



HM Inspectorate
of Probation

An inspection of probation services in:

Bradford & Calderdale PDU

The Probation Service – Yorkshire & The Humber Region

HM Inspectorate of Probation, November 2024

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Acknowledgements

This inspection was led by HM Inspector Billy Finnegan, supported by a team of inspectors and colleagues from across the Inspectorate. We would like to thank all those who participated in any way in this inspection. Without their help and cooperation, the inspection would not have been possible.

The role of HM Inspectorate of Probation

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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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This publication is available for download at: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation

ISBN 978-1-916621-60-2

Published by:

HM Inspectorate of Probation
1st Floor Civil Justice Centre
1 Bridge Street West
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M3 3FX

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Foreword

This was the first inspection of Bradford and Calderdale Probation Delivery Unit since it was established after the unification of probation services in 2021. Worryingly, there were a number of deficits in this PDU, including its culture, morale and high sickness levels. The underlying issues in this PDU are longstanding and had been neglected for too long, resulting in it now being a difficult place to work. Urgent action is needed to reset this, to ensure the PDU can deliver better results for staff, service users and the local community. Strategic relationships were in a stable position, but the quality of work to manage people on probation was insufficient on all four of our standards of casework. Overall, we have rated this PDU as 'Inadequate'.

Divisions between all three offices across Bradford and Calderdale were apparent, with an openly divisive and strained culture. There were still significant barriers between staff who had previously worked for the National Probation Service (NPS) and those who had worked for a Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC), and attempts to unite staff had failed. Three years on from unification, this was particularly poor and disappointing, and leaders need to address the issue urgently.

As a result of the culture, morale was low. Sections of staff did not feel valued in their roles and were working in difficult environments. This was impacting on sickness levels, where, across all staffing groups, the average loss was 18.6 days per year. This was even more acute at probation officer (PO) grade, where the figure was 21 days on average per year. In addition to this, the PDU had large gaps in staffing, with 33 per cent of the PO posts vacant and unclear timescales for when this would improve. The overall staffing challenges were acutely hampering the PDU's ability to deliver high-quality casework.

Significant improvements were needed in the quality of casework to assess and manage the risks posed by people on probation in the community. There were deficits across all standards of casework, but this was particularly poor in assessment, where only 19 per cent of cases were judged sufficient in supporting the safety of other people effectively.

Leaders clearly had some insight into the difficulties in this PDU, and as such were working with the Tackling Unacceptable Behaviour Unit (TUBU) to address some of these issues. This included work to create a psychologically safe environment. However, this needed more priority from all staff across the PDU to ensure the work was having the required impact. Overall, leaders needed to be much clearer in their messaging to all staff across the PDU.

The quality of services and their provision was more promising. We saw effective working relationships with the police, including the delivery of joint training events across Bradford and Calderdale, to improve the quality of public protection work. Additionally, the delivery of Integrated Offender Management (IOM) work was strong and producing impressive results in terms of reducing reoffending.

Bradford and Calderdale will be concerned with the overall outcome of this inspection. The PDU remains operating in a chaotic state and leaders need to stabilise it. There are opportunities to unite staff across all sites and improve the culture, including harnessing the work delivered by TUBU. Additionally, a focus on improving the quality of casework is needed as a priority. It will be a sizeable task to get Bradford and Calderdale to where it needs to be and will require support from beyond the PDU. However, there are opportunities to achieve this, and to make the necessary improvements needed to deliver an effective service.



Martin Jones CBE

HM Chief Inspector of Probation

Ratings

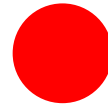
Bradford & Calderdale PDU

Fieldwork started September 2024

Score **1/21**

Overall rating

Inadequate



1. Organisational arrangements and activity

P 1.1 Leadership

Inadequate



P 1.2 Staffing

Inadequate



P 1.3 Services

Requires improvement



2. Service delivery

P 2.1 Assessment

Inadequate



P 2.2 Planning

Inadequate



P 2.3 Implementation and delivery

Inadequate



P 2.4 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.

Bradford and Calderdale PDU should:

1. improve the quality of work to assess, plan for, manage and review risk of harm
2. analyse information on child safeguarding and domestic abuse sufficiently to inform the quality of assessment and management of people on probation
3. clearly communicate strategic priorities and make sure these are understood by probation practitioners and middle managers
4. ensure that there are services in place to adequately support the demographic of people on probation in the PDU
5. ensure that there is parity of workloads for probation practitioners as well as for middle managers
6. improve the culture across the PDU to address divisions between teams
7. improve the quality of buildings and facilities in all probation offices, ensuring that staff are safe and that the buildings are accessible to all.

Background

We conducted fieldwork in Bradford and Calderdale over the period of two weeks, with week one beginning on 02 September 2024 and week two beginning on 16 September 2024. We inspected 49 community orders and 30 releases on licence from custody where sentences and licences had commenced during two separate weeks, between 22 January 2024 and 28 January 2024 and 04 March 2024 and 10 March 2024. We also conducted 57 interviews with probation practitioners.

Bradford and Calderdale is one of 11 PDUs in Yorkshire and the Humber and the second largest in the region. The PDU delivers probation work across three main probation offices. Two of these are in Bradford and the other is in Halifax, which covers cases from Calderdale. Additionally, in Bradford there is both a magistrates' and a Crown court.

The PDU covers a large area of West Yorkshire, including the city of Bradford, the town of Halifax and more rural areas. The local authority arrangements include separate unitary local authorities in Bradford and Calderdale. This can present resourcing challenges, because partnership arrangements have to be duplicated at both strategic and operational level. For example, there are two management boards for youth justice services (YJS), one for each local authority. West Yorkshire police serves the whole of the PDU's area. Bradford's reoffending rate is just above the regional average at 29 per cent,¹ with Calderdale's just below the regional average at 26 per cent.

The total caseload for Yorkshire and the Humber region is 26,789,² with the PDU's caseload standing at 3,834 at the time of inspection. Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups made up 32.8 per cent of the caseload, which was high when compared to the regional average of only six per cent.

A range of services were delivered across the PDU. This included services delivered both by Commissioned Rehabilitative Services (CRS) and through other commissioning arrangements. The CRS provision included accommodation services delivered by St Giles and women's services delivered by the Together Women Project (TWP). There was no designated service to work with people from a minority ethnic background.

The Probation Reset³ policy was implemented during the time of this inspection. Nine out of 70 cases inspected were subject to Probation Reset. This meant that those individuals had their supervision suspended for the final third of their supervision period. This change was delivered at pace and implemented from 01 July 2024.

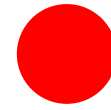
¹ Ministry of Justice. (July 2024). Proven reoffending statistics: Oct 2021 to Sep 2022.

² Ministry of Justice. (2024). Offender Management Caseload Statistics as of 31 March 2024

³ Probation Reset is a nationally mandated operational policy change and has been implemented to alleviate probation workload pressures in response to prison capacity challenges. This mandates that supervision of a person on probation, who is eligible according to certain criteria, will be suspended at the two-thirds point of their sentence. These measures aim to target resources at the start of supervision in the community.

1. Organisational arrangements and activity

P 1.1. Leadership



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

Inadequate

The PDU had faced challenges for a significant period of time and remained in a concerning state at the time of the inspection. Outwardly, the PDU presented as stable, with established external strategic relationships. However, internally, there were longstanding issues. Resourcing and workloads had compounded this. In recognition of the challenges and complexities faced by Bradford and Calderdale, regional leaders had put some limited additional support in place for the PDU, but this had not yet had the required impact. Overall, there were too many failings and deficits in leadership; therefore, this area has been rated 'Inadequate'.

Strengths:

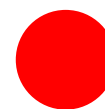
- External strategic partnerships in Bradford and Calderdale were strong. Relationships were well established and stable, with probation recognised as a valued partner. This was to the leadership's credit, given the complexities and challenges in this PDU.
- Leaders had recognised some of the culture issues in the PDU and had proactively sought the support of the TUBU unit. TUBU had completed a climate assessment and, in response to the findings, was delivering sessions for staff on psychological safety. However, inspectors had concerns that take-up was relatively low and additional work was required to ensure all staff across the PDU understood the high importance of this work.
- Engaging People on Probation was delivered effectively. Groups for people on probation were well established and operating across both the Bradford and Calderdale offices, with sessions themed around topical issues such as early release schemes. External services, including accommodation, were invited to sessions to improve individuals' understanding of these key areas.

Areas for improvement:

- Challenges in leadership were reflected in the casework, with all four of our standards rated 'Inadequate'. There were deficits in the work completed across both Bradford and Calderdale teams, with particular concerns in the work to keep people safe. There were also disappointing scores for both engagement and desistance.
- There was a hostile and divisive working environment in the PDU, with multiple cultural issues. This included significant division between the two separate offices in Bradford, and the Calderdale office. There was limited communication between the offices and no sense of 'One PDU'. Calderdale staff operated completely separately from Bradford staff, despite having very similar issues with the quality of casework.
- There were also divisions among staff groups, where legacy NPS and CRC issues were still in place, despite reunification taking place in 2021. The leadership had failed to address this over several years. Attempts to bring together teams across the PDU had been unsuccessful. This was urgently needed to remedy the culture.

- Leaders were operating a 'firefighting' approach and were largely reactive. Only half of respondents to our staff survey reported that the PDU promoted openness, constructive challenge and ideas. There were ambitions to get the PDU to a period of stability in order to address key priorities and improve the quality of work to protect the public and effectively support people on probation. However, this had not been achieved due to the scale of the longstanding challenges.
- Priorities were not clearly communicated and were not understood by staff. During a period when the PDU had experienced very high workloads, and both practitioners and SPOs had unmanageable workloads, staff received very limited direction or assistance from leaders to address the issues. The collective view was that 'everything was a priority'. Messaging from leaders needed to be much clearer, as did the steps to be taken to ensure staff knew what key priorities were and how to implement them.
- Difficult decisions were too often shied away from, including directing staff to assist with workloads. Staff repeatedly reported that actions were not followed up in a timely manner and that this would often lead to drift. This had resulted in staff losing faith that action would be taken when required. The PDU was viewed by some staff as a 'top show', illustrating that externally the PDU presented as stable, but internally there were major difficulties.
- Estates were a significant concern. The Fraternal House office in Bradford had a whole floor closed due to issues with damp, and there was no suitable area for staff to take their breaks. The city courts office in Bradford did not have appropriate disability access, despite being recently refurbished. Leaders had escalated these issues to facilities management and the region, but conditions remained unacceptable, with urgent attention to improving them required.
- Risks to service delivery were only partly understood. A risk register was in place, which appropriately outlined concerns around workloads, health and safety, and vacancy rates, but limited mitigation was in place. Additionally, culture and disparity in services between Bradford and Calderdale, and overall workload issues, were not fully recognised. These were key challenges in this PDU.
- Overall, limited priority was given to diversity and inclusion. Staff said that discussions were often surface level only and that it was not a safe environment to discuss potentially difficult issues openly. This included instances where some staff from minority groups felt, on occasion, marginalised by others within the PDU.

P 1.2. Staffing



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

Inadequate

Morale across the PDU was poor. Staff had been working in difficult conditions for sustained periods of time and a culture of silo working had become embedded. This, coupled with longstanding issues with resourcing, sickness, and workloads, resulted in an overall rating of 'Inadequate'.

Strengths:

- Staff attrition rates were below the regional average, with an overall rate of 8.2 per cent and just 5.7 per cent for POs. Given the challenges of the PDU, this was positive to see. A significant number of PQiPs had previously been in PSO or in administrative roles, and had aspirations to progress in the PDU.
- PDU development days were regularly delivered for practitioners and managers across both the Bradford and Calderdale offices. These took place in person at venues away from probation offices. Each session had a theme related to a target area of practice and provided the opportunity for staff in all three offices to collaborate, an area that needed to be developed further.
- Despite significant staffing challenges, 89 per cent of cases inspected had no more than two practitioners for the whole of the person's licence or order. This provided stability in the working relationship with the person on probation and the opportunity to increase engagement.
- A proactive approach was taken to address high levels of sickness in the PDU. There were regular sickness surgeries with the head of PDU and an HR performance manager, ensuring that formal attendance processes were robustly managed. Leaders were trying to ensure that a 'sickness culture' did not develop and staff were supported appropriately in their roles.

Areas for improvement:

- The PDU had significant staffing gaps. This was most pronounced at PO grade, where there was a 33 per cent vacancy rate. Staffing projections suggested that the PDU was unlikely to achieve its target staffing for some time, with continuing vacancies anticipated for POs up until the end of 2026. With a regional freeze on external recruitment for band four staff, the PDU had faced significant challenges in obtaining the staff it required to deliver services effectively, with limited resolutions at its disposal.
- There was very poor morale across the PDU, most noticeably in the Bradford offices. Staff felt undervalued and this was impacting on staff sickness. This was at a high level, with the average being 18.6 days per year for all staff and 21 days for probation officers. This issue was a particular concern given the potential impact on newer members of staff, including high numbers of PQiPs, and their ability to receive the level of support they needed.
- Collaboration among teams within the PDU was very limited. Tensions between the offices in both Bradford and Calderdale were clear. Staff groups of all grades,

including middle managers, were working in silos, contributing to a divided culture in the PDU. Staff had lost sight of the core probation values to keep people safe, protect victims and support people on probation and were focused on internal issues within the PDU.

- The PDU needed to address issues with workload disparity. Overall, the PDU's workload average was at 104 per cent against the workload measurement tool (WMT) for POs and 101 per cent for PSOs. This had reduced significantly since the implementation of Probation Reset. However, there was significant variation between teams. Some teams were at 118 per cent on the WMT, others at 69 per cent and a PQiP team at 34 per cent. The leadership had identified the equalising of workloads as a priority going forward. However, this issue only contributed further to tensions between teams
- The quality of PSO work needed to improve significantly. Experience levels at this grade varied. This, coupled with insufficient long-term and continuous training, had resulted in significant deficits in the quality of casework, particularly in work to keep people safe. Concerns extended to the work completed by trainee members of staff. Although only seven cases in our sample were from this group, the work completed was too often of poor quality.⁴
- There were concerns about staff not feeling safe in their working environment. In our staff survey, 31 out of 55 respondents did not feel that sufficient attention was paid to their safety. This extended to wellbeing, where 73 per cent of staff in our survey reported that insufficient attention was paid to their wellbeing. The PDU leadership had put in place a wellbeing action plan, but the impact of this was not being felt by staff at this stage.
- Management oversight was assessed as insufficient, ineffective or absent in 66 of 74 relevant cases we inspected. This did, to some extent, illustrate what we have seen nationally regarding excessive workload held by senior probation officers, including many HR issues. However, many staff reported that the visibility of some line managers was low. This impacted on the levels of support for staff.
- Staff training was a concern. The offer remained largely online, with staff often having limited time to undertake it. This resulted in an insufficient level of the required training being completed, evidenced further in the poor-quality casework. Some staff were accessing external training offered by the local authority, but this was not standard practice across the PDU. Additionally, there was an over-reliance on staff considered more experienced to train newer members of the team. This happened particularly at administrator grade, where there was a sense of 'you learn on the job'.

⁴ The findings relating to POs, PSOs and trainees have not been subject to the relative rate index analysis, which is test used to compare rates of incidence, we report on our findings with that caveat.

P 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

A varied offer of services was available in this PDU, with some strong joint work with the police and other agencies. However, there were disparities in services between Bradford and Calderdale, with the offer not always meeting the needs of people on probation. Decision guidance states that for an overall rating of 'Requires improvement', the rating for 2.3 implementation and delivery would usually be 'Requires improvement' or 'Good'. Although 2.3 was rated 'Inadequate', there were strengths in this area, which has led to an overall rating of 'Requires improvement' rather than 'Inadequate'.

Strengths:

- The Multi Agency Reducing Reoffending Service (MARRS) was a positive initiative. It was aimed at individuals who may be involved in regular offending but would not meet the IOM criteria. MARRS operated a multi-agency approach to support individuals in the Bradford area. At the time of the inspection, the pilot had been successful and further funding from Public Health England had been confirmed to extend it.
- IOM delivery was strong. Working relationships between the police, probation and other agencies were effective and information-sharing was consistent and timely. A concentrator model was largely in place, with IOM practitioners managing the majority of the cases. IOM was having real successes, with an average desistance rate of 83.5 per cent.
- The PDU had systems in place with dedicated administrative resources to access police information on domestic abuse. This meant that practitioners were usually able to receive vital domestic abuse information in a timely manner, enabling them to carry out risk assessments more accurately. This was evidenced in our casework, with 90 per cent of cases having sufficient domestic abuse information.
- Appropriate Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) were in place, with a focus on improving the quality of public protection work across the PDU. Joint training sessions had been completed with probation and the police in both Bradford and Calderdale, with further sessions planned for later in the year and early 2025. A regular newsletter was also distributed to all staff in order to ensure updates on process were disseminated.
- Drug and alcohol services in Calderdale were well established and delivered well. Drug Rehabilitation Requirements (DRRs) and Alcohol Treatment Requirements were being delivered above the national targeted figure and there was a varied offer from both Calderdale Recovery Steps and Ingeus, the treatment providers that delivered the dependency and recovery services. This included group work, individual support and separate pathways for women.
- A cannabis awareness group, delivered across both offices in Bradford, was a promising initiative. Delivered as part of the work by substance misuse provider New Vision Bradford, the group was led by facilitators with lived experience and provided support for a key area of substance misuse. Increasing referral numbers to this group would strengthen this initiative even further.

Areas for improvement:

- There was disparity between the services offered in Bradford and Calderdale, with Calderdale having most established services on offer. One example was the substance misuse offer. Although New Vision Bradford was ambitious to improve the support to people on probation, it faced challenges such as DRRs in Bradford not achieving the national targets.
- Despite the offer of services, inspectors judged that 28 out of 61 cases inspected had not been referred to a CRS service and should have been. Given that staff had high workloads, this was a missed opportunity to adequately support people on probation to desist from further offending. Improving awareness of the services available was key to addressing this issue.
- Mental Health Treatment Requirements (MHTRs) were not being offered in this PDU. Across West Yorkshire, staff had not yet been appointed to deliver MHTRs, and there was no confirmed live date. As a result, this key offer of support was not available for people on probation.
- In contrast to what we see in other PDUs nationally, there were no systems in place to directly access child safeguarding information from either Bradford or Calderdale. This contributed to problems in obtaining this vital information. These contributed to deficits in safeguarding in the casework inspected, whereby only half of cases had sufficient safeguarding information as part of assessment.
- Accredited programme completion rates needed to improve. The rate for successful completions for individuals who had committed a sexual offence was 39.5 per cent, and 55 per cent for those convicted of a non-sexual offence. In addition to this, the Horizon accredited programme for those convicted of a sexual offence was not delivered in the PDU. Individuals were having to travel to Leeds or other neighbouring PDUs to complete this programme
- There was no dedicated service to provide support for education, training and employment (ETE). Since the termination of the ETE CRS contract nationally, this has been a gap for the PDU. The CFO hub, which went live in the area in August 2024, did offer ETE support as one of its strands of work, but it was not a specified ETE service.
- The CRS accommodation service, provided by St Giles, was problematic. The contract offer did not provide a service required to meet the PDU's needs. The service was oversubscribed and caseloads for St Giles staff were very high. Relationships between the PDU and St Giles needed to improve, particularly to ensure a higher quality of referrals and an understanding of the service offer.

Feedback from people on probation

User Voice, working with HM Inspectorate of Probation, had contact with 73 people on probation as part of this inspection, with 69 people surveyed and four taking part in interviews. Of those surveyed, 52 per cent reported that they were being supervised after release from prison and 32 per cent were subject to a community sentence. 16 per cent of the respondents did not specify the type of order or licence they were subject to. The respondents were largely representative of the caseload in terms of ethnic diversity, with 35 per cent from a minority ethnic background, compared with 32.8 per cent of the caseload. However, 14 per cent of respondents did not disclose their ethnicity.

- People on probation overwhelmingly felt safe accessing probation services (86 per cent), with 80 per cent of respondents reporting that travel distances to appointments were reasonable. This was positive, considering the large geographical area covered by the PDU and the challenges with estates.
- 88 per cent of respondents reported having strong relationships with their probation practitioner. Given the internal challenges within the PDU, it was impressive to see that individuals were having a positive experience with their probation practitioners.

“My probation officer is really supportive and understanding of my situation and my needs.”

- More could be done to involve people on probation in creating their sentence plan, with a nearly a quarter of respondents reporting that they did not have sufficient input to them. This correlated with some of the deficits that we saw in the planning area of service delivery.
- There were occasions when people on probation did not consider that their supervision was helpful in supporting their rehabilitation. This raised questions about the value of certain appointments between people on probation and practitioners, but also indicates the workload pressures that practitioners were under, limiting the time they could spend with individuals.

“It’s short and sweet and we never get anywhere. I go to unpaid work every week for the past 10 weeks and someone showed up once.”

Diversity and inclusion

Strengths:

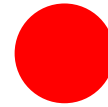
- The PDU had relevant data to understand the profile of staff and people on probation. 37 per cent of the workforce identified as being from a minority ethnic background, compared with 32.8 per cent of the caseload. Therefore, in terms of ethnicity, the workforce was fully representative of this demographic. This was particularly important, as 39 per cent of the local population of Bradford were from a minority ethnic background.
- Seconded probation officer and PSO posts had been vacant for lengthy periods in both Bradford YJS and Calderdale YJS, but the PDU had filled these posts in recent months. This was in response to the PDU recognising that its overall staffing picture was unlikely to improve significantly in the near future and the importance of transition work for young adults.
- Specific women's premises were available in both Bradford and Calderdale, facilitated by the TWP service. This provided a holistic environment for women to be seen by their probation practitioners, TWP staff and other services that offered support. Probation practitioners were regularly having their supervision appointments with women at these premises, increasing the likelihood of engagement in a more appropriate environment.

Areas for improvement:

- There was a significant gap in services to support the south Asian community. Historically, a service was in place to support this cohort of people on probation, but the contract ended and had not been replaced. Given the demographic of the local population, whereby 32 per cent of people in Bradford were from an Asian background, not having a specific service in place was poor.
- Eight out of 11 relevant cases of women on probation inspected did not have a CRS referral and should have. There had been a decrease in referrals to TWP women's services, who were able to provide a varied offer of interventions for women, with minimal waiting periods. This missed a prime opportunity to engage and support women with the services needed to help with desistance.
- Tracking of specific cohorts and demographics should be developed. This includes those transitioning from YJS to probation, where there was limited information on the outcomes of individuals once supervised by probation.
- In 57 per cent of cases inspected, the assessment did not analyse the individual's protected characteristics or consider their impact on the individual's ability to comply and engage with service delivery. The PDU needed to improve this work to improve engagement with people on probation.

2. Service delivery

P 2.1. Assessment



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

Inadequate

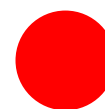
Our rating⁵ for assessment is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against three key questions and is driven by the lowest score:

Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
Does assessment focus sufficiently on engaging the person on probation?	46%
Does assessment focus sufficiently on the factors linked to offending and desistance?	56%
Does assessment focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	19%

- The area where there were most strengths in assessment was desistance. This was the highest-rated area of all the casework, even though only 56 per cent of cases were evaluated as sufficient. Practitioners were routinely identifying and analysing factors relating to the person on probation's offending. This was particularly strong in relation to licence cases, with this being judged as sufficient in 83 per cent of the cases inspected. Identifying these factors was key to enabling practitioners to target appropriate support for individuals to reduce the risk of reoffending.
- In contrast, keeping people safe was the weakest aspect of assessment and where the lowest number of cases were found to be sufficient in all the casework we looked at. A significant issue was around the use of safeguarding information. Information was received too infrequently, and when it was received, it was not used sufficiently to inform risk assessments. In 39 out of 78 cases inspected, there was insufficient information on child safeguarding. On occasions, critical information on children's involvement with social care was not explored or used to fully identify and address the risks posed.
- Improvements were needed to ensure that assessment drew sufficiently on information from available sources. Practitioners needed to consider individuals' past behaviour and the use of information from other agencies. This was judged to be completed sufficiently in only 32 per cent of relevant cases and was even weaker in cases managed by PQiPs.
- Not enough cases had a sufficient analysis of the risk of harm posed by individuals, including the use of domestic abuse information. This was insufficient in two-thirds of the relevant cases inspected. Without a robust assessment and sufficient understanding of risk, it is difficult to identify what practitioners should focus their delivery on throughout the period of supervision.

⁵ 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.](#)

P 2.2. Planning



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

Inadequate

Our rating⁶ for planning is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against three key questions and is driven by the lowest score:

Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
Does planning focus sufficiently on engaging the person on probation?	35%
Does planning focus sufficiently on reducing reoffending and supporting desistance?	48%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	27%

- In all three aspects of planning, the number of cases assessed as sufficient was below 50 per cent. However, there were some strengths in the work completed in desistance, again particularly in licence cases. Over two-thirds of relevant licence cases inspected sufficiently set out the services that were most likely to reduce reoffending and desistance. This included the work of services such as substance misuse and emotional wellbeing.
- Engagement in planning was weak. Practitioners were not involving the person on probation meaningfully in the planning for their order or licence. This was judged sufficient overall in only 39 per cent of cases. There was also not enough consideration of the individual's protected characteristics, which may impact on their ability to engage. This was a missed opportunity to gather the views, insights and motivations of people on probation.
- Too few cases had sufficiently robust risk management and contingency plans. There were occasions when plans referenced inaccurate information, were too generic and/or did not fully reference the valuable input from other agencies involved in managing risk. By not using this information sufficiently it would be difficult for practitioners to fully mitigate the risks posed by individuals.
- As with assessment, in too many cases planning did not sufficiently address risk of harm factors or prioritise those that were most critical. This was particularly poor in community cases, where only 14 out of 35 cases were judged sufficient by inspectors, hindering the prospect of planning effective supervision to keep other people safe.

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. [Full data and further information about inspection methodology is available in the data workbook for this inspection on our website.](#)

P 2.3. Implementation and delivery



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

Inadequate

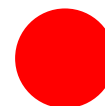
Our rating⁷ for implementation and delivery is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against three key questions and is driven by the lowest score:

Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
Is the sentence or post-custody period implemented effectively with a focus on engaging the person on probation?	53%
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support desistance?	37%
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?	23%

- Although much of the work undertaken by PSOs was weaker than that of POs, it was particularly noticeable in relation to implementation and delivery. Overall engagement scores for implementation and delivery were assessed by inspectors as sufficient in 25 out of 30 cases managed by POs, compared to 11 out of 39 cases managed by PSOs. This included consideration of individuals' diversity needs and engaging with others working with people on probation, such as approved premises staff.
- The overall work to keep people safe in relation to the implementation and delivery of sentences or licences was poor. Much of the work undertaken by PSOs was weaker than that of POs. Just two out of 39 cases managed by PSOs were judged as sufficient. Limited training, development and high workloads were having a direct impact on the quality of work being delivered by PSOs, particularly in regard to public protection.
- Improvements needed to be made to protect actual or potential victims. This was judged sufficient in only 18 out of 64 relevant cases. Examples included cases where domestic abuse and safeguarding concerns were clear, but there has been limited monitoring of existing or developing relationships in order to keep people safe.
- The involvement of other agencies to manage and minimise the risk of harm was poorly coordinated and judged as sufficient in just 21 out of 66 relevant cases. This missed opportunities for key services to have the relevant input to assist in keeping other people safe.

⁷ 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.](#)

P 2.4. Reviewing



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

Inadequate

Our rating⁸ for reviewing is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against three key questions and is driven by the lowest score:

Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the compliance and engagement of the person on probation?	51%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting desistance?	41%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	28%

- Improvements were needed across all areas of reviewing, but there were more strengths in the work delivered around engagement, particularly in relation to licence cases and those managed by POs. Inspectors judged that in 22 out of 30 cases managed by POs, reviewing sufficiently focused on supporting the compliance and engagement of people on probation compared with only 12 out of 39 cases for PSOs. This included proactive work to engage with individuals following enforcement action and increased contact during periods of instability, such as risk of homelessness.
- Reviewing was too often not sufficiently informed by input from other agencies. This was sufficient in relation to desistance in only 20 out of 54 relevant cases. The picture was similar with regard to keeping people safe, where only 29 out of 73 relevant cases were informed by the necessary input from other agencies involved in managing the risk of harm. To ensure reviewing activity is accurate and effective, it is crucial that practitioners receive input from other agencies so they can review current and pertinent information from other sources.
- When reviewing risk of harm, practitioners were not routinely involving people on probation and key individuals in their lives. This was a missed opportunity to improve engagement and gather up-to-date information to inform reviews.
- Formal reviews were only completed in 24 out of 65 relevant cases as a record of the management of risk of harm. The quality was inconsistent and, at times, formal reviews did not provide an accurate record of current risk concerns. Crucial information was too often missing, with 48 out of 70 relevant cases failing to fully identify and address key factors related to risk of harm.

⁸ 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.

Outcomes

Strengths:

- Of the cases inspected, 52 out of 79 had not been charged or convicted of any new offences during the period when their licence or order was inspected. This was a small positive and evidences the good contribution practitioners can make when supporting people on probation effectively.

Areas for improvement:

- Not enough of the inspected cases had completed sufficient work to address the factors related to the risk of harm individuals posed. This was judged as sufficient in just 10 out of 79 cases. This further demonstrated the necessity to improve the delivery of work to reduce risk of harm across the PDU.
- Although it was relatively early in some individuals' licence or order, there needed to be improvements in compliance. Compliance was judged sufficient in only just over half of the cases inspected.

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)