

Inspection of Adult Offending Work

**An aggregate report on the first six inspections:
a focus on violent offending**

Á

An inspection led by HMI Probation



Inspection of Adult Offending Work

An aggregate report on the first six inspections: a focus on violent offending

Inspections led by HM Inspectorate of Probation

Published April 2014
HMI Probation

Foreword

This aggregate report draws on data from the first six inspections in our Inspection of Adult Offending Work programme. In these inspections we have focused on the quality of work in cases where the primary offence was one of violence.

Our purpose in undertaking these inspections is to assess whether the sentence of the court is delivered effectively, and whether work with the individual offender protects the public, reduces the likelihood of reoffending, and provides a high quality service to courts and victims. The case sample for these six inspections was drawn from cases managed by Bedfordshire, Devon and Cornwall, Hampshire, Merseyside, Northamptonshire, and Northumbria Probation Trusts and encompassed a range of violent offences including domestic violence, but not sexual offending.

We found that work to deliver the sentence of the court was good generally, with appropriate levels of contact and enforcement action taken when the individual failed to comply. In almost two-thirds of cases, at least some progress had been made in addressing the factors associated with offending behaviour. This was let down, however, by the lack of attention to tackling alcohol misuse in all cases where this was needed – a particularly important area in this inspection, given the known links with violent behaviour. While around 70% of the inspection sample had problems with alcohol, this was not always given appropriate attention in the sentence plan and, consequently, the necessary interventions were not delivered. Where the right work was undertaken, progress was often made, but the lack of follow through from the assessment represented a missed opportunity to help many to tackle their drinking.

Nationally, work with those who have offended violently forms a significant proportion of the work of any Probation Trust. The quality of work to protect the public varied between the six Trusts, with some needing to pay attention to this important area of work. Overall, we found that all reasonable action had been taken to keep an individual's risk of harm to others to a minimum in almost three-quarters of cases. This left a significant number of cases where action had not been sufficient.

Despite some of these shortcomings, at the time of the inspections, 70% of the offenders in our sample had not been cautioned for, charged with, or convicted of a further offence, some eight or nine months into their sentence.

In order to drive the necessary improvements in this area of work, we have made a number of recommendations to the National Probation Service and the Community Rehabilitation Companies which will shortly take over the work of Probation Trusts.



Paul McDowell

HM Chief Inspector of Probation

April 2014

Contents

Foreword	2
Executive Summary	5
Recommendations	15
Practice illustrations	18
Stakeholder and service user views	28
Outcome 1: Assisting sentencing	34
Outcome 2: Delivering the sentence of the court	37
Outcome 3: Reducing the likelihood of reoffending	44
Outcome 4: Protecting the public by minimising the risk of harm to others	51
Outcome 5: Delivering effective work for victims	58
Leadership and strategic management	62
Appendix 1 Contextual information about the inspected case sample	65
Appendix 2 Acknowledgements	68
Appendix 3 Inspection arrangements	69
Appendix 4 Criteria	72
Appendix 7 Glossary	73
Appendix 6 Role of HMI Probation and Code of Practice	76

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

Introduction

This report is based on the first six inspections undertaken as part of our Inspection of Adult Offending Work programme. In these inspections we have focused on the quality of work in cases where the primary offence is one of violence¹. Nationally, work with those who have offended violently forms a significant part of the caseload of Probation Trusts; around 40% are identified as having an index (principal) offence involving violence. This rises to around 43% when robbery is included – robbery is categorised separately by the National Offender Management Service. By contrast, work with those who offend sexually forms only a small percentage of the national caseload.

This aggregate report draws on the data from those inspections, where we examined 437 cases.

Outcomes

Assisting sentencing

The proportion of work judged to have been done well enough	Range across the six Trusts
81%	77%-89%

- Work to assist sentencing was, generally, the strongest area of practice.
- Sentencers held very positive views about the work of probation staff in courts and in report preparation.
- However, more than one-quarter of the reports we read were not of sufficient quality. Some did not accurately analyse the risk of harm to others, or the factors which made reoffending more likely – information that is important to inform the sentencing decision. Given our focus on violent offending, this was a significant omission.

Delivering the sentence of the court

The proportion of work judged to have been done well enough	Range across the six Trusts
80%	73%-83%

- Work to deliver the sentence of the court was generally good.
- Contact levels were usually sufficient and the requirements of the sentence were delivered as intended in the majority of cases.
- Action was, generally, taken to promote compliance with the sentence, and enforcement action was taken when required.
- Sentence planning objectives had been achieved fully or in part in just over three-quarters of cases.

¹ Please see Appendix 1 for details of the violent offences included in the sample.

Reducing the likelihood of reoffending

The proportion of work judged to have been done well enough	Range across the six Trusts
73%	66%-77%

- At the time of the inspections, 70% of the offenders in our sample had not been cautioned for, charged with, or convicted of a further offence, some eight or nine months into their sentence.
- In almost two-thirds of cases, at least some progress had been made in addressing the factors associated with offending behaviour. This was let down, however, by the lack of attention to tackling alcohol misuse in all cases where this was needed.

Protecting the public

The proportion of work judged to have been done well enough	Range across the six Trusts
71%	61%-76%

- All reasonable action had been taken to keep an individual's risk of harm to others to a minimum in almost three-quarters of cases. This left a significant number of cases where action had not been sufficient.
- The quality of work to ensure the protection of the public varied across the six Trusts and some needed to give increased attention to this important area of work.

Delivering effective work for victims

The proportion of work judged to have been done well enough	Range across the six Trusts
77%	61%-87%

- Assessment of risk of harm to others and planning to minimise and manage that harm was not sufficient in too many cases. Not enough attention was paid to possible continuing risk of harm to some identifiable victims or potential victims, including children and young people.
- Victim contact work was undertaken well overall, and the views of almost all victims who responded to our surveys were very positive about the service they had received.

Outcome 1: Assisting sentencing

Pre-sentence reports and work in court are intended to enable sentencers to impose appropriate and effective sentences. We expect to see good quality reports that include an assessment of the offender and, where appropriate, a clear proposal.

Overall, 81% of work to assist sentencing was done well enough.

The work of Probation Trusts to assist sentencing was generally good. Sentencers in the six areas inspected held very positive views about the work of staff in court and about the information provided to them by probation staff. Whilst some of our findings in relation to court reports are good, the deficits in analysis require attention.

Content of reports

Reports for courts were generally based on sufficient information, but a few lacked the required Risk of Serious Harm screening. Missing from some was an accurate analysis of the likelihood of the individual reoffending, and others lacked an analysis of the risk of harm posed to others. Given our focus on violent offending, the fact that sentencers did not always receive this information was worrying.

Assessment of motivation to comply, and sentencing proposals

To enable sentencers to determine the most appropriate and effective sentence, it is important that reports give an indication of the individual's motivation and capacity to comply with the proposed sentence. In our sample, most reports contained this information, but just under half lacked information about how issues that could affect engagement and compliance would be tackled.

The great majority of written reports included a proposal for a community sentence where this was appropriate, including proposals for a punitive requirement where relevant. Almost all included clear and specific proposals that followed logically from the body of the report, and the intended outcome of the proposed sentence was generally clear. Sentence proposals were broadly followed by the courts.

Outcome 2: Delivering the sentence of the court

Victims, sentencers and the public have the right to expect that the sentence of the court will be delivered as intended, and enforced where necessary. We expect to see work to engage and motivate offenders in order to ensure that they completed their sentences, and that the work undertaken with them is effective in reducing offending and promoting community reintegration.

Overall, 80% of work to deliver the sentence of the court was done well enough.

Work to deliver the sentence of the court was generally good; contact levels were usually sufficient and enforcement action taken where the individual failed to comply. However, individuals needed to be more involved in drawing up their sentence plan, identifying any barriers to the completion of the sentence and in reviewing their progress.

Allocation and induction

Offenders were usually allocated to the correct tier of service delivery at the start of a community sentence or release on licence, and initial appointments were arranged swiftly. In the great majority of cases there was a full, timely and individualised induction, and people were informed of their rights and responsibilities.

Sentence planning to address likelihood of reoffending and setting objectives

Sentence plans usually contained objectives to tackle the factors linked with the likelihood of reoffending, but objectives to address risk of harm posed to others were missing in one-quarter of cases. In particular, where there were concerns about protecting children and young people, only just over half of the relevant cases included objectives to tackle those concerns.

Alcohol misuse was not sufficiently addressed in nearly one-quarter of sentence plans where it was needed. Given the links between alcohol and violent behaviour, this was a significant oversight.

Contact, compliance, and enforcement

Frequency of contact was usually sufficient to promote positive outcomes and carry out the sentence of the court. Attendance was monitored and action was taken where needed, including efforts to encourage improved compliance with the sentence. Professional judgments by offender managers about absence and other behaviour were almost always appropriate, and enforcement proceedings or recall to custody were used appropriately in almost all cases.

Delivery of interventions

Planned levels of contact were generally appropriate to the case. Interventions were delivered according to the requirements of the sentence in the great majority of cases and were in line with sentence plan objectives. Mostly, the delivery of interventions took account of any risk of harm posed to others. Motivational work to encourage engagement was generally done well where needed.

Reviews of sentence planning and recording progress

Reviews of sentence planning were not done sufficiently well in just under half of the cases. They were often not done promptly when a requirement or condition of the order or licence had been completed, or when there had been significant change. Nor were reviews used well to record the individual's progress or reinforce commitment to the sentence. In our view, not enough attention is being given to reviewing work carried out and this is a missed opportunity to encourage people in their efforts to complete their sentence and desist from offending.

Attention to diversity and individual needs

The assessment of the individual's needs was not sufficient in one-quarter of cases; this included considering issues of vulnerability, and whether there may be barriers to them engaging and successfully completing the sentence. The individual's level of motivation and capacity to change was considered in over three-quarters of the sample.

There was some evidence that the assessment of individual needs for people from black and minority ethnic communities was not as good as that undertaken with people from white communities.

Similarly, for the small number of prolific or other priority offenders and/or those subject to Integrated Offender Management, the assessment of their individual needs was done less well overall compared with others in the sample.

Offender managers did not always actively involve people in the drawing up of their sentence plan, and planning did not always pay sufficient attention to the person's strengths and aptitudes or to the methods most likely to be effective with them.

Diversity factors and individual needs were taken into account in the delivery of services in the great

majority of cases. However, there was evidence that some women, black and minority ethnic individuals, needed more help than they were given to overcome particular barriers they faced in successfully completing their order or licence.

Case transfers

In the small number of cases where the individual was transferred between organisations, the transfer out was handled appropriately in two-thirds. Where cases were transferred into the Trust being inspected, this was not handled as well, overall, as it should have been – for example, assessments and plans were not always updated sufficiently swiftly. Efficient transfer processes are important to ensure that the sentence of the court continues to be delivered and that issues relating to the risk of harm to others are effectively communicated and managed.

Case recording

Overall, case records held sufficient information to support the management of the order or licence, but some lacked relevant documents and the records did not always sufficiently reflect the work that had been carried out with an individual.

Outcome 3: Reducing the likelihood of reoffending

A number of factors may contribute to the likelihood of an offender committing further crime. We expect to see an accurate assessment of these factors at the start of sentence and evidence that effective, targeted work has reduced the likelihood of reoffending.

Overall, 73% of work to reduce reoffending was done well enough.

Work to reduce the likelihood of reoffending was not as strong as we would have liked to see. Although assessments were generally of sufficient quality, individuals needed to be more involved in considering what factors related to their offending behaviour. More attention was needed to reviewing the work done and identifying progress made, to keeping assessments up to date and encouraging people in the efforts they were making to desist from offending.

However, there was good focus generally on the changes individuals needed to make to their behaviour, and almost two-thirds made at least some progress in tackling significant factors related to their offending.

In terms of specific offending-related factors, there are known links between alcohol misuse and offending generally, and particularly strong links between alcohol misuse (especially 'binge' drinking and intoxication) and violent offending. Given that violent offending forms such a significant proportion of caseloads in Probation Trusts we would have expected to see more attention given to tackling alcohol misuse issues.

Assessment to reduce the likelihood of reoffending

Assessments of the likelihood of reoffending were generally of sufficient quality, taking into account relevant information about the individual's home and social environment and identifying the factors that contributed to offending. However, people who had offended were not always actively involved in their assessment and this was particularly noticeable in the prolific or other priority offender/Integrated Offender Management cases in the sample. The most commonly identified reoffending factor was the individual's thinking and behaviour, and alcohol misuse also featured strongly.

Alcohol and violent offending

Around 70% of the sample had problems with alcohol that made them more likely to reoffend. While the role of alcohol in offending was recognised in the assessment in the great majority of cases, it was not taken account of sufficiently in sentence planning in just under one-quarter of cases. Even where tackling alcohol misuse was included in the sentence plan, interventions to address this were not always delivered. So at every stage in the process there was attrition in attention to alcohol issues. Given this, it was not surprising that sufficient progress had been made in only around half of the cases where alcohol misuse was thought to be a factor in the likelihood of reoffending. However, where sufficient interventions had been delivered, around 70% had made progress – a fact which meant that the failure to follow through from assessment to delivering the appropriate interventions represented a missed opportunity to help many to tackle their problems.

Delivery of interventions to reduce the likelihood of reoffending

Constructive interventions challenged people to take responsibility for their actions related to offending in more than three-quarters of cases and we judged that work undertaken with the person generally kept a focus on the changes that they needed to make to their behaviour. Where an accredited programme was delivered, there was particularly good evidence of this; however, there was less work focused on general violent behaviour than we would have expected. Domestic violence programmes were more widely used.

People were generally well prepared for the interventions delivered to reduce their likelihood of reoffending, the great majority were informed of local services which could also help them and most were referred to these services where needed.

Reviews of likelihood of reoffending assessments and outcomes

Reviews of an initial assessment and sentence plan can provide the opportunity to mark progress, reflect changes in the individual's behaviour and circumstances, reshape plans and ensure the focus of work reflects appropriate priorities – all work that helps to promote compliance with the sentence and to support desistance from offending.

In our inspections, we found that assessments of the likelihood of reoffending were often not up to date. In one-third of the cases we inspected, they had not been reviewed within a reasonable interval after the initial assessment. Reviews were not generally used to celebrate progress in tackling issues related to offending, although almost two-thirds had made at least some progress in addressing significant factors.

Where there had been significant change, a prompt review happened in just under half of the cases.

There was not always evidence of improved family relationships where this was relevant, or improved integration into the community. However, resources had been used efficiently to achieve planned outcomes in more than three-quarters of cases.

Outcome 4: Protecting the public by minimising risk of harm to others²

Some offenders present a risk of harm to other people. In all cases we expect to see the level of this risk properly assessed and, where necessary, plans made to manage and minimise the risk. All reasonable action should be taken to protect the public and ensure the safety of victims.

² Our judgements about work to protect actual and potential victims are incorporated into the overall score for Protecting the Public as well as contributing to the score for Delivering Effective Work for Victims. In this report, the detailed findings are discussed under Outcome 5: Delivering Effective work for Victims.

Overall, 71% of work to protect the public by minimising the risk of harm to others was done well enough

Some of the findings in relation to protecting the public and delivering effective work for victims were particularly disappointing, given the importance of this work and the high profile it needs. The aggregate headline scores do, however, mask a considerable difference in performance between the six Probation Trusts. In some areas, there is clearly a need to refocus on practice in respect of protecting the public, although victim contact work is generally undertaken well.

People who have committed violent offences form a high proportion of probation service caseloads. Domestic violence, rightly, now receives significant attention in terms of interventions but our findings indicate that less attention is given to work with people who offend violently in other ways, in order to reduce the likelihood of reoffending.

Risk of Serious Harm screening and analysis of risk of harm to others

The Risk of Serious Harm classification (low, medium, high or very high) was accurate in almost all cases. The great majority had accurate and timely screenings for Risk of Serious Harm, but the screening was missing in a small number.

The full risk of harm analysis was completed sufficiently well in only 60% of the cases where it was required. In particular, assessments did not always pay enough attention to protecting children and young people.

Planning to manage risk of harm to others

Planning to manage risk of harm to others was not done well enough in around one-third of cases, and some cases lacked a risk management plan where it was required.

Multi-agency work

Where cases were managed through Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements, this had contributed effectively to the management of risk of harm in most cases. However, multi-agency Child Protection procedures were not judged to have been used as effectively. Decisions and actions from multi-agency meetings were not always recorded on the offender manager's case file.

Response to changes in risk of harm to others and enforcement

Changes in the risk of harm posed to others were not always identified swiftly or acted upon appropriately, and risk of harm assessments were not reviewed sufficiently well in too many cases.

More positively, breach proceedings or recall to custody were used appropriately in most cases where this was needed in response to an increase in the risk of harm posed to others.

Delivery of risk management plans

Actions set out in risk management plans were mostly carried out as required, but the planning itself was not sufficiently well reviewed in over one-third of cases.

Management oversight

We found limited evidence on case files of management involvement in cases classified as posing a high Risk of Serious Harm or where there were Child Protection issues. Some work was countersigned where there were clear gaps in quality, so management scrutiny was clearly not as effective as it needed to be.

Risk of harm to others minimised

We judged that all reasonable action had been taken to keep an individual's risk of harm to others to a minimum in almost three-quarters of cases. This did leave a significant number of cases where action had not been sufficient; this was particularly evident in standalone unpaid work cases.

The quality of work to ensure the protection of the public did vary across the six Trusts and some needed to give increased attention to this important area of work.

Outcome 5: Delivering effective work for victims

The safety of actual and potential victims should be given a high priority. We expect to see this given attention in work with individual offenders. Where statutory victim contact work is required, we expect to see this undertaken so that victims are kept appropriately informed.

Overall, 77% of work to deliver effective services to victims was done well enough.

Assessment of risk of harm to others and planning to minimise and manage that harm was not sufficient in too many cases. Not enough attention was paid to possible continuing risk of harm to some identifiable victims or potential victims, including children and young people.

Statutory victim contact work was undertaken well overall.

Work to minimise risk of harm to victims

We saw a mixed picture, overall, in relation to effective work for victims. Assessment of risk of harm to others and planning to minimise and manage that harm was not sufficient in too many cases. Some offender managers lacked a 'Think Victim' approach, and did not always give enough attention to possible continuing risk of harm to some identifiable victims or potential victims, including children and young people.

Victim contact work

Victim contact work was undertaken well overall, and the views of almost all victims who responded to our surveys were very positive about the service that they had received.

Restorative justice

Restorative justice interventions are in their infancy in most Probation Trusts, but in the handful of cases where they were provided, the outcomes were judged to be satisfactory for the victims concerned.

Additional findings

Work with women

We know from research that many women who offend have a background of abuse from childhood and/or in adult relationships. Around half will have been in the care of the local authority at some point. Their rates of self-harm are far higher than that of male offenders, and women in custody are more likely than men to suffer from depression. This gives some indication that the factors which affect their offending

are different to those of men and are often complex. Given their specific needs, it was encouraging to see that these were being recognised and addressed in most of the 50 cases that we inspected. Across the five outcomes, the overall quality of practice with women was generally similar to that with men and was sometimes better.

Differences in the quality of work

When examining our findings by sentence and type of offender, we found some differences in the quality of the work. Across four out of the five Outcomes there was some evidence that work with individuals from black or minority ethnic groups was not carried out as well as that undertaken with people from white backgrounds. Only for Outcome 1: Assisting Sentencing, was the quality of work better. For those identified as prolific or other priority offenders or subject to Integrated Offender Management, the headline scores across all five Outcomes indicated that work with this group was not of as high a standard as that carried out with all others in the sample. This was particularly surprising given the high level of multi-agency resourcing for these offenders.

We also compared the findings for cases where the only requirement was for unpaid work (Community Payback) with all the other cases in the sample. Again, the headline scores across all five Outcomes indicated that the quality of practice was not as high with this group. All these findings are concerning and merit further investigation.

Recommendations

Recommendations

These recommendations are based on the aggregate findings from the six inspections. Recommendations in this report must be followed up by whoever delivers probation services in the future, including both the National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Companies.³

Assisting sentencing

To enable sentencers to impose appropriate sentences, reports should include:

- an accurate analysis of the likelihood of reoffending
- an accurate analysis of the risk of harm to others
- an assessment of how issues which could affect the individual's ability to complete the sentence will be addressed.

Delivering the sentence of the court

To ensure compliance with the sentence of the court:

- work with each individual should include an assessment of their needs, including issues of vulnerability and potential barriers to successful completion of the sentence
- individuals should be involved in assessing the factors related to their offending, drawing up the sentence plan and reviewing their progress
- reviews of assessments and plans should be done promptly when requirements or conditions of the order or licence have been completed, or when there has been a significant change.

To provide assurance that the sentence of the court is delivered efficiently:

- case records should reflect the work that has been undertaken with the individual
- where cases are transferred between areas or organisations, assessments and plans should be updated swiftly and contact with the individual made promptly.

Reducing the likelihood of reoffending

To ensure that reoffending is reduced through the delivery of appropriate and effective interventions:

- the possible contribution of alcohol misuse to the offending should be identified in assessments, objectives to address the issues included in sentence planning, and appropriate interventions delivered
- violent behaviour should be reduced through the use of interventions that are most likely to be effective.

Protecting the public

To minimise the risk of harm to the public:

- risk of harm to others should be assessed accurately and promptly and reviewed as appropriate, taking account of information from other organisations
- assessments of the risk of harm should pay attention to the protection of children and young people

³ Under the Government's Transforming Rehabilitation Strategy, Probation Trusts are due to be replaced by the National Probation Service and 21 Community Rehabilitation Companies. The Strategy can be accessed at <http://www.justice.gov.uk/transforming-rehabilitation>.

- plans to manage risk of harm to others should take full account of the safety of actual and potential victims and pay appropriate attention to the protection of children and young people; all reasonable action should then be taken to keep risk of harm to others to a minimum
- sentence plans should, where appropriate, include objectives to address the risk of harm to others and the protection of children and young people
- where there is a risk of harm to others, or Child Protection issues, management oversight of the case should be active and effective.

Delivering effective work for victims

To minimise the risk of harm to actual and potential victims:

- staff working with an offender should 'Think Victim' and give attention to the possible risk of harm to identifiable or potential victims.

Practice illustrations

Practice illustrations

These are the examples of positive practice we used in the published reports. Please note – all names referred to have been amended to protect the individual's identity.

Outcome 1: Assisting Sentencing

Northamptonshire

Introduction of the Criminal Justice: Simple, Speedy, Summary (CJSSS) process

The Probation Trust had played a key role in the CJSSS programme through supporting the quicker processing of cases at court. This had also supported the previous National Offender Management Service (NOMS) target to deliver 70% of reports on the same day they were requested. This had been achieved with a move from 80% of cases being adjourned for reports to 80% reports being completed on the day.

To achieve this, the Trust had invested more qualified probation officer time into court liaison work and clarified the role boundaries between probation officer and probation service officer posts. The latter had received additional training in report writing and the assessment of risk of harm. The Trust attempted to identify in advance the hearings for cases currently under supervision so that a court report could be ready on the day.

Sentencers were impressed with the experience and confidence of the probation liaison staff and their flexibility in organising the production of reports at court given the constraints imposed by time, space and complexity of court listing. They considered that the Trust had been 'most helpful and supportive, and just got on with it and made it happen'.

In addition to the specific benefit of speedier justice, sentencers also appreciated the much higher level of personal contact with liaison staff, in assisting with sentencing decisions, that was inherent in the revised arrangements.

Outcome 2: Delivering the sentence of the court

Merseyside

Diversity and engagement

Josh was convicted of domestic violence against his mother and older sister, and blamed his behaviour on his Asperger's syndrome. At the start of his community order the offender manager took time to research Asperger's in advance of meeting Josh so as to be well prepared. She also encouraged him to explain to her how the condition would affect his ability to engage with supervision and carry out the unpaid work included in his order. In fact, his condition was managed well. He had a good employment history but it led to difficulties within his family setting when emotions ran high, as at the time of the offence. The offender manager was sensitive to a bereavement and encouraged him to consider bereavement counselling. When he declined, she signposted him towards family counselling as part of preparing for the end of supervision. This approach to working with diversity and promoting engagement was fully reflected in the sentence plan and risk management plan.

Sentence planning

Jon had committed a serious offence of wounding and had substance addiction problems, coupled with physical health concerns. His offender manager took a thoughtful approach to implementing his licence conditions. He sequenced the sentence plan so that work started first to tackle the drug and alcohol issues, as he believed that this would increase Jon's ability to complete the Thinking Skills Programme (TSP) which was a condition of his licence.

Another sentence plan objective was to form friendships with non-criminal people, and his ill health meant he no longer socialised with old criminal associates. To sustain this, as his health improved, the offender manager arranged for him to undertake education and training activities as an alternative, and used learning from the TSP to help him reflect on how he managed his life.

Devon and Cornwall

Signposting to appropriate services

William had been sentenced to a community order for an offence of common assault. He was signposted, initially and promptly, to a specialist alcohol service, as required by his Alcohol Treatment Requirement. However, following a review regarding its suitability to meet his chronic alcohol needs, he was returned to court and the court order amended. He was then referred to Addaction who worked with him on his Alcohol Specified Activity Requirement, which was deemed a more suitable intervention. There was lots of evidence of offending behaviour work having been undertaken in this case. William completed the required work in relation to his alcohol issues, complied with his curfew, secured independent accommodation and retained his employment. He did not reoffend.

Sentence planning

The offender manager was very aware of the pro-criminal attitudes of Graham, who had been released on licence following a custodial sentence for an offence of malicious wounding. The sentence plan was, therefore, drawn up with motivational work and the development of a rapport with Graham being prioritised before the structured offence focused work was addressed. Despite the offender manager having developed the relationship and undertaken appropriate offending-related work with Graham, he subsequently failed to comply. The offender manager instigated recall procedures promptly, and then sought to re-establish contact with Graham, with a view to putting in place appropriate plans for when he was next released.

Hampshire

Prompt and comprehensive induction

Stephen had been sentenced to a community order with various elements, including supervision, unpaid work and a specified activity requirement (to complete the Integrated Domestic Abuse Module). Although assessed as a Tier 2 case, Stephen was given a prompt induction appointment with his offender manager. This took place two days after sentence and involved Stephen agreeing a supervision contract and completing an OASys self-assessment questionnaire, as well as the offender manager carrying out a dyslexia assessment, collecting diversity information about Stephen and providing him with an introduction to the unpaid work arrangements. Stephen started his unpaid work placement the day after his induction, that is, only three days after the sentence was imposed. This prompt start enabled the unpaid work commitment to be completed within six weeks of sentence, leaving both Stephen and his offender manager free to concentrate on the other elements of the order, which were handled with similar efficiency.

Individualised approach to encourage engagement

Michael's offender manager read about his case before their first meeting and in doing so became aware that he had had negative experiences of probation supervision in the past. She knew she needed to be creative in her ways of working with him and decided to use a range of visual aids to assist with both sentence planning and, later, with the required offence-focused work. She demonstrated good offender engagement skills by listening to Michael and carefully guiding him on a number of issues. She also acknowledged from the start that his homelessness and lack of positive relationships were barriers to engagement. Therefore, rather than rush him into the Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme (IDAP), the offender manager agreed with the programme's treatment manager to delay him starting the programme. Motivational pre-programme work was completed by the treatment manager, enabling Michael to begin the programme when he was more stable.

Setting SMART⁴ objectives

Joseph had been released from prison on licence and was assessed as a high Risk of Serious Harm to others. Substance misuse had been correctly recognised as a feature of his offending. Joseph's sentence plan was particularly well written; it contained an overarching objective (recognising the link between alcohol misuse and offending), together with detailed, SMART, objectives which were easy for Joseph to understand. Written from his perspective, they read:

'I will not drink more than four pints of beer at any one time; I will not give a reading of more than 0.5 on any alcohol test; I will smoke cannabis in moderation and will not use any class A drugs or amphetamines; and I will not test positive for these on drug tests'.

Motivating individuals to engage

Peter had been convicted of racially abusing an Asian couple in London. He had a previous similar conviction. His offender manager had started to work through victim empathy worksheets with him, but realised that they simply generated arguments during which Peter would restate his racist views. Altering her approach, she began to explore the reasons for Peter's anger and introduced him to anger management techniques. She also persuaded him to ask his GP to refer him for cognitive behavioural counselling. With the offender manager's encouragement, he gradually began to open up about his need to feel superior in relation to other people, explaining how this often led to aggressive behaviour. We were particularly impressed that the offender manager had responded well to the initial struggle to engage Peter with the victim work, adapting her approach rather than ploughing on with one which was not working.

Preparation for employment

Laura had been released on licence, having served 20 months for the robbery of a taxi driver. Aged 23 and the mother of two small children, she was not in employment. Laura's offender manager recognised that a move into employment or education would be a big step for a young woman who had lost confidence through her experiences of school and an abusive relationship. She therefore referred her to the 'Discover Programme', which offered Laura five sessions of coaching with a view to preparing her for the next step towards employment. The offender manager was careful to check with the coach that this would be complementary to the counselling Laura had already undertaken in prison and would continue to experience in the community through other mainstream services. The 'Discover Programme' also gave Laura access to the women's community resource run by 'Women's Wisdom', which, in turn, offered her longer-term support beyond the licence period.

4 Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bounded

Maintaining contact with prisoners

During her time in prison, Laura's offender manager had arranged for her to complete the TSP. This proved to be very effective in tackling her attitudes and behaviour, so Laura came out of prison motivated to change her life, and in particular to resume care for her two young children. Recognising that Laura's family were an important protective factor for her, the offender manager had maintained contact with them during and after the custodial phase. This undoubtedly helped build a strong relationship between them which assisted with the post-release phase of her sentence.

Northumbria

Promoting compliance with the sentence

The Trust had introduced a compliance activity requirement, called the Re-engagement Programme. This was a specific activity requirement (SAR) which could be proposed at the first breach of a community order if appropriate. The focus was on trying to secure the engagement of the offender in the work and to help them to meet their responsibilities. There were three sessions; the first two were undertaken by a different offender manager and the third undertaken by the original offender manager. The first two sessions looked at barriers to engagement and compliance. Worksheets were used to identify problems and propose solutions. For example, in one case the individual had identified problems with his memory (arising from his heavy drug use). This formed the basis of a plan to address the barriers to engagement and to secure his compliance with the terms of the sentence.

Promoting positive engagement with the service

Gordon was subject to a Community Order that included both supervision and Alcohol Treatment Requirement (ATR) requirements. Gordon was anxious about meeting new professionals and expressed concern about attending the sessions with the alcohol workers. He missed the initial sessions and gave a variety of reasons to explain these missed appointments. The offender manager had established a good rapport with Gordon and arranged for them to meet just prior to the ATR session. The offender manager accompanied Gordon to the treatment provider and introduced him to the workers. This eased Gordon's concerns and after the first few sessions he felt confident about continuing on his own. Gordon successfully completed his ATR. He reduced both his alcohol consumption and his offending.

Inclusive reviews of progress

In this case, the self-assessment questionnaire (SAQ) was used at each review of OASys and other interim reviews with the individual to identify progress and agree future priorities. This approach was also used to inform ongoing reviews of likelihood of reoffending and of sentence plans. The printed sentence plan in the case file showed the positive way in which the individual had been engaged in the assessment, planning and review processes.

Northamptonshire

Practical help to support offending behaviour work and promote desistance

Darren had a history of violent and other offending, mostly connected with binge drinking and cocaine use. He had served a long custodial sentence for serious violent offences, and while in custody had completed

the TSP. Prison staff described him as a 'hugely changed character'. Once released on licence, Darren made a determined effort to rebuild his life. He stayed away from his former associates, using learning from his TSP and techniques suggested by his offender manager to make better decisions about his life. He was keen to find work and his offender manager linked him with the education, training and employment (ETE) worker. When Darren found work through an agency his ETE worker obtained suitable work clothes and boots for him, to support the efforts he had made himself. Some nine months after his release, Darren had been working consistently for five months in his new employment, he had not been reconvicted, and there was no sign of the drinking and drug problems of old.

Outcome 3: Reducing the likelihood of reoffend

Merseyside

Delivery of interventions

Matt was on a licence that included attendance on the TSP, and during the programme he had said he thought his mother and family were people in his life that would help him not to reoffend and support him not to drink – a key factor in his violent offending. However, his offender manager was aware of evidence that his mother was also a heavy drinker and there was a history of violent and abusive behaviour between Matt and his mother, dating from when he was a child. Moreover, his mother had also been in a number of violent relationships with men who had physically and possibly sexually abused Matt in the past.

Following a three way meeting between Matt, his offender manager and the programme tutor, the offender manager made a home visit to meet the mother and other family members. This helped her to get a clearer and objective picture of the dynamics in the family and to focus her assessment and planning, including work with Matt to increase his awareness of the triggers for conflict within the family.

Hampshire

Delivery of interventions: health trainer scheme

Mark was a 33 year old man on licence who had committed a serious assault on the day of his release from a previous sentence. Knowing he was not registered with a GP, the offender manager referred him to a health trainer who helped him to become registered. Mark lacked confidence in visiting the GP and felt that he would not be able to express himself, so the offender manager arranged for him to be accompanied. The health trainer helped Mark to join a gym; through his membership, he began to feel better physically and to become more self-confident. Mark was also referred to a boxing academy as he had a long-term plan to be a trainer or mentor. It was clear that helping raise his position in society in this way was likely to support Mark in his journey towards stopping offending. With the assistance of both the offender manager and the health trainer, Mark was also supported in relation to his accommodation needs; he was accompanied to the housing department, since acquiring his own flat appeared to be a significant protective factor.

Women-specific interventions

Sharon, aged 25, had assaulted an unknown man during a street fight. She had seen her victim hit a woman, which had brought back memories of her own experience of being a victim of domestic abuse; over-reacting, she had committed the assault. She responded very positively to supervision and to the curfew imposed. She stopped drinking and was happy to spend the evenings at home with her young children. Since then she had become more involved in their school and had made a break from her other

friends. The offender manager referred Sharon to the ETE worker and this had led to her doing voluntary work in a charity shop and starting a qualification in retail. This greatly increased her self-confidence and her self-esteem. Thinking ahead to the end of the order, the offender manager also referred Sharon to the women's community resource centre in Havant. There Sharon was able to access sessions run by Women's Aid on debt management, an ETE workshop, the women's programme, confidence building workshops and substance misuse services. These services helped to reinforce her integration into her local community.

Women-specific interventions

Julie had a history of heavy alcohol use within a mutually violent relationship with her partner and an unstable home environment; as such hers was a challenging case. However, Julie's offender manager was working hard to balance her risk of harm to others with the risks she faced. Through using the alcohol interventions team, accommodation resources and a women's group within a women's community resource centre, some progress was being made. The women's group was helping Julie to identify the sexual jealousy which was linked with her offending behaviour. She undertook a range of women-specific sessions, including work on emotional well-being, self-esteem, risky thinking, problem solving and goal setting. As the offender manager was one of the group workers, she was able to reinforce the learning from the group work in her individual sessions with Julie. Progress was shown through Julie taking on board the suggestions about choosing drinks with a lower alcohol content and starting to drink later in the evening.

Northamptonshire

Engaging offenders in their assessment

Completion of the initial OASys assessment involves the offender in completing a 27 point self-assessment questionnaire. To increase the engagement of offenders in this part of the assessment process NOMS had devised a more user friendly version. We were pleased to see that this was being used by the Trust to good effect. It was easier to read for those having difficulties with literacy or dyslexia. It was laid out more sparsely; used a large, clear font; and incorporated simple graphic icons to aid understanding.

Outcome 4: Protecting the public by minimising risk of harm to others

Bedfordshire

Effective enforcement and re-engagement

Stephen had served a long prison sentence for a very serious offence of violence. He was released on licence to approved premises so that his behaviour could be monitored closely, including through regular drug testing. As well as tackling the drug use, Stephen's offender manager worked with him about his alcohol use as his offending was linked to this. Her case recording gave a very clear indication of what was covered in each meeting with him and what work still needed to be done.

Despite making some progress, Stephen was recalled to prison for breaching his licence conditions through poor behaviour and testing positive for drug use. His offender manager visited him quickly to explain the reasons for the recall and to try to re-engage him with his sentence plan. Stephen accepted that he needed to improve his behaviour and learn to manage himself more appropriately, and at the time of the inspection his offender manager was trying to keep him motivated, learn from his mistakes, and try again when re-released.

Desisting from offending is not straightforward and there can be setbacks as well as progress. The

offender manager's role in 'sticking with' the individual is crucial in keeping the person motivated to 'make a better go of things' next time. This case was managed really well from prior to initial release until now. Assessment, planning and reviews were excellent and there was a good level of contact with Stephen. The quality of case recording was also first rate.

Merseyside

Assessment of risk of harm

Chris had profound communication difficulties and it was necessary for the offender manager to be supported by provision of an interpreter throughout the order, despite the high cost of weekly sessions.

Chris was assessed as presenting a high risk of harm to others, due to his offence of arson. The offender manager had carefully worked with Chris over time on the motivation behind the offence and was able to bring him to understand it was not simply a suicide attempt, as he originally claimed, but also in part motivated by revenge against a former friend. This careful, investigative approach was well documented in thorough reviews of OASys, enabling the true risks to be properly managed.

Multi-agency work to manage risk of harm

Daryl was subject to a community order with supervision and a requirement to complete the Community Domestic Violence Programme (CDVP) for a domestic violence assault. He was not known to the probation service and the pre-sentence report (PSR) assessment made good use of information sources including Children's Services and the Police Vulnerable Persons Unit to obtain relevant information and open up positive lines of communication. This created a strong foundation for the subsequent order, where assessments, plans and other information was shared in a timely way with partner organisations, increasing the level of protection for the potential victims. This good multi-agency working and coordination extended across local authority boundaries when Daryl began a new relationship with a woman in another area.

Devon & Cornwall

Intelligent risk management

George had been released on licence to approved premises. His offence was malicious wounding, but he had a history of serious domestic violence and controlling behaviour. The risk management plan included the need for hostel staff to be aware of 'offence paralleling behaviour', which meant they would be alert for behaviour such as grooming, targeting or bullying. The approved premises monitored his behaviour and gave detailed feedback to the offender manager, which led to his eventual recall to prison. The approved premises agreed to take George back on re-release which reinforced the offender manager's message that probation staff would not give up on him, even though at times his behaviour towards them had been rude and aggressive.

Hampshire

Analysis of risk of harm

Richard had experienced a difficult upbringing in a family in which acts and allegations of sexual abuse were rife. Both the familial and his own domestic relationships were complicated; Richard, himself, had had many different partners, some of whom he had abused, and there were Child Protection concerns in relation to his two children with different mothers. In analysing the risk, the offender manager plotted the

various relationships on a chart, showing the links between these and the various historic offences. He then used the chart to help him make sense of the various risk of harm issues, to complete a comprehensive analysis and to draw up an extensive risk management plan. Through this attention to detail, he made sense of an otherwise chaotic picture which helped him and Richard understand the nature of the risk of harm.

Effective risk management planning

Jason was subject to a community order with supervision and a requirement to complete control of violence for angry impulsive drinkers (COVAID), following an assault on a police officer. He was categorised as posing a high Risk of Serious Harm (RoSH) to others. The assessment and planning documents in the case were of a high standard. All aspects of the assessment contained relevant information which had been verified where necessary; factors relating to both risk and likelihood of reoffending were thoroughly analysed and linked together to create a holistic picture of Jason's needs and risks, including details of the factors likely to increase and decrease risk. A clear risk management plan outlined how the risks would be managed, who would take specific actions and by when. Contingency planning was thorough, as was the linked sentence plan which had been written from Jason's perspective, incorporating his comments. Safeguarding of Jason's unborn child had also been carefully considered and there was evidence of the offender manager involving both the social worker and Jason's ex-partner's offender manager to ensure thoroughness of the assessment and plan. A timely safeguarding referral had also been made in relation to Jason's younger brother, although this was not formally documented on the case record.

Monitoring potential changes in risk of harm

Phillip had been released on life licence following the murder of a teenager when he himself was a teenager. He was regarded as a high RoSH to others and, due to media interest, his case was being managed via Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) at Level 3. Resident in approved premises, Phillip's keyworker was very active in providing support and boosting motivation, while keeping a close eye on his level of compliance, the risks he posed to others and his vulnerability. In particular, both the offender manager and the keyworker monitored the media interest, arranging for him to be moved to another approved premises when it became necessary to protect his anonymity. Through their combined efforts, they not only managed the risk of harm but also assisted his reintegration into society after a long period of incarceration.

Alternatives to recall to prison

Joshua was on licence, having served a prison sentence for robbery. He had been making good progress in the community, with the assistance of an ETE worker, a specialist mentor and a health trainer. His offender manager had also completed one-to-one work on domestic violence, although more offence-focused work was planned. When Joshua committed a further offence, this time of an acquisitive rather than a violent nature, the option to recall him to prison was weighed against the progress and motivation shown up to that point. The decision was made not to recall Joshua to prison but, rather, to issue him with a warning from one of the Trust's Directors. This flexible approach enabled him to continue to make progress in the community.

Creative multi-agency approaches to public protection

The Trust was supportive of, and party to, the establishment of a police-led 'stalking clinic' which operated across the county. The clinic provided help to those individuals who were fixated with others, but who had not necessarily specifically broken the laws of harassment. We heard of one case where a man was fixated

with a girl who worked in a shop. He repeatedly hung around outside of the shop, to the extent that she decided to change jobs to avoid him. He then found out her new place of work and started hanging around there. Eventually he was prosecuted for harassment and served a short sentence which did nothing to deal with his offending behaviour. Through the Trust's network of support, he was referred for a mental health intervention and eventually helped to move out of the area, away from his victim.

Northumbria

Supporting effective multi-agency work

We saw examples in parts of the Trust where offender managers could spend time based in local Children's Services teams. They shadowed social work staff, so they could better understand the processes used in those teams and the pressures upon them. The aim was to help improve the communication and joint working arrangements. Offender managers said they found these opportunities to be very helpful in clarifying their role, and developing their confidence, in joint work with colleagues from the Children's Services teams.

Monitoring risk of harm and Child Protection concerns

This case demonstrated effective use of home visiting. The offender was seen on a regular basis in the home environment, with his partner (the victim of the index offence) and their child. Whilst this enabled the offending behaviour work to take place, it also allowed for close monitoring of the home circumstances, relationships issues and any potential child care concerns. Through careful planning, it also enabled the offender manager to undertake joint work, on a restorative basis, between the victim and the offender.

Outcome 5: Delivering effective work for victims

Bedfordshire

Multi-agency work to protect children and young people

Andy was subject to a community order following an offence involving domestic violence against his partner, who was in the early stages of pregnancy at the time of the assault. The offender manager identified the Child Protection issues and noted those concerns within the assessment of risk of harm to others and in the risk management plan. She followed up her concerns and referred the case to children's social care services, with the result that the unborn child was made the subject of a Child Protection plan and the family were provided with support from other agencies.

Multi-agency work was clearly recorded throughout the offender manager's case records, and the risk management plan showed what was happening to protect the unborn child. This was effective work by the offender manager to ensure that the child was protected, while the offender manager was able to concentrate on ensuring that Andy completed his community order to reduce the likelihood of reoffending.

Hampshire

Protecting actual victims

Christopher had a long history of abusing and harassing his partners and ex-partners. A women's safety worker (WSW) was appointed to work with his most recent victim, in view of him being required to complete IDAP. The worker supported the victim in such a way that she felt sufficiently confident to

disclose further offending to her and, more importantly, to the police. The WSW kept the offender manager well informed; this allowed him to use the information given by the victim to inform the way he worked with Christopher. He was careful to use this information discretely, so as to avoid increasing the risk of further harm to the victim. Throughout the order, the offender manager clearly gave the victim a high priority, demonstrating a thorough understanding of the risk factors while also keeping abreast of events outside of the appointments with Christopher.

Protecting potential victims

When Stuart's offender manager discovered that he had a new partner, he investigated further, obtaining the new partner's details and passing these to the WSW who had already been appointed to the case, given Stuart's requirement to complete IDAP. The WSW visited the new partner, offering her support and completing a safety plan with her in an attempt to protect her from becoming a future victim.

Stakeholder and service user views

This is how we captured the views of sentencers

On each inspection, we met a range of sentencers to find out their opinions about the quality of reports prepared for court, the information provided to them generally by Probation Trusts, and the assistance provided by probation staff in courts. Their views were almost always very positive. Please see the individual inspection reports for further information.

These are some of the things that they said:

Bedfordshire:

"We are very happy with our relationship with the Probation Trust."

"If we have any problems they are dealt with quickly and resolved."

Merseyside:

"In court probation staff are there when you need them, we rarely have to wait more than five minutes for one."

"The probation staff are fabulous! If there are any problems, I raise these with [the local probation manager] and they are sorted."

Devon and Cornwall:

"I respect the views of experienced probation officers."

"Personal contacts have helped to resolve problems, and the bench is happy to move to on the day reports and oral reports."

Northumbria:

"We are really fortunate as we have excellent probation staff in court who provide a high quality service. This is not an accident as I have seen the first rate leadership being provided to probation staff, even in these difficult times."

"It is really helpful to have dedicated court staff. It means we can get to know them in court and we can build up trust in them. We get a helpful and professional service from the probation staff."

Northamptonshire:

Some specific comments from sentencers are included in the practice illustration section of this report.

This is how we captured the views of people who had been victims of offending

Probation Trusts have a statutory responsibility to contact and provide information to the victims of serious violent or sexual crime where the offender has been sentenced to a term of imprisonment of 12 months or more. These victims then decide whether they wish to be kept informed about the offender's sentence and consulted about possible conditions of release to ensure their safety. Victim liaison officers (VLOs) in Probation Trusts then keep in contact with those who take up the offer of information and consultation. For each inspection we sought the views of people who were in touch with VLO staff. The Trusts sent our questionnaires to a selection of victims they were in contact with, asking them to respond directly to us.

The overwhelming majority of responses were very positive about the service they had received. More details are included in the individual inspection reports, but the comments below give a flavour of the value placed by victims on the work undertaken with them.

These are some of the things that they said:

Bedfordshire:

"Just the help when you need it, thanks."

"Thank you for all your help, keep up the good work."

Merseyside:

"We are very happy with the way we have been treated by VLO staff. It has been a great help and support."

"My VLO was excellent and gave me the support and time I needed. I was really happy with the service."

"The service has kept me fully informed, and helped set up an exclusion zone; this helps me feel a lot safer. I am really grateful for the service provider's help. I have nothing but praise for the VLO, they were able to instil confidence in our family at a time when we felt really vulnerable. They were courteous and clear in support. I feel without this help we would have been living under a veil of fear. We had threats of violence against our family members and the VLO ensured an exclusion zone was put into place to protect us. They were always available and very professional."

Devon & Cornwall

"My liaison officer was really helpful. Knowing he was on my side really helped."

"We discussed safety measures for the future. It was helpful to know and be kept up to date with issues concerning my safety and welfare."

Slightly less positively, one victim said that she was visited by a replacement VLO on one occasion and had had to repeat everything about her case which she had found upsetting. She said it would have been helpful if the replacement VLO had read her case notes before visiting.

Northamptonshire:

Some Mixed views from one person -

"Over eight years, I have tried to contact probation twice and got no response. Contact was only given when something happened in the sentence. I was in town and saw the defendant and did not know he was on home leave. I was quite shocked. My victim contact officer was very good at her job. I was more than happy."

Northumbria:

"We have, and still are, receiving excellent service from probation liaison and feel fully supported by our officer".

One person said *"I am not sure how much information staff have about the offence, therefore a full understanding of the impact. It seems to me that the victim liaison service have full information about the offender's sentence but not access to the case files. We are extremely lucky with our victim liaison officer, but some of the questions asked are very distressing to answer and I believe they should have access to the information. I would not wish the qualifying circumstances for access to this service on anyone, however the quality of the service as delivered by our particular officer is excellent and essential to victims of crime".*

One said *"I am really pleased that the suffering of victims is now taken more seriously and has a higher profile generally. Most victims have a life sentence".*

Less positively - another commented that they *"Will not be satisfied if the concerns reported are not acted upon".*

This is how we captured the views of people who had offended

NOMS undertakes an annual survey of the views of people under the supervision of Probation Trusts, either on community sentences or post-release licences. To avoid duplication we use the results from this survey for each Trust. In the main, their views about the experience of contact with Probation Trusts were very positive, with few suggestions for improvement.

Those who had offended expressed mainly positive views about their supervision or other contact with the particular Trust, though there were some negative comments and a number of suggestions for improvement. Please see the individual inspection reports for more details.

These are some of the things that they said:

Bedfordshire:

"Whilst being on probation isn't the best situation to be in, it has helped me turn my life around and get to an even better place."

"My probation officer is very supportive and understanding and always helps me to get things off my chest, and understands my point of view."

"I have been treated with respect and as an equal human being. Staff are great, helpful and polite even under the pressure they face from some visitors. Very helpful all round."

Some less positive comments

"I'm not entirely sure what the benefit is for me...Probation may be good for some people but not all."

"Probation don't help at all."

Merseyside:

"I enjoy my meeting with my Probation Officer and she has tried to help me. I am grateful for all the help she has given me."

"I am glad I had this experience and I know in my heart I will no longer offend."

"My offender manager has given me so much support I have trusted her so much. I have talked about things I hadn't before. She is fair and honest and sincerely understanding. Thank you."

"I have found probation staff to be very helpful and it has been a pleasure to engage with them. They have been very supportive and have given good advice. I commend what they have achieved in the way of encouraging and motivating myself and others."

Devon & Cornwall:

"As this is my first time on Probation I was unsure what to expect; I have been surprised by all the help given to me."

"For me the shame of having a conviction is enough to stop me offending again; my Probation Officer has been very supportive."

"My Probation Officer is experienced and obviously knows what she is doing."

"My Probation Officer has made such a difference to my life and I am gutted that I won't be seeing her again."

"In the early stages I saw six different officers due to ill health. Now I have [name provided], and he has been a huge help and inspiration."

Some less positive comments:

"Programmes should run on time and dates shouldn't change. If I miss a session or am late I get into trouble, but it's OK for programme tutors to change dates and arrive late!"

"More funding and opportunities should be made available for training and education."

Hampshire:

"I've been fairly treated by very professional people."

"Everything's been good but I would have liked to have started ETE sooner."

"I wouldn't change anything. Probation is changing me for the better."

"I found the group helpful with lots of different advice from other group members and the offender manager."

Some less positive comments:

"[I would like to] see only one probation officer not several. Seems like I have to start from scratch once I get passed over."

"[I would like] more direct and quick help to find work and to explore training courses suitable for ex-offenders."

"Resolution of queries could be much quicker."

Northumbria:

"I would like to say thank you and I felt I had no hope until I met my offender manager. They have made me see things differently with their help and I have changed so much and my time on drugs."

"I would not change of my experience of probation. My offender manager has really helped me and put me on the right track."

"There is nothing to change about my probation as I have been treated with respect and my probation officers are the best I could have asked for."

"I would change nothing as things worked out ok and I did everything I had to do and have avoided drugs for nearly two years now and haven't re-offended too."

Northamptonshire:

"I'm happy with the support I'm getting from probation."

"I would not change anything [about the Probation Service] because the help and support has always been there for me."

"You [the local probation staff] are all great so thank you for all your help and support."

"Having a planned written program helped me to settle down after a very unsettled way of life."

Some less positive comments:

"[I wasn't happy with] the waiting times to see somebody - the waiting is a bit uncomfortable sometimes."

"[I would prefer] coming every week rather than less often (monthly)."

"There needs to be a greater understanding of each person's abilities, and a far better way of organising Unpaid Work projects to use offender skill sets."

Outcomes

Outcome 1: Assisting sentencing

What we expect to see

Pre-sentence reports and work in court are intended to enable sentencers to impose appropriate and effective sentences. We expect to see good quality reports which include an assessment of the offender and, where appropriate, a clear proposal.

Case assessment score

Overall 81% of work to assist sentencing was done well enough.

What we found in the cases

1. Assessment and planning to inform sentencing

Type of reports

- 1.1. Over the six inspections, reports were prepared for courts in 260 cases in our sample. Just under half (49%) were shorter format typed reports, usually prepared within seven days, and just over one-third (36%) were fuller typed reports. The remaining 38 were oral reports, and in most cases there was a written note of what had been said to the court.

Content of reports

- 1.2. The quality of more than one-quarter of the full and shorter reports was not sufficient. Most were based on sufficient information for the court appearance. However, a few (19%) lacked the required risk of harm screening, and in a smaller number of cases relevant information about the individual's home and social environment was missing, as was an assessment of the likelihood of reoffending.
- 1.3. A few reports (19%) lacked an accurate analysis of the likelihood of the person reoffending, and an analysis of the risk of harm posed to others was missing in one-quarter. Typically, these reports described what had happened, without analysing the individual's offending and its impact on others. A few reports also lacked reference to previous convictions, cautions or other behaviour where this was relevant. Reports on those individuals classified as posing a low risk of harm to others were judged to be of the poorest quality; 59% (17 out of 29) met the standards we were looking for. The quality of reports in medium risk of harm cases and high or very high risk of harm cases was better, at 79% and 72% respectively. Almost all of the typed reports were clear in meaning and concise.
- 1.4. The quality of court reports is important, as without an accurate analysis of current and previous offending it is more difficult for sentencers to impose appropriate and effective sentences. The sentencers we met on our inspections, however, were generally satisfied with the quality of the reports they received.

Sentencing proposals

- 1.5. The great majority (87%) of full and shorter reports contained a proposal for a community sentence, where this was appropriate. Almost all included clear and specific proposals that followed logically from the main content of the report, and were appropriate to the nature of the offending.

A proposal for a punitive requirement, for example unpaid work (Community Payback) or a curfew, was included in almost three-quarters of reports, where it was appropriate.

- 1.6. In most of the full and shorter reports, the intended outcome of the sentence was clear. Where the outcomes were stated they took full account of the assessed likelihood of reoffending and the risk of harm posed by the individual in almost all cases. The sentence imposed by the court broadly followed the proposal in the great majority of cases.

Assessment of motivation to comply with the sentence

- 1.7. Most of the full and shorter reports gave an indication of the individual's motivation and capacity to comply with the proposed sentence. However, just over half explained how issues that could hinder the person engaging with their sentence or complying with it would be tackled. Such issues could include alcohol problems or carer responsibilities, for example. We saw a number of cases where these 'barriers to compliance' were obvious at the report stage, but were not considered by the report writer and, not surprisingly, some of the individuals concerned were later back in court for breach proceedings. Increased attention to these issues by report writers would help some people engage with their sentence more effectively from the start.

Reports on women who have offended

Twenty-six of the court reports were on women. The reports were generally of better quality than those undertaken on men; 81% met the standards we were looking for. More attention was given to the person's motivation and capacity to comply with the proposed sentence – 24 out of the 26 reports paid sufficient attention to these important issues. Despite this, barriers to compliance were still not identified as well as they should have been in ten of the reports. Twenty-five contained an appropriate proposal for a community sentence and the sentence imposed broadly followed the proposal in all but a few instances.

Summary

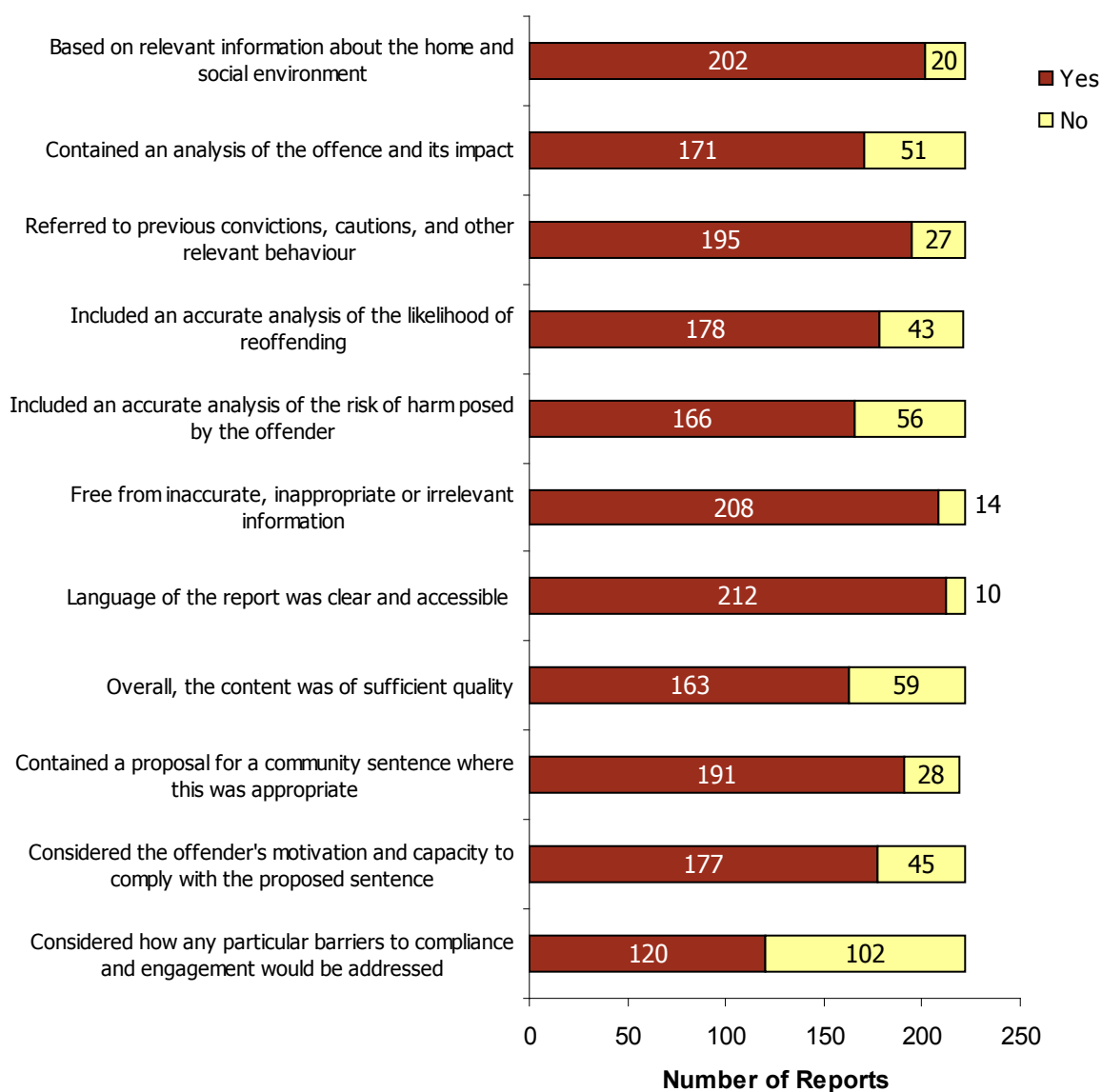
Overall, 81% of work to assist sentencing was done well enough.

Recommendations

To enable sentencers to impose appropriate sentences, reports should include:

- an accurate analysis of the likelihood of reoffending
- an accurate analysis of the risk of harm to others
- an assessment of how issues which could affect the individual's ability to complete the sentence will be addressed.

Pre Sentence Reports



Outcome 2: Delivering the sentence of the court

What we expect to see

Victims, sentencers and the public have the right to expect that the sentence of the court will be delivered as intended, and enforced where necessary. We expect to see work to engage and motivate offenders in order to ensure that they complete their sentences, and that the work undertaken with them is effective in reducing offending and promoting community reintegration.

Case assessment score

Overall, 80% of work to deliver the sentence of the court was done well enough.

What we found in the cases

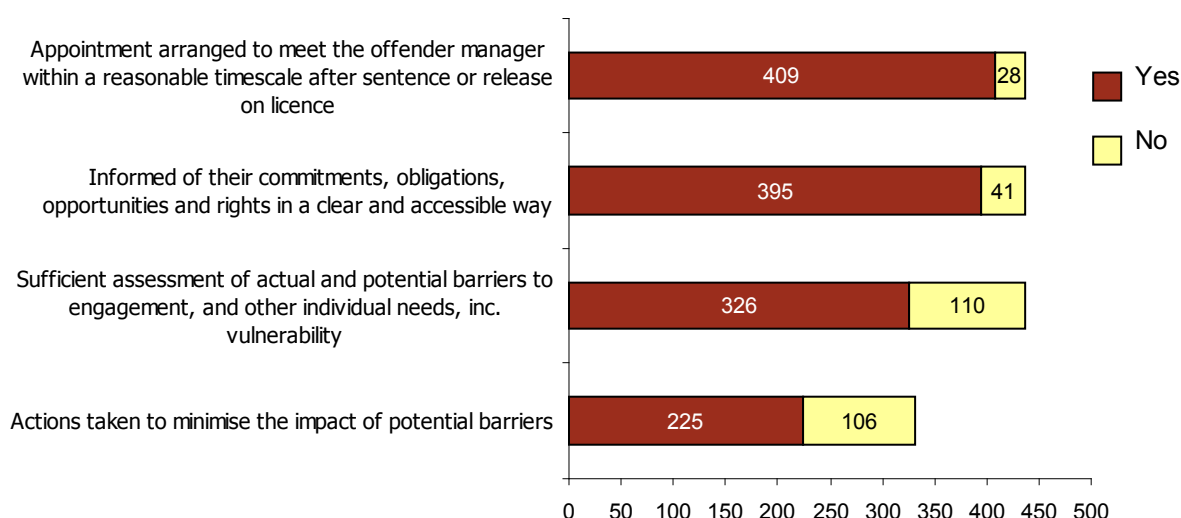
1. Assessment and planning to deliver the sentence

Allocation, induction, and assessment of diverse needs

Almost all of the cases in the sample were judged to have been allocated to the correct tier of service at the start of sentence, release on licence, or transfer into the particular probation area. In 94% of cases, an appointment was arranged for the individual to meet their offender manager soon after sentence.

- 1.1. In the great majority of cases, there was evidence of a full, timely, and individualised induction being offered; and people were clearly informed of their commitments, obligations, opportunities and rights in relation to their order or licence in an understandable way.
- 1.2. Assessment of the person's individual needs was not sufficient in one-quarter of cases. This included any vulnerability issues and any potential barriers to that person engaging with their sentence and completing it successfully, such as mental health problems or being homeless.

Engaging people at the start of sentence



- 1.3. There was some evidence that the assessment of individual needs for people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds was not as good as that undertaken with others; 36% were judged to be insufficient compared with 24% for those from white British backgrounds. The sample size was

small – 45 individuals across the six Probation Trusts, compared with 392 white British offenders – but the findings were statistically significant.

- 1.4. In the small number of cases (49) who were identified as prolific or other priority offenders (PPOs) and/or subject to Integrated Offender Management (IOM), the assessment of their individual needs was of poorer quality than that of others in the sample – 61% of assessments were sufficient, compared with 76% for the non-PPO/IOM group. This was surprising, given the high level of multi-agency resourcing for this group. Again, although the sample size was small, the findings were statistically significant.

Involvement in sentence planning

- 1.5. When it comes to sentence planning, we expect to see that individuals are actively and meaningfully involved in drawing up their plan, but we found no evidence of this in more than one-quarter of the cases. Sentence planning did not always pay sufficient attention to factors which might promote the individual's engagement and compliance with their sentence. For example, their strengths and aptitudes were considered sufficiently in 68% of cases, and the methods most likely to be effective in work with them were given sufficient attention in 66%. Where actions were needed to minimise the impact of potential barriers to engagement, these were included in sentence planning documents in 68% of cases. More positively, the person's level of motivation and capacity to change was considered in more than three-quarters of the sample.
- 1.6. The health of those who have offended is generally poorer than that of non-offending groups, so we expect that offender managers check at the start of sentence whether the individual is registered with local health services. However, in one-quarter of the sample the person's access to primary health services had not been assessed.

Sentence planning to address the likelihood of reoffending

- 1.7. Initial sentence planning was mostly timely and informed by the assessment of an individual's likelihood of reoffending and risk of harm to others. In the great majority of relevant cases there was sufficient assessment of factors likely to assist with rehabilitation so, in most cases, accommodation issues and education and employment had been appropriately assessed.

Setting objectives

- 1.8. Appropriate sentence planning objectives were set in 73% of cases. For example, in the great majority of cases, plans contained objectives that were appropriate to the purposes of sentencing and tackled the factors linked with the likelihood of reoffending.
- 1.9. One-quarter, however, did not set objectives to address risk of harm to others, and just over one-third lacked objectives relating to multi-agency risk management procedures, such as MAPPA, where this was relevant. There was also a significant gap in cases where Child Protection concerns were present – only 53% of relevant cases included objectives to tackle those concerns, which was worrying. We are currently undertaking a thematic inspection about protecting children, and the probation contribution to this important issue will be examined in more detail through this and the next six inspections of work with adults who offend.
- 1.10. We expect to see sentence planning objectives which are clearly and simply worded, set out achievable steps, and are outcome-focused, but one-third did not meet what we were looking for. It was clearer in more cases what the individual had to do to achieve the objectives, but that still left 30% where it was hard to tell what was actually expected.

- 1.11. In just over one-third of cases it was not clear when the sentence plan was due to be reviewed. This particularly concerned what changes might prompt an unscheduled review. Where the review period was clear though, it was appropriate for the case in most instances.

Planned contact

- 1.12. Planned levels of contact were generally appropriate to the case and were well recorded. However, there was not always a clear record of the contribution to be made by all workers in the case to achieve sentence planning objectives, and some cases lacked evidence that relevant parts of the plan had been communicated to other people involved.

2. Delivery and review of the sentence plan and maximising offender engagement

Delivery of interventions and attention to diverse needs

- 2.1. In the great majority of cases, interventions were delivered according to the requirements of the sentence and in line with sentence plan objectives. In most cases, delivery of interventions took account of any risk of harm posed to others by the individual. Most people also received sufficient help to improve their social networks and sources of support within the family and community, where this was needed.
- 2.2. Although not always particularly well assessed, diversity factors and other individual needs were taken into account in the delivery of services in the great majority of cases. However, there was some evidence that proportionally more women, black and minority ethnic offenders, and those subject to community orders with a standalone unpaid work requirement, needed more help than they were given to overcome the barriers they faced in getting through their order or licence. Such barriers included mental health issues like depression, family responsibilities, or lack of settled accommodation.

Contact, compliance and enforcement

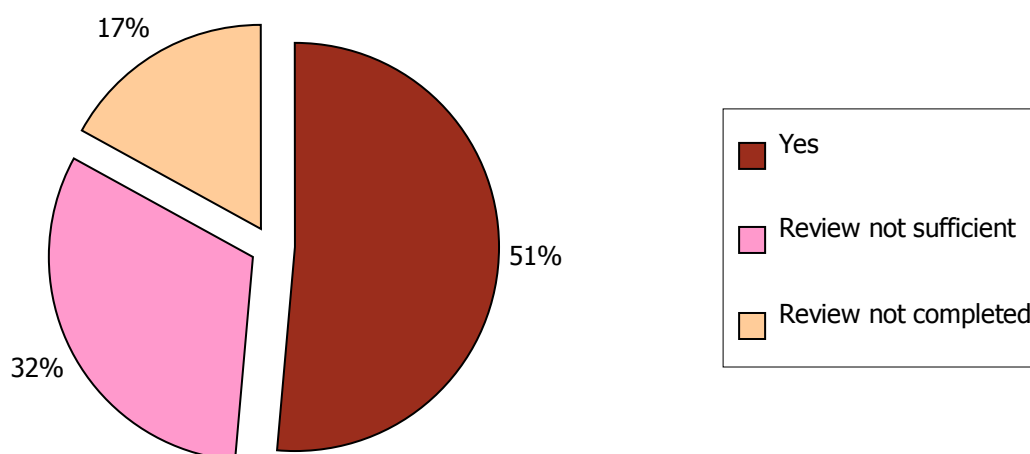
- 2.3. For the great majority of cases (88%), the contact arranged with people was sufficient to promote positive outcomes. More specifically, the frequency of appointments or instructions to attend unpaid work facilitated the delivery of the sentence and the achievement of sentence plan objectives in almost all cases. Mostly, contact was sufficient to monitor changes in dynamic risk factors and took full account of the assessed level of risk of harm to others. For most individuals, there was also enough contact to tackle their likelihood of reoffending. Pre-release contact with those in the licence sample was sufficient to assist with post-release planning in most cases (82%).
- 2.4. Sufficient resources were allocated throughout the sentence to address the purpose of the sentence, the likelihood of reoffending, and the risk of harm to others in over 86% of cases. Enough resources were applied to tackling diversity needs in 88% of cases where needed.
- 2.5. Where it was needed, offender managers undertook motivational work with most individuals to encourage them to engage fully with their sentence. In most cases, the offender manager took a leading role in relation to other workers in managing the sentence. Attendance at appointments for supervision, rehabilitation work, or unpaid work was monitored in almost all cases (96%), and a timely and investigative approach was taken in 91% of instances where appointments had been missed. Effective action was taken by other workers to secure compliance in almost all cases where it was needed. In most cases, those other workers involved with an individual also took action to increase motivation and encourage engagement and compliance for the future.

- 2.6. In one-third of cases in the overall sample, the person had not attended as required or there were instances of unacceptable behaviour. Professional judgements by offender managers about the acceptability of absence or other behaviour were appropriate in almost all cases. Judgements were reasonable and consistent, but needed to be more clearly recorded in some cases. Where a formal warning was required, it was given in a clear and timely way in almost all situations. Enforcement proceedings or recall were used appropriately in all but a few cases. Clear explanations were almost always given to the individual about why they were being returned to court or recalled, and proceedings were started swiftly in the main. In over three-quarters of cases, sufficient efforts were made to re-engage the individual with their sentence plan and encourage their commitment to continue.

Review of sentence planning

- 2.7. We expect to see sentence planning reviewed within the timescale stated in the initial plan, or within a reasonable period. Work with the individual was not reviewed sufficiently well in just over half the cases.

Sufficient review of the sentence plan



- 2.8. In more than one-third of cases there was no evidence of timely review of objectives, for example when the person completed one of the requirements or conditions of their order or licence. Following the relaxation by NOMS of the national standard, which had required reviews of OASys at intervals of no more than 16 weeks, some Trusts had left the decision about the timing of reviews to the professional judgement of the offender manager, while others had introduced a local standard of reviewing at six monthly intervals if there had been no need for an earlier review. Whichever route the Trusts had taken, we found that reviews 'had fallen off the agenda' for many offender managers, and some had only taken place shortly before the inspection, some eight or nine months after the start of the community sentence or licence. For the reasons stated below, in our view, this is too long a period to pass without reviewing the work being undertaken with an individual.

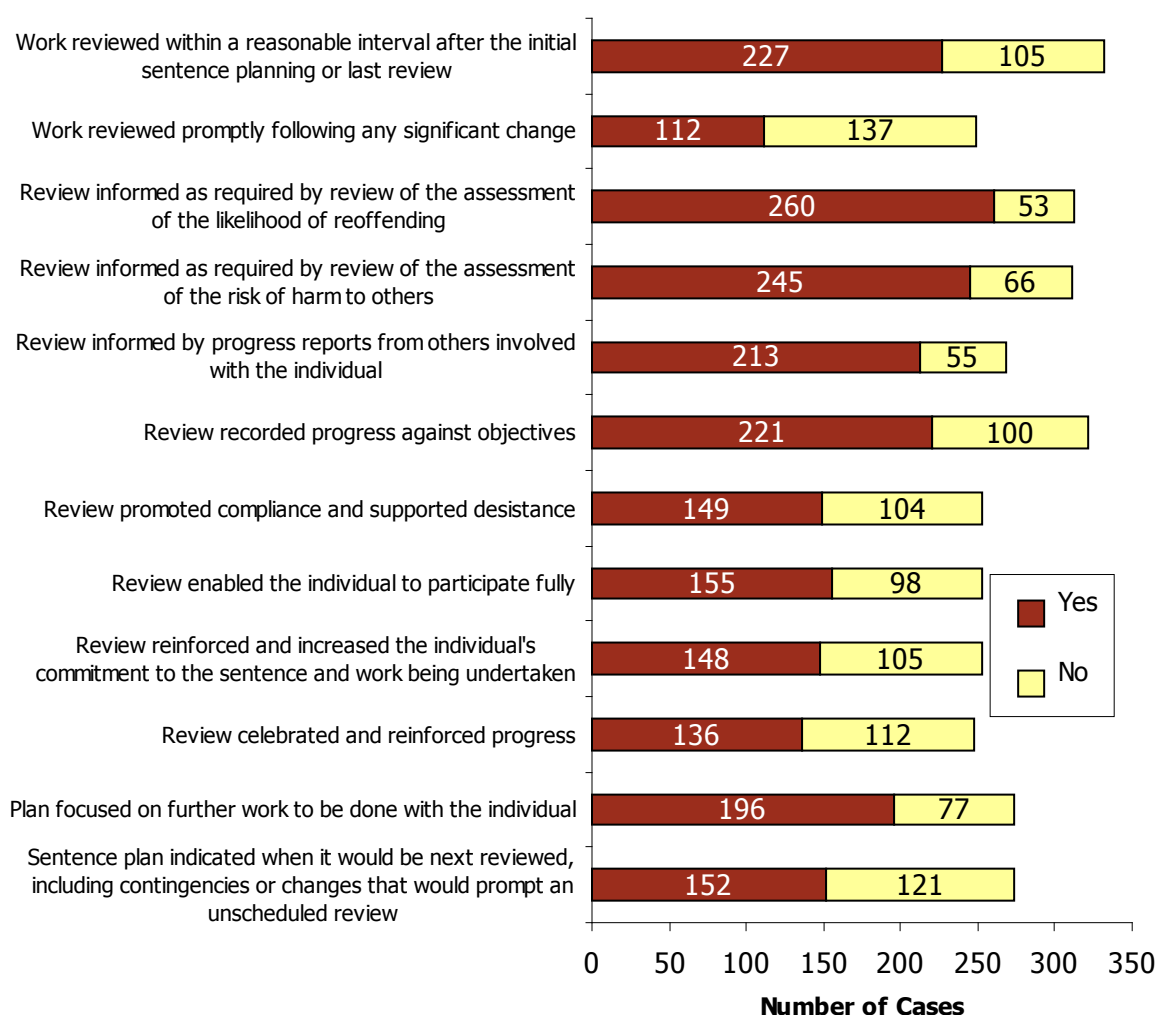
Recording progress

- 2.9. Sentence plan reviews provide an opportunity to celebrate progress and reinforce the individual's commitment to their sentence, encourage people in their commitment to complete the sentence and desist from offending. They were not generally being used in this way, or undertaken in a way which

enabled the individual to participate fully. In around one-third of cases, reviews were not well used to record the individual's progress against their objectives, or re-prioritise objectives, or allocate additional resources if required. So planning was not a dynamic process in these cases.

- 2.10. Where needed, 72% of reviews focused on further work to be done with the individual. In the light of the review, we judged that reallocation to a different level of service was required in 88 cases, but this was only undertaken in 49 (56%).

Reviewing sentence plans and reinforcing progress



Review when there had been significant change

- 2.11. There were 249 cases in the sample where significant change had occurred after the initial sentence planning, but only 45% were then reviewed promptly. This was concerning, as significant change could involve new offences or other events that might trigger a change in RoSH classification and the need for additional risk management planning, or at least a change in sentence plan objectives. More positively, where reviews were done, they were generally informed by a review of the likelihood of reoffending and a review of the risk of harm to others.

Case transfers

- 2.12. Twenty-seven cases in the overall sample had been transferred between different Trusts or other organisations such as a Youth Offending Team. Transfers out were handled appropriately in six

out of nine cases, with provision of up to date assessments, plans, and other relevant documents. Eighteen cases were transferred into the Trust being inspected. In half of these, the transfer was not handled as well overall as it should have been. For example, in ten of the cases the likelihood of reoffending assessment and sentence plan were not updated within a reasonable period of time after the transfer, and in nine the same was true for the assessment of risk of harm and the risk management plan. More positively, where the person moved geographical areas as part of the transfer, a new appointment was made with them as soon as possible in all relevant cases, but not all received a timely home visit. In all but two cases it was clear who was managing the case at every point in the transfer.

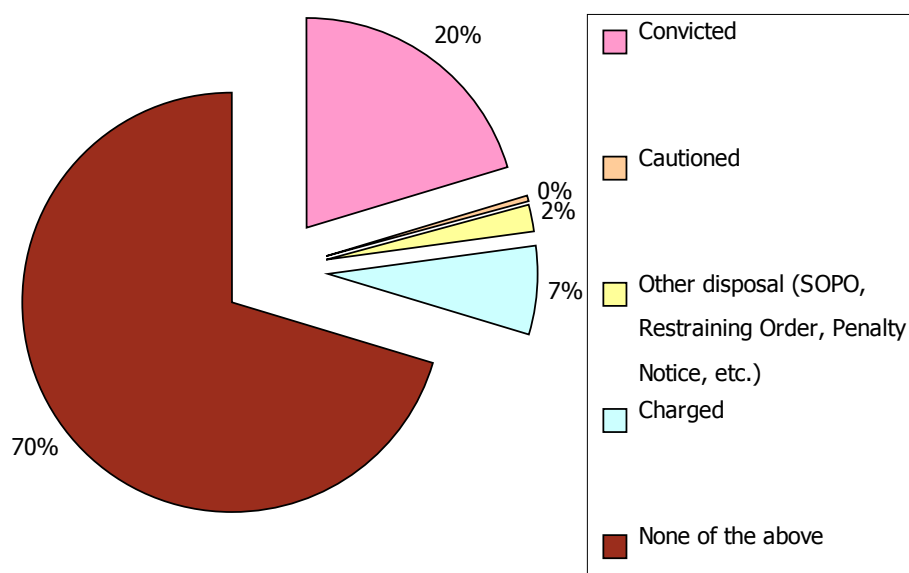
Case recording

- 2.13. In the great majority of cases, case records (both electronic and paper) held sufficient information to support the management of the order or licence. Relevant information was usually accessible by or communicated to other workers involved in the case. Almost all cases records (91%) were well organised and the recording of information was generally clear and timely, but 22% lacked relevant documents. In some cases it was the court order that was missing and the offender manager had not pursued the matter as they should have done. Case records did not always reflect the work carried out with an individual; in 21% of cases it was clear from discussion with offender managers that more thought had gone into assessment and planning, and more interventions undertaken, than was evidenced.

3. Initial outcomes are achieved

- 3.1. The requirements of the order or licence were delivered as intended in 83% of cases, so far as was practicable at the stage we inspected the case. Reporting instructions given to individuals were sufficient to carry out the sentence on the court in almost all instances.
- 3.2. In just under half of the cases, the person complied with their sentence without the need for additional action by the offender manager. Enforcement proceedings or recall had been used in just under three-quarters of cases where we judged that they were required.
- 3.3. Out of the 437 cases in the overall sample, 70% of individuals had not been cautioned for, charged with, or convicted of a further offence during the order or licence we inspected.

Further offending committed since the start of the sentence or release on licence



- 3.4. Sentence planning objectives had been achieved fully or in part in just over three-quarters of the cases. In the great majority of cases, the delivery of the sentence plan had been maintained when there was a change in offender manager.

Work with women who have offended

Overall, the work undertaken with women to deliver the sentence of the courts was generally of a similar quality to the work with men, although there were some exceptions. For example, there was slightly less evidence that women were offered an individualised induction or were clearly informed of their commitments and rights in relation to their order or licence. The quality of sentence planning was somewhat better with women than with men; 78% of the planning was sufficient overall, compared with 70% for men. There was better evidence for the women in the sample that sentence planning paid sufficient attention to factors that may promote engagement and compliance. In particular, we saw more attention to identifying the methods likely to be most effective with women. All of the Trusts made some specific provision for women, for example, being seen for their appointments in women's centres, where these existed locally, and/or being offered intervention programmes more specifically tailored to their needs; these arrangements were often referred to in sentence planning.

However, when it came to the delivery of services, relevant diversity factors were not taken account of sufficiently as often as with men; this was done satisfactorily in 80% of the cases, compared with 86% of the men in the sample. Also, as noted in paragraph 2.2 above, work to overcome barriers to successful completion of the order or licence was not done as well with women as with men – 77% of the practice met the standards we were looking for as compared with 84% for men.

Summary

Overall, 80% of work to deliver the sentence of the court was done well enough.

Recommendations

To ensure compliance with the sentence of the court:

- work with each individual should include an assessment of their needs, including issues of vulnerability and potential barriers to successful completion of the sentence
- individuals should be involved in assessing the factors related to their offending, drawing up the sentence plan and reviewing their progress
- reviews of assessments and plans should be done promptly when requirements or conditions of the order or licence have been completed, or when there has been a significant change.

To provide assurance that the sentence of the court is delivered efficiently:

- case records should reflect the work that has been undertaken with the individual
- where cases are transferred between areas or organisations, assessments and plans should be updated swiftly and contact with the individual made promptly.

Outcome 3: Reducing the likelihood of reoffending

What we expect to see

A number of factors may contribute to the likelihood of an offender committing further crime. We expect to see an accurate assessment of these factors at the start of sentence and evidence that effective, targeted work has reduced the likelihood of reoffending.

Case assessment score

Overall, 73% of work to to reduce the likelihood of reoffending was done well enough.

What we found in the cases

1. Assessment to reduce the likelihood of reoffending

- 1.1. An assessment of the factors that may contribute to the likelihood of further offending was required in all cases in the sample, except where the only requirement in a community order or suspended sentence order was for unpaid work. In 23 cases, no assessment was completed at the start of the order or licence, despite being needed.
- 1.2. Where the assessment had been done, we judged it to be of sufficient quality in the great majority of cases. So, in the main, assessments were timely, drew fully on all available sources of information, and took previous relevant behaviour into account. In almost all cases, they included relevant information about the individual's home and social environment and identified the factors that related to that person's offending, for example, lack of settled accommodation, or drug or alcohol use.
- 1.3. We expect that people are actively involved in the assessment of what factors were related to their offending and what would help them to desist from reoffending. Evidence of this was lacking in one-quarter of the cases and its absence was particularly noticeable for the 49 PPO/IOM cases in the sample, where only just over half met the standard we were looking for.

Alcohol and violent offending

- 1.4. In view of the links between alcohol intoxication and violent offending, we were particularly interested in this inspection to see what role alcohol played in the main offence and to what extent this was recognised in the assessment of the likelihood of reoffending. In 304 of the 437 cases, we judged that alcohol use was a factor that made the individual more likely to reoffend. In 259 of these cases, alcohol was judged to be a contributing factor in the current offence, and this was taken account of sufficiently in the assessment in 222 cases (88%). So in the great majority of cases, the role of alcohol was recognised. Overall, it was the second most common factor identified in the assessments, after deficits in thinking and behaviour.
- 1.5. We then looked to see whether the contribution of alcohol to the offence was addressed sufficiently in sentence planning. However, this was missing in 58 out of 255 (23%) of cases.

Alcohol and offending



Other factors related to the likelihood of reoffending

- 1.6. Over the 437 cases, there were a variety of factors that were related to the likelihood of reoffending for each person. In the overall sample, the most commonly identified reoffending factor was the individual's thinking and behaviour. This includes poor problem solving, difficulty in understanding the perspective of others and low self-control, so it is not surprising that it features highly in the assessment of the likelihood of violent reoffending. Problems with relationships featured in over half the cases, followed by lifestyle and associates, and attitudes to offending. Emotional well-being issues (including mental health and behavioural issues) were present in just under half the cases. Drug misuse issues did not feature as strongly, being present in under one-third.

2. Delivery of interventions to reduce the likelihood of reoffending

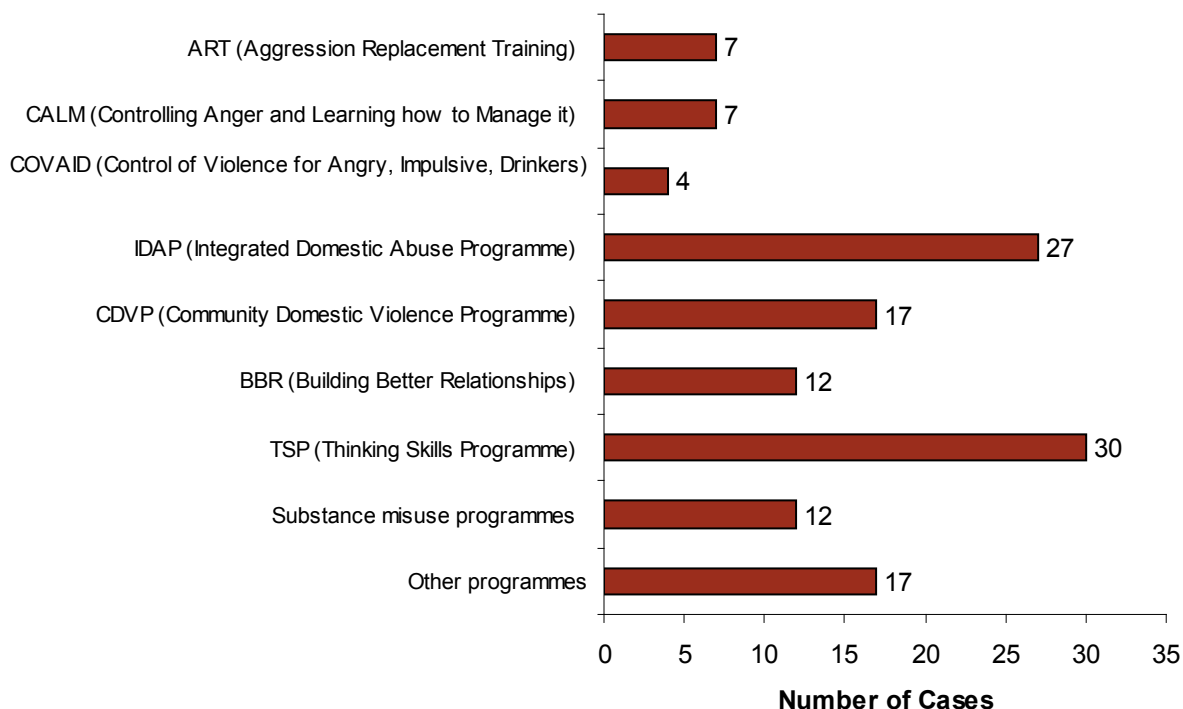
- 2.1. Constructive interventions (as opposed to those like a curfew which placed restrictions on behaviour) encouraged and challenged the individual to take responsibility for their actions and decisions relating to offending in more than three-quarters of cases. Some Trusts had introduced a structured programme of activity for the first few months of the person's order or licence, which was specifically focused on tackling offending-related factors and their rehabilitation generally. These programmes tended to work well for most people and the Citizenship Programme (developed by Durham Tees Valley Probation Trust and now also used by others) was producing positive outcomes. Over three-quarters of relevant cases in the sample demonstrated that work with the individual kept a focus on the changes they needed to make to their behaviour.
- 2.2. Individuals were generally prepared well for the interventions delivered throughout their order or licence. In almost three-quarters of cases, the offender manager then regularly reviewed with the individual the work they had done in other parts of their order or licence, such as attending accredited programmes or undertaking substance misuse sessions.
- 2.3. To support and sustain their desistance from offending, the great majority of individuals were informed of relevant local services which could assist them. Most were then referred to these services where appropriate.

- 2.4. Nine people had been identified as belonging to a gang and/or were involved in serious group offending. Six of them had been offered sufficient help to leave the group and reintegrate into the wider community.

Accredited programmes

- 2.5. Delivery of an accredited programme was planned for 29% of cases in the sample. These are longer, structured intervention programmes tackling specific issues that are usually run on a group work basis. Attendance on the programme is usually a requirement of a community sentence or suspended sentence order, or a condition in a licence. The programmes included several tackling domestic violence, others focusing on violence more generally and one addressing thinking skills. The chart below indicates the numbers in the sample with a requirement to attend a particular programme⁵.

Number of cases with a programme requirement



- 2.6. The 'other' programmes category included the low intensity alcohol programme (four people), Resolve (the successor programme to Aggression Replacement Training (ART) and Controlling Anger and Learning to Manage it (CALM), three people), and two people undertaking SOLO – a domestic violence programme delivered on a one-to-one basis.
- 2.7. NOMS Evidence and Segmentation, Companion Document to the Commissioning Intentions from 2014 notes that: *"There is good evidence that violence can be reduced through psychosocial interventions, such as anger and emotional management, developing interpersonal skills, social problem solving and [tackling] anti-social attitudes. This is specifically the case for programmes that follow the 'Risk, Needs and Responsivity' principles. Both generic cognitive skills programmes and cognitive behavioural programmes targeted specifically at violent behaviour have been found to reduce reoffending".*

⁵ It should be noted that not all programmes are available in all Probation Trusts – only TSP is delivered by all, and each Trust offers either IDAP, CDVP, or their successor programme Building Better Relationships.

- 2.8. Accredited programmes are relatively expensive to deliver for a number of reasons, including the number of sessions run over several months, the training and support of programme tutors, and the supporting management arrangements. Over recent years, funding for accredited programmes has been targeted on higher intensity programmes for offenders who present the highest risk of harm to others. We acknowledge that not all offenders in our sample would meet the eligibility criteria for accredited programmes. However, given that the entire case sample was of violent offending, and in light of the evidence about effective interventions, it was surprising to see the relatively low numbers scheduled to attend the more general violence programmes ART, CALM, and Resolve. It was particularly disappointing to see very limited use of COVAID as this intervention tackles specific issues relating to alcohol use and violent offending.
- 2.9. Domestic violence programmes were more widely used than the general violence ones. Given the number of cases in the sample where domestic violence featured either in the current or previous offences (51%) it was perhaps not surprising that more individuals were required to attend these programmes than any other.
- 2.10. In 85 of the cases where there was a programme requirement, the delivery of that intervention was consistent with the sentence plan; it had either been completed by the time of our inspection or there were plans in place to deliver it at an appropriate time in the future. For 11 cases though, the programme was delivered later than planned and in 27 it had not been delivered (but should have been) some nine months into the order or licence. There were a variety of reasons for this, including the programme not being run frequently enough in a few cases.

Specified activities

- 2.11. Ninety-five cases included an SAR. These are usually structured sessions focusing on a particular topic related to the person's offending, such as alcohol use. Much shorter than accredited programme,s they are often delivered individually by the offender manager or another worker, rather than in a group setting. There is no national framework for provision of specified activities as there is for accredited programmes and they vary widely from area to area. In 61 of the cases (64%), we judged that the particular specified activity had made its intended contribution to planned work with the person.

Approved Premises

- 2.12. Approved premises provide controlled accommodation for offenders under supervision, usually for those classified as posing a high RoSH to others. They were used in 56 cases in the sample, and constructive interventions had been provided for three-quarters of these in line with the individual's offending-related needs and their sentence plan.

Interventions to address alcohol use

- 2.13. Given the high number of cases where alcohol use was assessed to be a factor which made the person more likely to reoffend, we wanted to see whether interventions to tackle this had been delivered. In 133 cases out of 192 (69%) interventions had been delivered in line with sentence plan objectives. It is a matter of concern that not all of those who needed it were receiving an appropriate service, especially given the original number of cases (304) where we judged that alcohol was a factor which made reoffending more likely.

Reviews of the likelihood of reoffending assessment

- 2.14. We expect to see that the likelihood of reoffending assessment has been reviewed thoroughly when required. In just over half of the cases (56%) we judged that there had been a sufficient review. No

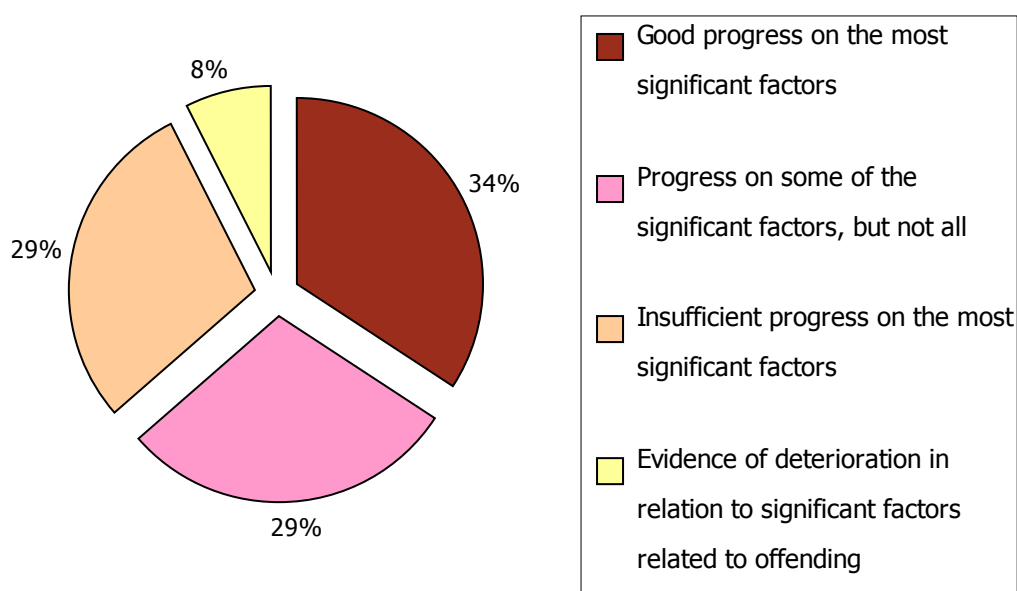
review had been completed at all in 18%. While changes in relevant factors were taken into account in over three-quarters of cases where there had been a review, one-third were not reviewed within a reasonable interval after the initial assessment.

- 2.15. NOMS standards require that reviews are undertaken where there has been significant change, for example, completion of a requirement of the sentence or changes in the individual's circumstances that might affect the classification of level of risk of harm to others. Over the six inspections we saw too many cases where reviews had not been done when a requirement, such as unpaid work, had been completed. Of the 228 cases where there had been significant change, the case had been reviewed promptly in only 47%. This was worrying, as it meant that assessments of the likelihood of reoffending were not as up to date as they should have been.

Likelihood of reoffending is reduced

- 2.16. Just over one-third of the cases had terminated by the time of our inspections and the remainder were around nine months old by that stage. 70% of the sample had not been convicted of, cautioned for, or charged with an offence committed since the start of the sentence or release on licence. Please see Outcome 2: Delivering the Sentence of the Court, for the chart relating to this.
- 2.17. If the planned work with the individual had been completed, we would expect to see improvements in factors associated with the likelihood of reoffending. Some of those factors had, indeed, been tackled by the time of the inspections; just over one-third (34%) were judged to have made good progress on the most significant factors, and a further 29% had made some progress. The remainder had either made insufficient progress (29%) or there was evidence of deterioration in relation to significant factors (8%).

Overall progress made in relation to factors identified as making the individual more likely to reoffend



- 2.18. We have already noted that alcohol misuse was an issue in the lives of a high proportion of those who had offended violently (around 70%) and that it was generally taken account of sufficiently in the initial assessment. However, it did not always feature in sentence planning and sufficient interventions were only delivered in around half of the cases where alcohol misuse was a problem. So, at each stage of the individual's journey through their sentence, there was attrition in attention to alcohol issues. It is perhaps not surprising then, that there was judged to have been sufficient progress in just 135 out of the original 304 cases where alcohol misuse was thought to be a factor

in the likelihood of reoffending. However, of the 156 cases where sufficient interventions had been delivered, around 70% had made progress. So where work was done to tackle the alcohol issues, the outcomes were generally positive.

- 2.19. Offender managers were not always making a sufficient record of the individual's progress or change – this was missing in one-quarter of cases. Reviews were not often seen as a way of celebrating the person's achievements or the changes they had made in their lives. This is an important aspect of encouraging people in their efforts to desist from offending, but it had not generally been evidenced well.
- 2.20. We looked for evidence of improved integration into the community, or improved family relationships where these were relevant issues, and 62% of cases showed this. Sufficient attention had been given to ensuring that positive outcomes were sustainable beyond the end of the sentence in 68% of cases where this was relevant.
- 2.21. Overall, resources had been used efficiently to help the individual achieve the planned outcomes in 78% of cases.

Work with women who have offended

Assessments of the factors that may contribute to the likelihood of reoffending were of similar quality to those of the men in the sample. Just over one-quarter were not actively involved in their assessment – again this was very similar to the findings for men. Alcohol misuse was assessed as the most common factor relating to the likelihood of reoffending, in 42 out of the 50 cases. Thinking and behaviour was the next most commonly identified factor, present in 40 cases, followed by emotional well-being issues in 37.

In 34 (85%) of the cases, alcohol misuse was judged to have been a contributing factor in the current offence; this compares with 69% for the men in the sample. This factor was taken account of sufficiently in the assessment for 90% of the women. However, when it came to sentence planning, the contribution of alcohol was addressed appropriately in only 62% of the cases, compared with 80% for men. So alcohol issues featured strongly in the violent offending of the women in the sample, were recognised in most assessments, but were not well addressed in sentence planning. Looking to see if appropriate interventions were then delivered, we found that they had been in 76% of relevant cases. This was a higher proportion than for men but it still left a small number of cases (6) where services to tackle alcohol issues should have been provided but were not.

The overwhelming majority of the women were informed of local services which could support them in their efforts to desist from offending, and almost all were then referred to these services where appropriate. The degree of progress made by the women was similar to that of the men in that 34% were judged to have made good progress on the most significant factors associated with their likelihood of reoffending. However, proportionately slightly fewer had made some progress – 24% compared with 29% for men, and slightly more women than men had made insufficient progress or there had been deterioration in significant factors.

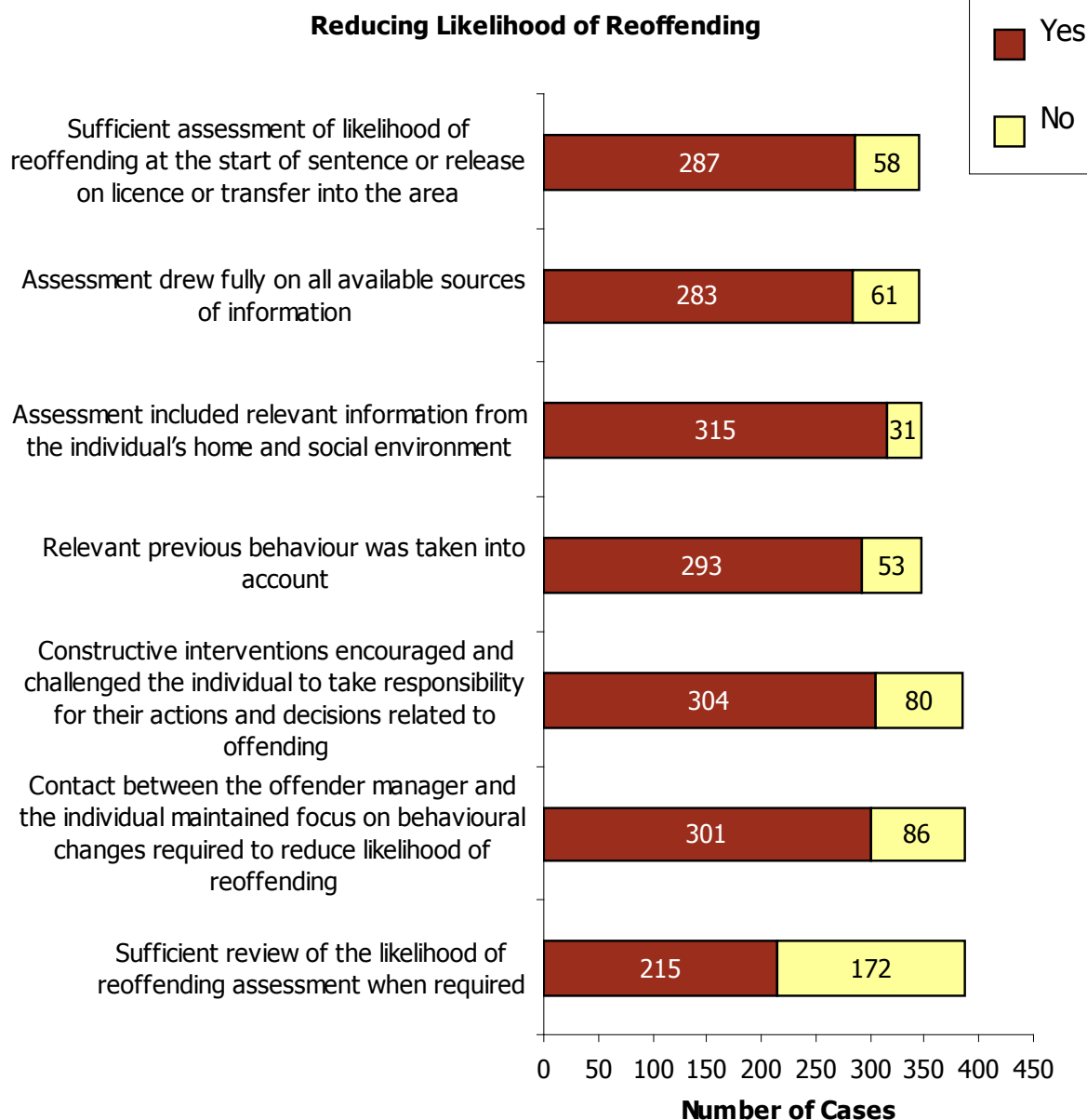
Summary

Overall, 73% of work to reduce the likelihood of reoffending was done well enough.

Recommendations

To ensure that reoffending is reduced through the delivery of appropriate and effective interventions:

- the possible contribution of alcohol misuse to the offending should be identified in assessments, objectives to address the issues included in sentence planning, and appropriate interventions delivered
- violent behaviour should be reduced through the use of interventions that are most likely to be effective.



Outcome 4: Protecting the public by minimising the risk of harm to others

What we expect to see

Some offenders present a risk of harm to other people. In all cases we expect to see the level of this risk properly assessed and, where necessary, plans made to manage and minimise risk to other people. All reasonable action should be taken to protect the public and ensure the safety of victims⁶.

Case assessment score

Overall, 71% of work to ensure the protection of the public was done well enough.

What we found in the cases

1. Assessment and planning to minimise risk of harm to others

RoSH screening

- 1.1. In every case, an accurate RoSH screening should be completed; failing to do this means that a potential risk of harm posed by the individual might be missed. For 31 cases (7%), there was no evidence that the screening had been completed at all, and in 77 the screening had been done but not sufficiently well.

Analysis of the risk of harm to others

- 1.2. Where concerns are identified by the screening process, a full analysis of the risk of harm to others is required. Having an accurate assessment at an early stage of an order or licence is important, as it enables all those working with an individual to understand what level of risk of harm is present and what factors might increase or lower that risk.
- 1.3. Where a full risk of harm analysis was required, it was completed sufficiently well in only 60% of the sample. Some assessments did not make reference to all of the available information, and previous relevant behaviour was not always taken into account. It was not always clear exactly who was likely to be harmed and in what circumstances as there was often insufficient analysis of the offending and other behaviour. In particular, assessments did not always pay sufficient attention to issues relating to the individual's contact with children and young people; this was lacking in 23% of the sample. In 9% of the cases a full analysis should have been completed but it had not been done.
- 1.4. Given that the principal offence in all cases in the sample was one of violence, the gaps in the quality of practice are unacceptable. It should be noted, though, that performance did vary considerably across the six Trusts in respect of risk of harm screening and full analysis; the poorer scores here for some Trusts have had a negative impact on the aggregate figures.

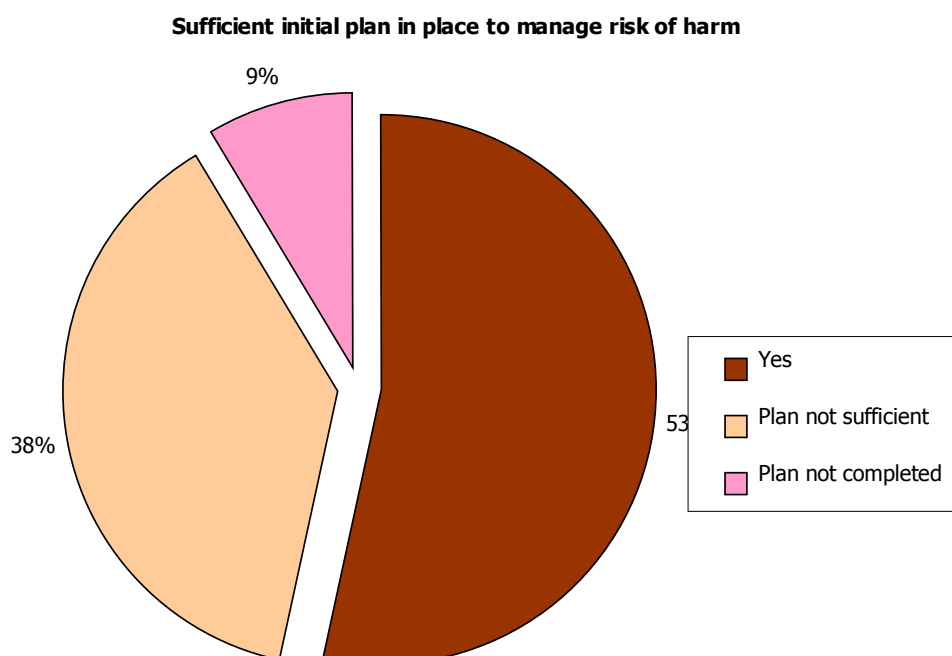
⁶ Our judgements about work to protect actual and potential victims are incorporated into the overall score for Protecting the Public, as well as contributing to the score for Delivering Effective Work for Victims. In this report, the detailed findings are discussed under Outcome 5: Delivering Effective work for Victims.

RoSH classification

- 1.5. Despite the gaps in the analysis, in almost all cases we judged that the RoSH classification was correct, which means that the individual had been accurately assessed as posing a low, medium, high or very high risk of serious harm to others.

Planning to manage the risk of harm to others

- 1.6. Risk management plans are required in cases where the RoSH classification is medium or higher. 389 cases in the sample needed such a plan, but one was not completed in 34 (9%). Where the plan had been done, 147 were of insufficient quality. Particular gaps included failing to address the risks to specific victims, and not making clear how the objectives in the sentence plan or other activities would protect actual or potential victims. Plans did not always tackle the factors identified in the risk of harm analysis, and planning for contingencies (such as breakdown in relationships, loss of employment, or increased consumption of alcohol) was lacking in just over one-third.



- 1.7. The plans did not set out all of the action needed in 41% of relevant cases, being unclear, for example, about who should do what and when, or how information would be shared. In 37% there was no evidence that individuals were actively involved in plans and arrangements to manage their own risk of harm to others. For many offender managers, the OASys risk management plan was a 'form to fill in' rather than a key aspect of protecting the public which explained who was at risk of harm from the individual and exactly how they were going to be protected.
- 1.8. 128 cases met the criteria for MAPPA and in all but 13 this had been correctly identified. In all but one of the cases that were identified, the initial level of MAPPA management was appropriate; 63% were managed at Level 1, 34% at Level 2, and 3% at Level 3, which is the highest level of inter-agency work. Where cases needed management at Levels 2 and 3, appropriate referrals were done in a timely way. However, in 12 cases there was no evidence that actions agreed by MAPPA had been included in all relevant planning documents, such as risk management plans. In most cases it was clear that those actions had been communicated to all those who needed to know; this still left a handful of cases where communication needed to improve.

Use of restrictive interventions

- 1.9. In the 165 cases where restrictive requirements (such as a curfew or electronic monitoring) or restraining orders were in place, their use was judged to be appropriate in almost all instances. They were generally proportionate to the risk of harm and likelihood of reoffending, and minimised the risk of harm to actual and potential victims. Where there was a curfew, it was seen as providing a significant punishment in most cases.

2. Delivery of interventions to minimise risk of harm to others

Responses to changes in the risk of harm to others

- 2.1. When changes took place in the risk of harm posed to others, for example because of an increase in a person's alcohol consumption or loss of settled accommodation, we expected offender managers to have made an appropriate response. This was lacking, though, in over one-third of relevant cases. So changes were not always identified swiftly and acted upon appropriately, or other agencies informed about any increase in risk of harm to others. This was worrying, as it indicated that practitioners were not always spotting significant changes or tackling them when they happened.

Monitoring of restrictive requirements

- 2.2. Where there were restrictive requirements or conditions in community orders or licences, they were monitored fully in most cases. Forty-eight people had been resident in approved premises at some point during their sentence. For all except one, the requirement to reside there and other restrictions on behaviour were used effectively to manage risk of harm to others.

Home visiting

- 2.3. In cases classified as posing a high or very high RoSH, or where there were Child Protection concerns, we expect to see that an initial home visit has been carried out. This was not done in 39% of cases (91) where we thought it should have been. In our view, home visits should also have been repeated in 79 cases but they were not undertaken.

Enforcement

- 2.4. There were 73 cases in the sample where breach proceedings or recall to custody were used in response to an increase in the risk of harm posed by the individual. We judged that this was appropriate in most cases. It was generally done promptly, with a clear explanation being given to the person concerned, and efforts made to re-engage them with their sentence plan. However, there were 11 cases where we thought that breach proceedings or recall should have been used but this did not take place.

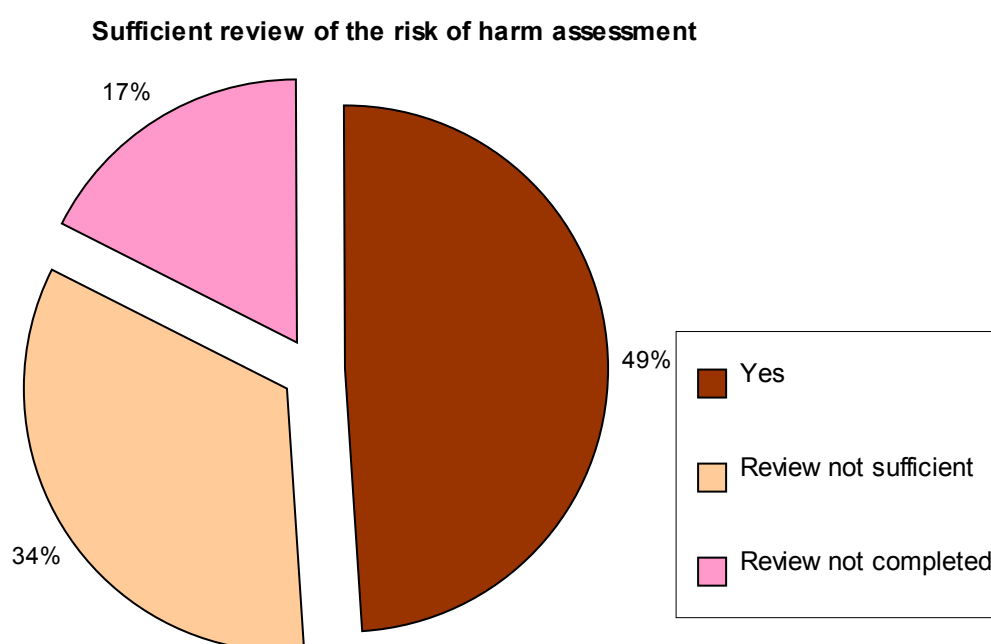
MAPPA and Child Protection

- 2.5. MAPPA operated effectively, overall, in 40 out of the 46 cases managed at Levels 2 or 3. Decisions taken within MAPPA were recorded clearly in the main, and followed through and acted upon, but there was less evidence of decisions being reviewed appropriately. In the great majority of cases, all relevant staff working with the individual contributed effectively to MAPPA. In 35 cases, a record was made on the Violent and Sexual Offenders Register (ViSOR); in 29 cases we felt that ViSOR had been used effectively to support the management of the case.

- 2.6. Multi-agency Child Protection procedures were judged to have been used effectively in just under two-thirds of relevant cases. Decisions taken were not always clearly recorded on case files, or communicated, followed through and acted upon, or reviewed appropriately.

Reviews of risk of harm to others

- 2.7. Risk of harm issues change over time for many individuals and we expect to find that the assessment is reviewed to reflect this. In 34% of relevant cases the review was not sufficient, and in 17% no review had been undertaken. Where there had been significant change in circumstances or risk of harm factors, only 46% had been reviewed promptly. We noted similar findings in the section of this report regarding reviews of the likelihood of reoffending assessment. Lack of a swift review (or indeed, any review) of risk of harm to others is concerning as it means that important assessments relating to public protection are not being updated in relevant cases when they should be.



Delivery of risk management plans

- 2.8. Actions set out in risk management plans were carried out as required in more than three-quarters of relevant cases. The plans themselves, though, were not sufficiently well reviewed in 35% of cases. In general, there was no improvement in their quality; the gaps were similar to those identified in the initial risk management plan.

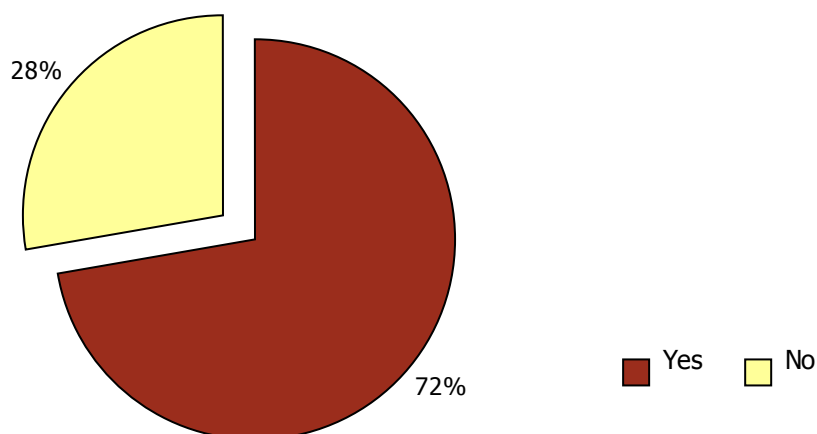
Management oversight

- 2.9. Where cases are assessed as posing a high or very high RoSH to others, or where there are Child Protection concerns, we expect to see effective management involvement in the case. We found limited evidence of this in the overall sample. Seventy-one cases (35%) contained no evidence of management oversight and 45 (22%) showed some evidence, but it had not been effective – for example work having been countersigned when there were clear gaps in quality. It was, thus, difficult to see from case records that managers were providing sufficient scrutiny or support in some of the most demanding cases.

3. Risk of harm is minimised

- 3.1. We expect to see that all reasonable action has been taken to keep to a minimum the individual's risk of harm to others, and in the overall sample we judged that this had been done in 72% of cases.

All reasonable action was taken to keep to a minimum the offender's risk of harm to others



Multi-agency work

- 3.2. Where multi-agency work had taken place, it had contributed effectively to the management of risk of harm in over three-quarters of relevant cases. However, we were concerned to find that in 35% of relevant cases (83 out of 236), there was no evidence that all inter-agency checks had been made to see if there had been any reports or concerns regarding the individual or addresses they were connected with. In 67 cases, checks had not been made with police regarding domestic violence callouts, and in 47 no checks had been made with children's social care services. More positively, where the checks had been done and there was new information, the offender manager took appropriate action in all but seven cases.
- 3.3. For cases managed through MAPPA at Levels 2 and 3, we expect to see that plans are in place to minimise the risk of harm presented by the individual in the longer-term, when no longer subject to MAPPA management. (This was a recommendation in the joint Criminal Justice Thematic inspection *Putting the pieces together – an inspection of Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangement*, November 2011.) We found no evidence of this in the 11 out of 30 cases where it would have been relevant.

Community Payback

- 3.4. Over the six inspections, we saw a number of cases where the only requirement of the community order or suspended sentence order was for unpaid work. In some of these cases, it was apparent that there were issues relating to domestic violence. As there was no supervision requirement, some offender managers were unclear about what was expected of them and did not liaise with other agencies regarding domestic violence issues and potential risks to children and young people. All reasonable action was judged to have been taken in only 25 out of 45 cases (56%).

Work with women who have offended

The quality of the RoSH screening on women was similar to that undertaken with the men in the sample; 76% were judged to be sufficient compared with 75% for men. Where a full risk of harm analysis was required, it was completed sufficiently well in slightly more cases – 64% as against 60% for men. Risk management planning was marginally better done with women but was missing altogether in six cases. In the same number of cases there was no evidence that key information about risk of harm to others was communicated between all relevant staff and other agencies. More women than men were actively involved in plans and arrangements to manage their own risk of harm to others; 76% as opposed to 62%. Actions set out in risk management plans were generally carried out. Initial home visits were missing in 10 out of 26 cases where they were needed because the woman posed a high RoSH or because there were Child Protection issues. Visits were made later or were repeated in 22 cases. Proportionately, more home visits were made to women than men.

Fourteen out of the fifty cases met the criteria for MAPPA and, in all but one, this had been correctly identified. For all of the 13 cases identified, the initial level of MAPPA management was appropriate. MAPPA was judged to have operated effectively in all three cases managed at Levels 2 or 3, the highest levels of inter-agency work. Child Protection procedures were assessed as having been used effectively in seven out of the nine cases where this was relevant.

Where there were changes in risk of harm factors, the quality of offender management work was similar to that with men. Changes were identified sufficiently swiftly in 71% of cases compared with 67%; they were acted upon appropriately in 59% (62% for men); and other agencies were informed of any increase in risk of harm to others in 69% of cases where this was relevant, which was slightly more often than for men. The gaps already noted over the whole sample in reviews of the risk of harm assessment were reflected in work with women – only 54% of assessments were sufficiently reviewed. The most common issue was the lack of a prompt review following any significant change. In terms of outcomes, the quality of work undertaken with women to minimise the risk of harm to others was similar to that with men.

Summary

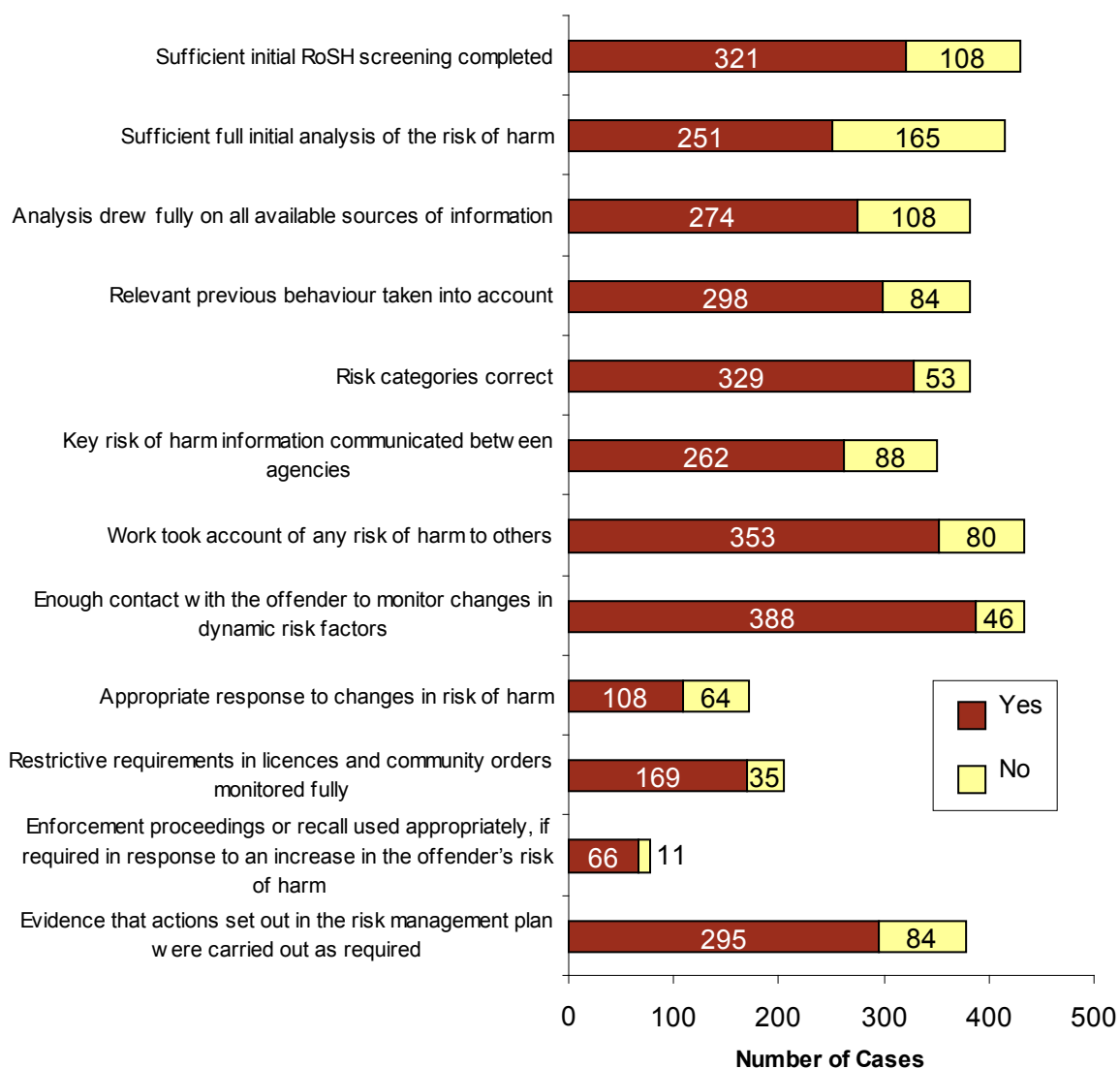
Overall, 71% work to ensure the protection of the public was done well enough.

Recommendations

To minimise the risk of harm to the public:

- risk of harm to others should be assessed accurately and promptly and reviewed as appropriate, taking account of information from other organisations
- assessments of the risk of harm should pay attention to the protection of children and young people
- plans to manage risk of harm to others should take full account of the safety of actual and potential victims and pay appropriate attention to the protection of children and young people; all reasonable action should then be taken to keep risk of harm to others to a minimum
- sentence plans should, where appropriate, include objectives to address the risk of harm to others and the protection of children and young people
- where there is a risk of harm to others, or Child Protection issues, management oversight of the case should be active and effective.

Protecting the Public



Outcome 5: Delivering effective work for victims

What we expect to see

The safety of actual and potential victims should be given a high priority. We expect to see this given attention in work with individual offenders. Where statutory victim contact work is required, we expect to see this undertaken so that victims are kept appropriately informed.

Case assessment score

Overall, 78% of work to deliver effective services for victims was done well enough.

What we found in the cases

1. Assessment and planning to minimise risk of harm to victims

- 1.1. In their assessment and planning, we look to see that offender managers and others have given appropriate attention to risk of harm to actual and potential victims. As already noted in Outcome 4: Protecting the public, Section 1, the quality of this work was insufficient in too many cases. To ensure an assessment is sufficiently thorough, information may need to be sought from other agencies. In 30% of relevant cases (106), this was not done. Information from children's social care services was not always sought on a routine basis at the start of any new order or licence, so it was not always identified in the assessment whether there were children and young people living in the same household, or if those children and young people were already known to children's social care services. Given this, it was unsurprising that in 23% of the overall sample, we judged that attention to protecting children and young people had not been sufficient. We have made a recommendation about additional attention needed to assessment and planning to protect children and young people.
- 1.2. Risk management plans did not always focus on the risk of harm posed to specific victims; 41% (128) did not sufficiently address the risks to them. Many plans (44%) failed to describe how the objectives in the sentence plan or other activities would protect actual or potential victims. We noted in some cases that there was a lack of a 'Think Victim' approach to planning to manage risk of harm to them, and it was difficult to tell how the victim or potential victim was made safer by the planning. We have made a recommendation about improvement needed in risk management planning.

2. Delivery of interventions to minimise risk of harm to victims

- 2.1. In ongoing work with individuals, offender managers and others need to give appropriate priority to the safety of current and potential victims. This was done sufficiently well in 71% of relevant cases in the overall sample. This did leave 103 cases where more attention needed to have been paid. Offender managers were not always giving enough thought to any continuing risk of harm posed by the individual, or taking into account the likely impact of the offender's behaviour on the victim. When there are deficiencies in assessment and planning, as noted in Section 1, above, then it is disappointing but not surprising that these are reflected in work done later in the case.

3. Risk of harm to victims is minimised

- 3.1. In 30% of relevant cases (102 out of 343) we judged that risk of harm to actual or potential identifiable victims had not been managed effectively. In particular, the safety of children and young people had not been promoted in 62 cases (28%) where this was needed. As noted elsewhere in this report, risks to children and young people had not always been identified in cases where there was domestic abuse or other violent offending.

4. Victim contact and restorative justice

Victim contact

- 4.1. Probation Trusts have responsibility for running victim contact schemes. These provide victims of some crimes with information about key points in an offender's custodial sentence, and gives them the chance to say what conditions they think should be included for their safety in the offender's licence once that person is released. There were 119 licence cases in our overall sample where victim contact work was required. In all but 11, we found evidence that an offer of face-to-face meeting with the victim contact worker had been made within eight weeks of the offender being sentenced to custody. Forty-nine victims took up the offer of contact and the overall quality of work undertaken was seen as sufficient in all but one case. So the overwhelming majority of victims were offered an opportunity to provide their views on proposed licence conditions and to see the relevant part of any report. All but one were informed of relevant conditions of release, such as the offender being excluded from certain areas or prohibited from contact with them. Where appropriate, all were kept informed about relevant events during the offender's sentence, such as a move to a different category of prison.
- 4.2. As detailed in the earlier section on stakeholder and service user views, victims of violent offending who responded to our survey in each Probation Trust were overwhelmingly positive about the service they had received.

Restorative justice

- 4.3. Restorative justice schemes are a relatively recent development and, as such, are not widely available in most Probation Trusts. We found low numbers of cases in the overall sample where restorative justice had been available. An intervention was offered to the victim in 12 cases and was taken up in three. The offenders concerned were enabled to take part in all three cases, and sufficient assessment was made of their suitability for the process and of the safety of the victim. In two cases a face-to-face meeting took place, and in the other a letter of apology was written to the victim. In all three cases the outcome of the restorative justice intervention was judged to have been satisfactory for the victim concerned. NOMS' commissioning intentions from 2014 refer to prisons continuing to have a role in developing victim-offender conferencing, although the delivery requirements for 2014-2015 do not include the provision of restorative justice interventions in custody or the community.

Summary

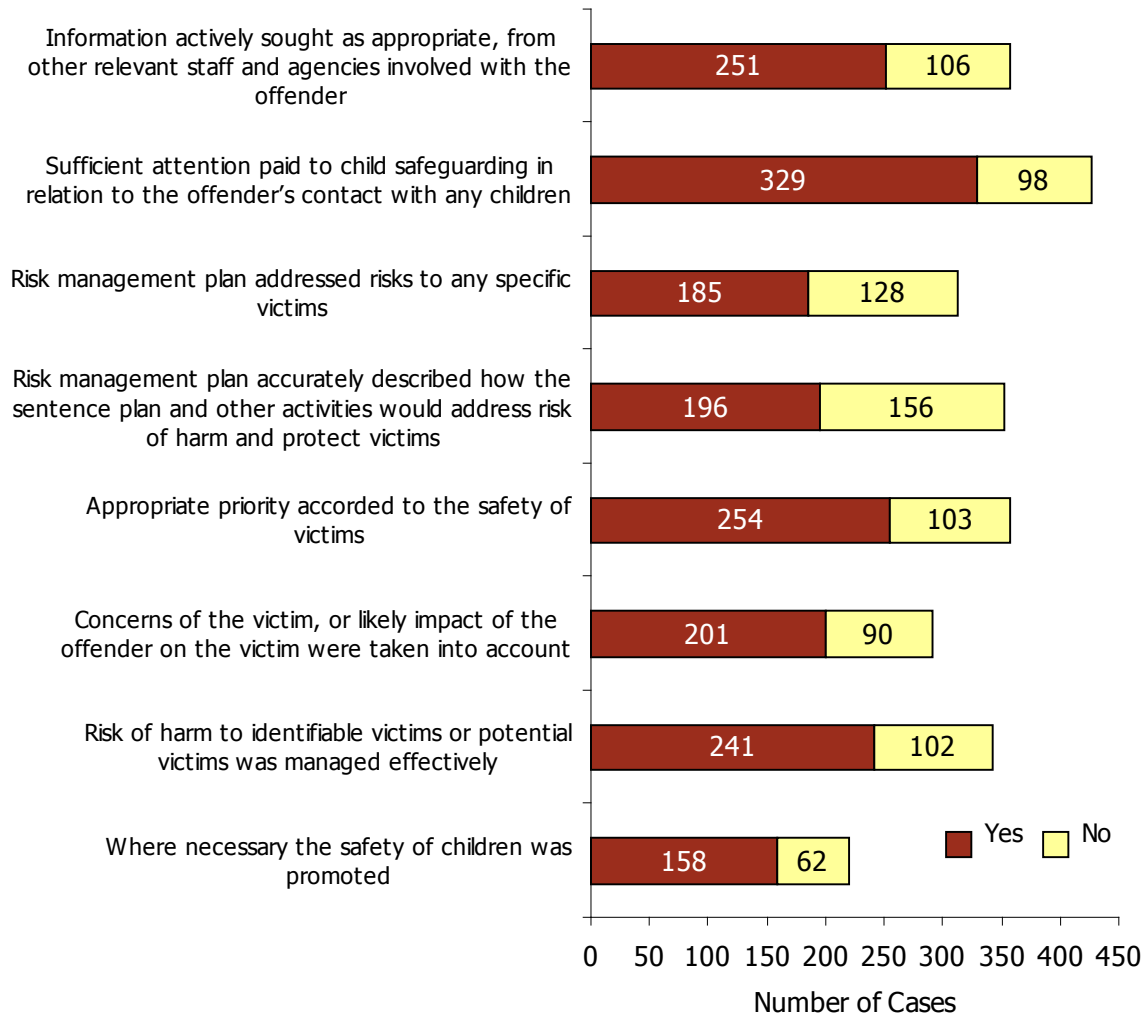
Overall, 78% of work to deliver effective services to victims was done well enough.

Recommendations

To minimise the risk of harm to actual and potential victims:

- staff working with an offender should 'Think Victim' and give attention to the possible risk of harm to identifiable or potential victims.

Effective Work for Victims



Leadership and Management

Leadership and strategic management

How Probation Trusts support the delivery of work with violent offenders – views from offender managers

We interviewed 311 offender managers over the six inspections (as part of the inspection of the 437 cases in the overall sample) to gain their views about their experience of working for the particular Trust.

Workload management

Overall, 77% thought that workloads were actively monitored; the remainder believed they were not or said they were unsure. Only 55% thought that workloads were managed in a fair and transparent way. These figures did vary quite considerably from Trust to Trust and the issue for some offender managers was about transparency – being able to see how work for frontline staff was allocated, rather than reporting that it was unfair.

Some Trusts had adapted the NOMS national workload management tool, as this was now somewhat outdated and did not address the work of all staff. Other Trusts had devised their own monitoring and management tools. Whatever approach is taken, it is clearly important to offender managers to understand it and feel that their workload pressures were taken into account.

With respect to staff absences, 77% thought that planned absences, like leave or long-term sick leave, were managed in an effective way to minimise any disruption to continuity of offender management. However, offender managers were less sure about how effectively unplanned absences (like short notice sickness) were handled to ensure that offenders were still seen as planned.

Management oversight and support

Almost all of the offender managers held very positive views about the skills of their line managers, saying that they had the ability to assess the quality of their work, assist development and support them. Most also thought that their manager was actively involved in helping them improve the quality of their work. Almost all said that routine countersigning of their work and management oversight was an active process.

Just over three-quarters of those we interviewed reported receiving regular professional supervision (line management meetings) from their manager, at six-weekly, monthly or more frequent intervals. Case discussion featured strongly in supervision, as well as feedback about performance, training and development issues and discussion of personal well-being. Around two-thirds reported that their practice had been observed by their manager or another person and they had been given feedback about this, and some said that they had received mentoring or coaching. The great majority thought that the particular methods used in supervision had promoted improvements in their practice.

All six Trusts had been involved in the NOMS Skills for Effective Engagement and Development and Supervision (SEEDS) project to a greater or lesser extent, and offender managers generally spoke very positively about the usefulness of this in helping improve their skills in engaging with the people on their caseloads.

Of the 156 who indicated that they had particular individual diversity needs, just over three-quarters thought that these had been reasonably addressed by the organisation. This did leave a significant minority who had concerns about the extent to which they were appropriately supported.

Learning and development opportunities

Offender managers who were probation officers all held a relevant professional qualification. As far as probation service officers were concerned, thirty-two (36%) held no relevant professional qualification but all bar one were working towards a qualification at degree or diploma level. The great majority of offender managers thought that arrangements for ongoing training and development were sufficient to equip them to do their current job, but there were slightly less positive views about meeting future development needs. For some, this was connected with the Transforming Rehabilitation changes and uncertainty about how much emphasis future providers of probation services would place on learning and development. Others thought that there were insufficient relevant training or development opportunities available to them, or they did not have time to take advantage of what was on offer.

More than half reported receiving specific training in practice methods or interventions in respect of violent offending, but we thought that this was a low proportion given that all were managing individuals who had offended violently.

Many offender managers felt that they had received sufficient training around diversity factors, but some reported less confidence in making initial assessments around learning needs (52) or mental health issues (65). A significant minority felt similarly about issues of culture and ethnicity (45) and issues relating to women offenders (31).

All but five of those who were interviewed felt confident that they could identify and work with Child Protection and safeguarding issues, which was interesting given our findings that concerns about protecting children and young people had not always been recognised or addressed in the cases we inspected.

Almost three-quarters of the offender managers spoke positively about formal opportunities to discuss practice issues with colleagues, and some Trusts were setting up action learning sets to support practice development. There were mixed views from offender managers about how effectively the learning from serious further offence reviews or serious case reviews was shared with them; 31% thought that this could be done better.

Overall, the great majority of offender managers interviewed (81%) thought that their Trust promoted a culture of learning and development.

Appendices

Appendix 1

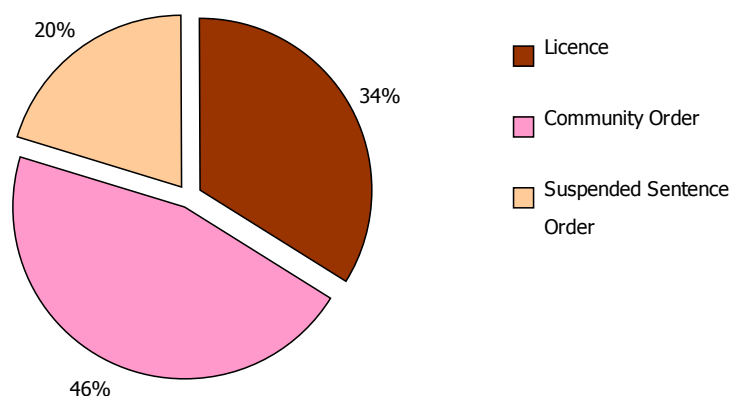
Contextual information about the inspected case sample

In the first fieldwork week of each of the six inspections we looked at a representative sample of between 50 and 90 individual cases (depending on the size of the area), which had been supervised for around nine months. These were community orders, suspended sentence orders and post-custody licences.

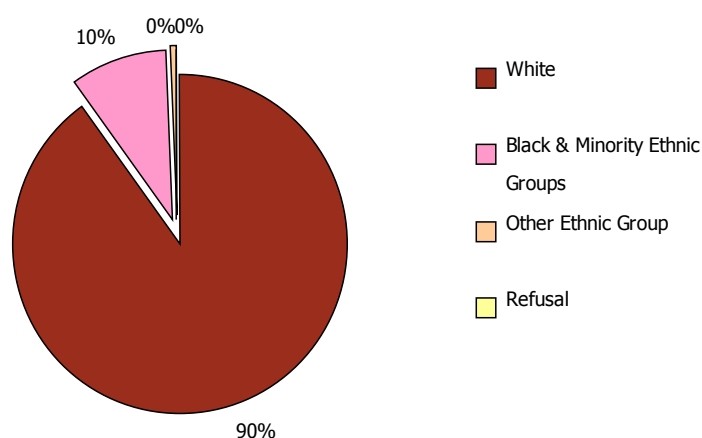
Between April and September 2013, the focus of the inspections was work with those who had committed violent offences. The sample was drawn from cases managed by six Probation Trusts.

Over the six inspections, we examined a total of 437 cases. In 127, the index (principal) offence involved domestic violence, and in a further 94 cases the individual had previously been a perpetrator of domestic violence. In 170 of the cases there were concerns about protecting children. Eight individuals were currently serving or had previously served in the armed forces. There were no violent extremism cases in the overall sample.

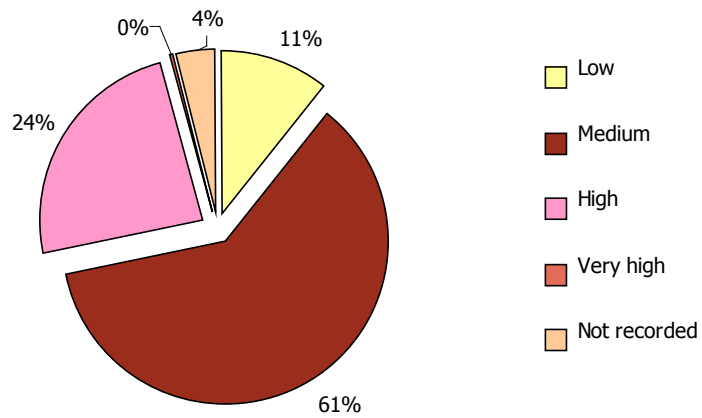
Type of Case



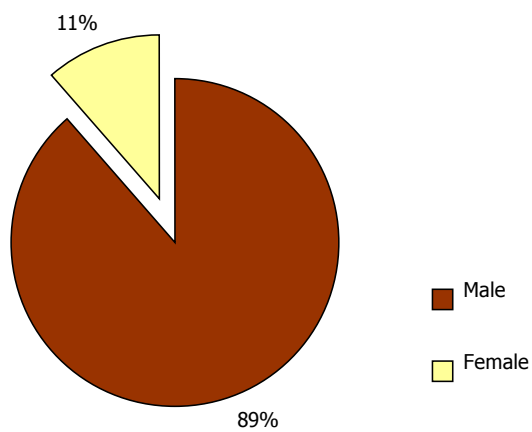
Race and Ethnicity



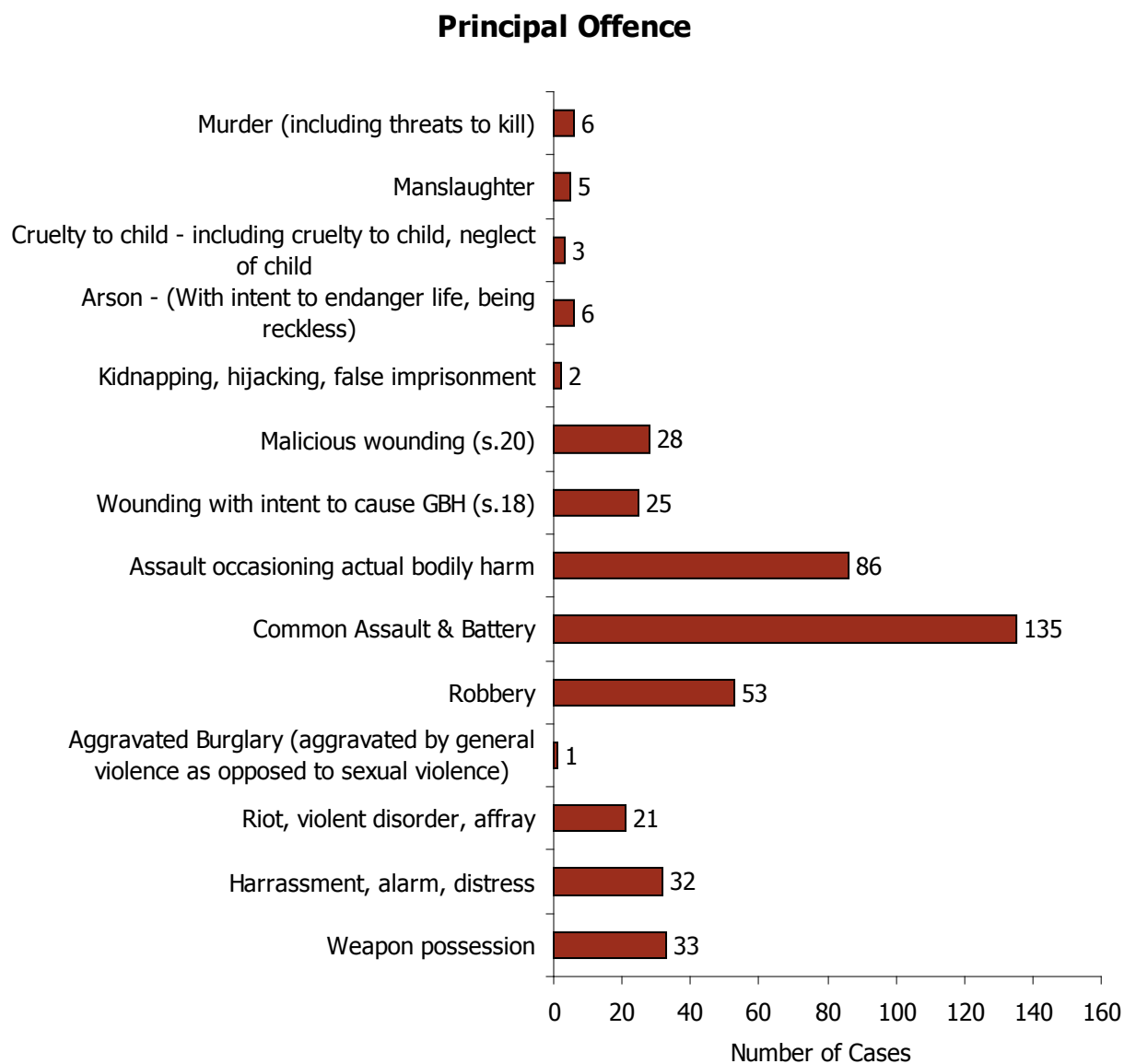
OASys RoSH classification as recorded at the start of sentence or release on licence or transfer into this area



Gender



These are the violent offences we included in our sample:



Probation caseloads

Offences of violence, including robbery, make up around 43% of probation caseloads nationally.

Appendix 2

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all the staff from the six Probation Trusts (Bedfordshire, Merseyside, Devon and Cornwall, Hampshire, Northumbria, and Northamptonshire) members of their management teams and partner organisations for their assistance in ensuring the smooth running of the inspection. We are particularly grateful to the staff who were trained as Local Assessors and worked as members of the inspection team.

Lead Inspector (aggregate report)	Joy Neary, <i>HMI Probation</i>
Inspection Team	Joy Neary, <i>HMI Probation - Bedfordshire</i>
	Helen Rinaldi, <i>HMI Probation - Hampshire</i>
	Tony Rolley, <i>HMI Probation - Devon & Cornwall</i>
	Joseph Simpson, <i>HMI Probation - Northumbria</i>
	Steve Woodgate, <i>HMI Probation - Merseyside, Northamptonshire</i>
HMI Probation Support Services	Pippa Bennett, <i>Support Services Manager</i>
	Oliver Kenton, <i>Assistant Research</i>
	Alex Pentecost, <i>Publications Manager</i>
	Christopher Reeves, <i>Proof Reader</i>
Assistant Chief Inspector	Sally Lester, <i>HMI Probation</i>

Appendix 3

Inspection arrangements

Full details of arrangements for the Inspection of Adult Offending Work are available from the HMI Probation website.

Inspection focus

During the year 2013-2014, the Inspection of Adult Offending Work focused on the work of Probation Trusts, supported by local partnership arrangements. This will change in due course, when work with offenders is managed and delivered by other organisations. The inspection framework has been designed to be adapted to accommodate these changes.

This inspection programme focuses on the quality of practice through inspecting a sample of cases managed by the organisation. In each case we follow the 'offender's journey' - that is, we firstly examine the quality of the assessment of the factors that need to be addressed to prevent offending; secondly the quality of work that is done with the offender to change their behaviour; and thirdly the evidence of outcomes – that is, whether the work has been well targeted, effective, and supports desistance. The inspection of these cases contributes to our overall judgements about the quality of work to:

- assist sentencing
- deliver the sentence of the court
- reduce the likelihood of reoffending
- protect the public
- deliver effective work for victims.

The type of cases inspected will change every six months. For the first six inspections we selected cases where the index offence was one of violence (but not including sexual offending, as this had been the subject of a thematic inspection). After each group of inspections, we will publish an aggregate report, in which we will use data from case inspection to highlight good practice and identify areas for improvement.

The case sample was comprised of offenders who were subject to a community order (including suspended sentence order) or post-custody licence.

Methodology

Each inspection was announced ten weeks before the first fieldwork week. The primary focus was the quality of work undertaken with adults who have offended, and statutory victim contact work in relevant cases. The work was assessed by a team of inspection staff and trained Local Assessors. Practitioners working with the case were interviewed in-depth and asked to explain their thinking and to identify supporting evidence in the record. They were also asked about the extent to which elements of leadership and management supported the quality of their work.

Although our main focus was the quality of practice, we also commented on leadership and management in our reports where this provided an explanation or context for the findings about practice. Prior to or during this first week, we received copies of relevant local documents that informed our understanding of the organisation's structure and priorities. Inspection teams followed up lines of enquiry triggered by case inspections, this could involve meeting local managers, talking with practitioners or administration staff, or general observation of office practice.

Formal meetings with managers, sentencers and service providers were held two weeks after the case inspection. Preliminary analysis of the data from the case inspections allowed us to explore, in greater

detail, the themes that were emerging. We also considered specific local characteristics and needs; the ways in which gaps in provision were identified and filled; and work that had been done to improve the quality of service delivery. In particular, issues relating to leadership, management and partnership were explored to help us understand their contribution, or otherwise, to the quality of the work delivered.

The views of victims were obtained through a questionnaire, and sentencers were interviewed about the quality of court based work. The views of offenders were obtained through a survey conducted annually by NOMS.

At the end of the second fieldwork week, we presented our findings to local strategic managers.

Scoring approach

This describes the methodology for assigning scores to each of the sections of the report.

In each case inspection staff examine how well the work was done across the case, following the criteria below:

1. ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING

- 1.1 Assessment and planning to inform sentencing
- 2.1 Assessment and planning to deliver the sentence
- 3.1 Assessment to reduce the likelihood of reoffending
- 4.1 Assessment and planning to minimise risk of harm to others
- 5.1 Assessment and planning to minimise risk of harm to victims

5. DELIVERY AND REVIEW

- 2.2 Delivery and review of the sentence plan and maximising offender engagement
- 3.2 Delivery of interventions to reduce the likelihood of reoffending
- 4.2 Delivery of interventions to minimise risk of harm to others
- 5.2 Delivery of interventions to minimise risk of harm to victims

6. CASE OUTCOMES

- 2.3 Initial outcomes are achieved
- 3.3 Likelihood of reoffending is reduced
- 4.3 Risk of harm to others is minimised
- 5.3 Risk of harm to victims is minimised

7. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

We look for evidence that leadership and management support the work with individual cases. This evidence is obtained through interviews with staff and managers from probation trusts and other organisations, and from sentencers.

- 1.4 Leadership and management to support sentencing
- 2.4 Leadership and management to deliver the sentence and achieve initial outcomes
- 3.4 Leadership and management to reduce the likelihood of reoffending
- 4.4 Leadership and management to minimise risk of harm to others

5.4 Leadership and management to deliver effective work for victims

8. VICTIM WORK

5.5 Victim contact and restorative justice.

Each scoring question in the inspection tool contributes to a score for the relevant section in the report. This approach enables us to say how often each aspect of the work was done well enough. Each section of the report focuses on a key outcome.

The score is based on the proportion of work judged sufficient ('above the line') across all the cases we inspected.

The **score for each of sections 1-5** is then calculated as the average of the scores for the component general criteria.

The **ASSISTING SENTENCING score** is calculated as an average, over all the relevant questions in the case assessment tool, of the proportion of work judged 'above the line'.

The **DELIVERING THE SENTENCE OF THE COURT score** is calculated as an average, over all the relevant questions in the case assessment tool, of the proportion of work judged 'above the line'.

The **REDUCING THE LIKELIHOOD OF REOFFENDING score** is calculated as an average, over all the relevant questions in the case assessment tool, of the proportion of work judged 'above the line'.

The **PROTECTING THE PUBLIC score** is calculated as an average, over all the relevant questions in the case assessment tool, of the proportion of work judged 'above the line'.

The **DELIVERING EFFECTIVE WORK FOR VICTIMS score** is calculated as an average, over all the relevant questions in the case assessment tool, of the proportion of work judged 'above the line'. Some of the questions in this section also contribute to the Protecting the Public score.

Development of the inspection criteria

We are grateful to the service users we met through Revolving Doors for their input on 'what an experience of supervision should be like'. Their thoughtful comments contributed to our detailed inspection criteria, and helped to shape our inspection guidance and set benchmarks for the quality of practice we define as sufficient.

Publication arrangements

In respect of the individual inspections, draft reports were sent to the relevant Probation Trust for a factual accuracy check three weeks after each inspection, with publication approximately six weeks later. In addition the published copy went to the relevant Ministers, other inspectorates, the Ministry of Justice Policy Group, NOMS, and Police and Crime Commissioners. Copies were made available to the press and placed on our website. Where inspections are undertaken in Wales the reports are published in both Welsh and English, but no such inspections were carried out in the first six months of this inspection programme.

For this aggregate report, the draft was sent to NOMS for comment. Publication arrangements were as above.

Appendix 4 Criteria

CRITERIA for the INSPECTION of ADULT OFFENDING WORK											
PROCESS											
Headline CRITERIA OUTCOMES		1	ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING	2	DELIVERY AND REVIEW	3	CASE OUTCOMES	4	LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	5	VICTIM WORK
1	ASSISTING SENTENCING	1.1	Assessment and planning to inform sentencing					1.4	Leadership and management to support sentencing		
2	DELIVERING THE SENTENCE OF THE COURT	2.1	Assessment and planning to deliver the sentence	2.2	Delivery and review of the sentence plan and maximising offender engagement	2.3	Initial outcomes are achieved	2.4	Leadership and management to deliver the sentence and achieve initial outcomes		
3	REDUCING THE LIKELIHOOD OF REOFFENDING	3.1	Assessment to reduce the likelihood of reoffending	3.2	Delivery of interventions to reduce the likelihood of reoffending	3.3	Likelihood of reoffending is reduced	3.4	Leadership and management to reduce the likelihood of reoffending		
4	PROTECTING THE PUBLIC by minimising the risk of harm to others	4.1	Assessment and planning to minimise risk of harm to others	4.2	Delivery of interventions to minimise risk of harm to others	4.3	Risk of harm to others is minimised	4.4	Leadership and management to minimise risk of harm to others		
5	DELIVERING EFFECTIVE WORK FOR VICTIMS	5.1	Assessment and planning to minimise risk of harm to victims	5.2	Delivery of interventions to minimise risk of harm to victims	5.3	Risk of harm to victims is minimised	5.4	Leadership and management to deliver effective work for victims	5.5	Victim contact and restorative justice

The aspects of adult offending work that were covered in this inspection are defined in the inspection criteria, which are available at

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/about/hmiprob/about/hmiprob/iaow-criteria.pdf>

Appendix 7

Glossary

<i>Accredited programme</i>	Structured courses for offenders which are designed to identify and reduce the factors related to their offending behaviour. Following evaluation, the design of the programmes has been accredited by a panel of experts
<i>Approved premises</i>	Approved premises provide controlled accommodation for offenders under supervision
<i>CDVP</i>	Community Domestic Violence Programme
<i>CEO</i>	Chief Executive Officer of a Probation Trust
<i>Child protection</i>	Work to ensure that that all reasonable action has been taken to keep to a minimum the risk of a child or young person coming to harm
<i>COVAID</i>	Control of Violence for Angry Impulsive Drinkers. A structured cognitive behavioural treatment programme aimed at drinkers who are aggressive or violent when intoxicated.
<i>CJS</i>	Criminal justice system: Involves any or all of the agencies involved in upholding and implementing the law – Police, courts, youth offending teams, probation and prisons
<i>Desistance</i>	The process by which people stop offending and build a new, crime-free identity
<i>Dynamic factors</i>	As distinct from static factors. Dynamic factors are the factors in someone's circumstances and behaviour that can change over time
<i>ETE</i>	Education, training and employment: work to improve an individual's learning, and to increase their employment prospects
<i>HMI Probation</i>	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation
<i>Interventions; constructive and restrictive interventions</i>	<p>A <i>constructive</i> intervention is where the primary purpose is to reduce likelihood of reoffending.</p> <p>A <i>restrictive</i> intervention is where the primary purpose is to keep to a minimum the individual's risk of harm to others.</p> <p>Example: with a sex offender, a constructive intervention might be to put them through an accredited sex offender programme; a <i>restrictive intervention</i> (to minimise their risk of harm) might be to monitor regularly and meticulously their accommodation, their employment and the places they frequent, imposing and enforcing clear restrictions as appropriate to each case.</p> <p>NB: Both types of intervention are important</p>
<i>IOM</i>	Integrated Offender Management
<i>LDU</i>	Local delivery unit: an operation unit comprising of a probation office or offices. LDUs are generally coterminous with police basic command units and local authority structures
<i>LoR</i>	Likelihood of Reoffending: see also constructive Interventions
<i>LSCB</i>	Local Safeguarding Children Board: set up in each local authority (as a result of the Children Act 2004) to coordinate and ensure the effectiveness of the multi-agency work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in that locality

<i>MARAC</i>	Multi-agency risk assessment conference: part of a coordinated community response to domestic abuse, incorporating representatives from statutory, community and voluntary agencies working with victims/survivors, children and the alleged perpetrator
<i>MAPPA</i>	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements: where probation, police, prison and other agencies work together locally to manage offenders who pose a higher risk of harm to others
<i>nDelius</i>	National Delius: the national probation case management system which was completed in 2012, based on the earlier Delius system used by some Probation Trusts. The system is being rolled out through 2013
<i>NOMS</i>	National Offender Management Service: the single agency responsible for both Prisons and Probation Trusts
<i>OASys/ eOASys</i>	Offender Assessment System/electronic Offender Assessment System: the nationally designed and prescribed framework for both Probation and Prisons to assess offenders, implemented in stages from April 2003. It makes use of both static and dynamic factors
<i>Offender management</i>	A core principle of offender management is that a single offender manager takes responsibility for managing an offender through the period of time they are serving their sentence, whether in custody or the community. Offenders are managed differently depending on their risk of harm to others and what constructive and restrictive interventions are required. Individual intervention programmes are designed and supported by the wider 'offender management team or network', which can be made up of the offender manager, offender supervisor, key workers and case administrators
<i>Offender Manager</i>	In the language of offender management, this is the term for the officer with lead responsibility for managing a specific case from 'end to end'
<i>OGRS</i>	Offender Group Reconviction Score: A predictor of reoffending based only on static risks such as age, gender and criminal history
<i>OMI 2</i>	Offender Management Inspection 2: HMI Probation's inspection programme which ran from 2009 to 2012
<i>PCMS</i>	Probation Case Management System
<i>PO</i>	Probation Officer: This is the term for a 'qualified' offender manager who has undertaken a higher education based course for two years. The name of the qualification and content of the training varies depending on when it was undertaken. They manage offenders posing the highest risk of harm to the public and other more complex cases
<i>PPO</i>	Prolific and other priority offender
<i>PSO</i>	Probation Service Officer: This is the term for an offender manager who was originally recruited with no qualification. From 2010 they may access locally determined training to 'qualify' as a probation services officer or to build on this to qualify as a probation officer. They may manage all but the most complex cases or those posing the highest risk of harm to the public depending on their level of training and experience
<i>PSR</i>	Pre-sentence report: this refers to any report prepared for a court, whether delivered orally or in a written format
<i>REM</i>	Race and ethnic monitoring

<i>RMP</i>	Risk management plan: a plan to minimise the individual's risk of harm
<i>'Risk of harm work'</i>	This is the term generally used by HMI Probation to describe work to protect the public, primarily using restrictive interventions, to keep to a minimum the individual's opportunity to behave in a way that is a risk of harm to others
<i>RoSH</i>	Risk of Serious Harm: a term used in OASys. All cases are classified as presenting a low/medium/high/very high Risk of Serious Harm to others. HMI Probation uses this term when referring to the classification system, but uses the broader term risk of harm when referring to the analysis which has to take place in order to determine the classification level. This helps to clarify the distinction between the probability of an event occurring and the impact/severity of the event. The term Risk of Serious Harm only incorporates 'serious' impact, whereas using 'Risk of Harm' enables the necessary attention to be given to those offenders for whom lower impact/severity harmful behaviour is probable
<i>Safeguarding</i>	The ability to demonstrate that a child or young person's well-being has been 'safeguarded'. This includes – but can be broader than – child protection
<i>SEEDS (Skills for Effective Engagement and Development and Supervision)</i>	An initiative in place across many Probation Trusts which emphasises the importance of the practitioners' skills in relationship building to ensure effective work with individuals. The development of these skills is supported by the observation of practice and reflective feedback by managers or others
<i>Serious Further Offences (SFO)</i>	Serious Further Offence: when an offender is charged with an offence classified as an SFO (serious sexual or violent offences), the Probation Trust conducts an investigation and review of the management of the case
<i>SMB</i>	Strategic Management Board: the duties and responsibilities of the MAPPA 'Responsible Authority' (police, probation and prison service) are discharged through the SMB. This consists of senior representatives of the agencies involved in MAPPA and lay advisors
<i>Static factors</i>	As distinct from dynamic factors. Static factors are elements of someone's history that by definition can subsequently never change (i.e. the age at which they committed their first offence)
<i>TSP</i>	Thinking Skills Programme
<i>ViSOR</i>	The Violent Offender and Sex Offender Register is a national computer based information system managed by the police and designed to enable probation, police and prison services to share information, risk assessments and intelligence about high risk offenders
<i>VLO</i>	Victim liaison officer: responsible for delivering services to victims in accordance with the Trust's statutory responsibilities
<i>YOI</i>	Young Offenders Institution: a Prison Service institution for children and young people remanded in custody or sentenced to custody
<i>YOS/YOT/YJS</i>	Youth Offending Service/Youth Offending Team/Youth Justice Service: these are common titles for the bodies commonly referred to as YOTs

Appendix 6

Role of HMI Probation and Code of Practice

Information on the role of HMI Probation and Code of Practice can be found on our website.

The Inspectorate is a public body. Anyone wishing to comment on an inspection, a report or any other matter falling within its remit should write to:

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



Arolygiad ar y Cyd Cyfiawnder Troseddol

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

ISBN:

