

Our commitment to you

Reducing crime and the fear of crime

Nottinghamshire's Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) strives to provide an outstanding prosecution service for the people who live, work and visit the county.



The CPS continues to make significant contributions to reducing the gap between the number of crimes recorded and the number of crimes brought to justice. We work with partners in the criminal justice system to reduce crime and the fear of crime within our communities.

This leaflet helps you to find out more about the Crown Prosecution Service in Nottinghamshire.

If you would like more information about Nottinghamshire's CPS, or if you would like to contact us to give feedback on the service we provide, please feel free to write to us at: 2 King Edward Court, King Edward Street, Nottingham, NG1 1EL or telephone on: 0115 852 3300.

**Kate Carty, Chief Crown Prosecutor,
CPS Nottinghamshire**

Dealing with domestic violence

On average, Nottinghamshire Police deals with 1,263 incidences of domestic violence per month. Since May 2006, Nottingham Magistrates' Court has held dedicated domestic violence courts. In a groundbreaking move the county's CPS prosecutors will work with trained probation officers, voluntary workers and police officers to identify, track and risk assess domestic violence cases. Extra support will be given to domestic violence victims and the agencies will share information better so that more offenders are brought to justice.

The domestic violence courts will be held at Nottingham Magistrates' Court on Wednesday mornings each week. The resources of the police, the CPS, the Probation Service, Social Services and voluntary agencies will all be available at the same time at the same place.

Victims will be supported throughout their case by an accredited Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA), who offers victims one point of contact during and after their case.

Prosecuting hate crime for you

Nottinghamshire's CPS operates on behalf of the entire community and we take hate crime extremely seriously.

Racist and religiously aggravated crime

Victims of racist and religiously motivated crime are targeted solely because of their actual or presumed racial or ethnic origins, or because of their faith. Prosecuting racist and religiously crime remains one of our key priorities and we are committed to dealing effectively and fairly with all cases referred to us by the police.

Certain offences, including assault, harassment, criminal damage and public order offences can be prosecuted specifically as racially or religiously aggravated offences. Where there is evidence of racial or religious aggravation, the defendant could face a harsher sentence than if he or she were convicted of a non-racial or religious crime.



Helping you to feel safe



We regard a homophobic incident as:

Any incident which is perceived to be homophobic or transphobic by the victim or by any other person [including the perpetrator].

Homophobic crimes are particularly serious because they undermine a person's right to feel safe about, and be safe in, their sexual orientation and gender identity.

We regard a homophobic/transphobic element of a crime as an aggravating feature, and our *Policy for the Prosecution of Cases with a Homophobic Element* is a public statement of our commitment to prosecute such cases effectively.

Nottinghamshire's CPS is determined to encourage all lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in the county to have the confidence to report hate crimes against them, knowing they will be supported throughout any criminal proceedings.

Victim and Witness Care

Victim and witness care continues to be a priority for the CPS. The criminal justice system relies on the willingness of witnesses to give evidence at court.

Witness Care Units (WCUs)

Two WCUs have been established in Nottinghamshire to transform the experiences of people who give evidence at court for the prosecution. The Units, created as part of the No Witness No Justice (NWNJ) project, are jointly managed by the CPS and the police. The project aims to make the criminal justice system more responsive to the needs of victims and witnesses by reducing the number of failed cases and preventing reluctance of witnesses to re-engage in the criminal justice process in the future.

Trained witness care officers endeavour to ensure the service provided to victims and witnesses is individually tailored to their needs. These officers support people from the moment a defendant is charged through to trial at court.

The Crown
Prosecution Service
in Nottinghamshire
and

YOU

...working with our community



Photo: John Hind.



Listening to views about crime and justice

The CPS is committed to informing, listening to and working with local people. We strive to build partnerships with schools, universities, community and voluntary groups to build confidence in our work. We also liaise with other organisations to inform the public of our policies and procedures.

We have started to work with local Members of Parliament to help us engage with constituents about criminal justice matters.

This has included holding informative question and answer sessions in constituencies throughout Nottinghamshire. Topics covered included anti-social behaviour orders, self-defence by householders against intruders and how the CPS reaches a decision to prosecute.

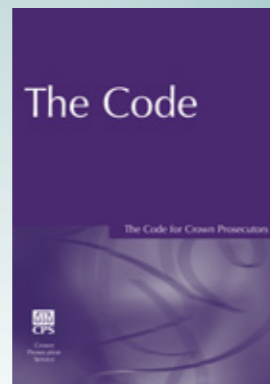
If you are interesting in finding out more about the role of the CPS please feel free to contact us at: **The Crown Prosecution Service, 2 King Edward Court, King Edward Street, Nottingham, NG1 1EL or telephone: 0115 852 3300.**

Making decisions

The decision to prosecute an individual is a serious step. Fair and effective prosecution is essential to the maintenance of law and order. The CPS applies the *Code for Crown Prosecutors* so that it can make fair and consistent decisions about prosecutions.

The *Code* guides lawyers to make decisions of whether or not to prosecute. It has two tests:

- **The Evidential Test** – prosecutors have to satisfy themselves that there is enough evidence to provide a realistic prospect of conviction. If a case fails to pass the evidential test it doesn't go ahead, no matter how important or serious it may be
- **The Public Interest Test** – once a case passes the evidential test lawyers must then decide whether a prosecution is needed in the public interest.



Keeping you informed

The CPS is committed to keeping victims of crime informed of the progress of their case.

If there is insufficient evidence to charge a defendant we will notify vulnerable or intimidated victims. If, after a defendant is charged, we decide to drop or substantially alter a charge we will again write to the victim to inform them of our decision.

In cases where a death has occurred, and for child abuse matters, sexual offences, racist or religiously aggravated offences, or cases with a homophobic element, we will offer to meet the victim or victim's family to explain why no charges will be brought or why the charges have been dropped or substantially altered.



Transforming our structure to support you

In May 2006, Nottinghamshire's CPS transformed its structure from two large prosecution units to four smaller, combined teams. The changes will result in the CPS working even closer with its criminal justice partners in preparing cases for court.

The new teams will deal with magistrates' and Crown Court work from the moment a defendant is charged, and where possible, to advocacy at court. Prosecutors, caseworkers and administrators will be responsible for a specific number of files and will work as part of the CPS and police "prosecution team" in tackling criminal offending in Nottinghamshire.

Prosecutors will use their skills and talents in taking an active role in charging and we will increase our profile in the Crown Court through the effective deployment of higher court advocates. Our designated caseworkers will be prosecuting more of our magistrates' courts to free up our lawyers to focus on charging and case preparation. Witness support officers will operate within the new teams to ensure victim care is at the heart of the new structure.

Working for you

The CPS is a national organisation, created in 1986 to prosecute criminal cases investigated by the police. Although we work closely with the police we remain independent of them. The independence of prosecutors is of fundamental importance. All casework decisions are taken with fairness, impartiality and integrity to help deliver justice for victims, witnesses, defendants and the public.

We do this by:

- Advising the police on cases for possible prosecution
- Reviewing cases submitted by the police for prosecution
- Where the decision is to prosecute, determine the charge in all but the most minor cases
- Present those cases at court.

Each year CPS Nottinghamshire deals with approximately 30,000 cases in the county's five magistrates' courts at Nottingham, Mansfield, Newark, Retford and Worksop, and a further 2,500 cases in the Crown Court at Nottingham.



Working together for you

The CPS remains a key partner in the work of Nottinghamshire's Local Criminal Justice Board. Effective partnerships have been formed with criminal justice agency partners throughout the county.

Senior prosecutors and managers regularly meet with officers from the police, probation, prisons, courts and youth offending teams to develop a culture of joined-up working.

The Board's priorities include:

- Bringing more offenders to justice
- Putting victims and witnesses at the heart of its work
- Tackling persistent and prolific young offenders
- Increasing public confidence in the criminal justice system.

Statistics from the National Crime Survey continue to show increasing public confidence in the criminal justice system in Nottinghamshire.