

## **PQ32 Editorial**

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# WELCOME TO PROBATION QUARTERLY

## PQ32 EDITORIAL



**Jake Phillips**  
Editor, Probation Quarterly

It has been three years since I took over as editor of *Probation Quarterly*. In my first editorial – written just before unification – I said that it would take time for probation to recover from TR and that workload issues would likely persist for some time. It is perhaps no surprise – if somewhat depressing – that I could write a very similar editorial now as I did back then. The system surrounding probation has continued to creak, especially in relation to the increasingly overcrowded prison estate. This has put even more pressure on the Probation Service through the early release of prisoners. Thus, despite efforts to grow the workforce even more pressure is being put on probation staff. There is already some worrying evidence about the effect of this in terms of high recall rates and examples of people who pose a high risk of harm being released from prison at short notice, and with inadequate release planning. The Government's response to this has been a 'reset' by which sentences being served in the community will – for most – effectively end at the two-thirds point. This issue of PQ starts by trying to make sense of what this means for probation. I am grateful to members of the Probation Institute's [Academic Advisory Network](#) who have quickly responded to a request from myself to analyse the reset from their own particular area of expertise.

The remainder of the issue includes a range of articles focusing on different areas of probation practice, development and innovation. We start with an article that summarises the recent exhibition that was curated by HMPPS and has toured exhibition spaces across England and Wales in the last year. We then hear from Janet Carter, a retired barrister who provides her view on what needs to happen to prevent probation from becoming increasingly overloaded. We have two articles which deal with the issue of neurodiversity: in the first, User Voice provide an overview of their research on neurodivergent peoples' experiences of criminal justice and in the second Roger Broadbent discusses the empowerment passport for people who need extra support with communication. Two articles focus on issues of gender: one article on women who give birth in prison and recent related policy as well as an overview from Matt Tidmarsh of his article on the feminisation of probation. Finally, we look to the US where we hear from Florida about two initiatives being developed there to encourage engagement and compliance.

As ever, I hope you enjoy reading this issue and please do get in touch with any thoughts or suggestions for contributions.