



HM Inspectorate
of Probation

An inspection of probation services in:

Newham PDU

The Probation Service – London region

HM Inspectorate of Probation, November 2022



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Acknowledgements

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The role of HM Inspectorate of Probation

HM Inspectorate of Probation is the independent inspector of youth offending and probation services in England and Wales. We report on the effectiveness of probation and youth offending service work with adults and children.

We inspect these services and publish inspection reports. We highlight good and poor practice and use our data and information to encourage high-quality services. We are independent of government and speak independently.

Please note that throughout the report the names in the practice examples have been changed to protect the individual's identity.

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Foreword

This was the first Probation Delivery Unit (PDU) inspection of services in Newham since the unification of the Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) and National Probation Service (NPS) in June 2021.

We saw evidence of a forward-thinking leadership team and an adequately resourced and enthusiastic staff group. The PDU had access to an impressive suite of partnership services in the borough and appropriate facilities to intervene effectively with people on probation. However, it was disappointing to discover that none of these foundations had resulted in good quality case management, which was poor in some areas, and consequently the PDU is rated "Requires improvement".

Activity undertaken with people on probation was rated as "Inadequate" across all our standards, with work to address desistance and keep other people safe being consistently poor. Assessments were not always analytical and did not always draw on all relevant sources. Planning and service delivery was hampered by a failure to: engage partners effectively; consider victims' safety; and sequence interventions as required. Reviewing was poor, and it was concerning reviews were not always completed when risk of harm levels required this. All these issues were exacerbated by inconsistent management oversight of the quality of work being undertaken.

It was also concerning that work undertaken with people being released from prison was undertaken less well than that with people subject to community sentences. The reasons for this will need to be explored by the PDU.

Work to engage with people on probation was more positive. We saw promising signs that a relationship-based approach was impacting positively on some assessment and planning activity, particularly with young adults aged 18-25.

Work with this young adult cohort was coordinated well within a multi-agency, co-located Transitions Hub pilot. While it is too early to effectively evaluate the long-term success of this pilot, our observations were positive, and we saw evidence of genuinely ambitious and innovative work taking place. We would hope that Sheffield Hallam University's imminent evaluation is positive.

The PDU will be disappointed with the outcome of this inspection, but their capacity to develop practice is strong. The positive team culture we witnessed during fieldwork was good to see and a renewed focus on quality assurance within the PDU should lay the foundations for quick progress to be made and improvements to be in place before the next inspection.



Justin Russell
Chief Inspector of Probation

Ratings

Newham PDU

Fieldwork started September 2022

Score **6/24**

Overall rating

Requires improvement



1. Organisational delivery

1.1 Leadership

Requires improvement



1.2 Staff

Good



1.3 Services

Requires improvement



1.4 Information and facilities

Good



2. Court work and case supervision

2.2 Assessment

Inadequate



2.3 Planning

Inadequate



2.4 Implementation and delivery

Inadequate



2.5 Reviewing

Inadequate



Recommendations

As a result of our inspection findings, we have made a number of recommendations that we believe, if implemented, will have a positive impact on the quality of probation services.¹

Newham PDU should:

1. improve the effectiveness of quality assurance activity and consistent management oversight of all casework
2. improve the quality of work to assess, plan for, manage and review risk of harm and to improve desistance
3. ensure probation practitioners always consult and liaise with all relevant services when assessing, planning and intervening with people on probation
4. ensure consideration of the safety of victims in all instances where required
5. ensure that domestic abuse and safeguarding checks are completed and utilised to inform assessment, planning and risk management
6. ensure probation practitioners always understand the specific needs of people on probation, particularly regarding protected characteristics
7. review the efficacy of work with people on probation leaving custody, including the efficacy and availability of services for this cohort.

London region should:

8. increase quality assurance activity at a PDU level
9. improve completion rates for accredited programmes
10. review the location of delivery sites for unpaid work to ensure they are accessible for all people on probation.

HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) should:

11. consider incentives to improve recruitment and retention of staff
12. encourage the Ministry of Justice to continue funding the Young Adult Transitions Hub pilot and ensure all good practice identified by Sheffield Hallam University's evaluation is disseminated nationally.

¹ Progress against previous inspection recommendations for the relevant CRC or NPS division are included in annexe one.

Background

We conducted fieldwork in Newham PDU in the week beginning 05 September 2022. We inspected 33 cases where sentences and licences had commenced between 24 January 2022 and 25 February 2022. We also conducted interviews with 21 probation practitioners and held 14 group meetings with probation staff and representatives from services delivered by partners.

Newham is one of 18 PDUs within the London probation region – which has three distinct districts – and is one of six units managed within the North East London probation district. Newham PDU is a single borough delivery unit. There is one approved premise located within the borough; however, there are no courts. As a region, London probation manage around 38,950 people on probation at any one time. At the point of announcing the inspection, Newham PDU had a total caseload of 1,947; 719 people on community orders, 493 subject to licence supervision and 735 pre-release. Of the caseload, 95 per cent is male and only 16 per cent self-identify as white. The most reported faith among the caseload is Muslim at 24 per cent, and 58 per cent of the caseload is under 35. Newham PDU's own data analysis indicates that the most frequent offence types on its caseload are violent offences; drug possession and drug supply being the next most frequent offence types.

There was only one office site for the PDU, based in Stratford, with CRC, NPS legacy staff and newly-qualified officers within this office distributed across five teams, with an additional standalone Professional Qualification in Probation (PQiP) team. One of the five teams was co-located with partnership services in a separate 'annexe' to the main office, delivering trauma-informed interventions specifically with 18–25-year-old young adults as part of a multi-agency 'Youth to Adult Transitions Hub' pilot scheme. This pilot is funded by the government's Shared Outcomes Fund, supported by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime and the Ministry of Justice, and is being evaluated by Sheffield Hallam University.

The local authority for this PDU is Newham London Borough Council. They also work with the North East Basic Command Unit of the Metropolitan Police Service. There is evidence of good working relationships with a number of partnerships, including links with the Community Safety Partnership in the borough.

The Prioritising Probation Framework (PPF) is a mechanism which attributes a red-amber-green rating to a PDU based on staffing levels and workloads. The principles of the PPF were first established in March 2020 as a response to the operational pressures which the Covid-19 pandemic presented, including significant reductions in staffing due to illness. At the point of inspection, Newham PDU was operating to a business-as-usual model as a 'green' site under this framework. Unpaid work and accredited programmes are both managed on a regional basis.

1. Organisational delivery

1.1. Leadership



The leadership of the PDU enables delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all people on probation.

Requires improvement

Strengths:

- The management team have made sustained and proactive attempts to develop positive links with stakeholders at a strategic and operational level.
- Scrutiny of needs analysis had been undertaken to facilitate personalised planning activity and provide a baseline from which to develop and operationalise the PDU's strategy.
- A focus on developing relationship-centred approaches within the PDU is evident, which resulted in a positive and collaborative team culture and a vibrant working environment.
- Communication with staff was regularly undertaken through a combination of face-to-face and remote activity.
- Activity to develop the young adult Transitions Hub was ambitious and shows an attempt to develop an innovative strategy for this cohort.

Areas for improvement:

- Needs analysis activity had failed to establish total clarity among staff about the specific vision for people on probation who were not open to the Youth to Adult Transitions Hub. The ambitions the PDU has for working with this older cohort are less well defined.
- Oversight of aspects of service delivery were delegated to Single Point of Contact (SPOC) managers and probation practitioners, providing clear lines of accountability and escalation routes. However, we observed inconsistent practice from both managers and probation practitioners during the inspection, and the ratings from the cases inspected indicate that service delivery was not always good enough. This SPOC approach needs to be reviewed to ensure that it is supportive of effective delivery.
- The management team's oversight and response to performance monitoring is process driven and did not focus sufficiently on evaluating outcomes and quality. This evaluation is crucial to ensuring there a consistent understanding of the impact of performance monitoring activity on practice.
- Despite attempts to ensure people on probation's views were taken into consideration when developing frontline practice, a significant majority of them did not feel their views had been listened to.
- We were not provided with evidence of the PDU's business continuity plan.

1.2. Staff



Staff are enabled to deliver a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all people on probation.

Good

Strengths:

- Newham was well-resourced with a low vacancy rate. There was a good blend of experienced and newer team members, including PQiP students, with managers providing an effective bridge between the PDU's Head and its probation practitioners. There was evidence of a strong work ethos and mutual support of colleagues.
- Recruitment and retention activity had impacted positively on vacancies and was enhanced by the involvement of a designated Senior Probation Officer.
- Overall, the training offer was good, and monitoring systems were in place. Most staff had undertaken core mandatory training, and those in the Transitions Hub accessed bespoke opportunities.
- Most staff viewed supervision positively, and the development of reflective supervision within the Transitions Hub was a strength.
- Administrative staff were skilled and motivated, and reported good support from management; their contribution to the PDU was positive.
- Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff are well represented within the PDU in all roles.
- Individual development needs are recognised, and staff were actively encouraged to 'act up' or apply for new roles, which provided career progression routes and recognised talent.
- Average sickness levels are seven sick days for all staff members annually, compared with a regional average of 17.
- Mentors working with young adults provide additional, structured and tailored support.

Areas for improvement:

- Not all staff had accessed all training to support blended caseloads.
- There was a disconnect between staff's perception of workload (eight out of 16 staff said workload was not so or not at all manageable) and what the workload management tool was indicating (91.9 per cent at the start of fieldwork). The reasons for this disconnect had not been explored fully by the PDU to understand if probation practitioners' workloads were being managed effectively.
- Recording of information on the case management system was not always undertaken promptly and reinforced our concerns of inconsistent management oversight when monitoring practice.
- Support provided by managers in supervision and other means did not always translate into good frontline practice.

1.3. Services



A comprehensive range of high-quality services is in place, supporting a tailored and responsive service for all people on probation.

Requires improvement

Strengths:

- There was a broad range of services in the PDU including Commissioned Rehabilitation Services (CRS), the Transitions Hub and other local partners.
- The development of the Transitions Hub enhanced access to multi-agency opportunities and localised bespoke services for young adults.
- The Transitions Hub explicitly considered the diversity needs and protected characteristics of people on probation, and we saw evidence of a 'golden thread' approach where it was often central to activity with young adults.
- Referral numbers to CRS were monitored, and there was assurance that probation practitioners were considering the options available in their plans.
- Although there were no courts within the PDU, there was evidence of liaison with local sentencers to ensure the offer within Newham was clear.
- Effective use had been made of the funding streams available. For example, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities funded an accommodation worker who had secured accommodation for 30 people who had left custody.

Areas for improvement:

- The use of services by PDU staff was not always implemented effectively. For example, the coordination of services with other organisations in work to support both desistance and the safety of others was undertaken well in only eight out of 25 relevant cases inspected.
- Well-defined operational and strategic safeguarding links with children's social care were in place but not reflected in practice, with several enquiries not being made when needed.
- There was a lack of consistent domestic abuse intelligence received from the police, inhibiting public protection arrangements. We heard of instances where, despite concerns, police were not providing information. Additionally, police resourcing to chair some MAPPA meetings was not always consistent.
- Unpaid work outcomes were poor; 46 per cent of cases with an unpaid work requirement had hours outstanding beyond 12 months, and it was notable that the lack of local delivery sites had been a barrier to engagement.
- Successful completion rates for general accredited programme requirements and rehabilitation activity requirements were poor over the last 12 months; 25 per cent and 55 per cent, respectively. However, dip sampling of recently sentenced cases during fieldwork gave some assurance this was being addressed.

Resettlement

Strengths:

- There has been strategic consideration of the specific needs of people in custody. For example, the PDU has a specialist Parole Assessment Report Offender Manager who produces all reports, allowing some degree of consistency with this activity. Additionally, commissioning an in-house resettlement accommodation worker to specifically tackle related needs when leaving custody was another positive response.
- The classification of risk for this cohort of inspected cases was accurate in eight out of the 10 cases inspected.

Areas for improvement:

- Our findings indicated that activity with people on probation within the post release supervision cohort was not undertaken as well as for those subject to community sentences.
- The strengths-based approach to engaging people on probation was noticeable with those on community sentences. It was less well defined for people on probation within the resettlement cohort, and assessments had identified their strengths and protective factors in only one of the seven cases where strengths were apparent. Furthermore, when interventions were delivered with these seven individuals, service delivery did not build upon these strengths with any of them.
- Despite the broad range of services available in the borough, attempts at engaging with people on probation leaving custody was poor. For example, planning that utilised links to the work of other agencies and other multi-agency plans was undertaken in only one of nine relevant cases inspected, and the coordination of interventions with other organisations to deliver services was undertaken in only one case. The PDU needs to review this area of activity to provide assurance that services are bespoke enough for the needs of this cohort and that there are no barriers to engagement.
- We saw limited attempts to re-engage people on probation after recall or enforcement action had been taken; it was evident in only one of the five cases where enforcement action had been undertaken. By not making the attempt to re-engage, probation practitioners are missing opportunities to address the reasons for relapse and tackle the revolving door of custody that some people on probation experience.
- None of the nine people on probation who required a review of their risk were meaningfully involved in this activity. Again, these were missed opportunities to engage the person on probation but also to ensure they were fully aware of the probation practitioner's risk assessment.

1.4. Information and facilities



Timely and relevant information is available, and appropriate facilities are in place to support a high-quality, personalised and responsive approach for all people on probation.

Good

Strengths:

- The PDU was based in one office, with satellite provision for females if required. The main office was in a good state of repair, accessible to all and provided a good base from which to deliver interventions.
- Office space was well utilised. As well as co-location of Transitions Hub staff, there was evidence that partners such as Integrated Offender Management colleagues regularly visited the building to co-deliver activity and meet probation practitioners. This activity had a positive impact upon relationships and links between staff.
- The Transitions Hub had been designed with consideration of the needs of young adults and the aims of the transitional approach; the waiting area was a controlled environment, and people on probation were seen in a trauma-informed setting.
- Staff had access to mobile phones and laptops, which support remote working. However, there was a management expectation that probation practitioners work from the office whenever possible to enhance opportunities for increased contact with people on probation and collaboration with other staff.
- Policies and guidance were coordinated and reviewed appropriately at local and regional level. These were stored on the intranet platform, and all staff had access.
- Several service-level information sharing agreements were in place, and there was evidence that information was being shared between services, although not in all instances.
- Although it was not always effectively utilised, ICT systems provide managers with access to appropriate management information.

Areas for improvement:

- In our survey, of the 16 probation practitioners who responded, only 10 felt that attention was paid to safety most of the time. Furthermore, some staff interviewed did not feel health and safety incidents had always been dealt with effectively or had resulted in lessons learned being discussed effectively or changes to policy being made. Additionally, while we did see evidence of activity to learn lessons from SFOs and other serious incidents, arrangements to monitor action plans locally need to be more consistent.
- Desk space within the Transitions Hub was restricted, which meant that the benefits of co-location were not consistently experienced.

Feedback from people on probation

Overview

User Voice, working with HM Inspectorate of Probation, had contact with 96 people on probation as part of this inspection and undertook 13 face-to-face interviews. Eighty-five of the respondents were male and 11 were female. Most respondents were black, Asian or minority ethnic (65 out of 96). All but two of the remaining responders (who 'preferred not to say') self-identified as white or white British.

There were a number of strengths noted about their experiences but also a lack of consistently positive feedback. People on probation had a wide range of views about the type of service they wanted, underpinned by a wish for a service tailored to their individual needs.

Strengths:

- Three in five people on probation think their relationship with their probation practitioner works well.
- People feel safe at probation offices and able to have private conversations with their probation practitioners.
- Two in three people on probation who responded (62 out of 93) were happy with the overall support they received from probation.
- Although 26 out of 93 who responded said there were no positives regarding their probation experience, this number is much lower than that found in other PDUs inspected across London in 2022.

Areas for improvement:

- Appointments are the biggest issues for people on probation (raised by 28 out of 94 respondents). Those who had negative experiences noted challenges such as long waiting times, lack of flexibility, probation practitioner not paying attention and delivery of repetitive interventions.
- Only around half of those that needed services had access to them, with only 32 out of 61 people on probation who said they needed support, indicating they had been helped by probation.
- Experiences of induction vary from person to person and were inconsistent. For example, some noted that induction was overwhelming and sometimes involved being given a lot of information to process and retain with minimal checks of their comprehension.
- None of the 13 people interviewed felt they had a say in how probation is run. Only 30 of the 93 who responded said they had been asked for their views about being on supervision.

Diversity and inclusion

Strengths:

- The workforce in Newham PDU reflected the diversity of the local population in terms of ethnicity and included proportionally more ethnic minority staff than the region across all roles.
- The Transitions Hub was responsible for considering the diversity needs and protected characteristics of younger people on probation. This included an acknowledgement of the impact of race and ethnicity within the trauma-informed practices, the development of user-friendly materials by speech and language therapists, and the utilisation of local organisations to work specifically with young black people on probation.
- Provision for females on probation was comprehensive, although we were not able to validate this in the cases we inspected.
- A team member has been seconded to HMPPS's Strategic Group (Race Action Programme Team) and is due to return in January 2023.

Areas for improvement:

- While the PDU is making positive attempts to tackle issues of diversity, this was not always translated into effective frontline practice; in only 13 of the 33 cases inspected did the assessment analyse the protected characteristics of the individual. Furthermore, protected characteristics were not analysed in any of the 10 resettlement cohort cases. Planning took account of diversity in only 16 of the relevant cases and implementation in only 16 instances.
- While data on diversity is collected, we did not always see evidence that it was always evaluated comprehensively, particularly regarding disproportionality.
- We saw evidence that the quality of translation services for some people on probation who had communication difficulties was variable, and deficits had not been reviewed sufficiently or escalated to find solutions. Additionally, findings from cases inspected identified gaps in the management of foreign nationals with scope for better liaison (potentially at a regional rather than PDU level) with the Home Office in relation to intelligence sharing and risk management.
- While the PDU utilised the 'Let's Talk' toolkit to develop staff understanding of diversity and inclusion themes, there had been limited evaluation of the impact of this activity.

2. Court work and case supervision

2.2. Court work

The pre-sentence information and advice provided to court supports its decision-making.	Not applicable
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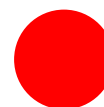
Our rating² for court work is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against the key question:

Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
Is the pre-sentence information and advice provided to court sufficiently analytical and personalised to the individual, supporting the court's decision-making?	Not applicable

This standard was not inspected. There is no court located within Newham, and there were no pre-sentence reports prepared within the PDU.

² The rating for the standard is driven by the score for the key question, which is placed in a rating band. Full data and further information about inspection methodology is available in the data workbook for this inspection [on our website](#).

2.2. Assessment



Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the person on probation.

Inadequate

Our rating³ for assessment is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against three key questions:

Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
Does assessment focus sufficiently on engaging the person on probation?	64%
Does assessment focus sufficiently on the factors linked to offending and desistance?	48%
Does assessment focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	36%

Newham PDU is rated as 'Inadequate' for assessment as the lowest score out of the three key questions was 36 per cent. This lowest score relates to whether there was sufficient focus on keeping other people safe.

Strengths:

- There was evidence of attempts to apply relationship-based approaches with people on probation, reflected by the fact that 73 per cent of assessments meaningfully involved them.
- Although only five young adult cases were inspected, assessment activity was undertaken well with all of them, supporting the multi-agency approach to assessment undertaken by the Transitions Hub pilot.

Areas for improvement:

- Assessments identified and analysed offending-related factors in only 16 of the 33 inspected cases, impacting on the efficacy of Newham's approach to addressing desistance.
- Assessments only drew on sufficient information sources to assess risk of harm in 30 per cent of cases inspected, with domestic abuse and safeguarding enquiries not being made in a reasonable majority of cases. This meant there was a lack of assurance that assessments were always being made with all available information and consideration of all relevant risks.

³ The rating for the standard is driven by the score for the key question, which is placed in a rating band. Full data and further information about inspection methodology is available in the data workbook for this inspection [on our website](#).

2.3. Planning



Planning is well-informed, holistic and personalised, actively involving the person on probation.

Inadequate

Our rating⁴ for planning is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against three key questions:

Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
Does planning focus sufficiently on engaging the person on probation?	52%
Does planning focus sufficiently on reducing reoffending and supporting desistance?	48%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	39%

Newham PDU is rated as 'Inadequate' for planning as the lowest score out of the three key questions was 39 per cent. This lowest score relates to whether there was sufficient focus on keeping other people safe.

Strengths:

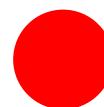
- While the experiences of people on probation being meaningfully involved in their plan was adequate in too few instances (20 out of 33 cases), Newham's attempts to involve them were undertaken better than other planning activity inspected and reflected genuine attempts to incorporate relationship-based approaches into practice.

Areas for improvement:

- Planning did not sufficiently reflect offending-related factors or promote those factors that were most critical in half the relevant cases, indicating that personalised plans were not always considered and developed.
- The coordination of plans to keep others safe with other services were not robust; activity failed to make links with other agencies in 16 out of 25 cases where required and thus reduced assurance that plans to manage risks were sufficiently collaborative.
- Contingency planning was poor and only undertaken well in 10 out of 27 relevant cases, which meant that if there were concerns about the risk posed, it was not clear what action should be taken to keep others safe.

⁴ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. Full data and further information about inspection methodology is available in the data workbook for this inspection [on our website](#).

2.4. Implementation and delivery



High-quality well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging the person on probation.

Inadequate

Our rating⁵ for implementation and delivery is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against three key questions:

Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
Is the sentence or post-custody period implemented effectively with a focus on engaging the person on probation?	42%
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support desistance?	30%
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?	27%

Newham PDU is rated as 'Inadequate' for implementation and delivery as the lowest score out of the three key questions was 27 per cent. Scores across all three key questions were poor.

Strengths:

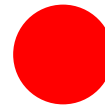
- The comprehensive allocation process in Newham noted previously appeared to be having a positive impact upon the timeliness of interventions starting, and we identified that requirements had started promptly in 21 of the 31 cases where people on probation had complied from the outset.

Areas for improvement:

- Some of the strengths we had identified in assessment and planning were not reflected in ongoing intervention activity; for example, sequenced, desistance-focused services were only delivered in 13 of the 33 cases inspected.
- Consideration of the safety of victims was not undertaken well and provided little assurance that consideration of their needs was a priority. Sufficient attention to their protection was present in only seven out of 28 cases where a victim was identified.
- Key people in the person on probation's life were rarely engaged by probation (five out of 16 relevant cases). This lack of engagement reflected a key missed opportunity to engage others in supporting effective service delivery.

⁵ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. Full data and further information about inspection methodology is available in the data workbook for this inspection [on our website](#).

2.5. Reviewing



Reviewing of progress is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the person on probation. **Inadequate**

Our rating⁶ for reviewing is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against three key questions:

Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the compliance and engagement of the person on probation?	48%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting desistance?	30%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	30%

Newham PDU is rated as 'Inadequate' for reviewing as the lowest score out of the three key questions was 30 per cent for two key questions. Scores across all three key questions were poor.

Areas for improvement:

- The person on probation was not meaningfully engaged in reviewing progress in 19 of the 33 cases inspected. This highlighted a deficit in Newham's relationship-based approaches to working with people on probation that had been evident in other standards inspected.
- Reviewing focused on identifying and addressing changes in factors linked to offending behaviour in only eight out of 29 relevant cases, indicating that this activity is not being evaluated well enough by the PDU. More effective management oversight is needed to ensure that this activity is meaningful and that adjustments are made appropriately.
- Reviewing activity which identified and addressed factors related to changes in risk of harm was undertaken poorly and was assessed to be satisfactory in only three out of 24 cases.
- Written reviews were completed in only 13 of 27 cases where there was a requirement to formally record the management of risk of harm. Failure to complete such a record meant changing risks associated with the relevant person on probation could be missed by another probation practitioner picking up the case file with no prior knowledge of original risk of harm concerns.

⁶ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table.

2.6. Outcomes

Early outcomes are positive, demonstrating reasonable progress for the person on probation.

We do not currently rate the outcomes standard, but provide this data for information and benchmarking purposes only.

Outcomes	Percentage 'Yes'
Do early outcomes demonstrate that reasonable progress has been made, in line with the personalised needs of the person on probation?	27%

Strengths:

- In 28 out of the 33 cases inspected, there was no increase in offending and none of those within the inspected cohort who were identified as homeless at the start of intervention were homeless at the point of inspection.

Areas for improvement:

- Formal breach or recall action was only taken in six of the 11 required instances, perhaps reflecting the previously noted inconsistencies in management oversight. More consistent oversight may have resulted in clearer responses to instances of non-engagement.
- Overall, there was only a limited demonstration of improvements in the factors most closely linked to offending, with improved outcomes only being demonstrated in five of the 31 cases inspected. This is illustrative of our earlier noted analysis of implementation and delivery activity. Although we saw some more positive activity within assessment and planning, this was not followed through with desistance focused service delivery.
- Attempts to reduce factors most closely linked to risk of harm to others were also poor. This was only evidenced in five out of 27 cases where risks were present. It was unclear in an additional three instances. The previously noted poor completion rates of written risk reviews and identification of factors related to changes in risk will have made it more difficult for probation practitioners to evidence potentially positive outcomes.
- Poor recording by probation practitioners may have contributed to a lack of clarity about positive outcomes; for example, our assessment of those people on probation whose accommodation status was not clear rose from two at the start of intervention to eight at the point of inspection.

Annexe one – Web links

Full data from this inspection and further information about the methodology used to conduct this inspection is available [on our website](#).

A glossary of terms used in this report is available on our website using the following link: [Glossary \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/glossary)