

Report to the Bute and Cowal Community Planning Group

1.0 The purpose of this report is to clarify the role of Unpaid Work, identify its current structure in Bute and Cowal and illustrate the types of work being undertaken by squads of offenders in the local community.

2.0 Background

2.1 The introduction of Community Payback Orders (which replaced Community Service and Probation Orders) in February 2011 has resulted in a slight increase in offenders receiving Unpaid Work as either a sentence in its own right or as part of a more complex sentence run in conjunction with other requirements.

2.2 Unpaid Work Requirements can be imposed by the Court on 2 levels

Level 1 – between 20 and 100 hours to be completed in 3 months

Level 2 – between 101 and 300 hours to be completed within a maximum of 6 months (although the court may stipulate a different period of time).

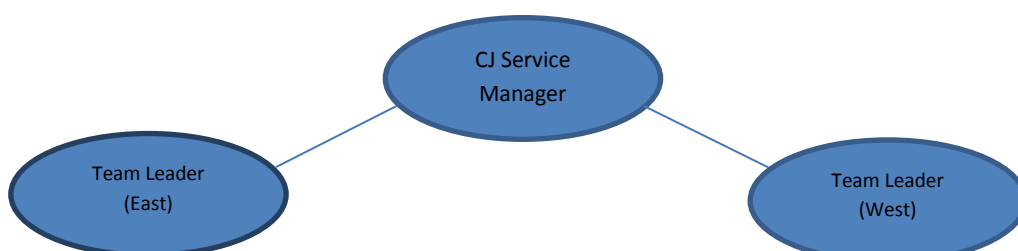
2.3 As with its predecessor Community Service, Unpaid Work must

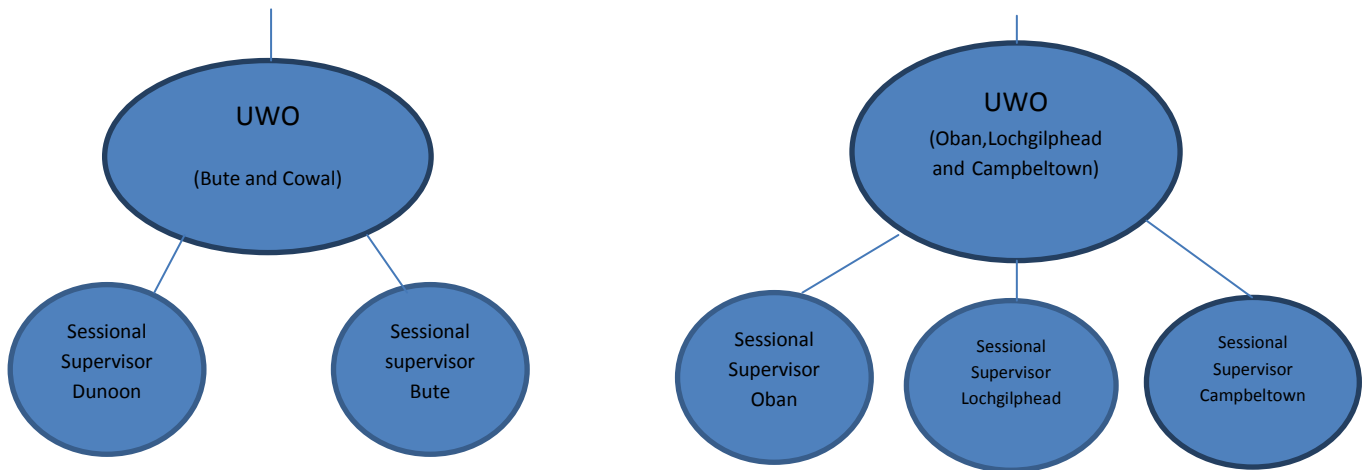
- benefit the local community;
- be aimed at not-for-profit organisations and charities;
- not take away paid work from others; and
- costs of materials must be supplied by the beneficiary

3.0 Current Structure

3.1 At the end of March 2012 the Criminal Justice Management Team completed an exercise to restructure Unpaid Work across Argyll and Bute and two Unpaid Work Officers (along with a pool of sessional supervisors) were recruited to post.

3.2 At present our two Unpaid Work officers are situated in Lochgilphead (Covering Oban, Lochgilphead and Campbeltown) and Dunoon (covering Cowal and Bute).





the role of the new unpaid work officer is quite complex and involves holding cases, working squads, enforcing orders for non-compliance and developing relationships with community agencies. The role of the sessional workers is to support the officers by taking out squads of offenders to carry out their hours. The Unpaid Work Office has no line management responsibility to the Sessional Worker.

4.0 Bute and Cowal - Squads

- 4.1** Since our restructure in March 2012 Bute and Cowal have operated 5 work squads each week, 3 in Dunoon and 2 on Bute. In recent months however, due to an increased need in the area we have added to our Dunoon capacity to include a Friday work squad.
- 4.2** We operate on the basis of a maximum of 1 supervisor to 5 individuals on squad at any given time. Each offender on an Unpaid Work requirement works for approximately 7 hours in a day undertaking a variety of tasks detailed below.
- 4.3** In essence therefore in any one week we have 30 offenders working and 210 hours per week of work being completed. Of course these figures can fluctuate and are dependent on factors such as the weather, compliance of the squad members and availability of sessional staff.
- 4.4** Whilst it is not the intention of Unpaid work to undertake tasks that should be completed by paid workers it is interesting to note that if our squads work to capacity and were paid employees on the average minimum wage (approximately £5.50 per hour as we work with individuals who are aged 16+) they would have contributed approximately £1155 worth of labour to the local communities each week.

5.0 Bute and Cowal – Agency placements

- 5.1** On occasion and if the offenders risk permits, an individual may be placed within an agency setting and supervised by that agency directly. This is an area of our work that we continue

to try to develop but at present have had reasonable success in placing offenders in Charity Shops, Residential Homes for the elderly, Local charities such as the Help project and Local community Trusts. We are currently developing links with the Kilfinan Community Trust, Ardentenny Walled Garden and Women's Aid. Such placements enable us to offer a better quality of placement to some of our offenders who match the criteria, giving them more opportunity to complete their hours whilst gaining experience of the work place.

6.0 Types of Work Undertaken by Unpaid Work squads Bute and Cowal

- Beach Cleaning – Throughout the area including Toward, Dunoon, Loch Eck, Tighnabruaich, Strachur, Kilmun, Blairmore and Ardentenny
- Gardening – Working with ACHA and Fyne Homes we identify vulnerable residents and on a rota basis undertake domestic gardening. We also clear weeds from foot paths road edges. Examples of this included the clearance of weeds from the footpaths at Blairmore and the strimming of road side grass in Kames and Tighnabruaich
- Furniture removal – for vulnerable persons only. Each case is assessed on its own merits.
- Path Clearance – Bishops Fairy Glen and other woodland areas.
- Winter weather support – gritting pathways. Supporting the elderly and vulnerable in their homes. Some winter snow clearance.
- Decorating – Examples of work undertaken include the painting of Dunoon stadium railings, Tighnabruaich waterfront railings and various village halls such as Strachur and Lochgoilhead.
- Woodwork and Joinery – The creation of raised beds, school play equipment and historically even the design and building of doll's houses for the local hospice.
- Litter picking throughout the region.

6.1 This list is not exhaustive and we are always on the lookout for new ideas and projects. We would welcome any suggestions from the Community Councils and look forward to forging strong links in the future.

To make suggestions for potential Unpaid Work Placements please visit <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/forms/consultation-unpaid-work>

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