



*Independent inspection of
adult & youth offending work*

Andrew Bridges
HM Chief Inspector of Probation
Second Floor
Ashley House
2 Monck Street
London SW1P 2BQ

**Response by the Chief Inspector of Probation to comments by Ann
Widdecombe on the Chief Inspector's Foreword to the Annual Report of
HM Inspectorate of Probation for 2009-10**

Ann, I'm not your Aunt Sally

Ann Widdecombe, 'setting up an Aunt Sally' is when someone's else's viewpoint is grossly exaggerated in order to serve as a hostile target at which to aim one's own polemic, and you have tried to do that with the Foreword of my Annual Report this week on the subject of the Price of Public Protection.

The irony is that I most deliberately did not propose or suggest anything, but I did seek to put a debate about the financial and the non-financial costs of our current use of imprisonment into the public domain where taxpayers can make up their up their own minds – see our website [here](#).

Don't worry, the penal doves have done the same thing to me in the past, when I identified an unwelcome problem for Probation staff when taking into account human rights considerations with dangerous offenders – both the hawks and the doves take the view that certain difficult topics should simply not even be raised in public. Like World Cup Final referee Howard Webb, I'm used to being criticised by two opposing viewpoints at the same time.

Andrew Bridges CBE
HM Chief Inspector of Probation
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