

15th Annual Community Justice Portal Lecture

Lives and Spaces: Photovoice and Offender Supervision

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Abstract

The lives and experiences of those on probation supervision are often invisible and dismissed as unimportant or worse as 'an easy option'. This presentation reviews three different studies in England, Germany and Ireland, which utilised an innovative technique, Photovoice, to foreground the experiences of probationers on their journey towards desistance. The difficulties they face such as stigma, social judgement and exclusion are explored as well as their need for emotional calm, and support and understanding from their supervisors and the wider community. Photovoice provides a unique insight into probation supervision and an effective technique for undertaking cross-national research which can communicate across cultural boundaries.



Biography

Wendy Fitzgibbon's first career was in the probation service where she undertook a variety of roles – generic team management, prison probation work, bail hostel management, teaching and training new entrants. Wendy moved into academic work in 2003, completing her PhD in 2008. She has worked at several universities including Hertfordshire, De Montfort, Middlesex, London Metropolitan and now works at University of Leicester where she has been a Reader in Criminology since 2016. With an orientation to the criminal justice area, Wendy has maintained a strong network among practitioners especially in the probation service and associated voluntary sector organisations, establishing forums enabling interchange between

practitioners and academics. Her current areas of research are Comparative probation studies, Privatisation and criminal justice, Risk management and most recently Photovoice methods. As a member of the European Community Punishment Research Group she was involved in a major research project for COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) to develop a network on 'Offender Supervision in Europe'. She has used the innovative visual methodology, Photovoice, to explore offenders experiences of supervision. She co-authored reports on England and Wales, Germany and Ireland which have been published online and in journals.