

# Parole Board Chief Executive's blog – June 2020 recruitment

The Parole Board last week launched its [latest recruitment drive](#) for new [psychologist](#), [psychiatrist](#) and [retired judicial members](#). This is an exciting opportunity for those who feel they can contribute to the vital job we do in risk assessing society's most serious offenders on their suitability for release into the community.

## [About the Parole Board](#)

The work is both stimulating and interesting and I would like to take this opportunity to explain a little about the recruitment campaign, the Parole Board and what the work would involve. The Parole Board is an independent body which aims to protect the public by assessing whether prisoners can be safely released back into the community. Our work is of critical importance to prisoners and their families, but it also has a wider role in maintaining public confidence in the justice system.

I am extremely proud of the work we do, however, I know there is more to be done. This recruitment campaign gives candidates the opportunity to be part of this work and our wider vision going forward.

We are pressing ahead with our member recruitment drive to ensure that we have the right people in place to deliver parole decisions in ways that are fair and timely for prisoners, victims and the public. There are currently 263 members. The majority are independent members, meaning that they come from all walks of life and we also recruit from specific professions. Our membership will increase to 292 in September and include 62 retired and serving judges, as well as 53 psychologists and 20 psychiatrists.

There is an increasing demand for specialist input in our cases and we are looking to appoint up to 15 new psychologist members; 15 psychiatrist members and 10 new judicial members from the ranks of retired judges. We are seeking people with a genuine interest in the work we do and who possess the 'behaviours', strengths and skills to make an effective contribution to the Board's work.

This is a very exciting time to be joining the Parole Board. The Board has reacted quickly to continue to progress cases amid the present public health crisis despite the huge challenges we are facing and restrictions in place at prisons across the country. This has involved innovative changes which are likely to endure beyond the pandemic. Before the coronavirus outbreak, almost all oral hearings took place inside prisons with all parties involved in one room. Far from grinding to a halt, we have made thousands of parole decisions since the outbreak, adapting and making use of remote hearings (video and telephone). Provisional figures indicate that up to 12th of June, 6,368 decisions had been made, with nearly 800 prisoners directed for release, over 130 recommended for open conditions, and over 3,000 directions that

imprisonment continues to be necessary for the protection of the public.

We believe we have achieved this in a manner which both ensures the protection of the public without compromising fairness to the prisoner. Once the pandemic is over, we expect that there will be many remote hearings as prisons will have improved their capability to hold them. Nevertheless, there will still be a substantial number of cases requiring face to face oral hearings and we will need psychologists and psychiatrists across all of England and Wales, and especially outside London and the south east. We expect that parole panels will undertake a mix of both remote and face to face hearings.

We have also adapted our training and guidance so that members continue to have access to a range of resources to support them in this vital work. If you believe that you have the qualifications, experience and qualities that we are seeking, I hope you will consider applying for this important and rewarding position.

We are aware that our membership is not sufficiently ethnically diverse. We would therefore particularly welcome candidates from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME) background.

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## **Work to start on second phase of £40m flood scheme in Bury.**

The £40 million scheme, forms part of the Environment Agency's programme of £2.6 billion investment into flood defences across the country. Working in partnership with Bury Council, the scheme, which will be delivered in three parts, will not only reduce the risk of flooding to hundreds of local homes and businesses but aims to keep transport routes and infrastructure open during times of flood. This will help to maintain vital links in an area that has been severely affected by flooding on a number of occasions.

Work on the second phase of the Radcliffe and Redvales Flood Alleviation Scheme will see a combination of traditional walls and embankments, along with new wetland habitat, as part of a catchment wide approach to reducing flood risk.

The project also incorporates a flagship Natural Flood Management (NFM) programme. Natural flood management is when natural processes are used to reduce the risk of flooding. The team is working with partners and landowners across the catchment to deliver a range of measures, such as the Lower Hinds wetland and other natural features. These techniques will hold back water to help reduce the flow of rainwater into the river and help reduce the impacts of climate change.

Construction activity for Phase 2, currently due to start in July, will be in a number of locations including, Warth Road, Central Avenue, Whitefield Road, Dumers Lane and York Street. When works begin, much of the left bank of the river will be inaccessible from Lower Hinds (at the top of Warth Road) to Hardy's Gate Bridge. The Environment Agency and Bury Council are working with contractor BAM Nuttall to minimise any disruption to the public but ask that residents adhere to any warning signage around the site areas for their own safety.

All works will be undertaken safely in line with Government guidance on social distancing.

Peter Costello, Area Flood and Coastal Risk Manager said:

"It is heartening to see the next stage of this ambitious scheme to reduce the risk of flooding across Radcliffe and Redvales starting. Seeing further work happening on the ground will hopefully give reassurance to residents and businesses owners that soon they will have measures in place to prevent a repeat of the catastrophic damage and pain caused by the impact of past flooding incidents.

"The scheme itself is a perfect example of the value of partnership working but also how when we are designing and building these incredible structures, we can regenerate the natural environment and public spaces while still making communities more flood resilient for the future. We look forward to additional progress on the ground in the coming months and will continue to keep residents and businesses affected by our work informed about the scheme at every stage of its development. Community drop in events will restart once it is safe to do so as and when coronavirus restrictions are lifted."

Cllr Alan Quinn, cabinet member for the environment said:

"In the last five years Bury has been hit by two of the worst storms in history, Storm Eva (Boxing Day 2015) and Storm Ciara in February. During Storm Ciara, the flood defences installed worked and stopped major flooding in Radcliffe; unfortunately Redvales was flooded as there were no defences yet. This next phase will eventually see Redvales protected and give residents the confidence that these defences are in place to stop flooding. Bury Council has contributed £2m to these defences with a further £3m partnership funding from the NW Rivers Floods & Coastal Committee. In 2018 I led a delegation from Bury which successfully lobbied for a further £7m from government to make sure that Bury got the flood defences it needed."

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**[UN Human Rights Council 43:](#)**

# Interactive Dialogue on Ukraine

Thank you Mr Vice-President,

The UK thanks the High Commissioner for her update and welcomes the 29th report of the OHCHR Monitoring Mission.

We are concerned by increased civilian casualties in eastern Ukraine. Russia-backed armed formations continue to disregard fundamental freedoms and restrict the work of OHCHR. Reports of systematic use of torture on detainees in non-government controlled areas are deeply troubling. Russia-backed proxies use Covid-19 as a pretext to impose further restrictions on international organisations.

Russia's persistent restriction of fundamental freedoms in illegally annexed Crimea is deplorable. The systematic persecution of Crimean Tatars, suppression of freedom of religion or belief and forced conscription must stop.

Russia's continued arbitrary arrests, detentions and crackdown on freedom of expression are aimed at intimidating the people of Crimea. At least 94 Ukrainian political prisoners remain unlawfully detained in Crimea and Russia – there are accounts of their torture, ill treatment and denial of medical care. We call on Russia to release all political prisoners immediately.

We are concerned by continuing restrictions on OHCHR access to eastern Ukraine and Crimea, and would welcome more reporting on the human rights situation there.

Madam Deputy,

What more can the international community do to ensure accountability for these human rights violations and abuses?

Thank you.

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## Work starts again to improve flood defences in Lower Bootham

Press release

Work is back on track to improve flood protection in a section of the York Flood Alleviation Scheme



Construction work is starting again to improve flood defences in the Lower Bootham area in a bid to help better protect 134 properties.

The area already has embankment defences in the grounds of St Olave's and St Peter's schools and a flood wall in the gardens of Almerly Terrace but these are at risk of over-topping in the future and so the plan is to raise their standard of protection.

The flood alleviation work is being carried out in three phases and includes:-

- Raising the existing embankment along St Peter's and St Olave's School playing fields
- Extending the length of the existing embankment through St Peter's playing field
- Raising the height of the existing flood wall at the back of Almerly Terrace using glass panels to reduce the visual impact of this wall and maintain views and natural light for the properties
- Funding grants for Property Flood Resilience for homes at risk of flooding in Government House Road.

Last year the Environment Agency started on phase one of works – raising a section of the embankment in the grounds of St Peter's School. However, due to adverse weather in November, this work was delayed but has now re-started by contractor BAM Nuttall.

A transition wall is being built to link the new housing development next to Almerly Terrace and the new higher embankment. The plan is to complete improvements to defences in this area of the city by the end of the year.

The site compound is now up and running on fields belonging to St Peter's School. To make sure that construction vehicles can easily access the site, parking restrictions will be in place during weekdays on Westminster Road to avoid congestion.

To complete the construction of the defences, some paths will need to be closed temporarily:-

- The riverside path directly next to Almerly Terrace will be closed during the construction of the embankment and whilst gates and glass panels are installed at properties. Closures will be from around early August until

late October during working hours 8am – 5pm, but not every day.

- The Almerly steps footpath will also be closed whilst we increase the height of the adjacent wall and for some of the time we are working on the adjacent Network Rail land. This is estimated to be from early September to late October.
- The footpath from the end of Westminster Road to the river will need to be closed whilst working is carried out to improve the flood embankment. This closure is currently estimated to be from the end of August.

David Morey, flood risk adviser with the Environment Agency, said:

Our aim is provide much better flood protection for this community by improving our defences from Coppins Farm to Scarborough Bridge.

We have been working hard to reschedule our work to ensure as much as possible can be carried out safely under the Government guidelines related to social distancing and that delays caused by the effects of this coronavirus pandemic are kept to an absolute minimum.

We will continue to keep residents up to date with progress on the scheme and any changes including necessary footpath closures. You can sign up to our regular electronic newsletters by emailing: [yorkfloodplan@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:yorkfloodplan@environment-agency.gov.uk).

For any questions about onsite issues contact community liaison officer, Rebecca Stone: Tel: 07900711136 or email: [rebecca.stone@bamnuttall.co.uk](mailto:rebecca.stone@bamnuttall.co.uk) To sign up for digital newsletters about the scheme email: [yorkfloodplan@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:yorkfloodplan@environment-agency.gov.uk) For more information on the York Flood Alleviation Scheme, [visit](#) Or follow EnvAgencyYNE on Twitter, York Flood Alleviation Scheme on Facebook at @YorkFAS or YorkFloodPlan on Instagram.

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# CMA Chairman Andrew Tyrie to step down

I want to thank all of those with whom I have worked, and the many friends that I have made, for their kindness and support over the last two years. The CMA is an extremely hard-working institution, strongly committed to the public good.

On taking the role, I was asked by the Government to map out a route to a new type of competition authority, one better equipped to understand and respond to what most concerns ordinary consumers: penalties for loyal customers, price discrimination against vulnerable consumers, the difficulties faced by millions in getting good deals online, among them.

I was also asked to suggest ways in which the CMA could become more agile, less legally encumbered, and also with closer international ties, reflecting both the increasingly global and often digital nature of consumer detriment, and the CMA's enhanced post-Brexit role.

We've all, particularly the most senior executive team and the Board, worked hard at the CMA to do that.

The CMA submitted proposals for wide-ranging legislative changes to the government last year.

It has taken forward important work to protect consumers, and it has imposed tougher penalties on those who break competition law.

And in our response to the coronavirus outbreak, we've reoriented the organisation to listen and act on consumer concerns more quickly and effectively. In responding, the CMA has shown a remarkable and unprecedented capacity to develop an emergency role.

I am delighted to have played some part in these achievements.

The Government asked me to take this work forward at great pace. I have done so. I now want to make the case more forcefully for legislative and other reform – in Parliament and beyond – than is possible within the inherent limits of my position as CMA Chairman.

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy will now commence the process for recruiting a new Chair of the CMA.