

# sacro SANCT

May 2008

SAFEGUARDING COMMUNITIES – REDUCING OFFENDING

## Promoting safe and cohesive communities

**IN 2008**, Sacro has secured additional funding to create a new Supervised Bail Service in the Highlands, and for a 'spot purchase' Community Mediation Service in the Western Isles. This is in addition to significant funding awarded to Supervised Bail in Ayrshire. Where funding has been cut following the removal of ring-fenced money for non core services, Sacro, its Board and staff are committed, where viable, to minimise the loss of staff through redeployment.

In line with our mission to promote safe and cohesive communities by reducing conflict and offending, Sacro now also leads the way in conflict resolution work in Scottish schools in addition to its core services in criminal justice, youth justice and community mediation. The schools work is in great demand and there is a need for trained staff to extend this schools work across Scotland. A bid for further funding to address this situation is currently being considered by the Scottish Government. In addition, Sacro's

expertise in youth justice continues to be sought by local authorities across the country.

At our Annual Conference in March, we had guest speakers Kenny MacAskill MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Justice, and Julius Lang, Technical Director of the Center for Court Innovation in New York speaking on the theme of community sentences. The 120 delegates were involved in a lively and thought-provoking event. Sacro's view – that community sentences should play a key role in Scotland's offender management strategy, leaving custodial sentences as the disposal for dangerous offenders only, was in tune with the Cabinet Secretary's message. It gained great support from the delegates as the electronic voting system was able to confirm.

As always, Sacro welcomes your comment on any of the articles included in this publication.

**Susan Matheson**, Chief Executive, Sacro.

## Prisoners' Children Give Service a Boost

**THANKS** are due to the Michael, Katie and Sarah, three children who have visited relatives in prison using Sacro's Travel Service and have now designed a poster to advertise the facility to others.

They entered a competition run by Sacro and The Salvation Army to highlight the Travel Service which provides transport to Scottish prisons and the State Hospital at Carstairs. This service plays a vital role in enabling prisoners, patients and their families and friends to maintain contact. This helps sustain family relationships and facilitates the prisoners' re-integration into the community on release.

Every year, over 250 people make use of the Travel Service, which provides transport from Edinburgh to Carstairs, Glenochil, Polmont and Cornton Vale. Visits to other Scottish prisons can be arranged for those with individual needs.

## Sacro Travel Service



The Sacro Travel Service provides regular services from Edinburgh to:

- > Carstairs
- > Glenochil
- > Polmont
- > Cornton Vale

Visits to all other Scottish prisons can be arranged and families and individuals with special needs can be also be accommodated.

Thanks to Katie, Michael and Sarah for their help with this poster.



For further information and bookings, please contact Sacro on:

**0131 622 7500**

**sacro**  
SAFEGUARDING COMMUNITIES – REDUCING OFFENDING

## Significant Award for Ayrshire Bail Service

Sacro is pleased to announce it has been granted a significant funding package from the Ayrshire Criminal Justice Partnership – which covers North, South and East Ayrshire – to expand the capacity of the Supervised Bail Services already provided to all courts in these areas. The service is designed to reduce unnecessary remand, minimise the risk of reoffending while on bail and provide the courts with reports to assist in disposal decisions.

Referrals to the Sacro service come through Kilmarnock and Ayr Sheriff courts having been assessed for suitability by court social workers. Those eligible for the service include people at risk of having bail refused, young people under 18 years of age and all females appearing on summary who are at risk of having bail refused.

Shirley Findlay, Service Manager in Kilmarnock said "We are delighted about this new funding. Supervised Bail can be an extremely effective alternative to custody. The number of people using our service has grown over the years and we can see that the support given to them really makes a difference to their immediate circumstances and in the long term, to their ability to lead crime free lives. The service, therefore, contributes to making Scotland safer.

"Sacro is able to support them with accommodation, employment, training, literacy, numeracy and overall health issues. The alternative is a spell in prison where they will be cut off from their families and communities, lose employment and accommodation, making it so much more difficult for them to rehabilitate successfully on their return".

Sacro provides Supervised Bail Services in Lothian and Borders CJA's, Glasgow CJA, South West Scotland CJA and Lanarkshire CJA.

For further information, please refer to *The Case for Bail Supervision* written by Sacro's Research Officer, Steve Kirkwood and Criminal Justice Advisor, Donald Dickie. The document is available from the research section of Sacro's website at [www.sacro.org.uk](http://www.sacro.org.uk).



## A Silver Celebration

**25 YEARS** is a good number to devote to an organisation that you believe is making a difference to society and improving the quality of peoples' lives.

One of Sacro's employees, Jackie Rae, has done just that and we are proudly celebrating her achievement.

The Sacro she joined in 1983 was a very different organisation to the one she is now part of but its mission is still much the same: to promote safe and cohesive communities by reducing conflict and offending. Jackie has always been proud to work towards this and Sacro is proud of her!

Today, Sacro has a turnover of over £10 million. We have over 15,000 service users across the country and over 400 full, part-time and sessional staff. The organisation operates in Criminal Justice; Restorative Justice and Reparation; Community Mediation and Schools Work.

For over 30 years, Sacro has achieved a great deal by re-enforcing its proposals for increasing community safety to politicians, the media and in turn the public – proposals always supported by real evidence and thorough research.

It goes without saying that loyal employees such as Jackie are essential to the success that we achieve.



## Noise Action Week: May 19–24 2008

**EDINBURGH COMMUNITY MEDIATION** deals with over 400 referrals of neighbour disputes each year and over 50% of these disputes are concerned with noise issues. For this reason, the organisation is supporting Noise Action Week, a council-led initiative to encourage people to take a more responsible attitude to their domestic noise.

Christine Schoeck at Edinburgh Community Mediation says, "Unfortunately, some people find it difficult to talk to their neighbours when problems first start and the situation can blow up out of all proportion. Most people are not really anti-social; they just don't realise the effect their noise or actions are having on others. Mediation is an ideal way for everyone to be able to sit down and talk to each other about what has been going on and then find a practical solution to the problem for the future".

Community Mediation provides a safe and structured environment for disputing neighbours to engage in dialogue in order to reach a suitable solution to their problems, assisted by trained mediators. This successful service helps neighbours to resolve differences and live peacefully side by side.

For further information please contact:  
Edinburgh Community Mediation Service on **0131 557 2101**.

# You Too Can Take Advantage of Sacro's Learning and Development Opportunities



Sacro's Learning and Development Service is a highly valued resource.

A number of our key learning and development opportunities are now available to external agencies and can be tailored to suit requirements. Experienced subject specialists develop and provide these opportunities in a venue chosen by the client. Alternatively, delegates can travel to Glasgow city centre to use the Sacro facilities at Central Chambers, 109 Hope Street. (five minute walk from Queen Street station and opposite central station).

The opportunities have been designed to enable staff to develop knowledge and skills to enhance performance, address learning needs and meet personal development objectives. Sacro employees have benefited greatly from this resource and new opportunities are continually being developed to meet the needs of an ever changing society.

Hire of the event room at Central Chambers is also available for a nominal daily charge of £100 to organisations requiring city centre meeting facilities.

Training available to external parties includes: *Working With Offending Behaviour, Knowledge and Skills; Anti-discriminatory Practice; Youth Justice Knowledge and Skills.*

Please call 0141 847 0738 to discuss requirements.

## 'New Look' Website

Sacro's redesigned website went live at the end of February. The site was completely rebuilt in-house and has seen a remarkable 800% increase in average site traffic since its launch.

Information is now quick and easy to find on all services and links to a host of relevant partner organisations have been greatly improved.

The material is updated regularly, enabling users to find current information on work in youth and criminal justice, community mediation, work with schools, research and case studies.

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



## Restorative Justice Expert Moves On

Sacro is sad to say goodbye to Derek Brookes, an international pioneer of Restorative Justice who has worked in Scotland for the last seven years. Derek has provided a constant source of support and guidance in restorative justice matters to the Scottish Government, the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration, the police, the Scottish Prison Service and many others.

Derek has returned to Australia where he will continue to work in this field. Derek's contribution was valued enormously and he leaves Scotland an important legacy. Sacro is pleased that his expertise remains with the organisation in the staff he trained, his research and documentation.



## Crime, Punishment and The Media: A Conversation

**OUR RELATIONSHIP** with the media has always been of great importance to us. With this in mind, we have teamed up with the Glasgow School of Social Work and Professor Alec Spencer of Stirling University to hold an event entitled, *Crime, Punishment and The Media: A Conversation* in Edinburgh on Thursday 15 May.

Guest speakers in addition to Professor Spencer include Brian McNair, Professor of Journalism at Strathclyde University on the subject of *Crime, Punishment and News in a Changing Media World*. In the afternoon, Magnus Linklater will address delegates under the title, *'If It Bleeds, It Leads – Is This Still True?'*

Alec Spencer will cover *Rethinking Prison Issues*.

The event is designed to be informal and encourage discussion and debate. Those invited include reports, editors, and journalists, as well as key representatives from criminal justice agencies. We want to hear from both sides how to work better together and how to ensure accurate and informative coverage of criminal justice issues.

Lessons learned as a result of this 'Conversation' will be covered in the next issue of *Sacrosanct*.

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## Research 2008

**RECENT** research documents produced by Sacro include:

*The Case for Bail Supervision* – co-authors, Steve Kirkwood, Sacro Research Officer and Donald Dickie, Criminal Justice Advisor.

*Evidencing the Impact of Criminal Justice Services on re-offending*. Written by Steve Kirkwood.

These, along with many other valuable research documents are available from the Sacro website.

## Event Calendar Highlights

➤ **Circles of Support and Accountability for Released Sex Offenders in Canada – an Evaluation.**

➤ **Thursday 19 June 2008**

➤ **University of Strathclyde,  
76 Southbrae Drive, Glasgow.**

Sacro has long supported the introduction of Circles of Support into Scotland. We are now keenly awaiting an announcement from the Scottish Government, due in May, in response to a report on Circles produced by the Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research. Sacro is supporting the above event with guest speaker Robin Wilson from the Florida Civil Commitment Centre.

If you are interested in attending please contact:  
[lisa.sage@strath.ac.uk](mailto:lisa.sage@strath.ac.uk)

➤ **Sacro Welcomes  
Rt. Hon. Henry McLeish**

➤ **Tuesday 7 October 2008**

➤ **Playfair Library, Old College,  
University of Edinburgh.**

Sacro is delighted that The Right Honourable Henry McLeish has accepted an invitation to address our Annual Lecture in October.



As Chair of the Scottish Prison Commission, Mr McLeish will share his views on the Commission's report, and recommendations for the future, which will have been published earlier.

The event will take place at 5.30pm in the Edinburgh University Playfair Library, Old College on Edinburgh's South Bridge. Please check website [www.sacro.org.uk](http://www.sacro.org.uk) for further details of the event nearer the time.

The Scottish Prison Commission's remit is to look at the purpose and impact of imprisonment in contemporary Scotland. The Commission is holding public debates to allow you to have your say on whether you think prison is the right place for the majority of Scottish offenders.

➤ **Dundee (19 May): Marryat Hall.**

➤ **Edinburgh (20 May): Netherbow Theatre (Sacro's Chief Executive will be on the panel).**

➤ **Glasgow (27 May): Jeffrey Room, Mitchell Library.**

➤ **Aberdeen (28 May): Kings Auditorium, Kings College Conference Centre.**

➤ **Inverness (29 May): Town House.**

All events will start at 6:30 in the evening.

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