



BM

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

3 October 1984

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your letter of 2 October. Though her visit to the "Drop-in" centre in Liverpool 8 was very brief, it nevertheless provided her with a valuable insight into some of the problems of the area, particularly drug abuse.

(Andrew Turnbull)

David Mathieson, Esq.

Merseyside Probation Service

Burlington House
South Wing
Crosby Road North
Liverpool L22 0PJ
Tel: 051-920 9201

After Office Hours: 051-928 9493

Chief Probation Officer: David Mathieson

Our ref. DAM/MB

Your ref.

2 October 1984

Rt Hon Mrs Margaret Thatcher MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
LONDON

R3

Dear Annie Minister,

I understand that earlier today you paid a short impromptu visit to our "Drop-in" centre in Liverpool 8.

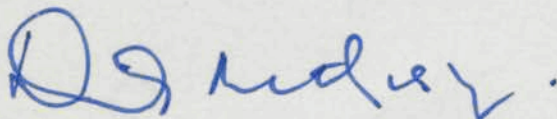
I am sorry that, due to the extemporary nature of your visit, it was not possible for me to be present to receive you and Mr Patrick Jenkin. I am confident, however, that you were indeed well received by those who were present.

In fact, this particular "Drop-in" centre is still in the course of preparation. It will be so important in this particular part of Liverpool - where unemployment and other social problems are particularly high. On the basis of our experience in other parts of Merseyside, we are hoping that the availability of this centre will prove beneficial in the interests of crime reduction and crime prevention.

You may be particularly interested to know that some of the persons whom you met earlier today are "Community Assistants". With the assistance of finance from the Manpower Services Commission, the Merseyside Probation Service is able to employ on temporary contracts local people as community assistants. Many of them are black and ex-offenders - and our experience is that they serve as a valuable link between authority and the community.

Finally, may I thank you very much indeed for the interest which you showed personally in our work. I am sure that the Home Office will be able to provide you with any further information because the Probation Inspectorate there are fully in the picture.

Yours sincerely



David Mathieson
Chief Probation Officer

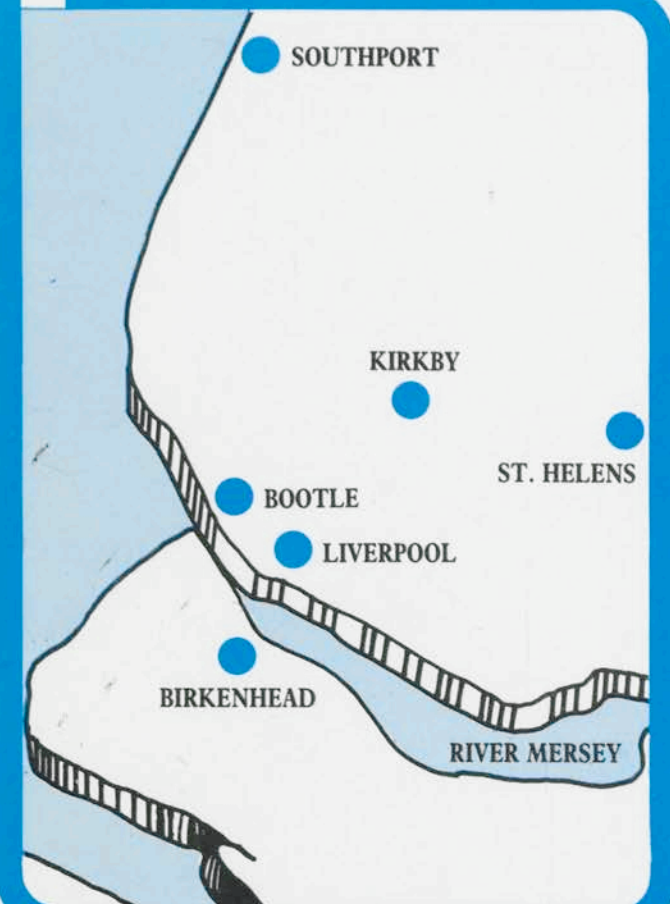
FURTHER DETAILS

If you would like to know more about the Probation Service, either locally or nationally, please contact:

**David Mathieson,
Chief Probation Officer,
Burlington House,
(4th Floor/South Wing),
Crosby Road North,
Waterloo,
Liverpool L22 0PJ,
Merseyside**

**Telephone: 051-920 9201 (day time)
051-928 9493 (after hours)**

Merseyside Probation Service



Merseyside Probation Service

is administered by a Probation Committee representing Magistrates from all parts of the County. The Chief Probation Officer is responsible to that Committee.

There are 28 local Probation Offices throughout Merseyside serving the communities in which they are located.

The Probation Service provides a social work service for 8 Magistrates' Courts, the Crown Courts and Divorce Court. It also staffs the Probation Department in Liverpool Prison, Probation Hostels and a Bail Hostel.

Probation Officers work with offenders of all ages. They provide reports on offenders to assist the Courts to determine the most appropriate sentence. Together with ancillary staff and volunteers, who are members of the public, they provide community based supervision.

Probation Officers not only work with offenders but also serve in the Domestic and Divorce Courts helping with family difficulties. Probation Officers are particularly involved in decisions concerning custody and access of children.

Some people get into trouble because of mental illness, personality problems, drink or drugs. The Probation Service works with other agencies to overcome these problems.

Probation Orders, for adults, and Supervision Orders, for those under 17 years of age, require offenders to comply with the conditions of a Court Order. In administering the Order, Probation Officers supervise offenders for a specified period.

If an offender receives a custodial sentence, the Probation Officer keeps in touch with him and his family during the sentence. Some offenders are discharged subject to conditions and must report to a Probation Officer; others do not have conditions on release, and choose to maintain contact voluntarily.

Community Service is undertaken by offenders who are ordered by the Court to work in their spare time for the benefit of the Community. Work varies from improving the environment, to helping the aged, children and the disabled.

There are a number of Day Centres in Merseyside where offenders go as a condition of a Probation Order. There they learn practical and social skills. They are encouraged to develop self-confidence and a capacity to work with others.

Other voluntary Day Centres provide advice, information and companionship.

Bail and Probation Hostels provide accommodation for the homeless or when there are difficulties at home. Offenders can be required to live at a hostel because of a Court Order or whilst on bail.

Activities are organised in order that offenders might learn other skills and experience new situations. They are encouraged to develop self-reliance and new abilities. Education Groups, arts' and craft groups, motor projects, and many more activities can open up new horizons.

No Probation Officer can perform his or her duties effectively without adequate administrative and clerical support. The clerical officer is an important member of the team. The administrative unit has a whole range of tasks including personnel, supplies, buildings and special projects.

