



HM Inspectorate
of Probation

An inspection of probation services in:

Hull and East Riding

The Probation Service – Yorkshire and The Humber Region

HM Inspectorate of Probation, December 2024

Contents

Foreword	3
Ratings	4
Recommendations	5
Background	6
1. Organisational arrangements and activity	7
2. Service delivery	16
Annexe one – Web links	24

Acknowledgements

This inspection was led by HM Inspector Donna Waters, 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

HM Inspectorate of Probation is the independent inspector of youth justice 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.

© Crown copyright 2025

You may re-use this information (excluding logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence or email psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

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

ISBN: 978-1-916621-63-3

Published by:

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

Follow us on Twitter
[@hmiprobation](https://twitter.com/hmiprobation)

Foreword

This was the second inspection of Hull and East Riding Probation Delivery Unit (PDU) since the unification of probation services in 2021. We were encouraged by our findings, which highlighted some impressive partnership work and a stable and committed workforce. However, the quality of work delivered to manage people on probation was inadequate in three out of four of our standards of casework. Overall, we have rated this PDU as 'Requires improvement'.

Strong leadership was evident through the partnership's work, which has been driven by the well-established deputy head of service. Leaders were active on several boards and were universally well regarded by strategic partners. The head of service had been in post for five months at the point of inspection and had already started to make an impact on creating a more autonomous working culture. There was a vision for middle managers and practitioners to become more accountable in their day-to-day work. At the time of the inspection, this message had not yet fully filtered down, meaning middle managers were not always focusing on the quality assurance of casework, which we found polarised.

Partnerships and the range of services available were a distinctive feature of Hull and East Riding PDU. These relationships were fostered across grades over many years and continue to be harnessed in response to change; an example was the exemplary work to plan for the release of standard determinate sentence (SDS)40 prisoners. We found targeted partnership work was particularly strong, and individuals receiving those services had better outcomes. This was not consistent across all people on probation, leaving gaps in provision for many.

Staffing was generally stable, with the exception of probation officers, where only 76 per cent of the required number were in post. Most staff described their workloads as manageable and there was an appetite for delivering quality work. Appointments were frequent, and we saw examples of people being meaningfully engaged in their sessions with practitioners. However, not all practitioners were confident in how to challenge or explore attitudes with people on probation.

There were barriers to practitioners accessing good-quality information to safeguard children. While administrators were able to access social care systems directly, the level of information was often sparse, and further clarification was sought inconsistently. Nevertheless, since our last inspection there had been improvements in access to police domestic abuse information, resulting in a significant improvement in practitioners' assessment of these risks.

Overall, Hull and East Riding PDU has much to be proud of and is capable of making the changes needed. Localised quality assurance of sentence management work to identify and address gaps in practice is needed. This will ensure that the quality work we did see is more consistent and less polarised across the PDU.



Martin Jones

HM Chief Inspector of Probation

Ratings

Hull and East Riding

Fieldwork started October 2024

Score **4/21**

Overall rating

Requires improvement



1. Organisational arrangements and activity

P 1.1 Leadership

Requires improvement



P 1.2 Staffing

Requires improvement



P 1.3 Services

Requires improvement



2. Service delivery

P 2.1 Assessment

Inadequate



P 2.2 Planning

Requires improvement



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.

Hull and East Riding PDU should:

1. develop practitioners' confidence and skills in using professional curiosity and challenging conversations to identify, analyse, assess, plan, and respond to indicators of risk effectively
2. devise and implement arrangements for monitoring and improving the quality of sentence management work delivered by practitioners with people on probation
3. ensure domestic abuse and safeguarding information is complete and analysed sufficiently to inform the quality of assessment, planning and management of people on probation
4. ensure middle managers have enough capacity to provide the appropriate level of oversight according to the needs of staff members and level of casework in the team.

Background

We conducted fieldwork in Hull and East Riding over the period of two weeks, beginning on 07 October 2024. We inspected 36 community orders and 30 releases on licence from custody where sentences and licences had commenced during two separate weeks, between 26 February and 03 March 2024 and 01 April and 07 April 2024. We also conducted 57 interviews with probation practitioners.

The Probation Reset¹ policy was implemented during the time of this inspection. Of the cases we inspected, 11 out of 66 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.

Hull and East Riding PDU is one of 11 PDUs in the Yorkshire and the Humber probation region of the Probation Service. Many of the core services in the PDU are managed pan-regionally, including interventions, accredited programmes, and statutory work with victims. The PDU has five offices. Two are in Hull, and three in the East Riding: in Goole, Beverley and Bridlington. The women's probation teams are based at three local women's centres.

Hull and East Riding is a large PDU, covering both the city of Hull and the surrounding rural area, which includes the East Riding of Yorkshire. The population of Hull at the time the inspection was announced was 271,942, and the East Riding had a population of 350,119. However, each has different levels of population density, with the East Riding being among the lowest 15 per cent of population density across English local authority areas. The proven reoffending rate is 30.0 for Hull and 22.9 per cent for the East Riding. The PDU comes under the governance of two unitary authorities, Kingston upon Hull and East Riding of Yorkshire. Staff employed within the PDU provide a service to magistrates' courts in Hull and Beverley, and the Crown court in Hull. There is one male approved premises in Hull and three prisons: HMP Humber, HMP Hull and HMP Full Sutton.

At the point the inspection was announced, Hull and East Riding PDU had a caseload of 1,137 people on probation who were subject to community sentences and 725 people who were being supervised on licence from prison. In total, 536 individuals were being managed in custody before release.

The head of the PDU had been in post for around five months when the inspection fieldwork took place and succeeded a long-standing predecessor. The deputy head of PDU was well established and leading on partnership work. The PDU was fully staffed across most grades, with a surplus of probation service officers (PSOs). However, only 76 per cent of probation officers (POs) were in post when we announced this inspection.

Commissioned rehabilitative services (CRS) were provided by Shelter for accommodation support; Ingeus for personal wellbeing; and Together Women for women's services. Services were provided by Forward Trust to support those with drug and alcohol needs and the Department for Work and Pensions for employment coaching. The PDU's progress against our previous recommendations can be found at the end of this report.

¹ 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.

Requires improvement

Current national changes in the form of Probation Reset and Standard Determinate Sentences 40 (SDS40) had contributed to some change fatigue in the workforce. Leaders were aware of challenges; training needs of staff were identified and had started to be met on a local level. This had not yet been reflected consistently enough in the cases we inspected. This, along with low levels of management oversight of service delivery, has resulted in an overall rating for leadership of 'Requires improvement'.

Strengths:

- The PDU had a clear strategy. Its vision and delivery plan aligned with the regional reducing reoffending plan and the priorities of His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service. The delivery plan set the operational direction. The PDU had made some progress against the delivery plan, including PDU-specific performance and quality meetings and a significant increase in police domestic abuse checks undertaken by practitioners. This was a strength, in an environment of considerable change, both nationally and in the senior leadership team locally.
- The leadership team was outward-facing, innovative and universally well regarded by strategic partners. They had fostered an ambitious and proactive culture, which influenced middle managers and practitioners alike. Leaders encouraged new ideas, and harnessed the ideas of staff.
- Partnership working was impressive. There was an abundance of initiatives, strategic partnerships, and commissioning to meet the needs of people on probation. Examples included access to women-only alcohol treatment requirements (ATRs) and drug rehabilitation requirements (DRRs), the Multi-Agency Cuckooing Advisory Panel and the strategic approach to managing housing, in conjunction with Humbercare and the local council. Joint work was taking place with the police to introduce a 'bot' for conducting detailed domestic abuse checks. The bot is designed to respond to requests at frequent intervals and to a high level of accuracy, removing any resourcing issues as a barrier to accessing police information.
- Senior leaders were active members or chairs of no less than 13 strategic boards, including safeguarding boards, domestic homicide subgroups, youth justice boards and the Combating Drugs Partnership.
- Partnership work was exemplified by the management of the first tranche of prisoners released from custody under SDS40. Leaders had coordinated a strategic plan to ensure all agencies worked together. The outcome of this work was that, impressively, no one was released homeless from that cohort.
- The approach to engaging people on probation was very positive, with a holistic approach taken across the PDU. Tangible changes to provision had come from this work. These included changes to the reception processes in offices, improvements to

how people on probation were interviewed as part of the pre-sentence report process, and the introduction of accommodation passports.

- Reasonable adjustments were made for staff with a disability, with 92 per cent reporting in our survey that their manager was supportive in implementing reasonable adjustments.
- Learning from serious further offences (SFOs) was communicated effectively to staff through bulletins and was incorporated into protected development days. Newly qualified officers' caseloads had been reduced, and there was a focus on preparing trainees for practice, as a consequence of learning from SFOs.
- Senior leaders were aware of incidents of bullying, harassment and discrimination among the workforce, which were reflected in our staff survey. A sufficient response was taken. Specialist support was sought through national and regional arrangements, such as the tackling unacceptable behaviour unit, which completed a climate report and was also providing a consultative service to senior leaders.
- The head of service was taking a positive approach to addressing inequitable workloads across the PDU by increasing the autonomy of middle managers. Senior probation officers (SPOs) were responding positively to this change, relishing the opportunity to make decisions on risk and to allocate cases without seeking endorsement from senior leaders.

Areas for improvement:

- Despite some positive strategic relationships with both children's services and the police, this was not consistently being translated into effective practice to keep other people safe, and was potentially masking some ineffective work.
- SPOs were diverted from supporting the quality of casework because of unmanageable workloads and their lead areas of responsibility. While these were increasing the richness of partnerships and the initiatives being developed, there was a lack of manager-led scrutiny of cases, both in and out of supervision.
- The concerns with practice to keep people safe related primarily to obtaining information to safeguard children and using it effectively in managing cases. We were, however, encouraged by recent arrangements to ensure that practitioners had direct access twice a week to a designated social worker to improve communication and liaison.
- Feedback from the regional case assessment tool audits were mixed, indicating that further work is required, particularly in assessment and planning. Risk management, however, was deemed to sufficiently meet good practice standards. However, this was not always reflected in the delivery of work we inspected, indicating that internal audits had the potential to skew the focus on overseeing quality.
- Despite sufficient action in response to unacceptable behaviour among the staff group, a lack of effective communication left some staff unclear about how issues were taken forward. In some cases, this undermined staff's confidence that issues were being taken seriously.
- There were gaps in delivery, despite practitioners reporting manageable workloads. Change fatigue was a theme among practitioners, who often felt that their focus and priorities were constantly shifting according to national changes (end-of-custody supervised licence, Probation Reset) alongside recent changes to senior leadership locally and regionally. This undermined efforts to communicate

messages to staff, with some feeling disconnected from the PDU's vision and priorities.

- The vision of the head of service to increase autonomy among the staff group had not yet impacted on all practitioners and administrators. Some staff told us they felt safer seeking endorsement of their decisions from management and there was a reluctance to make risk decisions autonomously. Some practitioners were capable and ready for increased autonomy but had not yet received these messages.

P 1.2. Staffing



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

Requires improvement

A lack of targeted management oversight, caused in part by high workloads, had impacted on the quality-of-service delivery, particularly the implementation and delivery of services and work to manage risk of harm. In addition, practitioners required support and training to deliver tailored interventions and conversations with the people they supervised. Despite this, there had been innovation in the approach to supporting PQIPs who were nearing qualification. Training was locally driven, varied and specific to the needs of staff. Taken as a whole, this resulted in an overall rating for staffing of 'Requires improvement'.

Strengths:

- Other than PO grades, staffing levels were sufficient and had been stable for over a year. Surplus PSO staff were being used creatively to support the delivery of desistance work with partners. Although only 75 per cent of PO posts were filled, seven newly qualified staff were expected in December, which would reduce vacancies to just five.
- Recruitment was a key priority. The success of the PDU's rolling recruitment campaigns and engagement in local recruitment fairs had resulted in a surplus of PSOs.
- Sickness levels had halved since the PDU was last inspected, in 2023, with a steady reduction in long-term absences over the last year.
- The PDU had worked hard to create a learning culture for practitioners. In our survey, 46 out of 54 respondents considered that the PDU promoted a culture of learning and continuous improvement. Protected development days had a local focus and were used meaningfully to target the needs of practitioners. They were often peer-led, and speakers with lived experience were used to engage staff, who described events as varied and interesting.
- Wider training was appropriate and included specialist input on organised crime and work relating to risk and risk management. Completion levels for mandatory training were reasonable, at 77 per cent overall. This included training in safeguarding adults, at 90 per cent, and in safeguarding children, at 88 per cent.
- The PDU's approach to preparing trainees for qualification was a strength. Key work included completing parole reports, managing recall cases and shadowing an oral hearing. We saw some examples of high-quality work delivered by newly qualified officers in our case inspections.
- We saw numerous examples of practitioners and middle managers identifying gaps in provision and being supported to develop initiatives such as the Multi Agency Cuckooing Advisory Panel (MACAP). In our survey, 35 out of 54 respondents said that the PDU promoted openness, constructive challenge, and ideas. Staff in focus groups felt that leaders were interested in their opportunities for progression.
- Middle managers were impressive in their motivation to drive improvement through their lead areas and were committed to doing a good job. They were motivated, and sufficiently skilled and experienced to carry out their roles.

- The diversity of the staff group was representative of the local community and the caseload.

Areas for improvement:

- Processes were in place to welcome and induct new staff, but this was not experienced equitably across all grades.
- Only 21 of 66 cases we inspected had sufficient management oversight. SPOs often had unmanageable workloads and sometimes focused too much on the strategic element of their role at the expense of practitioner oversight. Although practitioners reported manageable workloads and a surplus of PSOs were recruited, the impact of these was not leading to high-quality services being delivered for people on probation.
- The PDU had an established induction programme for case administrators. However, not all administrators felt that their induction was sufficient or structured. This meant that confidence and skills varied, and knowledge was not consistently embedded. Staff based in Norwich House reported having no induction or training since unification, which was three years ago, yet they were responsible for inducting and training new staff. Existing training took the form of shadowing, which was inconsistent and dependent on who was available.
- 52 per cent of staff who responded to our survey said they received supervision that enhanced the quality of their work. During fieldwork, staff reported inconsistent frequency and quality of supervision, largely due to the availability and workload of managers. Oversight of specific cases was determined by practitioners, both in and outside of supervision.
- Sickness levels for the whole PDU were below the regional average and were steadily decreasing. However, this was masking some concentrated pockets of sickness, seen in the Beverley office. Practitioners in Beverley were covering appointments and work for colleagues who were unwell, which was having a negative impact on morale and how manageable their workloads were.

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

There was a varied range of services and a collaborative approach by partners to support people on probation and to protect the public. Although our standard for implementation and delivery was rated 'Inadequate', there were significant strengths in the range of provision, which has led to an overall rating of 'Requires improvement'.

Strengths:

- Partnership working was particularly impressive and a distinctive feature of this PDU. There was an abundance of initiatives, strategic partnerships, and commissioning to meet the needs of people on probation in Hull and the East Riding. PDU staff took a collective approach to meeting the needs of people on probation. This was part of the operational fabric of the PDU, where ideas and innovation were encouraged.
- Strong strategic links were in place, which included the Combating Drugs Partnership, Youth Justice Board, Child and Adult Safeguarding Boards, the Housing Offenders Group and Community Safety Partnerships, among others. These strong partnerships had been used to respond in an agile way to changes in need. For instance, the PDU, sentencers and substance misuse partners worked to increase the use of ATRs and DRRs as a response to the shortage of prison space.
- There was a collaborative, holistic response to SDS40, with all partners seeing it as their responsibility. This coordinated approach focused on ensuring no one was released unhoused and that needs were met on the day of release in a single location, including access to benefit applications and methadone for those who needed it.
- Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) procedures were well established and effectively supported by the strategic management board. The MAPPA coordinator was well regarded by partners, and a domestic abuse specific MAPPA had been implemented as a strategic response to the high number of cases and their associated complexity. The domestic abuse MAPPA was chaired by police colleagues. This ensured liaison across other public protection partnership arrangements, such as Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences, to improve information-sharing for the most critical cases.
- Work with women was generally positive, with an effective range of support through Together Women and external partners. Overall, in our review of casework, we found that work with women was consistently more effective than that with men.
- Excellent work was taking place to support homelessness. Work in partnership with both the local council and other community agencies had been in place for over five years. There was a range of initiatives, including outreach surgeries to improve support and reduce eviction rates. Strategic boards were attended by middle managers and the secondment of two practitioners to the making every adult matter (MEAM) team effectively supported those with multiple complex needs.
- We found little evidence of barriers to information-sharing with police to assess and manage domestic abuse. Some staff reported that waiting times had improved in

recent months, and only nine per cent of cases we inspected lacked sufficient information from the police at assessment stage. This was an encouraging improvement since the PDU's last inspection, in 2023, where 38 per cent of cases lacked sufficient police enquiries. The PDU was working with the police to develop a robot to conduct swift, frequent and accurate police checks. This initiative was in the final stages of testing and was anticipated to further increase access to police information.

- Practitioners were conducting some meaningful sessions at an appropriate frequency with people on probation. The PDU had the highest rate in the region for completed rehabilitation activity requirements, with 71 per cent of orders at termination point having fully completed requirements. In addition, in three-quarters of relevant cases inspected, practitioners had an appropriate level of contact with people on probation to manage the risk of harm. This demonstrated practitioners' capacity to see their cases regularly and their commitment to delivering meaningful work.
- Completion rates for accredited programmes were reasonable: 72 per cent of individuals sentenced to a programme requirement for a non-sexual offence completed the programme. For those convicted of a sexual offence, the completion rate was just over half.
- Practitioners were regularly using toolkits to deliver interventions. Trainees and newly qualified officers had been given the opportunity to shadow delivery by more experienced colleagues. Practitioners that were using toolkits were confident in doing so and found them a useful resource. There were positive relationships with sentencers and reasonable levels of engagement with liaison events.

Areas for improvement:

- The implementation and delivery of services was rated 'Inadequate' in the cases we inspected. Of particular concern was the delivery of services to keep people safe and reduce the risk of harm posed by people on probation; 51 of 66 cases inspected were found to be insufficient. This was disappointing in the context of the excellent partnership working arrangements within the PDU.
- Barriers to practitioners obtaining information to safeguard children, coupled with a lack of bespoke conversations and challenge outside of toolkits and programmes, went some way to explaining these results.
- While people on probation were being seen with sufficient frequency, in too many cases the practitioner did not focus on the most important factors to manage risk and address desistance.
- Women reporting to the Beverley office did not have access to safe, women-only reporting times. Women's provision throughout the PDU also required more input from strategic leads to address the underrepresentation of women under MEAM, and to coordinate services for women.
- Only one out of nine cases we inspected with an accredited programme requirement started within an appropriate timeframe and only two were delivered from appropriate locations. Senior leaders were aware of this disparity and have produced a position statement that sets out aspirations for future delivery from rural locations. As referrals for accredited programmes increased, so did waiting times, which resulted from a lack of resourcing for interventions.

Feedback from people on probation

User Voice, working with HM Inspectorate of Probation, had contact with 67 people on probation as part of this inspection. This included 48 surveys completed face to face, and 19 completed online. Five further in-depth interviews were undertaken but, while these contributions were included in the overall evaluation, the participants did not complete a survey. Of those surveyed, 73 per cent were male, seven per cent were female and 19 per cent preferred not to say. In total, 37 per cent were subject to a community order, 46 per cent were reporting following a period in prison, and 16 per cent were unsure what sentence they were subject to. Most respondents were aged 30 years or over, and the diverse ethnicity of the respondents was representative of the overall caseload of the PDU.

- The induction process for people on probation was successful, with 63 out of 67 respondents stating that they knew what was expected of them at the start of their order or licence. The majority also felt they were involved in creating their sentence plan. This reflected our casework data, where over half of the cases we inspected contained sufficient engagement during assessment and planning.
- 71 per cent of respondents felt their probation appointments were useful in helping them with their rehabilitation. One person said:

“My appointment is at the same time every week helping me with my journey. I have been doing extra work as my life in the community changes and I face different challenges.”

- Respondents with full-time employment found it difficult to get an appointment with their probation practitioner. One person said:

“The time slots on an evening could do with some rethinking. They are very limited, between 5-7pm on a Wednesday. It can get very difficult if your probation officer has lots of people on their caseload who work.”

- 78 per cent of respondents felt they had been supported in their rehabilitation. This was higher than our inspection findings, which found gaps in service delivery.

Diversity and inclusion

Strengths:

- Hull was a designated City of Sanctuary, meaning local groups and organisations worked collaboratively to make their city a welcoming place for individuals subject to forced displacement. There were two contingency hotels in the city and many residents had no recourse to public funds. Due to their lack of local connection, these individuals were not represented within the official demographic data and risked being overlooked. We found no evidence that this evolving community had a direct impact on the PDU caseload. However, we found that PDU leaders, through their relationship with housing partners, understood that there may be some direct impact in future months. Leaders plan to monitor changes through their presence on the Housing Offenders Group.
- A seconded PO was based in the local youth justice teams, and worked with children who were transitioning to adult services. Once young adults fully transferred at 18, they were supervised by a specialist team of young adult concentrators in the PDU, who worked in a different way. 83 young adults had engaged with the choices and changes toolkit to develop maturity.
- There was a fair representation of Black, Asian and ethnic minority members of staff across the PDU. Approximately four per cent of people on probation identified as Black, Asian or from a minority ethnic group, which mirrored the staff group and the local community data.
- Engaging people on probation was a strength of the PDU, which had support from the region and staff across all grades. Participants had a monthly forum for suggestions, such as the use of whiteboards to sign in more discreetly at reception. These suggestions were acted on. There were strong engagement skills from practitioners with people on probation. Suggestions were implemented including 'a plan on a page'.
- Case inspection data indicated that building strengths and enhancing protective factors was central to the delivery of services in the PDU. Delivered services built on the strengths and enhanced protective factors in 64 per cent of inspected cases. This was reflected in the community integration activities available through the Creating Future Opportunities activity hub and Together Women.
- The quality of work with women on probation was stronger than that of work with men. A gender-specific approach was being taken to engage women, with a clear understanding of women's differing pathways into the criminal justice system. Management oversight of the work with women was also stronger. It was refreshing to see women given a choice at court between a male and female practitioner.

Areas for improvement:

- Despite the high-quality work taking place between probation staff and Together Women, we saw deficiencies in work to address risk of serious harm which paralleled casework with men. Practitioners did not always understand the complexities of women as both victims and perpetrators, often simultaneously. In addition, there was a lack of strategic coordination of all women's services to ensure better joint working and risk management.

2. Service delivery

P 2.1. Assessment



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

Our rating² 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?	59%
Does assessment focus sufficiently on the factors linked to offending and desistance?	76%
Does assessment focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	38%

- Analysis of the primary offence and underlying factors was done well in 82 per cent of the cases we inspected. However, work to involve the person on probation in their assessment was not happening frequently enough, and was lacking in around a third of the cases we inspected. Similarly, practitioners did not sufficiently explore the protected characteristics of each individual, or consider how these might affect their engagement. This was only happening in just over half of the cases we looked at.
- Access to good-quality safeguarding information was a primary barrier to assessment for keeping people safe. Only 28 of 62 relevant cases we looked at had sufficient information from social care on children associated with people on probation. While administrators had direct access to safeguarding information, the level of information they could obtain was too basic and lacking in detail. This meant practitioners in most cases needed to contact social care to ask further questions so that they could understand the history and risks. We found this was not always happening.
- Access to and use of police information was better. In 83 per cent of cases we inspected, the practitioner had obtained police domestic abuse information; and a reasonable majority of practitioners were following information up and using it in their assessments. Although this was still too few, it suggests that once information was obtained, most practitioners had the skills to analyse and weave it into assessment.
- In 80 per cent of the cases we inspected, child safeguarding was an active concern. This meant that the barriers to obtaining safeguarding information affected the majority of cases we inspected.

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.](#)

P 2.2. Planning



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

Requires improvement

Our rating³ 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?	52%
Does planning focus sufficiently on reducing reoffending and supporting desistance?	77%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	53%

- Two-thirds of sentence plans for people on probation set out clear arrangements for how work would be delivered and how often they could expect to be seen. People were involved in creating their plans in 40 of the 66 cases we inspected, but more could be done to ensure this was implemented consistently.
- Planning to reduce the risk of reoffending was a strength in this PDU. Seventy per cent of the cases we saw involved the practitioner understanding what people on probation needed to improve their stability; planning joint work with other agencies; and building on strengths and community integration.
- Risk management planning required improvement. Just over half of relevant cases had sufficient contingency planning, which was too few. Practitioners were able to identify any restrictive measures available to manage the risks. Just over half of relevant cases we inspected did not set out how other key partners could work with probation to safeguard potential victims from future harm. Gaps in information obtained from agencies (particularly children's social care) during the early stages of the sentence were likely to have had an impact on planning for safeguarding.

³ 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 rating⁴ 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?	70%
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support desistance?	56%
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?	23%

- Engaging people on probation in work to address their offending was evidenced in 92 per cent of the cases we looked at, showing flexibility to individuals' changes in personal circumstances. Practitioners were fair, addressing compliance concerns appropriately in 34 out of 46 cases. They ensured requirements set by the court began swiftly in two-thirds of the cases we looked at.
- In two-thirds of the cases we inspected, practitioners set appointments with people on probation at an appropriate frequency, time and location to meet their needs and support them not to reoffend. However, in too many cases, targeted work and interventions were not delivered to address attitudes and thinking. Three-quarters of cases were missing this work, either through a lack of constructive, challenging discussions with their practitioner, or through accredited programmes not starting swiftly enough.
- Less than half of relevant cases involved sufficient coordination of partner agencies delivering work, which was disappointing, given the range of services available. We saw the biggest gaps in work to address attitudes and behaviour. People on probation needing support to reduce their drug misuse were most likely to have received appropriate services, although there were still a third who needed support in this area but didn't receive it.
- Not enough was being done to protect potential victims from harm and we saw two-thirds of relevant cases falling short in this area of work. In 39 out of 53 relevant cases, the practitioner did not work well enough with other agencies to safeguard children. Barriers to obtaining child safeguarding information at the start of sentences led to practitioners not knowing which children required safeguarding and from whom. This had a secondary effect on actions taken later in the sentence.

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.](#)

- Work with women was a strength, particularly around engagement and desistance from offending, where they received a higher quality of support than men. In fact, in 100 per cent of cases we looked at involving women on probation, the women were sufficiently supported to address the reasons for their offence. Practitioners took a gender-specific approach and were able to offer appointments, as well as drug and alcohol treatment, from a discreet, women-only environment.

Good practice example

A comprehensive assessment was undertaken with A, which was appropriately sensitive to her experience of trauma and abuse. A was referred to Together Women and joint working took place on her emotional wellbeing, housing and substance misuse. After 20 years of sofa surfing, she secured stable housing, and professionals worked together to build her confidence and support independent living skills.

P 2.4. Reviewing



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

Inadequate

Our rating⁵ 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?	65%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting desistance?	58%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	41%

- Practitioners responded to changes in circumstances by involving the person on probation in discussions and decisions in over half the cases we looked at, which demonstrates more could be done to have these conversations. This was lower still in cases where reviews to risks posed by the person on probation were required. Practitioners involved people on probation in just over a quarter of the cases we inspected. This supports findings that practitioners were not always having the necessary challenging, risk-focused discussions in sessions with people on probation.
- Recording was an issue in cases where practitioners were reviewing risk. In 20 of the 52 relevant cases we looked at, there was no written review, either through risk management tools or case notes, to evidence that the practitioner was adapting their approach to manage new risks and information. This lack of recording meant inspectors were not always assured that practitioners had identified or monitored changes at all.
- Reviewing should analyse changes to the person on probation's circumstances, protective factors and stability. Nearly two-thirds of relevant reviews we looked at were completed in isolation, without consulting other agencies. The strongest aspect of reviewing focused on resolving compliance issues, which was embedded in performance measures. More needed to be done to review activity prompted by practitioners in response to changes in the risk of reoffending of the people they supervise.

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.

Outcomes

Strengths:

- Sufficient compliance had been achieved in 64 per cent of the cases we inspected. This was closely related to the work probation practitioners were doing to build working relationships with people on probation and support them through their sentences.
- We saw some improvements to accommodation stability for people on probation. The proportion identified as homeless reduced from 12 per cent to six per cent between the start of their sentence or release and the time of the inspection. This was reflective of the collaborative housing partnerships we saw in focus groups and in some of the cases we inspected.

Areas for improvement:

- Improvements in the individual factors linked to risk of serious harm were evidenced in only 14 out of the 64 cases inspected. This largely reflected what we had seen in terms of the quality of work to manage the risk of harm and lack of reviewing of any changes to factors related to risk.
- Sufficient levels of compliance, coupled with the use of toolkits and referrals to partner agencies, indicate that practitioners had some capacity to deliver meaningful work but required support and autonomy to identify the conversations they should be having, both with people on probation and partner agencies.

Progress on previous recommendations

Previous recommendation	Action taken and impact	Categorisation	Improvement still required?
<i>From previous probation inspection of Hull and East Riding PDU (March 2023)</i>	<i>Summary of action taken and impact</i>	<i>Sufficient progress / some progress / no progress</i>	<i>Yes/no If yes, consider repeating the recommendation</i>
ensure all cases are allocated to staff who are appropriately qualified and/or experienced	<p>Hull and East Riding PDU opted to be an early adopter of the Allocate a Person on Probation digital case allocation tool. Cases were allocated in line with the national tiering model to ensure that suitable cases were allocated to POs and PSOs. When allocating cases, managers considered offence types and were conscious of who the case was allocated to; consideration was also given to experience and specialisms. There was a regional approach to identify any misallocated cases to ensure the efficient and effective use of partner resource. At the time of inspection, 99.9% of cases were correctly allocated according to data from the allocation tool. The PDU described taking care to ensure cases were allocated to PSOs who had completed appropriate training, and we saw no evidence to the contrary.</p> <p>The PDU had an experienced SPO with a lead for allocations that practitioners could approach to discuss the appropriateness of new allocations.</p> <p>Fifty three out of 57 practitioners felt they had the necessary skills, experience and knowledge to supervise the case</p>	Sufficient progress	No

<p>improve the quality and impact of work to manage risk of harm and to keep actual and potential victims safe</p>	<p>While there had been developments in multi-agency work to manage risk, such as MACAP and domestic abuse specific MAPPAs, practitioners were still not demonstrating enough professional curiosity, responding to changes in risk or delivering sufficient work during appointments with people on probation.</p>	<p>Some progress</p>	<p>yes</p>
<p>ensure all probation practitioners receive management oversight, training and support, commensurate with their experience and the needs of the given case</p>	<p>Around half of staff responding to our survey said they did not have access to regular supervision. Our case inspections also found that 68% of cases did not have sufficient management oversight. There were some identifiable improvements to SPO oversight of MAPPAs level 1 screening, and training was more locally driven according to need. Middle managers had not taken adequate steps to promote opportunities to work with Quality Development Officers and not all practitioners were aware of the support available.</p>	<p>Some progress</p>	<p>yes</p>

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](#)