

# Our commitment to you

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the 2005-06 CPS Sussex Annual Report. This has been a momentous year for CPS Sussex, for as well as meeting difficult performance targets, we also embraced Statutory Charging.



We are employing more lawyers than ever, and we employ them more efficiently: in charging centres where they advise police officers as suspects are brought in, and in Crown Court where our Higher Court Advocates are presenting many cases which would earlier have been handled by the independent Bar.

Our lawyers also continue to prosecute in the magistrates' courts, but we are increasing the use of Designated Caseworkers in these courts.

As Chair of Sussex Criminal Justice Board, I have ensured that CPS Sussex works alongside our criminal justice partners to ensure that more offences are brought to justice, that the people of Sussex are more confident in the abilities of the Criminal Justice System and that the victims of crime remain at the heart of the prosecution process.

Sarah Jane Gallagher,  
Sussex Chief Crown Prosecutor

# Domestic safety for you

**1 in 4** women will experience domestic violence at some time in their lives.

**2** women are killed every week by a current or former partner.

**Violence against women and children is a crime —**

**Domestic violence**  
**Rape and sexual assaults**  
**Forced marriage**  
**Honour crimes**  
**Child abuse**  
**Elder abuse**  
**Human trafficking**  
**Prostitution**  
**Mutilation**



**Freephone 24-hour National Domestic Violence Helpline: 0808 2000 247**  
**Perpetrators' phoneline RESPECT: 0845 122 8609**



# Prosecuting hate crime for you

**We regard a racist or religiously-motivated incident as:**

***Any incident which is perceived to be racist or religiously motivated by the victim or any other person.***

An offence is racially or religiously aggravated if:

- at the time of committing the offence, or immediately before or after doing so, the offender demonstrates towards the victim of the offence hostility based on the victim's membership (or presumed membership) of a racial or religious group; or
- the offence is motivated (wholly or partly) by hostility towards members of a racial or religious group based on their membership of that group.

Certain offences, including assault, harassment, criminal damage and public order offences, can be prosecuted specifically as racially or religiously-aggravated offences.

With any other offence where there is evidence of racial or religious aggravation, the defendant faces a harsher sentence than if he or she were found guilty 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].***

We regard homophobic crimes as particularly serious because they undermine people's right to feel safe about, and be safe in, their sexual orientation.

Such crimes are based on prejudice, discrimination and hate, and they have no place in an open and democratic society.

We regard the homophobic element of any crime as a serious aggravating feature. We are determined to play our part in reducing crime by bringing offenders to justice.

CPS Sussex works closely with the police and other agencies to tackle the menace of hate crime. If you wish to report a homophobic incident, you may be assured that you will be treated fairly and sensitively.

In an emergency, dial 999, in less urgent situations call Sussex Police on 0845 60 70 999.

# Area information

CPS Sussex works hard to reach out to all the communities it serves. We have specialist lawyers dealing with important issues such as racial, religious and homophobic crime, anti-social behaviour and domestic violence.

Our commitment to honouring the Code of Practice for Victims means that we have a particular emphasis on ensuring that the victims of crime remain at the heart of the prosecution process.

We seek to make the experience of witnesses easier too, and will ask for special measures, such as screens or video links, where this will make the witnesses' experience less traumatic. We also work closely with our partners in the Criminal Justice System, particularly through the Sussex Criminal Justice Board.

During this year we have also made contact with the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) so as to create a higher level of public awareness of our work and an increase in public confidence.

Contact with young people is important to the work of the CPS, and in Sussex we have attended a number of schools to talk about the work we do, and have offered work experience to several students who are considering a career in the criminal justice system.

The Crown Prosecution Service in Sussex and

# YOU

## ...working with our community



Brighton Sea Front.

# What the CPS does for you

The Crown Prosecution Service was set up in 1986 to prosecute criminal cases investigated by the police in England and Wales. In undertaking this role, the CPS:

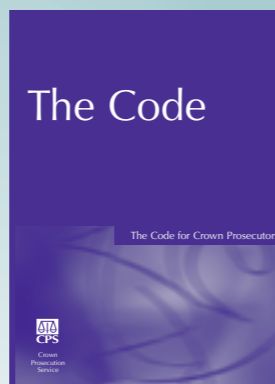
- advises the police on cases for possible prosecution
- reviews cases submitted by the police for prosecution
- where the decision is to prosecute, determines the charge in all but minor cases
- prepares cases for court; and
- presents those cases at court

Each year we handle around 36,000 cases in the magistrates' court cases and 2,600 in the Crown Court. In 2005-06, our average conviction rate was 97.8% in the magistrates' court and 88.1% in the Crown Court.



## Justice for you

The *Code for Crown Prosecutors* is a public document, issued by the Director of Public Prosecutions that sets out the general principles Crown Prosecutors should follow when they make decisions on cases.



### Is there enough evidence against the defendant?

When deciding whether there is enough evidence to prosecute, Crown Prosecutors must consider whether evidence can be used in court and is reliable. Crown Prosecutors must be satisfied there is enough evidence to provide a "realistic prospect of conviction" against each defendant.

### Is it in the public interest for the CPS to bring the case to court?

A prosecution will usually take place unless the public interest factors against prosecution clearly outweigh those in favour of prosecution.

## Keeping you informed

### No Witness No Justice

At the heart of No Witness No Justice are the Witness Care Units, which now provide an enhanced level of service to all victims and witnesses in England and Wales in cases where a charge has been brought. This includes completing needs assessments, to identify childcare or accessibility issues for example, and organising pre-court familiarisation visits.

### Victims' Code

The Code of Practice for Victims of Crime came into full effect on 3 April 2006.

The Code of Practice will give victims rights to minimum standards of service from the criminal justice system for the first time. This includes notifying vulnerable or intimidated victims within one working day if there is insufficient evidence to charge a defendant, and within five working days for all other victims, as well as identifying any special measures that may be appropriate.

The CPS is committed to its obligations under the code, which formalises many of the good things it is already doing.

## Supporting you

CPS Sussex is often seen at community events, alongside its criminal justice partners. Events attended in the last year include the "999" attractions at Eastbourne and Hastings, "Pride" at Brighton, the court open days at Lewes, Eastbourne and Brighton, the LGBT Job Fair and a number of specific events in connection with race and homophobic crime.

This year, we expanded this activity, visiting a number of schools, colleges and universities to talk about our work and career opportunities for prospective employees.

We have forged strong links with our local media too, not just in reacting to major case stories but also with proactive features, such as with the specialist ASBO lawyer, and in response to issues such as equal opportunities for women in the workplace.

The CPS Sussex Equality and Diversity Committee was also reinvigorated, with representation broadened to embrace a wider cross-section of the community, setting the pace for a continuing, mutually beneficial relationship with the people of Sussex.



## Working with us

CPS Sussex is working towards being an employer of choice. As part of a world class prosecution service, we aim to provide the best opportunities for our staff to develop their potential, whether they are aspiring to a legal career or wish to follow one of the support or managerial occupations.

If you are interested in working for CPS Sussex, look on the CPS website ([www.cps.gov.uk/working](http://www.cps.gov.uk/working)) where all national CPS vacancies are listed and can be applied for online.

### Jobs we do

**Prosecutors** are qualified barristers or solicitors. They advise the police on potential cases, review and often prosecute cases in court. **Caseworkers** assist prosecutors in case management through initial preparation and processing of casework. Some caseworkers advance to **Dedicated Caseworker** status, where they present certain cases to a magistrates' court. **Administrators** cover a range of support functions, including case processing and management support.

CPS Sussex is an equal opportunities employer, offering a range of attractive benefits to staff. Applications are welcomed from all suitably qualified people, regardless of gender, race, religion, age or sexual orientation.

## Working together for you

CPS Sussex operates right at the heart of the Criminal Justice System in Sussex. Our Chief Crown Prosecutor, Sarah Jane Gallagher, is also Chair of the Sussex Criminal Justice Board, comprising the chief officers of CPS, Sussex Police, Probation, HM Prison Service, HM Courts Service and the Youth Offending Teams.

Working alongside our criminal justice partners, we are able to influence the delivery of justice in Sussex, and are seeing the Board's performance improve year on year, increasing the number of offences brought to justice and reducing the fear of crime in our community.

We are also acting alongside other criminal justice stakeholders. For example, we have initiated links with the Local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) and continue to work with Victim Support and the Witness Service.

### Useful websites:

[www.cps.gov.uk](http://www.cps.gov.uk)  
[www.sussex.police.uk](http://www.sussex.police.uk)  
[www.sussexprobation.gov.uk](http://www.sussexprobation.gov.uk)  
[www.hmcourts-service.gov.uk](http://www.hmcourts-service.gov.uk)  
[www.youth-justice-board.gov.uk](http://www.youth-justice-board.gov.uk)  
[www.hmprisonservice.gov.uk](http://www.hmprisonservice.gov.uk)  
[www.legalservices.gov.uk](http://www.legalservices.gov.uk)  
[www.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk)  
[www.dca.gov.uk](http://www.dca.gov.uk)  
[www.cjsonline.gov.uk](http://www.cjsonline.gov.uk)  
[www.sussexcps.gov.uk](http://www.sussexcps.gov.uk)