

Electronic Monitoring In Scotland

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EM Champions share their reflections of wearing an electronic tag



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Life after tagging!

Whilst my experience of being tagged was extremely short and on the face of it had no consequences, I mean I even volunteered, why am I still reflecting some 6 months later? I think what struck me most was the vulnerability of the individuals I met who were subject to Court ordered Electronic Monitoring (EM). This is not to minimise their having offended but they were all so different and I wondered how the restrictions on their tag differed to reflect their individual circumstances and behaviours? From my short tagging experience I reflected on my feelings which to begin with were bravado but that was fine with those that knew me and that I was only 'pretending' but when strangers clocked my accessory I was not quite

so brave. I felt shame, humiliation and defensive and I had no way of knowing if others had clocked it or it was just my perceptions. This sense of being judged, viewed negatively by random strangers really made me think of what we are expecting of particularly young people in relation to being tagged. A higher level of understanding of what we are expecting people to be able to do and the support and preparation to do it is necessary to ensure tagging is a meaningful intervention in managing and reducing offending and harm to others. I look forward to learning more from those who have lived this experience for real and putting that knowledge to use.



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Monitoring the Future

Last year I volunteered at a local EM event and

found myself fitted as a demonstration of a monitoring device on my left ankle. Revealing a tattoo of a chain of sumo wrestlers, the audience visibly crept forward to investigate. This was the beginning of my interest in



the use of technology to build on the new vision for Justice in Scotland and my starting point as a champion for the approach.

Seeing the process in action was a privilege and I've now just completed my training at the control centre with Jim and out on a late shift with Mandy - fitting, removing and adjusting devices. The G4S staff I've worked with have a strong person-centred ethic and an outstanding skillset. I've heard the respectful tone of the calls the staff place and receive. The skilful way staff navigate and balance at times tense home situations with nightly encounters of sometimes bleak over-familiarity.

The impression I gained, particularly out in the field was of a service which operates well across a highly charged boundary. Building a rapport, offering practical support but constantly managing the allowances our justice

system provides or denies. I saw health opportunities also; signs of substance use, mental health issues, and trauma were balanced with positive parenting, ambitions for work and loving family support. I left clear that in order to reduce reoffending we need alternatives to prison custody. The future lies in these technical solutions founded on relationships of acceptance, compassion and empathy.



Champions Network

From the periphery to a priority: changing uses of electronic monitoring in Australia



Dr Hannah Graham is a Lecturer in Criminology in the Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research, University of Stirling. She is an Australian citizen and a British citizen, having lived and worked in **Tasmania**.

Dynamics in criminal justice are changing in Australia, with electronic monitoring in the national spotlight after decades of low-profile use on the periphery. This is partly compelled by domestic abuse as a highly visible political priority and a 12 year [National Plan to reduce violence against women and children](#).

To put these developments in context: In Australia, a nation of 24 million, criminal justice is a devolved power to states and territories (currently six Labor and two conservative governments), which have separate and independent criminal justice systems. Private sector involvement in criminal justice exists in some states, but is not widespread. The federal Australian Government (currently a conservative coalition) can fund and work with state governments on justice and safety issues. Also, taxation powers exist at federal and state levels.

GPS electronic monitoring has recently risen to prominence with the May 2017 announcement of new

three-year Technology Trials, based on equal matched funding from federal and state governments. These uses of EM will be informed by risk assessments; the Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model and domestic and family violence risk tools are commonly used across Australia. Specialised family violence courts and problem-solving approaches have existed there for over a decade.

In [new Technology Trials in Tasmania](#), repeat family violence offenders may have a monitoring condition added to a family violence order, enabling GPS tagging and tracking with exclusion zones. Victims, if they consent and opt-in, can carry a GPS bilateral tracking device. Similarly [in New South Wales](#), GPS tagging can be used with sentenced offenders, paroled offenders, and at the bail stage with Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders. Again, victims in NSW can choose to take part in bilateral monitoring. Tasmania is moderate in its sentencing cultures and justice policies; NSW is punitive

in its justice cultures, policies and practices.

Of fundamental importance is the fact that electronic monitoring technology trials are *one part* of multi-faceted, collaborative strategic approaches in Australia. New uses of EM are not being initiated in isolation.

In Australia, especially in the last year, the amounts of funding and resources being invested by governments to address domestic abuse and promote women's safety are staggering – an impressive use of public money and puissant display of political backbone. They are putting their money where their mouth is when they speak of pursuing change within a generation. Following a Royal Commission inquiry into family violence, this year the Labor state government of Victoria (a state of 5 million people) put *\$1.9 billion AUD* (almost £1.1 billion) to tackle family violence and implement the Commission's recommendations. This state government budget commitment is separate from other states, and from the \$100 million AUD (£577 million) Australian Government Women's Safety Package, which includes the match-funding for EM Technology Trials.

Taken in context, electronic monitoring is now more of a priority in Australian justice systems, but one that remains a fraction of the overall budget and a portion of the overarching focus on tackling domestic abuse – a focus which centres on human beings, human service provision and the ambition of realising family-level, community-level and societal change within a generation.



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west and east Scotland will be in Glasgow and in Fife or Dundee. By housing women in smaller, community-based units closer to their families, and providing additional support to address their needs, such as drug and alcohol advice or mental health support, we can further reduce re-offending – and so keep crime down and our communities safe.”

The new approach to women in custody reflects the key role – highlighted in the Vision and Priorities paper – of wider public services, notably in health but also other areas like parental support, education, housing and employability, in supporting justice partners to deliver on their priorities and achieve the ambition of safer, just and more resilient communities in every part of Scotland.



Justice in Scotland: Vision and Priorities

‘Justice in Scotland: Vision and Priorities’ supersedes the ‘Strategy for Justice in Scotland’, published in 2012 and can be read, along with the 2017-18 delivery plan here:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Justice/justicestrategy>

Milestone in transformation of female custodial estate

Last week the Justice Secretary Michael Matheson announced an ambitious new strategy to create a safer, just and more resilient communities across Scotland.

The ‘Vision and Priorities’ for Justice was launched as demolition work began at Cornton Vale women’s prison and the areas that will host Scotland’s first community-based custody units were announced.

Developed and agreed by the leaders of Scotland’s justice system, and drawing on latest evidence, the Vision paper identifies effective approaches and emerging challenges. A delivery plan, detailing how justice professionals will work with the wider public and third sector to achieve their vision, will also be published annually.

Mr Matheson said:

“While our imprisonment rate – the

second highest in western Europe – remains too high, prisons will always be necessary for those who commit the most serious offences, or who pose significant risks to public safety. The Scottish Prison Service is transforming how they work to better rehabilitate those in custody, addressing underlying issues that can often drive their return to jail. With the demolition of Cornton Vale under way, there is no turning back on our plans for a smarter, more progressive approach to managing women in custody, ensuring they are prepared for life after release.

“That is why I am also pleased to announce that the first two community custodial units for

'Rocky Road' tells the story of co-production challenges and successes

This is the first of '100 Stories of Co-Production', an [Ingage](#)-led project supported by the Scottish Co-Production Network

'Rocky Road' tells the story of how local community activists took over the Community Centre in their ex-mining village Dalmellington.

In the 5 minute film, community activist Sharon Smith and Angela Graham, Senior Estates Surveyor at East Ayrshire Council, take the camera into their own hands, and grill one another about the ups and downs of the process. It's a revealing conversation.

For more information and to view the film please go to:

www.coproductionscotland.org.uk



Tracking People: Controversies and challenge

The University of Leeds has hosted three events exploring the ethical, legal, social and technical issues arising from the current and future use of wearable tagging and tracking devices. Reports from the first three events are now available:

www.trackingpeople.leeds.ac.uk

The final event 'Tracking people: looking to the future' will be held in London on 9 November 2017. This conference will disseminate the principle findings drawing out core themes from preceding events.

For more information email: trackingpeople@leeds.ac.uk

Your EM Newsletter

We hope you found this edition of the EM Newsletter useful.

For future editions we plan to feature regular updates about EM, highlight good practice and innovation and provide useful links and information.

We would be delighted if you would get in touch with any feedback or ideas for future content.

Please contact Gill Scott with your thoughts:

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www.gov.scot/Topics/Justice



<https://blogs.gov.scot/justice-safety/category/justice/>