencies to 'sell' these projects to the offenders and at the same time attempts were made to ensure a good standard of turnout and of work so as to give to those agencies a good idea of the possibilities of community service.

It is from these beginnings and along these lines that the present system has evolved until, on a typical weekend in late 1974, the centre had some 170 offenders working in the community in some 70 different situations.

Extension of the Scheme to other Areas

The scheme has been subjected to close scrutiny by the Home Office Research Unit. Its obvious merits were soon recognised and in mid 1974 the Home Secretary decided that the opportunity for probation and after-care services to run schemes should be extended to the remainder of England and Wales during 1975.

There is bound to be some diversity in the application of the scheme to different areas because of their particular needs and the various conditions

prevailing in the area. Some areas will have full employment while in others there are large numbers of chronic unemployed. In some there is already a high level of civic consciousness while in others there is little community activity to which work schemes can be related. In some, voluntary bodies are active and welcome the help of offenders, while in others there is less voluntary activity and the probation and after-care service has to organise its own response to local needs. The six areas involved in the initial experiments developed schemes and philosophies suited to their own needs. A marked division in their policies was in applying the scheme either as a direct alternative to imprisonment or as an additional non-custodial treatment. It is regarded as important, however, that as new schemes develop a fundamental philosophy underlying community service should be applied generally if the courts, the community - and offenders - are not to be confused.

2. COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDERS: THE RECORD OF THE FIRST TWO YEARS

The numbers of community service orders made by individual Inner London courts up to 31st December 1974, and other information, are shown in Appendix 1. In all, 541 men and 20 women were made subject to orders; 216 in 1973 and 345 in 1974. In some cases the offender was made the subject of more than one order, so that the number of actual orders was 701.

In the first year the flow of orders was spasmodic but in 1974 apart from a massive increase in the making of orders during February (it is thought this was consequent on the report of the first year's progress) offenders were made subject to community service orders at a constant rate of one per working day. Graph 'A' in Appendix 1 is an interesting illustration of this. Graph 'B' is an illustration of the number of orders made by each of the courts during the four half-years, and shows some interesting variation in response. Graph 'C' is a comparison between orders made on the initiative of courts and when the recommendation has come from the probation officer. A significant swing, capable of various interpretations, has taken place.

In imposing community service orders the courts are in a somewhat new situation. In the past, when a court has sent a man to prison or imposed a fine, it has been quite clear to the court what the sentence has meant. When courts have made probation orders they have similarly had a reasonable understanding and expectation of what probation officers will do with the offenders. However, when a community service order is made no absolute promises of the type or locality of the task and the rate at which it will be worked can be made to the courts, since the functioning of the community service scheme is entirely dependent upon community good-will. Parliament has given authority to courts to make orders but legislation cannot force the community to accept its delinquents. It falls to the community service organiser to see that the number of hours of service called for by the order is completed and to judge whether and at what point the failure of the offender to carry out his obligations necessitates his return to the court to be disposed of as the court decides.

In the event, judges and magistrates have been increasingly willing to make orders, and probation officers to recommend community service for offenders whom they judge could profit from this alternative to a custodial sentence.

The length of the orders made is shown in Appendix 2. Their length has varied widely between the statutory minimum of 40 hours and maximum of 240 hours. (A small number of orders - 18 - has been made for less than 40 hours; these have formed part of a number of consecutive orders to which one individual offender has been subjected). The greatest number of orders has been made for 100 hours (320) or 120 hours (79); in fact, out of 701 orders, 57% have been for periods of these intermediate lengths.

Most offenders carry out their work under the order on either Saturday or Sunday for a period of about six hours. Whatever the number of hours stipulated in the order, they are likely to take longer to complete than the offender initially expected. The average period of time to complete an order on the

When an Order Breaks Down

The determination of the point of breakdown of an order - the point at which it is necessary to return the offender to court for breach proceedings - depends on an assessment of, on the one hand, what the court would consider appropriate persistence on the part of the staff and, on the other, its expectation that orders will be carried out without undue procrastination.

If the breakdown results from committal for a further offence (which, as has been indicated, may have been committed before the making of the community service order) and the man has been remanded in custody, no action can be taken until he has been dealt with for that offence. Even if he is released on bail, it may be doubtful whether any purpose is served by his continuing with a community task while the case remains unsettled. Once he has been dealt with, since a further offence is not a breach of an order, the question arises whether the order should remain in force, particularly if he receives a custodial sentence.

3. THE COMMUNITY SERVICE CENTRE AND ITS ADMINISTRATION

The community service centre for Inner London is located in Chiswick. The establishment of staff at the end of 1974 consisted of the Director, three Senior Probation Officers (known as 'Community Service Organisers'), three probation officers, an executive officer and secretarial and ancillary support. (Two probation officers had not then taken up their posts). However, the growth of the organisation has been such that three sub-units are now being set up, one in Camden and the other in south-east London, while one remains at Chiswick. Each will be in the charge of one of the senior probation officers at present stationed at Chiswick. During 1974 the scheme has operated from Chiswick as three sub-units and reports from the officers responsible are to be found in Appendix 8. Chiswick will continue to be the administrative centre of the organisation.

The administrative aspects of community service are complex, demanding instant access to information on both the general position and the individual detail. In effect, the community service centre, unlike the normal probation unit, has to review its entire caseload once a week. The staff keep records of attendance, of the movement of offenders between tasks and of work undertaken. The turnover of tasks is fairly rapid, and the weekly programme has to make provision for all those available for work, including newly-sentenced offenders. Arrangements must be made for replacements in cases of sickness and unexpected absences, and for sudden changes arising from the flexible needs of voluntary organisations.

A great deal of effort has to be directed towards gaining the co-operation of voluntary bodies and others who might offer work opportunities for offenders on community service. The scheme is dependent on public good-will, and on the co-operation of organisations which are in a position to locate need and offer channels for putting offenders in touch with prospective beneficiaries. This good-will is easily lost, and its continuance depends on ensuring that the help offered is both effective and timely. Experience has shown that the most successful approaches to voluntary organisations have been those where the centre has offered manpower rather than where it has appealed to an organisation to make a non-specific contribution for the benefit of offenders.

From the administrative point of view, the tasks available to offenders fall into two categories. First, those in which the probation and after-care service provides direct supervision of offenders who undertake specific work for a voluntary agency or a client of that agency. For these tasks the centre employs sessional supervisors who work with the offenders on the projects. Secondly, there are those tasks where the supervision and the choice of work, within previously agreed limits, is the responsibility of the voluntary body.

...of the offenders' times of attendance. Allowance is made for travelling time if this exceeds half an hour each way. Offenders are expected to meet their own expenses, though fares may be paid to those who are temporarily unemployed. Although there is authority under the scheme to meet offenders' expenses and provide subsistence, the policy in London has been to develop and build upon the offenders' positive motivation and encourage them to regard themselves in the same way as voluntary workers in similar situations. The process of paying fares and providing food would, it is felt, tend to lower the value of the work in the offenders' eyes. The responsible officer at the centre maintains constant contact with supervisors in the matter of the offenders' performance of their tasks.

Supervisors

Much clearly depends on the personality and skill of the supervisor. The offender's attitude to community service will be greatly affected by the people he works with as well as the work he does, and where he is employed in a group he may gain much positive experience from his interaction with others in the work situation. The group's attitude to society could be vitally influenced by its observation and respect for the person in charge. Supervisors must be able to make easy relationships; to be firm yet tolerant. They must be in sympathy with the philosophy of the scheme and have at heart the interests both of society and of the offender.

The function of the supervisors is to account for the behaviour and work of those in their charge, to organise and ensure the completion of any task undertaken, and to act as the immediate representatives of the probation and after-care service in the day-to-day situation, both to the offenders and to the beneficiaries. They are not necessarily required to have any particular skills of a practical nature, but they must be sufficiently

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committed to the work in hand to be able to inculcate enthusiasm in others and harness the abilities and goodwill of those in their groups. They have to protect beneficiaries from exploitation, and similarly protect the offender from exploitation in the situation in which he is placed.

Their financial reward has to be sufficient to attract and retain men and women of the required calibre and compensate them for the loss of their own leisure time. It should not be so great as to induce people to work for the money rather than in the interests of the offender and society. Bearing this proviso in mind, it has to be said that the remuneration offered at present is inadequate.

No fixed limits of age, sex or qualifications are laid down for the selection of supervisors. In practice, however, because of the particular responsibility of the role, some maturity is necessary. It has been found that this task can be done with equal facility by men or women.

An interesting recent development has been the recruitment of two men, currently under the supervision of probation officers, as paid supervisors. They have been selected with care, bearing in mind the criteria set out above and the additional strains likely to be put upon men who have recently been 'on the other side', and with the knowledge of the agencies with which they are involved. While the experiment must be watched with care, results so far are hopeful. Clearly, if ex-offenders can demonstrate to their peers that the transition from one 'side' to another is possible, this could have important long-term implications, not only in the area of community service.

4. THE OFFENDER

The ages of those made subject to orders are shown in Appendix 4. They reflect in general the age range of those appearing before the courts, showing a strong preponderance of male offenders from 17 to the early twenties. The graphical illustration shows that this ratio has been fairly constant during

the two years. The upper end of the range is still represented - by one man of 60 and another of 67. However, 73% of the 561 offenders are males in the age range 17-23 and of all the offenders, male and female, only 140 are over that age.

The number of previous convictions is shown in Appendix 5. All but 47 have been convicted of some previous offence; the average of previous convictions per offender is 4.4.

The type of offence committed is shown in Appendix 6 - the offence listed is the most serious in each case where there was more than one charge. 55% of the 561 represent larceny of one kind or another; 27% are offences connected with motor-cars; and 15% involve violence, leaving a small miscellany of 19 which includes possession of drugs, soliciting, a 'bomb threat' and breaches of community service orders. The illustration in this appendix of the breakdown of cases in 1973 and 1974 indicates a fairly constant pattern. So far no court has made an order for a sexual offence apart from that of prostitution. The staff of the community service centre follow the principle, and regard it as an important one, that in discussing cases with probation officers in the field the nature of the offence is not an overriding consideration.

The general picture which emerges from these figures is that the typical offender is a young man of about 20 years old with four or five previous convictions. Very often he has already experienced custodial treatment and he is likely to have had some experience of supervision, whether under a probation order or in some form of after-care. It appears, therefore, that the community service scheme is dealing to a considerable extent with young men for whom other forms of supervision must be admitted to have failed.

This typical offender is, it may be suggested, in many ways immature. The most suitable way of dealing with him must be one in which time to mature

is an important factor. He might be sent to prison, where the main essence of the situation is time, but time which is not particularly constructively used and during which maturation may be retarded rather than allowed to continue its normal course. The first and most important alternative to imprisonment is a probation order, and here again a significant essence is time. The idea of community service is now beginning to be seen as providing a further alternative of time plus experience. If the experience is good enough, maturation can be accelerated.

The range of experiences which can be offered to offenders is by now fairly wide. Some are quite personal, offering a direct contact with the beneficiary; others less personal, where the essence is working in a group situation. It is relevant here to mention that the workshop, which was at first seen as an essential part of the scheme, was closed in the spring of 1974, since not only was it then possible to find sufficient suitable tasks in the community, but it was less easy to demonstrate that work of that nature was of immediate value to the community.

In placing offenders, the first concern is with locality. It is important that the offender should work in a familiar environment which he or she can recognise as his or her own community. The next consideration is the offender's personal strengths, his personal feelings and the demands that these bring. One young man who was a qualified life-saver was placed round the corner from his home, teaching spastic children to swim. This was an ideal combination of location, talents and personal inclinations which it is rarely possible to achieve. Less specialised skills can be more easily utilised. Almost half the offenders have been in penal institutions. One skill that young offenders often learn in borstal is the rudiments of painting and decorating, and there is a great demand for this kind of work for the elderly, both in their own homes and in hostels.

Women offenders

Women offenders pose special problems, largely because the possibility of imprisonment does not usually face them until fairly late in their criminal careers. It has not always been easy to find suitable tasks for them and, because they often have demanding family ties, absence from home is seen as inflicting an additional penalty. The Inner London experience has been that very often the women have children but not the continuing support and interest of a man. It has often been necessary to seek work for women in situations where they have been able to take their own children with them. Those who are pregnant are specially difficult to place. Nevertheless, there have been some successes. One woman had undervalued herself to the extent that she thought she had no contribution to make to society. Initially, she regarded her community service as 'slave labour', but after completion of her order took a job in a hospital and is now reported to be very happy and working well. Before her experience of community service she had worked only for short periods and always in routine repetitive jobs which gave her no personal satisfaction.

The Attitude of the Offenders to Community Service Orders

After two years of operation of the scheme some general comment becomes possible on the reactions of offenders, the degree of commitment that can be expected from them, the possible areas of expansion and the limits - of types of offender and of activity - within which its most successful application probably lies.

In its earliest days a clear impression was obtained from offenders of what community service meant to them. First, if they were to bring any real enthusiasm to their tasks, they had to be convinced that the beneficiaries of their service were themselves deserving of help. Secondly, they had to be sure that the work being done could be related to obvious and immediate needs that were capable of being met. To produce or maintain the essential motivation in the offenders the community service organisers had to find

tasks which put them in contact with the very old, the young and the mentally or physically handicapped and were demonstrably relevant.

When community service is offered to offenders instead of imprisonment they may give their consent and promise their co-operation because they feel the decision of the court is an easier way out, a substitute for a painful alternative. At this stage of their delinquent careers, most offenders have experienced a number of previous penalties and are used to coping with social workers. To some, a community service order appears as no more than an opportunity to continue and extend the pattern of manipulation in which they are well versed and in which the rules are already well known to both parties.

The actual experience is in striking contrast to these expectations. The sheer difficulty of fitting in enough hours of weekend work within the time limits imposed has been mentioned. Besides this, the offender finds himself in a situation in many ways more demanding than that which would have faced him if he had been sentenced to institutional training. Instead of having his decisions made for him, he has to cope with everyday work and life and, in addition, make up his mind to present himself at his place of service at the right time and in the right frame of mind to do unpaid work for the community on his day off. It is not surprising that some fail and that others fall back into the familiar attitude that life is a struggle between 'them' and 'us'. The community service organiser has to play his part in providing work which is suitable to the offender, offers him a positive experience and is more or less interesting in itself, but the effort is made in vain if it encounters an uncompromisingly negative attitude. If an offender seems unwilling to work on a community task, it is necessary to consider whether the problem lies in the work he has been offered or in the man himself.

Certain factors have been found to delineate the offenders who are more likely to benefit from community service. Those with a reasonable employment record and a permanent address tend to stay the course better than those who

have been unemployed for long periods and are repeatedly on the move. Borderline alcoholics, especially those who drink heavily at weekends, are often late in attending and are frequently unfit to carry out their community tasks when they do arrive. It has been proved difficult to ensure the co-operation of those who are addicted to drugs.

The committing of an offence is often an indication of the need for long-term personal assistance. A community service order is not the answer for those who are in need of casework help. The community service centre is not equipped or intended to provide ongoing help of this nature. Its function is to present the offender with the best opportunity for community service it can find for him, and to assist him in whatever immediate problems he encounters or produces by his attendance or non-attendance. It is hoped that, by focussing on the positive elements of the offender and concentrating on facilitating his completion of the order, his success in this one field may spill over into other facets of his life. The centre may encourage and assist his progress by offering him, if necessary, a series of alternative tasks. As has been said, an attendance rate short of the ideal may justifiably be tolerated, but it remains a basic condition of community service that an offender must 'satisfactorily' perform the work he is given.

In judging whether a man's performance is satisfactory, account has to be taken of his individual ability. This is seldom known at the commencement of an order. It is necessary at times to take the man and his estimate of his own capabilities on trust. If, as can happen, he overestimates them, the work he produces may appear accordingly less acceptable. As he becomes better known, his abilities can be more objectively assessed, and the standard of his work rated in a truer relation to them.

CASE HISTORIES

The impact of community service on the lives and careers of offenders may perhaps best be illustrated by a selection of case histories from Inner London.

Two of these record distinct successes; two, distinct failures; and the rest may be described as failing somewhere in between.

(1) John

John was made the subject of a 200 hour order in May 1974 after stealing a Barclaycard and going on a shopping spree.

He was 28 and had several previous convictions, mostly for theft of one sort or another. He had been placed on probation four times and had received a prison sentence when 22. A qualified electrician, he was keen to employ his talents in community service. To reduce the size of his commitment at the outset he volunteered to work throughout his summer holiday, rewiring a hostel for women 'down-and-outs'.

His pre-trial report described him as 'a young man of a defensive and uncommunicative disposition, lacking in self-confidence and with little ambition or purpose in life'. In view of this it was a pleasant surprise to find that he communicated well with his supervisor, with the other members of his group and with the organisers of the project on which he worked.

As time went on he became virtually an assistant to the supervisor in organising the work. He attended regularly and took a responsible attitude to the work. Towards the end of his order, when the supervisor could not attend on a couple of occasions, he very successfully took on the role of supervisor.

John was a notably successful community service worker for three reasons. First, he was able to sustain the effort to complete a 200-hour order in the short space of six months - experience has shown that particular problems may be associated with orders of such a length. Secondly, he was able to disprove a somewhat critical pre-trial report, proving in the outcome to be friendly, communicative, confident and responsible. Finally, he maintained interest in the project, continuing to call in and work occasionally on it after the completion of his order.

(2) Henry

Henry, aged 40, alienated from his parents, and divorced, had twelve previous convictions, mostly resulting in prison sentences. He was not without intelligence and had held several responsible jobs. He came to the centre suffering from a deep sense of failure. His probation officer felt that his problems stemmed from a lack of confidence, which led him to create situations which cut him off from the community. He was given a 100 hour order for an offence involving deception.

Placed in an adventure playground in a very deprived area, he quickly became one of the team of playleaders. Reports were soon received of his helping to build a new tower, making rabbit hutches with the children, running a disco and generally helping out with supervision and maintenance. His interest grew to such an extent that he attended evening classes in play leadership. He completed his hours of service in record time, and nine months after the completion of his order was still continuing to work at the playground on a voluntary basis.

(3) Brian

Brian, aged 23, was found guilty of actual bodily harm at the Old Bailey in 1973 and sentenced to 150 hours of community service. He had one previous conviction, having been fined for a similar offence in 1972. He had been remanded in custody for some weeks before his trial. This caused numerous problems for his wife and three infant children. The experience seemed to provoke him to take a responsible attitude towards the order in the beginning.

At the time of his interview he expressed relief that he had not been 'sent down', as he had expected a fairly stiff sentence.

He worked regularly and well for over two months in the workshop at the centre, and by February 1974 had completed 54 of his 150 hours. He then got a job which involved working on Saturdays. In order not to interfere with his employment he was found a Sunday project, working at an old people's home, mostly

in the garden. His attendance became irregular and, late in March, he visited the centre claiming that he had been unable to get off his work, but promising to attend more regularly.

He continued to absent himself, and when visited at home said that his job made him over-tired. He appeared to understand the seriousness of the situation and promised to work in future. A new project was tried; he was sent to work decorating a youth club. Once again he failed to attend, and was told he would have to return to court if he failed to make a real effort to complete his order. He said he wished to return to working with old people, and was given a task at a council home for the aged. For a few weeks he attended regularly and good reports on him were received from the project organiser. Then the previous pattern of non-attendance was re-established. Letters written to him were unanswered and when his home was visited he was always out. It was later discovered that he had left the area. More recently he was returned to court and committed for trial to the Crown Court. He had completed 83 of his 150 hours.

It appears that throughout his order Brian was always prepared to gamble on how much he could get away with. He would only work when shocked into it by being told of the consequences of not working, and the shock was never long-lasting. He appeared to take a responsible attitude towards the order, but in fact never fully comprehended the purpose or serious intent of it.

(4) Peter

Peter was already on probation and under a suspended sentence. His offences had usually been committed when he was under the influence of alcohol. He was a good worker, and there was general concern that he should be kept out of prison. The magistrate who sentenced him shared this general concern, and thought that community service might at least keep him out of the pub on Saturdays. He was placed on a project building a new adventure playground. He repaired to the pub at lunchtime and soon began, instead of returning to the project afterwards, to get drunk and go home.

He was reallocated to a project renovating a home for 'battered' wives. Here lunch was provided on the premises. He worked well and regularly, and appeared to learn for the first time from these women the potentially disastrous effects of drink. He was several times overheard in the probation office waiting-room expounding in all sincerity the positive aspects of community service.

Unfortunately he committed a further series of petty offences when drunk, and is now back in prison. It is hoped on his release to take him back into community service on a voluntary basis, to assist in his rehabilitation.

(5) Mary

Mary, aged 22, came before a crown court for theft. She had a good upbringing and education and no previous convictions. She was described as capable, with a stable personality. After having a variety of jobs she had become bored and somewhat confused in her aims. She took on a different kind of job which exposed her to some degree of temptation. The court ordered her to perform 100 hours of community service. When interviewed she seemed pleasant and bright and gave good promise of co-operation. She was assigned to do domestic work at a centre where she would have direct contact with people. She attended twice a week and completed her order within three months. Reports from the centre where she worked stated that she was much liked there and her cheerful and willing attitude was appreciated.

(6) Albert

Albert, 36 years old, a married man with four children, was a butcher by trade. He had a bad criminal record for dishonesty, and had had four prison sentences totalling more than seven years. His more recent offences involved driving whilst disqualified. He was described as a quiet, respectful man. His domestic life had been for some time one of constant strain, and he had accumulated considerable debts. He was given a 120 hour community service order as an alternative to imprisonment. He was placed first in a painting project

at a community care and treatment hostel, where he worked well, and later attended an adventure playground. Here again his attendance was satisfactory and his work regular. He did building work and general labouring, and gave assistance with the children in a helpful and understanding manner.

He was ill in August and on resuming work faced increasing difficulty in coping with his debts. He had to increase his hours of employment and his community service record suffered. Some effort had to be made to rekindle his enthusiasm at this point, when he was two-thirds of the way through his order, and he had to give careful thought to his priorities. He was allowed to work shorter periods, painting at a local church and doing odd repair jobs at the playground before it re-opened in the spring.

He completed his order just within the time allowed. His work was thorough and willing throughout, and it seemed in the course of the year that he was confronting his debts and other difficulties with greater resolution. He made some advance in his job and was planning to open a shop of his own. He has committed no further offences. It seems justifiable to regard his response with guarded optimism, and the expedient of a community service order as positively helpful and worthwhile.

(7) Matthew

Matthew, an 18 year old West Indian, came to this country as a child. He lives with his parents; his three older brothers and sisters are married and live away from home. He first appeared in court for petty theft while aged 16 and still at school. He was conditionally discharged. His next appearance was not until 1973, when he was fined for theft. This was followed by a series of motoring offences. The car was his own, it was taxed and insured, and he had a provisional licence, but he continued to drive it when disqualified. He was eventually charged with this offence and also with the theft of a camera found in the car, which he claimed he had 'found' a year before.

He appeared at a crown court and was given a 100 hour order. He impressed the interviewing officer at the community service centre as an intelligent and

articulate young man with a pleasant and co-operative manner. He was interested in doing some decorating and was placed with a church project, painting an area used for welfare purposes. He attended regularly and formed a good relationship with his supervisor, who described his performance as 'exemplary'.

An intelligent young man, he recognised and accepted society's demand that he should make some sort of reparation for breaking its laws. He was quite willing to give up his time for the sake of those less fortunate than himself. His supervisor was of the opinion that he enjoyed the experience and was a good influence on other members of the group.

(8) Terry

Terry, a teenager, came before the court for taking a car and driving whilst disqualified. On a previous appearance, also for theft of a car, he had been fined. He was given a community service order and warned that he might have been sent to borstal.

He comes from a good home but there has been a lack of male influence in his life and he has had a rather undesirable circle of friends. He is nevertheless well liked and said that he would be glad to help others.

When interviewed at the centre he presented himself as a rather immature youth with little enthusiasm to do his community work. He was refused at one project because of his attitude and at the next referral, a hostel, where it was thought that he was more suitably placed, he showed himself at first to be unco-operative and headstrong.

With the perseverance and understanding of the hostel warden and his wife, Terry began to work through some of his feelings and to respond, showing that he has good potential and a better side to his personality. He has now applied himself with more enthusiasm to painting within the hostel, general labouring and gardening. When he began recently to make a play area for children he enlisted

on his own initiative a group of young people living locally, who assisted him in a most efficient way. There is now much more optimism about him and it is felt his future augurs well.

THE VIEW OF THE BENEFICIARY

There are some positive criteria by which the success or otherwise of community service can be judged, as far as its impact on the offender is concerned. Its impact on the recipient of his labours is more difficult to assess, and this might be a fruitful area for further enquiry. Such reactions as have been received tend to be favourable. This may be because in an area where expectations are low the reverse to the usual practice holds good, and people only express their reactions when they are pleased, remaining silent when they are not. However, a short selection of typical correspondence is not without interest.

I would like to place on record my praise for the manner in which A. has conducted himself. His reliability, industriousness and general attitude have made him a very welcome and respected addition to my staff.

- Adventure Playground Organiser

I would like to say how satisfactory B's general behaviour and attitude have been during the period of community service that he has worked at the youth club here. He has always been most helpful and I don't really know how we will manage without his help. I intend to recommend him for training as a part-time youth leader when he is 18 years of age.

- Minister of Methodist Mission

Please convey to your supervisor and the two young men who came to assist me with my garden our sincere thanks and appreciation for the excellent help they gave us and for the really hard work they put into it. As you know, my wife and I are registered blind and my friends and neighbours have told us how nice and tidy the garden is because of the work they did. Again, thanks, and we do hope they will be able to visit us again.

- Old Age Pensioner

I would like to thank you for the prompt work of decorating my flat. Mr. C. was really excellent in every way, very clean and very obliging. I wish him all the very best.

- Old Age Pensioner

5. VOLUNTARY AGENCIES

The value of the co-operation and interest of voluntary agencies is incalculable, for it is only by enlisting their help and specialised skills that it is possible to identify areas of need and put offenders to work in those areas.

The response from voluntary bodies to our approaches has invariably been helpful, whether it has been on an organisational basis, such as meetings arranged by local councils of social services of interested organisations in their boroughs, or in the very direct work that has been carried out by old people's welfare committees in locating work for old people and on occasions actually supervising the carrying of it out.

All the agencies used during the past two years have been circularised, and in only one case did an organisation ask not to be mentioned by name in this report, for the reason that 'it might be bad for our radical image'. This agency continues to find useful work for an offender.

6. TYPES OF WORK

Full details of the projects on which community service has been done by offenders, the nature of the tasks and the numbers of offenders involved are given in Appendix 7.

The principal areas of work under the scheme have been: old people's homes, youth clubs, adventure playgrounds, neighbourhood centres for children, hospitals; hostels for unmarried mothers, offenders on probation or after-care, 'battered' wives, blind people and the mentally and physically handicapped; church halls and rectories, craft shops, charity shops and centres for families visiting prisons.

The work done includes painting and decorating, gardening, playground construction and supervision of children's activities, building construction work, maintenance and repair, and some less general activities such as laundry

and domestic work, hairdressing, swimming instruction and the bagging and distribution of coal to old age pensioners.

Working with such organisations as Age Concern, small parties of offenders have helped to renovate the homes of old people and restored their gardens to order. At youth clubs they have undertaken sports coaching, organised physical fitness classes, helped with camping arrangements, assisted with preliminary work for charitable activities such as stalls for jumble sales and charity walks, and accompanied children on outings.

As has been noted, many of those on community service orders have some training in painting and decorating. They have put it to use in such ways as preparing an after-care day centre, renovating a building for an experimental community care and treatment centre for homeless offenders, turning old buildings into student accommodation, renovating a theatre club and preparing a centre for the rehabilitation of drug addicts.

The Attitude of Trade Unionists to the Scheme

The trade union movement has given tacit approval to the objectives of community service. There have been expressions of interest and support from individual trade unionists. If this positive attitude is to continue, the beneficiaries of community service and the work undertaken must seem as worthy and acceptable to the unions as to the offenders themselves. It is important that if there are any doubts about particular tasks under consideration, these should be discussed with the unions. Inner London is fortunate in this regard in having on its community service committee a nominee of the trade union movement. Besides this, a joint liaison committee has been set up, representing the probation and after-care service and certain trade union and employer interests in the local authority field, where issues of this nature can be discussed and potential difficulties resolved.

The Attitude of the Probation and After-Care Service

Community service is still a new idea and a new method of working, and

the probation and after-care service has been chosen to operate it. This has caused some heart-searching among probation officers anxious to avoid or minimise what they feel may develop into an authoritarian role. The staff within the scheme have to bear this in mind and operate it in such a way that the work done with and by offenders does not run contrary to the caring traditions of the service. It is the probation officer who recommends this treatment to the courts; the organisers of community service must always attempt to produce working situations which satisfy their colleagues in the field.

The Attitude of the Community

The community has its own feelings about offenders, and it is to some extent to satisfy these feelings that prisons are built - to put difficult, non-conforming and threatening people away out of sight and out of mind. Community service means that offenders are going about within society, and the fears that the community may have about them have to be allayed. It is not possible to make an explanation to the public at large of the life situations of individual offenders. There has to be a building up of confidence in the community service scheme, so that the community is assured that it is not put to unreasonable additional danger by the activities of offenders engaged on community service tasks.

CONCLUSION

A principal function of a penal institution is to act as a 'container'. While he is in prison, the offender cannot commit further offences. During the time he is subject to a community service order and thus at liberty, he has opportunities for further criminal activity. That some will offend again has to be accepted. Taking into account the degree of criminality of those sentenced to community service during the first two years of its operation in Inner London, immediate conversion to good citizenship is hardly to be expected. This is a risk which it may be hoped the community will tolerate if its limits can be seen and the ultimate benefits of the system, in terms of criminals made less delinquent, demonstrated. Therapeutic effects are difficult to measure but there are

encouraging signs that some offenders have begun to think differently about their neighbours as a result of their experience of community service. If it is accepted that imprisonment is a negative experience for many offenders, community service is indeed a viable alternative and a positive way of dealing with some of those who break the law.

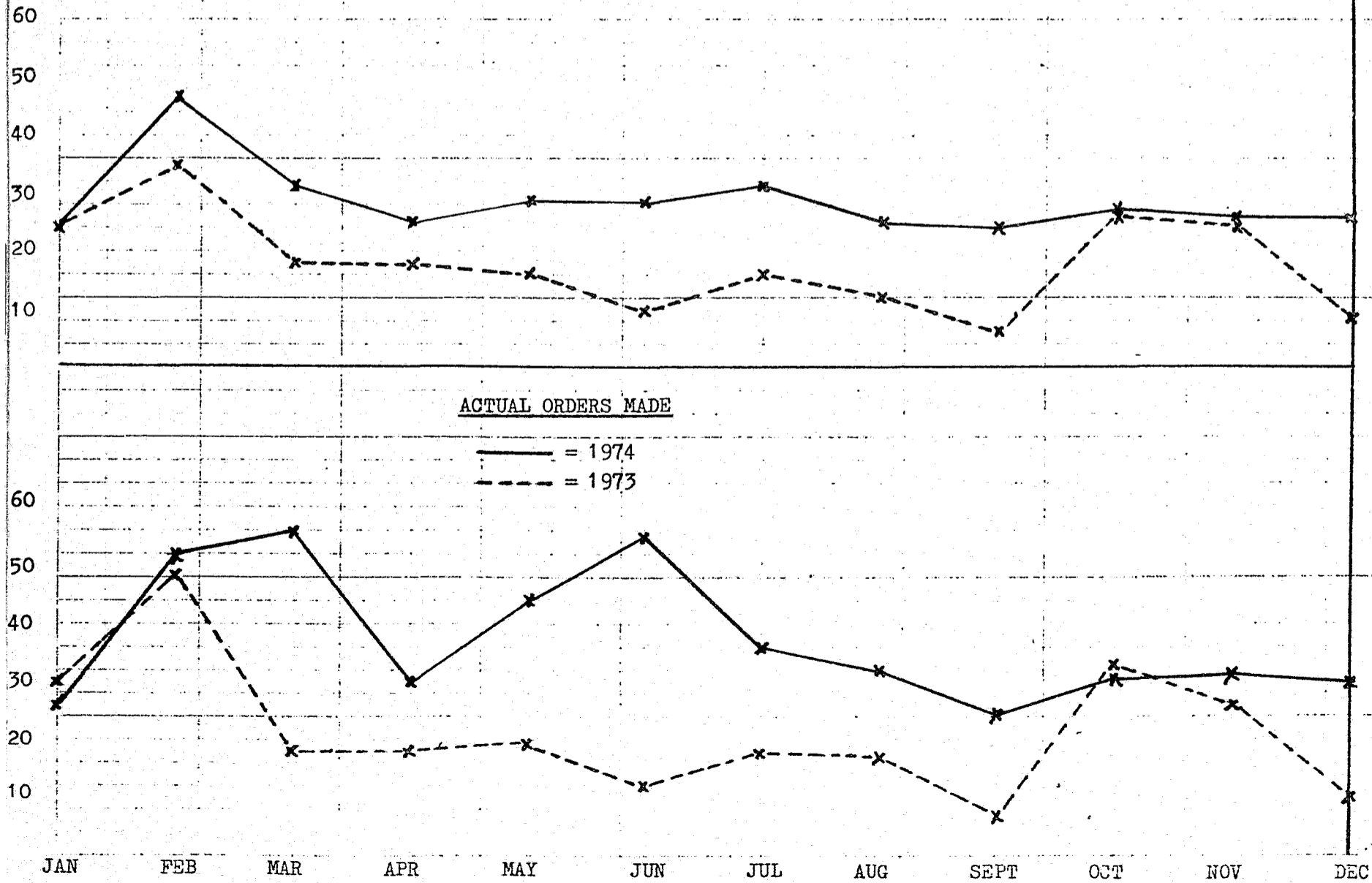
On a typical weekend late in 1974 over 170 offenders subject to community service orders in Inner London, having worked throughout the week to support their families, were employed on tasks for the benefit of others. They could have been sitting in prison cells, benefitting none but each costing the nation between £30 and £40 a week and, perhaps, as much again to support their families.

APPENDIX 1

<u>Courts making orders</u>	<u>Persons</u>	<u>Orders</u>
Central Criminal Court	30	31
Crown Court	92	103
City of London	2	2
Clerkenwell	29	41
Hampstead	7	9
North London	33	51
Old Street	36	42
Bow Street	16	18
Marlborough Street	7	7
Marylebone	18	20
South Western	60	77
Wells Street	6	9
West London	68	98
Camberwell Green	63	74
Greenwich	17	24
Lambeth	2	2
Thames	22	32
Tower Bridge	36	41
Woolwich	17	28
	<hr/> 561	<hr/> 701

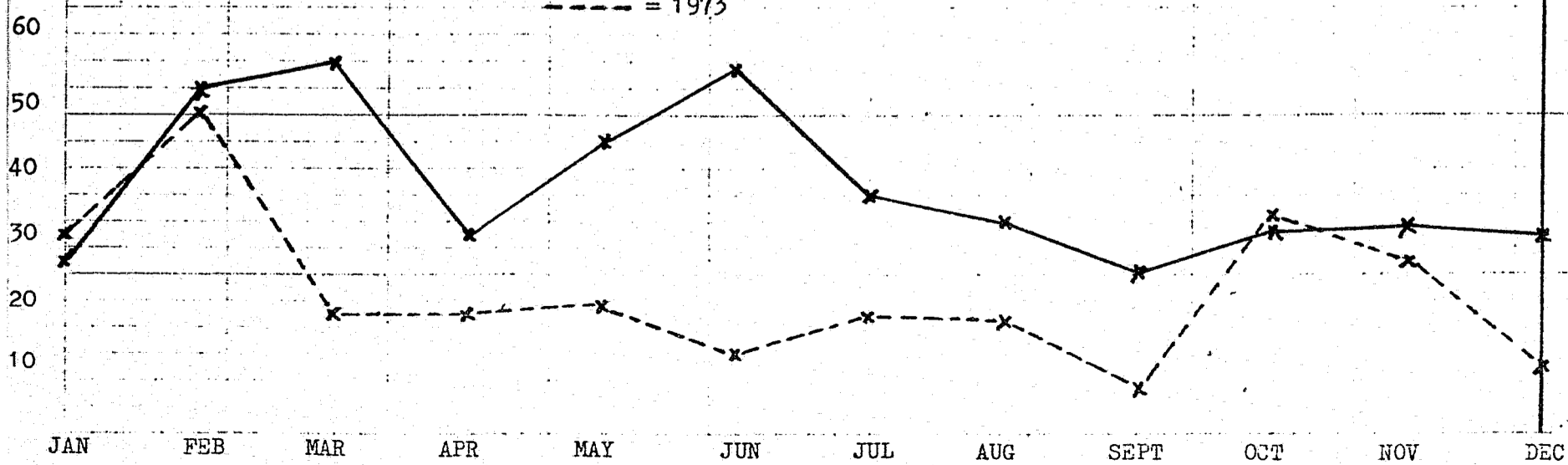
NUMBER OF CLIENTS

— = 1974
- - = 1973



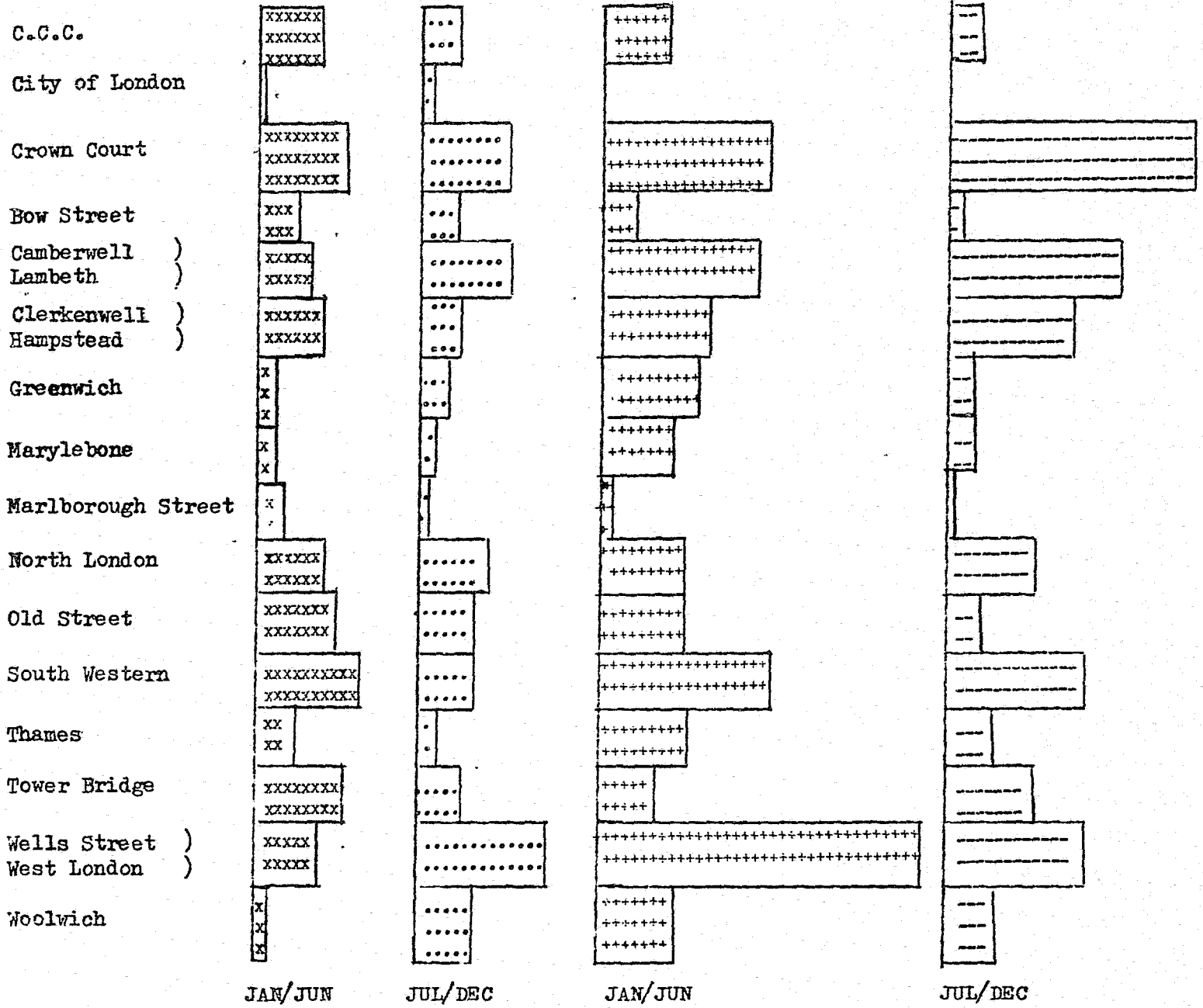
ACTUAL ORDERS MADE

— = 1974
- - = 1973



ORDERS MADE IN THE COURTS

'B'

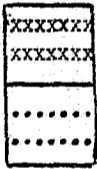


1973

1974

C.S.O. RECOMMENDATIONS

'6'



Initiated
by
Courts

Probation Officers

1973

1974

APRIL

MAY

OCTOBER

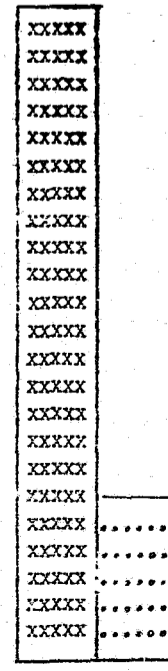
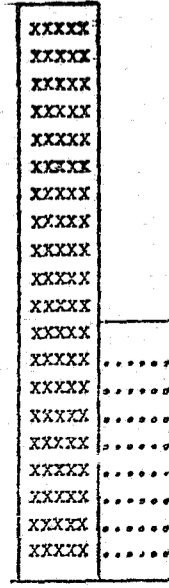
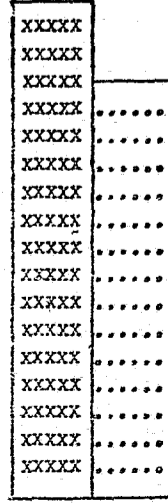
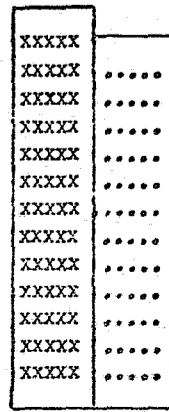
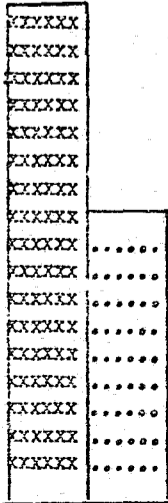
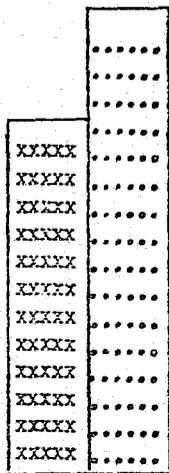
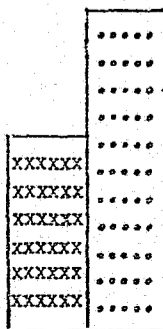
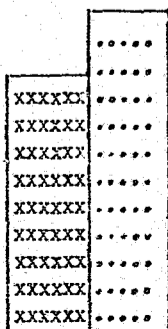
NOVEMBER

APRIL

MAY

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER



APPENDIX 2

Length of orders

<u>Hours</u>	<u>Orders</u>
15	1
20	8
25	6
30	3
40	37
48	2
50	23
60	42
64	1
75	6
80	30
90	2
100	320
120	79
125	1
130	1
140	12
150	61
160	12
180	1
200	48
240	5
	<hr/>
	701
	<hr/>

APPENDIX 3

Completions or revocations of orders

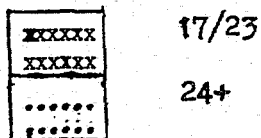
	<u>Persons</u>	<u>Orders</u>
<u>Satisfactory completions</u>	232	296
<u>Revocations:</u>		
Did not attend initial interview	5	
Failed to report for work	27	
Committed further offence	54	
Physical or personal reasons	6	
Left area	7	
Varied on appeal	2	
<u>Total revocations</u>	101	131
<u>Non-effective: In custody; address not known; awaiting revocation</u>	38	54
<u>Summonses or warrants issued:</u>		
Did not attend initial interview	11	
Failure to work or to notify change of address	27	
<u>Total summonses/warrants</u>	38	48
<u>Available for work</u>	152	172
	<u>561</u>	<u>701</u>

APPENDIX 4

Ages of persons subject to orders

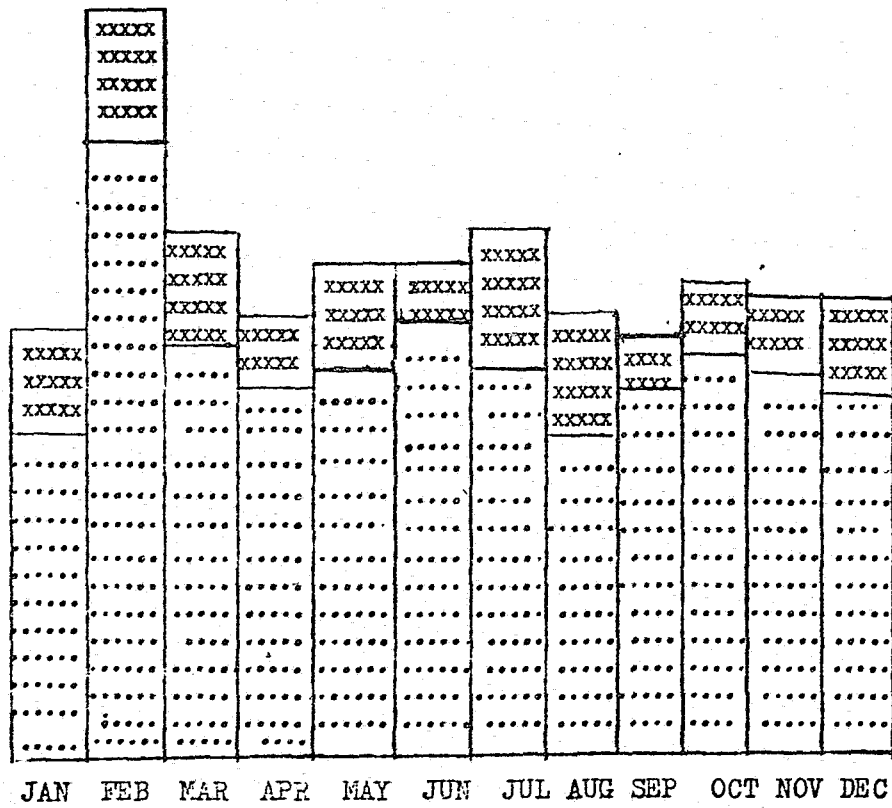
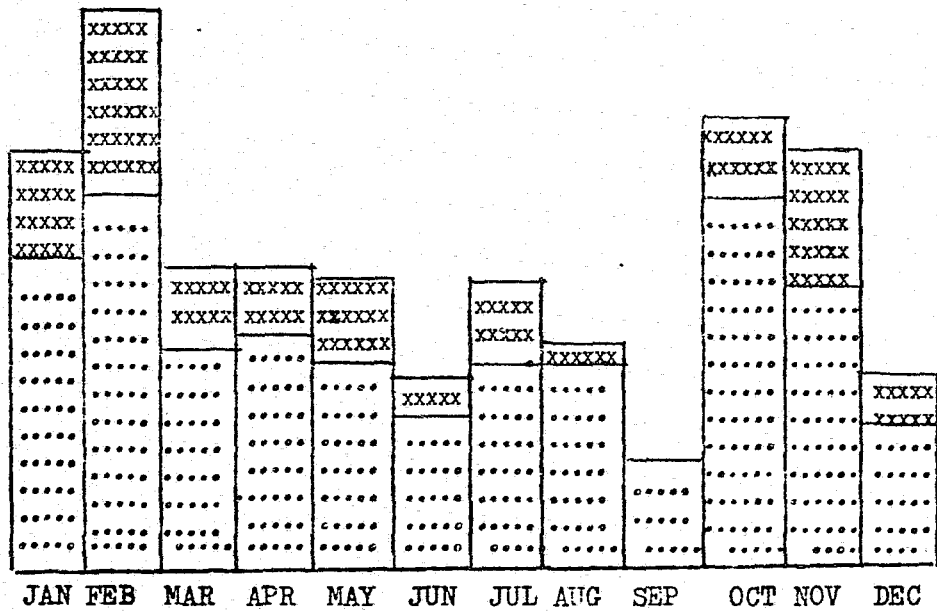
<u>Age</u>	<u>Orders</u>	
	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
17	70	1
18	78	3
19	75	2
20	68	1
21	47	1
22	45	3
23	27	
24	21	1
25	17	1
26	16	1
27	13	
28	5	
29	6	
30	9	
32	2	1
33	4	
34	5	1
35	3	
36	1	
37	5	2
38	4	
39	6	
40	2	1
41	2	
42	2	
43	2	
46	1	
48	1	
49	1	
50	1	
51		1
60	1	
67	1	
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	541	20
	<hr/>	<hr/>

AGE RANGE



1973

1974



APPENDIX 5

Previous convictions

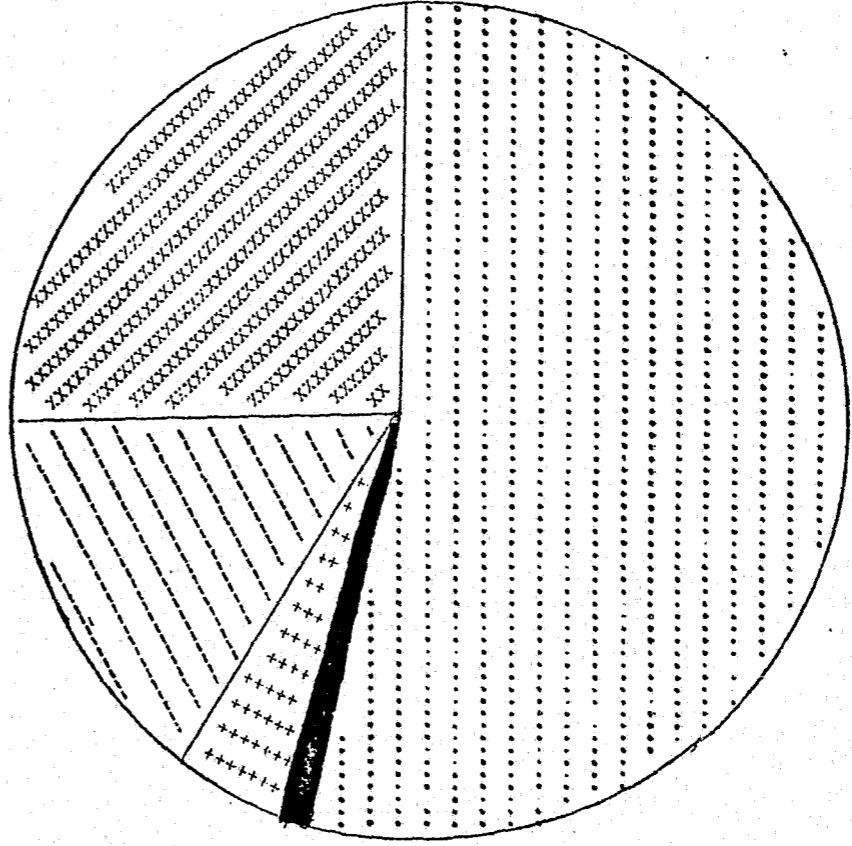
<u>Convictions</u>	<u>Persons</u>
Not yet known	1
None	47
1	72
2	81
3	78
4	67
5	47
6	50
7	24
8	25
9	17
10	20
11	11
12	7
14	1
15	2
16	4
18	4
19	2
20	1
22	2
30	1

561

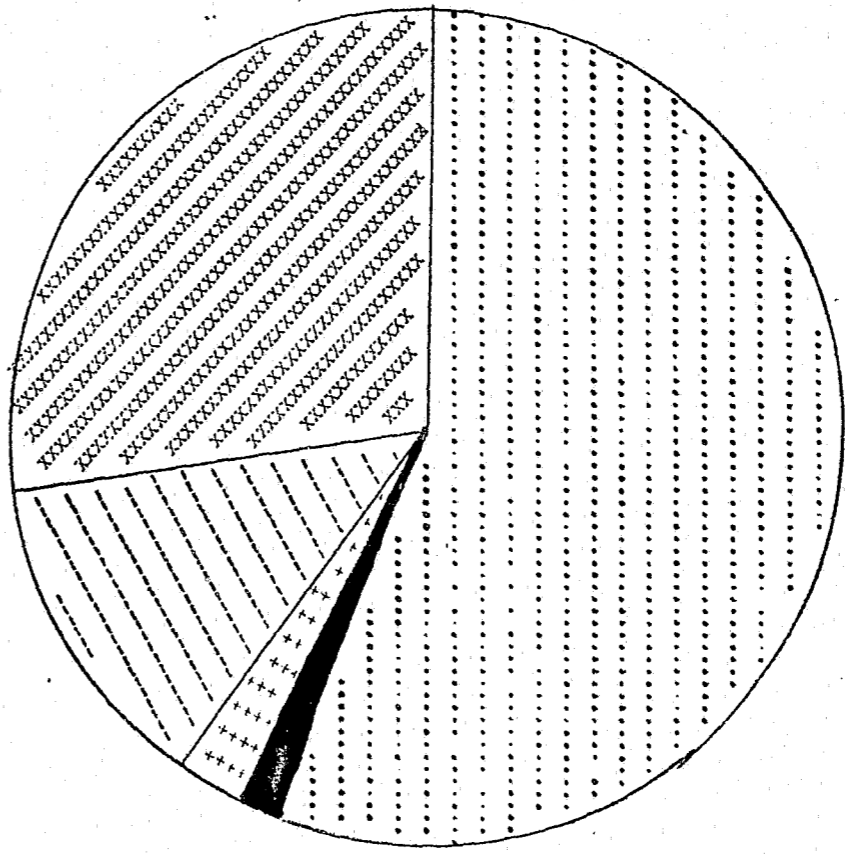
APPENDIX 6

Type of offence (most serious in each case)

Theft	194	
Dishonest handling	29	
Burglary	48	
Robbery	5	
Forgery	2	
Deception	14	
Suspected person	12	
Possession of forged notes	1	
	<hr/>	
	305	305
Assault	51	
Offensive weapon	15	
Criminal damage	12	
Arson	1	
Possession of firearms	1	
Threatening behaviour	4	
	<hr/>	
	84	84
Take and drive away	71	
Driving while disqualified	25	
No insurance	48	
Allow to be carried	5	
Dangerous driving	3	
Excess alcohol	1	
	<hr/>	
	153	153
Malicious telephone call (bomb threat)	1	
Soliciting	1	
Possession of drugs	15	
Breach of community service order	2	
	<hr/>	
	19	19



THEFT 119
 VIOLENCE 36
 MOTORING 50
 MISCELLANEOUS 1
 DRUGS 10



THEFT 187
 VIOLENCE 48
 MOTORING 103
 MISCELLANEOUS 2
 DRUGS 5



<u>Name of project</u>	<u>Nature of project</u>	<u>Nature of community service work</u>	<u>Number of persons involved</u>	<u>Supervised by</u>
Abbeyfield, Chiswick	Elderly women's home	Gardening	1	Warden
Abbeyfield, Clapham	Elderly women's home	Painting, gardening	3	Warden
Abbeyfield, Deptford	Elderly women's home	General assistance	1	Warden
Acton Women's Aid	House for battered wives	Gardening, general	4	Sessional supervisor
Addison Boys' Club, Hammersmith	Boys' Club	Painting	6	Supervisor
Age Concern, Lewisham	Old age pensioners' homes	Gardening, decorating	36	Supervisors
Albany, New Cross	Settlement	Pottery, workshop, ESN children, adventure playground	1	Administrator
Alexander Rose Day, Acton	Charity shop	Painting	4	Sessional supervisor
All Stars One Club, Fulham	Youth club	General duties	5	Club leader
Alver Bank Salvation Army, Clapham	Eventide home	Painting, gardening	1	Warden
Ashburton Youth Club, Battersea	Youth club	General duties	1	Club leader
Avenues Unlimited, Tower Hamlets	Adventure playground	General assistant to leader	1	Worker in charge
Barge Club, Isle of Dogs	Youth club	Barge reconstruction	6	Ancillary; later, worker in charge
Battersea Churches Trust	Unmarried mothers' accommodation	Cleaning	4	Sessional supervisor
Bemerton Street Adventure Playground, Islington	Adventure playground	Playground construction	2	Sessional supervisor
Bermondsey Adventure Playground	Adventure playground	Construction, assistance to leader	2	Leader in charge
Bishop Creighton House, Fulham	Community settlement	General	4	Warden
68 Bradmore Park Road, Hammersmith	Old age pensioners' home	Laying stones	2	Unsupervised
Bravington Road Project, Notting Hill Gate	Ex-prisoners accommodation	Painting	6	Sessional supervisor
19 Bridge Avenue, Hammersmith	Registered 'squat' premises	General	4	Organiser
Carlton Dene, Notting Hill Gate	Old people's home	General help with aged	1	Matron
Carter, Rev. F.H. Hackney	Community priest	Decorating premises of old people	1	Rev. F.H. Carter
Centre for Spastic Children, Cheyne Walk, Chelsea	Day centre for children	Portering and assistance with children	1	Worker in charge
Children's Neighbourhood Centre, Hammersmith	Community project	Decorating, general building, working with children	25	Supervisors and workers in charge
Chiswick Craftshop (closed February 1974)	Community service centre workshop	Repairs, wendy houses, painting etc.	4	Ancillary and sessional supervisor
Chiswick Women's Aid	House for 'battered wives'	General help, decorating	5	Warden
Christian Aid, Tower Hamlets	Voluntary hostel	Christmas catering	1	Worker in charge
Church Army Disabled Men's Hostel, Brixton	Hostel	Cleaning, gardening, etc.	2	Officer in charge, warden

Appendix 7 (contd).

Church Army Hostel, Putney	Hostel	General help	1	Warden
Church Army Training College, Blackheath	Residential training college	Gardening	1	Admin. officer
Clapham Youth Centre	Youth club	Painting, general help in club	1	Youth leader
The Club, Christchurch Hall	Probation officers' club for lonely clients	General help	1	Probation officer
The Coffee Pot, Old Street, Hackney	Probation officers' club	General help	2	Probation officer
Crossed Swords Youth Centre, Walworth, S.E.17	Youth club	Assistance to leader	1	Youth leader
Dalston and Salters Hall, Hackney	Baptist church hall	Decorating and repair	2	Minister
Dalston Methodist Mission Youth Club, Hackney	Youth club	Assisting leader	1	Minister
Dermody Road AP, Lewisham	Adventure playground	Assistance with children	1	Play-leader
Downs Baptist Church, Hackney	Baptist church hall	Maintenance and repair	1	Worker in charge
Ealing Women's Aid, West Ealing	House for 'battered wives'	Gardening, window cleaning	5	Staff
East End Mission, Tower Hamlets	Hostel for unmarried mothers and children	Decorating	9	Sessional supervisors
Evelyn Coyle Centre, Walworth	Day centre for mentally handicapped	General assistance and supervision	1	Leader in charge
Fairfield Community Playcentre, Camden	Adventure playground	Assisting play staff	1	Play leader
Feathers Club, Westminster	Adventure playground	Assisting play-leader	6	Social worker
Fellowship of St. Michael and All Angels, Tulse Hill	One-parent family home	Gardening, repairs and painting	7	Social worker in charge
First Stop, Shepherds Bush	Accommodation for ex-prisoners	Painting, repairs	1	Staff
Free Form, Dalston	Community association	General help	1	Agency
Friern Hospital, Barnet	Psychiatric hospital	Constructing aviary, rebuilding outer wall, decorating wards	22	Sessional supervisors
Glamis Road AP, Tower Hamlets	Adventure playground	Assisting play-leader	6	Worker in charge
282 Goldhawk Road, Shepherds Bush	Old people's home	General help, minor repairs, hairdressing	5	Matron
Gypsies Youth Centre, West Dulwich	Youth club	Painting, supervision, general assistance	1	Youth leader
Hackney Women's Aid	Battered wives group	Decorating hostel	2	Worker in charge
Haggerston Community Centre, Hackney	Community and tenants' association	Youth club help	3	Worker in charge

Appendix 7 (contd).

Halliwick Hospital, Barnet	Psychiatric hospital	Decorating wards	7	Sessional supervisors
Islington Play Association	Play-staff referral group	General help	1	Playground leader
Jewish Welfare Board, Hackney	Agency for elderly	Help with single elderly people	1	Social worker
Knights Youth Centre, Brixton Hill	Youth club	Assistance at jumble sale	1	Youth leader
Lambeth Meals on Wheels	Meals on wheels	Assistance with distribution	1	Worker in charge
Lambeth Welcare, Clapham	One-parent family home	Painting, gardening	1	Social worker in charge
Lansdowne Youth Centre, South Lambeth	Youth club	Repairs and supervision of equipment	1	Youth leader
Lewisham Park Youth Centre	Youth club	Painting and general assistance	1	Youth leader
Lewisham Seals	Swimming club for handicapped	General assistance, swimming instruction	1	Leader in charge
Lollard St AP, Kennington	Adventure playground	Assistance with children, supervision on trips out	1	Play-leader
London Association for the Blind, E. Dulwich	Residential hostel	Gardening	1	Warden
LOPWA, Lambeth	Old age pensioners homes	Gardening and decorating	21	Sessional supervisor
Lyndhurst Hall Youth Club, Camden	Youth club	Maintenance and organisational help	1	Worker in charge
Make Children Happy Shop, Hammersmith	Charity shop	Assistance in shop	2	Manageress
Martin Luther King AP, Islington	Adventure playground	Assistance to play-leader	1	Worker in charge
Masbro Road Playground, Kensington	Playground	Assisting leader	2	Play-leader
Michael Stewart House, Fulham	Home for elderly and handicapped	General assistance, hairdressing	3	Matron
Mother and Baby Club, Shepherds Bush	Afternoon club	General help	1	Supervisor
Multiple Sclerosis Society, Woking	Charity Gymkhana	Arena party	7	Sessional supervisor
National Association of Voluntary Hostels, Covent Garden	Charity accommodation	Painting	9	Sessional supervisor
Newland House, Fulham	Hostel	General assistance	1	Warden
Noah's Ark AP, Deptford	Adventure playground	Painting, repairs, assistance with children	4	Play-leader
North Lewisham Project, New Cross	Community relations	Painting and general assistance	1	Leader in charge
Old Street Project, Hackney	Probation officers' hostel for clients	Decorating	2	Probation officers
Paddington Boys' Hostel	Boys' hostel	General assistance	1	Warden
Peckham AP	Adventure playground	Assistance with children	1	Leader in charge
Pembroke AP, Walworth	Adventure playground	Assistance with children	1	Leader in charge

Appendix 7 (contd).

Penrose House, Islington	Ex-prisoners' hostels	Reconstruction and decorating	10	Sessional supervisors
Pop In (Age Concern tea house for OAPs)	Old age pensioners' meeting cafe	General assistance	4	Agency
PRA, Hackney	Psychiatric rehabilitation club	Decorating halls	4	Sessional supervisors
Rockingham Estate Playground, Southwark	Adventure playground	Assistance with children	2	Leader in charge
Roeampton Boys' Club, Shoreditch	Youth club	Organisation of club	1	Chairman
Royal London Aid Society Hostel for Ex-offenders	After-care hostel	Painting, plastering, laundry	4	Warden
St. Barnabas, Wandsworth	Church hall and grounds	General help	4	Vicar
St. Francis of Sales, Clapham	R.C. Church	Painting, repairs and general assistance	1	Priest in charge
St. George's AP, Tower Hamlets	Adventure playground	Assisting team	4	Secretary
St. George's Community Workshop, Tower Hamlets	Community workshop	Assisting youth leader	1	Community worker
St. James's Vicarage, Bermondsey	Church hall and grounds	Painting	1	Priest in charge
St. John's Hospital, Battersea	General hospital	Bagging and distributing coal to old age pensioners	3	Sessional supervisor
St. Martin's in the Field, W.C.1.	Decorating crypt	Painting	11	Supervisor
St. Mary's, Charlton	C. of E. Church	Gardening	1	Priest in charge
St. Matthew's, Brixton	Community centre	Plastering, moving furniture, general assistance	1	Leader in charge
St. Mungo Coal Project, Earls Court	Distributing coal to old age pensioners	Bagging and distributing coal	3	St. Mungo's
St. Mungo's Community Trust, S.W.1.	Night shelter	General assistance at shelter	8	Worker in charge
St. Mungo's, Lennox Building, Wandsworth	Residential accommodation	General duties	2	Sessional supervisor
St. Paul's Rectory, Deptford	Church rectory and crypt	Cleaning and general assistance	2	Vicar
St. Peter's, Battersea	Church hall and grounds	General assistance	3	Vicar
S.E. London Scout Centre, Dulwich	Weekend camp site	Repairs and general assistance	4	Scout warden
Shoreditch Park AP	Adventure playground	Assisting team	1	Secretary
Southwark CSS	OAPs' homes, Citizens' Advice Bureau, St. Luke's Church	Painting, repairs etc.	28	Supervisor
Space Structure Workshop, Woolwich	Educational structures	Workshop	1	Manager
Stockdale House, Camden	Bail hostel	Redecorating	5	Sessional supervisors
Streatham Youth Centre	Youth club	Painting and general assistance	2	Youth leader
Students' Community Housing, Camden	Community housing group	Reconstructing hostel	7	Students

Appendix 7 (contd).

Telegraph Hill Neighbourhood Council, New Cross	Neighbourhood council	Adventure playground, furniture store activity, general assistance	1	Leader in charge
Theatre Girls' Club, Greek Street, Soho	Christian Action hostel	Painting, general help	10	Supervisors
Time and Talents, Bermondsey	Neighbourhood council	Painting	2	Supervisor
Tower Hamlets S.S.	Elderly people referred by social services	Redecorating	1	Sessional supervisor
Visitors' Centre, Pentonville	Voluntary centre for visitors to H.M. Prison, Pentonville	General help	3	Worker in charge
Volunteer Organiser, Borough of Hammersmith	Providing volunteers	Redecorating, gardening, general	8	Sessional supervisors
Westbourne Workers' Partnership (Patchwork), Notting Hill	Short-life accommodation	Renovating	11	Supervisor
West Hampstead Action Community Ltd.	Community action	Renovating	4	Secretary
West Indian League, Peckham	Youth club	Painting, general activity	4	Youth leader
White City Y.C., Shepherds Bush	Youth club	General assistance in club	1	Leader in charge
Wives and Families, Brixton	Centre providing shelter and teas for visitors to H.M. Prison, Brixton	Assistance to leader	4	Volunteer in charge
Young Adventurers, Camden	Voluntary association for young people	Assistance in hostel	3	Worker in charge

APPENDIX 8

Reports from the regions, 1974

(i) South-East Region

The four boroughs comprising the south-east region - Lambeth, Southwark, Lewisham and Greenwich - cover an area of some 55 square miles with a population of over a million people.

At the beginning of 1974 in the whole of this area only seventeen people were working out their community service orders: eleven men in three supervised groups were involved in decorating or gardening for the elderly, and five men and one woman were working on other miscellaneous projects. Seven other men resident in the south-east were travelling to the west or north regions to do their community work.

With the appointment of a probation officer with specific responsibility for the south-east area a greater opportunity came of realising some of the large potential in the region for both group and individual projects. The slow beginning was in fact a distinct advantage since the scheme had taken root and was well publicised.

During 1974 eight supervised groups have operated in four boroughs. Some of these groups have worked on different projects each week or even, where gardening is concerned, on a number of gardens in one day. This involves some effort in checking the addresses, the work to be done and the equipment needed. It is perhaps in the greater variety of work and the frequent movement of groups from site to site that the south-east differs most from the other regions.

In organising group work considerable assistance has been given by local Committees of Age Concern, which have shown interest and enthusiasm for the scheme. One has held monthly meetings to discuss progress, possible projects and the more efficient use of resources. Another has contributed immensely by ensuring that work for the elderly was reviewed

beforehand and arranging for materials and equipment to be available. Throughout most of the year four petrol-driven lawn mowers were operated each weekend by the work parties and well over a hundred gardens have been maintained. One group has worked on a community project, developing and extending a centre for public information and advice. Emergency operations have included removals, the preparation of a hostel and the provision of accommodation for the homeless. Another group has converted and repainted a shop for use as a café and meeting place for pensioners. The work done has involved a high standard of skill in building, rewiring, glazing and decorating.

Much credit for the groups' work has been due to the supervisors' ability to harness and adapt the skills or interests of the offenders. The different backgrounds, skills and personalities of the supervisors have brought their own variety to the characteristics and work of the groups. The monthly meeting of supervisors has produced lively and constructive contributions to the scheme. The appointment of a supervisor who had himself overcome the personal difficulties shared by his group has proved successful. This use of an ex-offender to supervise a group is a development that indicates new and positive potentialities of the community service scheme.

Offenders working as individuals have been placed on projects that met their particular interests, such as working with handicapped young people. One offender who had a life-saving certificate was placed with a swimming club to assist and instruct handicapped people. An older man with the appropriate experience carried out decorating, unsupervised, for the elderly. After his order was completed he continued to assist the agency responsible and left his telephone number with those he had assisted so that he could be summoned for such emergencies as blown fuses and burst pipes. His successful work on the scheme paved the way for others to be involved in similar work. The work of individuals in youth clubs and adventure

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playgrounds has brought a good response; some offenders are still working on these projects voluntarily after completion of their orders. Work has been done on several churches, mainly in ground clearing, in 'eventide' homes and one-parent family homes and for neighbourhood councils. Three women have completed community work in the wives and families group at a prison; one of these has asked to be put on the reserve list of volunteers for emergency work.

During 1974 36 new projects have been opened. Some have come through direct contact with organisations or through probation officers, and in one or two cases projects have been suggested by offenders who have been involved with youth clubs, etc. The majority however have been found by following up lines already established by the centre and by personal contacts. It is not envisaged that there will be any shortage of projects in the future. On the contrary, new areas of constructive and useful community work are being opened which should cope with the kind of expansion being sought for.

During the year 55 offenders completed their community service orders in the region. Many of the offenders have appreciated and benefited from the opportunity of doing useful and interesting work, and have been able to make a good relationship with their supervisor and with the people they have met in working on their projects. There has been a steady accumulation of valuable experience in such matters as the matching of clients' skills to particular community tasks, and in coping with their travel and work problems.

The year has been one of progress and steady development. The distance of the region from the centre at Chiswick caused some imbalance in the distribution of projects, the most distant borough, Greenwich, having suffered most in this regard. With the establishment of a south-east regional office this situation should show a rapid improvement.

(ii) West Region

With the division of Inner London into three areas, the west region assumed responsibility for the boroughs of Wandsworth, Kensington and Chelsea, Hammersmith and Westminster.

Work was fairly readily available in the area and it was possible to offer work near their homes to most of those on community service orders. Equal numbers of men and women have acted as supervisors of groups. It was found possible to establish three groups in close proximity to one another in the West End. This made oversight and control a simpler matter and enabled people missing from their projects to be visited for an explanation on the same day.

One project involved work on two houses which were being converted for the accommodation of ex-prisoners and people who had been before the courts. This led to some involvement with local government offices and other agencies and an increased local interest in community service work. Other projects were found through probation officers who, when making referrals, suggested possible placements for their clients. This led to some useful development of contacts, particularly with youth clubs.

Offenders working on community service have been well received in homes for the elderly, where they have been of particular help in tasks such as alterations to shelves, hangers etc which add to the comfort of people unable to reach upwards or move about freely. However, more specialised help for both men and women was provided on this project since two hairdressers were available in the group. It is hoped in future to place more people in projects working with elderly, handicapped and young people as contacts with the relevant institutions are increased. Meanwhile groups for painting and other tasks continue to be established as their services are requested. Organisations asking for help have been numerous

and some have made considerable efforts to ensure that the men and women whose aid has been offered have been constructively used.

Among less conventional tasks may be mentioned the provision of the ring party for the weekend for a gymkhana in aid of a well known charity.

(iii) North Region

The boroughs included in the region are Camden, Islington, Hackney and Tower Hamlets.

A third of the offenders placed on community service during 1973 were still available for work at the beginning of 1974. During 1974 a further 101 persons were added and placed in 52 new projects. The number of failures, 18, was the same as in 1973, but represented a lower percentage of those placed on community service. Most of the failures were due to further offences rather than to a lack of response to the scheme.

Some who seemed at first unlikely to succeed were re-interviewed and reallocated successfully to more suitable projects. One young man originally placed in the centre workshop (now closed) was subsequently placed in his local community centre workshop where he completed his hours teaching photography.

In the north region the aim has been to place emphasis on personalised projects. Where offenders have been involved in groups with a supervisor they have been allocated to projects where interaction with the community has been possible. They have not only provided a tangible service but have grown through the relationships they have been able to form with the recipients of their help. Notable examples of this have been provided by groups involved in different projects at two mental hospitals where they have come into direct contact with patients.

Two groups converted an old summer house into an aviary for geriatric patients. The materials were provided by the league of friends of the hospital. A local school supplied budgerigars, canaries, etc., and continues to look after them. The aviary was opened by the oldest inhabitant, a grand-daughter of the poet Shelley, on her 102nd birthday, with the local press in attendance.

One group travelled to Wales to repair a holiday home for deprived children, which had been damaged by storms. Another decorated a hostel for unmarried mothers who, in the opinion of the superintendent, also gained by the opportunity of forming friendships with the offenders. A further group of four did an estimated £2000 worth of decorating at a day centre for ex-mental patients for a cost of £160 in materials. The patients showed their appreciation by supplying the workers with cups of tea and ham rolls.

During the year other groups have constructed an adventure playground and completely renovated a house, now in use, for ten homeless ex-prisoners. Several hospital wards have been repainted at no cost to the hospital budget. Another house was made ready for homeless single persons, and further accommodation for the homeless offender will be ready for occupation in 1975.

By the end of the year four supervised groups were still working in therapeutic establishments, providing help for the mentally or physically handicapped.

The type of projects found for community service reflects the predominantly built-up nature of the northern area. Few houses have gardens of any size and so far it has not been possible to start the gardening projects that have proved successful in the south. However, enquiries have been pushed forward along these lines and it is hoped to commence some projects of this nature in the spring.

The majority of workers have been placed individually in a variety of situations, for example at adventure playgrounds, youth clubs or centres and old people's homes; providing domestic service, working on churches of all denominations, hospital visiting, helping in community projects, cooking, decorating houses, providing training in boxing and football and working on various probation service projects to provide facilities and accommodation for the lonely or needy. One unforeseen result of the successful use of community service is that some projects are no longer available for community service workers because the offenders, having completed their hours, have remained there in a voluntary capacity.

The office of the north region was opened on 1st December 1974 at 199 Arlington Road, N.W.1. (Tel: 01-485 8383). The general good-will shown to the venture and the assistance given by the volunteer supervisors and the community at large have formed a vital contribution to the achievements of the scheme. It is hoped that the location of the regional office in the area of operation will further improve the service to the client and the community in the coming year.

The search proceeds constantly for imaginative new projects which will be both fulfilling for the offender and beneficial to the community. However, emphasis must still be placed on the necessity for selection as to suitability and the careful matching of client to task, with reallocation where this is necessary and ongoing liaison with supervisors, agencies and probation officers.

It can be said that both the community and the agencies providing work in the north region have accepted community service without reservation. The courts and probation staff have been equally enthusiastic and the regional centre is confident that it can provide suitable work in 1975 for a further 200 offenders.

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