

# cjm

## update

### Una Padel outlines changes at the Home Office.

**N**ow that the excitement of the General Election is fading the new ministerial appointments at the Home Office have been announced. The structure has changed since the election. Keith Bradley has been appointed Minister of State for Criminal Justice, Sentencing and Law Reform. The Criminal Justice Bill planned for this Parliamentary session will undoubtedly be a major preoccupation for him in the immediate future as it will contain changes to be made as a result of John Halliday's forthcoming report on sentencing and Sir Robin Auld's forthcoming report on the criminal courts. Beverly Hughes is the new Parliamentary Under Secretary of State with responsibility for community and custodial sentences, including youth justice, probation and prisons. She brings first-hand experience to the job, albeit before the 'What Works' era, having worked as a probation officer in Merseyside in the 1970s. Bob Ainsworth is also appointed as Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, with responsibility for anti-drugs coordination and organised crime. The Home Secretary, David Blunkett, has already signalled his intention to prioritise the prevention of crime including the international trafficking of drugs, people and arms, and there is to be a Proceeds of Crime Bill in this Parliamentary session which would extend the powers to confiscate money and goods from certain types of offender.

John Denham is Minister of State for Crime Reduction, Policing and Community Safety. He will have responsibility for steering through the modernisation programme planned for policing. Those measures which

require legislation will be contained in the Police Bill scheduled for this Parliamentary session.

The new Minister for Citizenship and Immigration is Jeff Rooker, and Angela Eagle is the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Europe, Community and Race Equality.

### Rehabilitation reviewed

The Home Office is currently reviewing the scope and operation of the *Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974*. The focus is on whether it "adequately achieves the policy goal of reducing crime by facilitating the rehabilitation of offenders and the protection of the public, or whether any other arrangements might better deliver this objective." In the 25 years since the Act was passed sentencing has changed considerably. The criteria for determining when previous convictions must be disclosed and the time intervals which must pass before they become spent are (obviously) based upon the sentencing patterns of the day. The review group is keen to hear views on the current operation of the Act and ideas about how best to achieve the balance between helping those who have served their sentence put their offending behind them, and protecting those who might be vulnerable to becoming victims of crime. Comments should be sent to Sue Jago, Review of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, Room 304, Home Office, 50 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9AT, e-mail [ROA.Review@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ROA.Review@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk) by the end of July 2001.

### Chief Inspectors

New Chief Inspectors of both prisons and probation have recently been appointed. Professor Rod Morgan, Director of the Centre of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the Faculty of Law at Bristol University is to replace Sir Graham Smith as Chief Inspector of Probation. Anne Owers CBE, currently director of the human rights and law reform organisation Justice, and a former General Secretary of the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, is taking over from Sir David Ramsbotham as Chief Inspector of Prisons. Both take up their posts on 1st August. ■