

Quality & Impact inspection

The effectiveness of probation work in Derbyshire

An inspection by HM Inspectorate of Probation
September 2016

© Crown copyright 2016

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

Where we have identified any third party copyright information, you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available for download at:

www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation

Published by:

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation
1st Floor Civil Justice Centre
1 Bridge Street West
Manchester, M3 3FX

Contents

Foreword	4
Key facts	5
1. Overall judgements and recommendations	6
Overview	7
Protecting the public	7
Reducing reoffending	8
Abiding by the sentence	9
Recommendations	10
2. The arrangements for delivering probation services in Derbyshire	11
National context	12
Local context	13
Organisational arrangements	13
The CRC	13
The NPS	19
Our report	21
3. An evaluation of the quality of probation services in Derbyshire	22
Protecting the public	23
CRC effectiveness	23
NPS effectiveness	28
The CRC and NPS working together	31
Reducing reoffending	32
CRC effectiveness	32
NPS effectiveness	37
The CRC and NPS working together	43
Abiding by the sentence	45
CRC effectiveness	45
NPS effectiveness	49
The CRC and NPS working together	51
Appendix 1: Inspection methodology	53
Appendix 2: Background data	54
Appendix 3: Data analysis from inspected cases	58
Appendix 4: Glossary	61
Appendix 5: Acknowledgements	64

Foreword

This inspection was the third in our Quality & Impact inspection programme, designed to assess the effectiveness of work undertaken locally by probation services with people who have offended.

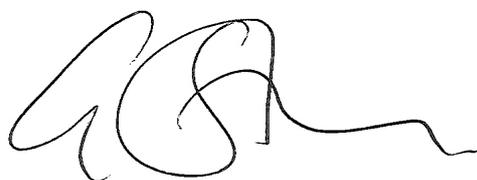
The Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) has developed an ambitious and innovative operating model, but implementation is taking longer than expected, or desirable. Leaders and managers are still occupied by a demanding change agenda, and meanwhile practitioners with exceptionally high caseloads are working without the anticipated case management software, administrative arrangements, management oversight and quality assurance that would both ease matters and likely improve the quality of work.

Much of the CRC's work we saw was not of sufficient quality. We expect to see public protection prioritised by all probation service providers, but we found shortcomings here and across the spectrum of the CRC's casework.

National Probation Service (NPS) leaders and managers in Derbyshire have had less (and less complex) change to manage, and were benefiting from and building on a strong legacy of good Probation Trust performance. Work was generally of the right quality. The NPS was managing the risk of harm to others well overall, a particularly important requirement given its caseload mix.

The CRC operating model has promising features, including an expansive range of interventions, but it has yet to come into its own. The CRC expects to implement its new software systems next year - a significant milestone, dependent on gaining systems approval from the National Offender Management Service (NOMS). We do urge NOMS to do all possible to prevent the further delay of CRC systems approval, and to provide the promised IT gateway needed to enable necessary case information to flow freely between NOMS and new providers.

We hope that the findings and recommendations within this report will help the CRC and NPS in Derbyshire to enhance both the quality and impact of their work.



Dame Glenys Stacey

HM Chief Inspector of Probation
September 2016

Key facts

- 251,170** The total number of offenders subject to probation supervision across England & Wales¹.
- 8,449** The number of offenders supervised by the Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire & Rutland CRC¹.
- 41%** The proportion of the CRC cases which relate to a custodial sentence (pre or post-release supervision)^{1 2}. The proportion for all England & Wales was 56%.
- 62%** The proportion of offenders, with custodial sentences over 12 months, who were recorded as having successfully completed their period of licence or post-sentence supervision with the CRC^{2 3}. The performance figure for all England & Wales was 75%, against a target of 65%.
- 16,182** The number of offenders supervised by the Midlands Division of the NPS¹.
- 1,384** The number of MAPPA eligible offenders managed by the NPS in Derbyshire⁴.
- 12%** The volume reduction for the CRC caseload, comparing 2015-2016 annual data to initial assumptions^{2 5}. The reduction across CRCs ranged from -6% to -36%.
- 2 (of 21)** The number of CRCs owned by the Reducing Reoffending Partnership.

1 Offender Management Caseload Statistics as at 31 March 2016, Ministry of Justice

2 Figure for the Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire & Rutland CRC

3 CRC Service Level 9, Community Performance Quarterly Statistics January-March 2016, Ministry of Justice

4 Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) Annual Report as at 31 March 2015, Ministry of Justice

5 'Transforming Rehabilitation', National Audit Office, 2016

1. Overall judgements and recommendations

Overview

Overall, the quality of work was mixed, and differed as between the CRC and the NPS.

The quality of CRC work was significantly lower than that we saw formerly in the Probation Trust, and was in some respects poor. Assessments and plans were often not good enough, and purposeful rehabilitation work was seen in too few cases. We expect to see public protection prioritised, yet we did not find evidence of this. The organisation was still in transition, with systems implementation taking longer than anticipated.

The NPS was in a better position. A strong, legacy culture of good professional practice and a focus on public protection prevailed. The quality of work was generally good and the NPS was effective in protecting the public and assisting the rehabilitation of offenders.

Staff and leaders in the CRC had experienced and were still experiencing a great deal of change, those in the NPS less so. No doubt this affected the quality of CRC work: CRC senior staff were still occupied with the imperatives of change implementation.

Protecting the public

CRC effectiveness

In too many instances, CRC staff did not make follow-up enquiries when insufficient information was provided by NPS court staff to them at the point of allocation. In too many instances, CRC staff had not fully reviewed all of the information about the case before undertaking their assessments. Risk of Serious Harm assessments, and risk management planning, were often not sufficient.

The failure to deliver meaningful rehabilitative work to many domestic abuse perpetrators made it less likely that reoffending and public protection outcomes would be achieved.

Many staff were concerned that they had not had sufficient training, or the practice experience and resources, to work effectively on the risks of harm posed by service users.

Quality assurance was not routinely undertaken, and management oversight was not effective in making positive public protection outcomes more likely.

NPS effectiveness

The quality of the initial screening of cases at court for risk of harm issues was generally satisfactory but not all CRC cases had complete information at the point of allocation. NPS responsible officers were experienced and competent, and their Risk of Serious Harm assessments and risk management plans were good overall.

The work delivered by responsible officers, contracted providers and partner agencies to minimise the individual's risk of harm to others was sufficient in most cases, underpinned by strong joint working arrangements.

The CRC and NPS working together

There were systems in place to respond to cases that needed to be escalated from the CRC to the NPS because of increased concerns about risk of harm. It was reported that there had been few examples of this process being used in recent months. Not all CRC practitioners expressed themselves confident in using these arrangements.

Reducing reoffending

CRC effectiveness

Many CRC responsible officers considered their workloads unmanageable.

Many initial sentence plans failed to specify the objectives of supervision or what service users needed to do to achieve the desired outcomes. Work to address offending-related factors was often not being delivered.

Responsible officers were not keeping cases under review or adjusting plans when significant changes occurred. Many responsible officers were positive about the support provided by line managers, but understood that the amount of management attention being given to dealing with change, combined with reduced management resources, had meant that a focus on quality had been lost in recent months.

NPS effectiveness

Sentencers generally had the information they needed to inform their sentencing decisions.

The start of order assessment was sufficient in most instances, leading to the creation of plans of work that addressed appropriate offending-related and protective factors.

When positive rehabilitative work was required, it was generally undertaken. Where it was required but not delivered, it was usually because the offender failed to engage.

Responsible officers kept the delivery of interventions under review, and, where significant changes occurred, they adjusted plans accordingly. The NPS was not, however, making full use of the extensive range of interventions offered by the CRC.

The CRC and NPS working together

Considerable effort had been put into maintaining positive working relationships between the CRC and the NPS, particularly in relation to courts and partnership arrangements. Well-organised court teams made sure that the quality of the pre-sentence report was generally satisfactory.

Abiding by the sentence

CRC effectiveness

In general, progress on delivering the requirements of the order or licence was sufficient and absences were being responded to appropriately. In most cases, the service user had sufficiently abided by their order or licence.

The diverse needs of service users were not always assessed or taken into account in sentence plans. For many, the contact levels were inadequate and did not promote the achievement of positive outcomes. Service users gave mixed reports about their experience of being managed by the CRC. Some were very positive, others less so. Common concerns included repeated changes in their responsible officer in a short period of time, and practical difficulties, at the point when the Derby City team moved offices, in making contact with their responsible officers due to problems with CRC telephony.

NPS effectiveness

Sufficient progress was made in delivering the requirements of the order or licence, and absences were being responded to appropriately.

Most of those supervised by the NPS were positive about their working relationships with their responsible officers. Most service users were meaningfully involved in drawing up their sentence plan. Their diverse needs were generally assessed and taken into account in planning and delivering the sentence. Several told us about the progress they had made that made them less likely to reoffend.

The CRC and NPS working together

Sentencers were kept apprised of the developments in relation to rehabilitation activity requirement days and the services that could be offered. The relationship between the CRC and NPS was positive but, due to teething problems with their new systems, some communication issues prevailed.

Recommendations

The Community Rehabilitation Company and National Probation Service should:

1. make sure that all staff are familiar with the escalation process and that decisions relating to escalation are transparent and recorded.

The Community Rehabilitation Company should:

2. give all staff the facilities, resources and workloads needed to deliver services in the context of the new operating model
3. improve the quality of assessments, planning and the delivery of interventions so as to increase the likelihood of reduced reoffending and of positive public protection outcomes
4. address service user diversity issues and make sure each understands their sentence plan goals, what work will be done to help them achieve those goals, and how progress will be measured
5. review work with service users, particularly in response to changes in their circumstances, making sure that any increased risk of harm is identified and addressed
6. make sure contact levels, including home visiting, meet the public protection and rehabilitative needs of cases
7. improve the quality of management oversight of work and supervision of responsible officers.

The National Probation Service should:

8. provide the CRC with all relevant information on Child Protection and police call-outs at the point of allocation from court
9. review reception arrangements to improve service user confidentiality
10. make sure service users have access to relevant services, to help achieve reduced reoffending and improved public protection outcomes.

The National Offender Management Service should:

11. make sure the accreditation arrangements for new CRC assessment and planning tools do not impinge unnecessarily on broader implementation of CRC's operating models
12. make sure the IT interfaces between CRC's and NOMS's systems do not hinder CRC operations.

2. The arrangements for delivering probation services in Derbyshire

- the national context
- the local context
- organisational arrangements

National context

In 2014 the UK government extended probation supervision for the first time to offenders released from prison sentences of under 12 months (some 50,000 people each year). Now, over 250,000 adults are supervised by probation services annually, and all offenders released from prison on licence are subject to supervision. In addition, since May 2015, in an initiative known as 'Through the Gate' probation services must provide offenders with resettlement services while they are in prison, in anticipation of their release.

Probation services were formerly provided by 35 self-governing Probation Trusts working under the direction of NOMS. They are now provided in a mixed economy model, with an expectation of greater involvement of the third sector. The Government wishes to promote innovation in probation services, and in June 2014, under the UK government's *Transforming Rehabilitation* programme, probation services in England & Wales were divided into a new public sector NPS and 21 new privately-owned CRCs providing services under seven year contracts with a lifetime value of £3.7bn.

The NPS advises courts on sentencing all offenders, and manages those offenders presenting high or very high risks of serious harm, or who are managed under Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). CRCs supervise most other offenders presenting low and medium risk of harm. Probation staff assess and manage the risk offenders pose to the community, to protect the public. They help rehabilitate them by dealing with problems such as drug and alcohol misuse, and lack of employment or secure housing, so as to reduce the prospect of reoffending. They monitor whether they are complying with court requirements, so as to make sure individuals abide by their sentence, and report them to court or request recall to prison if they are not.

CRCs operated as companies in public ownership until 01 February 2015 when ownership was transferred to eight separate organisations. Most CRC income is from a 'fee for service' related to the number of offenders under various forms of supervision and the requirements to which they are subject. These payments may be reduced if the CRC fails to meet certain service levels. In addition, there is the possibility of additional income - payment by results - triggered by reductions in reoffending, once relevant reoffending data is available.

The transition from Probation Trusts to the mixed economy model has been challenging (as reported in our series of *Transforming Rehabilitation* reports) and the new expectations of CRCs are demanding. Those serving short sentences are more often prolific offenders, less receptive to rehabilitation. Through the Gate services require persistence and good partnership working, and for the moment those arrangements appear the least well-developed.

The NPS is a relatively new national, regionalised organisation, midway through an ambitious standardisation programme (known as 'E3'). Nationally, NPS workloads have risen noticeably in the last business year and staffing levels have risen marginally, whereas CRC caseloads (and income) do not match the assumptions underpinning CRC contracts. Caseloads and staffing levels vary across the CRCs.

The new arrangements provide opportunities for CRCs to innovate and develop new systems, but caseload shortfalls have led to financial constraints and uncertainty for them, and often a reluctance to commit to longer-term investment or settled arrangements with other providers, including those from the third sector.

Local context

Here we report on probation services delivered in Derby City and the county of Derbyshire by the NPS Midlands division and the Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire and Rutland CRC (DNLR CRC). These services were formerly provided by the Derbyshire Probation Trust. The area is served by two Local Authorities, Derby City Council (a Unitary Authority) and Derbyshire County Council with eight districts. It is coterminous with the Derbyshire Police and Crime Commissioner area. Both the NPS division and the CRC provide services to other parts of the Midlands as well as in Derbyshire.

We provide demographic data and information about the area in Appendix 2. There are noticeable differences between the city and the rest of the county: deprivation and crime rates vary across the county but are significantly lower than the national average, save in the city, where they are well above the national average. The area is of moderate size with a population of just over one million.

The CRC delivers services from six locations across the county: Buxton, Chesterfield (x2), Derby City, Ilkeston and Swadlincote. The NPS operates from four locations and in premises formerly those of the Probation Trust: Buxton, Chesterfield, Derby City and Ilkeston.

In common with others nationally, the NPS area caseload is higher than anticipated, and the CRC's lower. The CRC is the fifth largest in the country by contract value⁶.

Organisational arrangements

The CRC

The CRC is wholly owned by the Reducing Reoffending Partnership (RRP), itself made up of three organisations: Ingeus (a private company) and two charities, St Giles Trust and Change, Grow, Live (CGL). RRP also owns the Staffordshire & West Midlands CRC. The two are neighbours. They are run broadly by RRP as one organisation, with one Governance Board and one CEO.

RRP and the two CRCs had concluded a major organisation redesign with new organisational and management structures, premises and IT systems and were midway through implementation. The new operating model proposed a customer service centre to provide administrative support to front-line staff who would be enabled in turn with new software to help manage cases efficiently and effectively. The model provided for an extensive suite of interventions from a wide range of providers.

⁶ Target Operating Model. Rehabilitation Programme. September 2013

RRP was in the process of harmonising policies and practices where appropriate across the two CRCs. Commendably, the Board had sought to focus on the service user experience, and enhancing the ability of staff to deliver effective and sustainable services.

A senior manager said:

“I am really pleased that RRP is focused on the long-term, in order to drive the imperative of reducing reoffending. We are doing things because they are the right things to do, and not just because of commercially driven reasons. We have had lots of investment in IT and in estates recently. A learning and development strategy is in the pipeline. This will help staff to work in different ways but we recognise that staff have not experienced all this change in a seamless way”.

Change management

A credible transformation plan was being implemented at the time of the inspection. The Board had been configured to include representatives from the two CRCs, underpinning a partnership approach. Change management had taken up considerable management time in the period leading up to the inspection, but some responsible officers had lost confidence in the change process and the proposed initiatives. One told us she was:

“resigned to uncertainty”.

We found that staff had welcomed the stated values of the new organisation, and the aim of putting service delivery at the centre of the changes. Many were less convinced, however, about the change process, commenting that the CRC was still immersed in it and that the new approach to rehabilitation was not yet a reality.

Cascade communications to staff had not proved effective. New ways of engaging and informing staff about the changes were being considered, and senior staff acknowledged the need to keep staff informed of developments and to provide firm dates when the promised improvements would be in place.

For many practitioners, there was a gap between corporate plans and everyday reality, and we perceived a growing gap developing between senior staff and others. Front-line staff felt senior managers were disconnected from their, and service users', experiences. Staff told us that the change process hindered their ability to focus on doing quality work with service users.

Supply chain and the involvement of the third sector

The CRC offers an exceptionally wide range of interventions, and has more under development. It is innovating, and developing an extensive supply chain while at the same time maintaining and building on legacy partnerships.

The services offered included the following: Rehabilitation Activity Requirement (RAR) packages; Women's Work; Education, Training & Employment; Engagement Toolkit; Hope and Transition Programme (peer mentoring); DV RAR (Safer Choices), Pathway to Independence; Getting a Home, Keeping a Home (including Tenancy Sustainment); and Female Focus on Violence (Derbyshire only). Further services were under development: Foundations of Rehabilitation, Substance Misuse Brief Intervention and Anger Management services.

In addition, the CRC provided accredited programmes delivered on CRC premises, and unpaid work. The accredited programmes included Building Better Relationships (BBR) and RESOLVE (both aimed at domestic abuse perpetrators); Control of Violence for Angry Impulsive Drinkers; and the Thinking Skills Programme.

Take-up of some of the services was lower than anticipated. The CRC had produced information and guidance to explain to CRC and NPS staff the services on offer, but nevertheless some were not fully aware of the range available. Several noted that RAR services may have been developed, but they were not all being delivered.

Some staff were positive about the developments in access to services, for example the housing mentoring service. One responsible officer said:

“I have been a probation officer for 15 years and I now have access to more services than ever before”.

In our sample of cases, however, few service users had been offered access to services via the supply chain. Most of the work we saw was delivered on a one-to-one basis by responsible officers.

Several staff felt the 'Women's Work' package was good, partially because it was delivered mostly on a one-to-one basis. They were concerned, however, about an apparent drive to complete this as groupwork which, they said, many women did not want to do. Others told us that the CRC did not assign women's cases to female workers (whereas CRCs are required to offer this where practical) and there was limited attention given to women's services beyond 'Women's Work', which they felt was mainly for sex workers and those with a drug dependency.

There was a positive legacy of partnership work and the CRC's strategic approach to partnerships, including working with the NPS, remained positive. A number of legacy partnerships had been maintained, such as the provision of some health services. Accessing partnership services was a core part of the new operating model, and steps had been taken to maintain services via a number of local providers and introduce new services, including those provided by Sova as part of the CRC's emerging supply chain.

The CRC retained a presence on various local Strategic Partnership Boards, for example the Local Criminal Justice Board and the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Resettlement services⁷

Staff commended the improved access to accredited programmes for those released from prison.

The CRC had noted a drop in accredited programme requirements being made at court and had filled the spare capacity by promoting referral of those due for release on licence. CRC treatment managers had trained prison-based staff to assess an individual's suitability for accredited programmes. There had been an increase in the numbers of those on licence being referred to such programmes.

Some actively involved in delivering these services were positive about the quality and range of interventions for female offenders. Most, however, thought that resettlement provision was not well connected with community provision, and that it offered little practical support for male offenders.

Most responsible officers said they were only getting a very basic Offender Assessment System (OASys) custody screening from prisons and did not always receive notice of individuals being released or copies of licences. One said:

“sometimes they just turn up at the office and I had no idea they were due out”.

Staffing

CRC leaders thought the organisation was short-changed in the allocation of staff to Derbyshire on inception. Derbyshire were slightly under the allocated resource at the time of the Probation Trust split and this was compounded by a disproportionate number of staff, compared to the rest of the CRC, leaving for jobs in the NPS and prisons around January 2015. Numerous attempts have been made to recruit permanent staff, with varied success, leading to a high level of agency staff being deployed in the interim. At the time of the inspection Derbyshire were continuing to recruit as current operational staffing levels were below those identified in the target operating model.

Managers

First line manager numbers had reduced from seven to four, in line with the operating model. Several front-line staff said they did not feel adequately supported, with those managers taking on new responsibilities for buildings, performance, personnel issues and other matters. Managers reported they had not been able to maintain a focus on service delivery, for similar reasons. The changes had reduced significantly the time available to them for promoting quality practice.

We found few instances of management oversight adding value to the work of practitioners. Only 4 (of 36) practitioners said that inadequate management oversight had limited their ability to achieve positive outcomes with service users. We considered the situation was more problematic than this figure suggests, as few

⁷ We do not inspect resettlement service in this inspection series. We inspect resettlement provision jointly with HMI Prisons in a programme of thematic inspections.

cases could show that management input had either added value to the work, or resolved concerns about work that was of poor quality.

Workloads

Frequent reassignment of cases, together with staffing levels below those planned and new (short sentence cases) work led to very high caseloads for responsible officers. Several said their caseloads were around 70. They felt their caseloads and workloads had increased since CRC inception. For some, the workload pressures had increased as a consequence of holding more complex cases.

The frequent use of agency staff led to high levels of caseload reassignment. Some staff told us that often they did not know anything about the case when they saw a service user for the first time. There was an element for many service users of having to 'start again'. One was very critical of the number of different responsible officers he had had. He said:

*“I’m well p***ed off. I’ve now had four different workers in six months. I’m sick of telling them the same stuff. Can they not look in my file? Yeah, I did wrong but how would they feel if they had to keep telling different people about their personal stuff?”*

Delays in implementing key aspects of the operating model (new IT systems and interface, and the customer services centre) designed to free up responsible officer time and improve efficiency and effectiveness left individual workloads not conducive to delivering high quality services.

It was not reasonable to expect responsible officers to achieve consistently the rehabilitation and public protection goals required. We asked responsible officers if their workload had an impact on their ability to deliver positive outcomes in their work with service users. Almost three-quarters said it was having a negative impact on the quality of their work.

Staff told us that the reality for them consisted of fewer staff with higher caseloads, having to do what they could with the limited resources available. A practitioner told us:

“high caseloads have led to us having less time to spend with service users. Some cases can have five or six responsible officers over the term of their order. There is no consistency for service users. We have had a big turnover of staff and agency workers. It tends to be agency workers’ cases that are getting passed around the team. Some cases are going two to three weeks without a responsible officer. Some agency workers are not up-to-speed when they start, as they are not familiar with the work or systems, having been out of practice for a while”

Just over half of the 36 staff who answered the question felt that their training and support had enabled them to help the individual who had offended to achieve positive outcomes. Several staff told us that they felt their level of professionalism had dropped since CRC inception and that they did not experience the CRC as prioritising quality of work.

Operational sites

The CRC's estates strategy had seen the Derby team recently move into new business premises. Staff had encountered a number of problems with the new building and several reported that they had not had suitable responses to the concerns raised. Ongoing issues in respect of IT, the perceived lack of suitable interview spaces, and health and safety concerns had left many staff demoralised. Some were concerned that critical telephone or email messages were not getting through and that they might be missing important information about, and from, service users and others. During the coordination of this inspection we also encountered difficulties in communicating with CRC staff, both by telephone and email. Much of this was no doubt initial 'teething problems' with the new building but the experience of staff in Derby was raising concerns for staff elsewhere, as others would also be moving to new premises in the near future.

Supporting systems

The CRC was still reliant on legacy systems, but had provided staff with new hardware while innovating, and developing a new case management system known as 'Partnership Works'. Partnership Works is designed to reduce double entry of information, support case administration, and help practitioners to develop quality sentence plans and put in place the right interventions, thereby enabling them to manage high caseloads and spend more time with service users.

Development has progressed, but before use the system must be approved NOMS. The approval process is onerous, staged, and lengthy (the process began in 2015). Managers were anxious, as the CRC's new operating model depends on successful implementation of the system. Managers were hopeful of conditional approval in late September, but were concerned at the likely demands of the further stages to full approval, and the potential for significant consequential delays in implementing the new operating model.

The CRC was the first to try and link to the Ministry of Justice's Strategic Partnership Gateway, the facility that would enable the various systems to work together. The Strategic Partnership Gateway was not yet available. CRC managers confirmed all those involved understood its importance and Ministry of Justice staff had been working to provide interim solutions. The delay was nevertheless hampering the CRC's ability to provide their new customer services centre. The customer service centre aimed to go live in September 2016, using alternative enablers, until Partnership Works is launched.

The NPS

The NPS is implementing a national change programme (E3) designed to create a more consistent approach across England & Wales in six key areas of NPS work, including community supervision; court services; custody; youth offending services; victim services; and approved premises. It is a programme of standardisation that includes aligning, where appropriate, job roles and staff numbers, terms and conditions.

Despite these significant organisational changes, there was a local sense of stability and continuity evident in Derby and Derbyshire. A positive legacy of professional practice underpinned the quality of practice locally. The NPS was performing well against national performance measures.

The local NPS structure fitted that outlined in the NPS operating model. Operational staff numbers were sufficient to enable responsible officers to maintain a focus on effective practice. The changes in the staff structure had impacted mainly on corporate and support functions, i.e. personnel, information and facilities management, as responsibility for aspects of this had moved to the divisional and national levels.

In a local initiative, teams of six staff worked together in groups known as pods. This enabled pod members to help each other, for example through holiday cover. This structure supported staff through many of the changes and helped to maintain a practice culture focused upon quality in the work.

Staffing

At the time of the establishment of the NPS team in Derbyshire, the staffing complement was in line with the expectations of the Target Operating Model. This had enabled local managers and practitioners to maintain a focus on service delivery, while addressing structural changes. Some NPS staff were concerned, however, about centralisation in the NPS.

Efforts to retain a sense of localism, particularly in partnership working, had moderated some of the centralising effects of reform. The delivery of drug rehabilitation requirements (DRR), alcohol treatment requirements (ATR) and Integrated Offender Management (IOM), for example, continued to rely on effective local partnerships. There were concerns, however, about the sustainability of this approach, with decision-making increasingly centralised.

We were told that local partners, such as those involved with safeguarding, youth offending and the Local Criminal Justice Board, were uneasy about the reduced level of investment from probation providers into partnership work since *Transforming Rehabilitation*. In the NPS, there was a worry that the centre did not appear to prioritise adequately the need to service the complex array of local partnerships, seen as core to delivering relevant and effective services locally.

A positive working relationship with the CRC had been maintained and there was a clear sense of the added value that a strategic alliance between the CRC and the NPS would bring to the interests of both organisations. NPS managers were happy about access to accredited programmes, but there was confusion (as we have found elsewhere) about the rate card provision of CRC services. Work was in hand to provide definitive guidance to staff.

Workload

We asked individual NPS responsible officers if their workload had an impact on their ability to deliver positive outcomes in cases we had inspected, or other cases in their caseload. Four out of five said it was having a negative impact on the quality of their work. Conversely, in most instances, responsible officers advised us that training and support had enabled them to help the individual who had offended achieve positive outcomes.

NPS middle managers in Derbyshire had retained a focus on the quality of service delivery but acknowledged that an increased range of responsibilities had reduced their opportunities for promoting quality practice. Several felt that the pre-existing high levels of performance, and the legacy focus on quality were underpinning the work of practitioners in the new context.

Only 1 (of 20) practitioners said that inadequate management oversight had limited their ability to achieve positive outcomes with service users.

One manager said:

“we love our job. It’s not all doom and gloom”.

Operational sites

The NPS continued to operate from the buildings formerly occupied by the Probation Trust.

Supporting Systems

There was a growing positive view of the support afforded by national Human Resource systems, such as the ‘Employee Assistance Programme’ and the Civil Service well-being strategy. Some staff were anxious, however, about the potential impact of the E3 programme on local autonomy, and local and legacy operational arrangements.

NPS managers noted a deterioration in their access to information about local issues since the move to the divisional structure. Derbyshire managers reported, for example, that there was now no easy way to analyse service user feedback at the local level, compared with the well-developed systems they had had previously. Managers had recently acquired access to the NPS management information system and this was starting to plug some gaps in information.

Our report

In April 2016 we began a new programme of inspection of probation services, and this is the third inspection of the programme. We have reported already on the quality of services delivered in the Durham, York & North Yorkshire areas.

We inspected probation services in Derbyshire in June 2010, when some of the services now delivered by the NPS and Derbyshire CRC were being delivered by the Probation Trust. Those services were generally being delivered well, and the Trust compared exceptionally well with others we had inspected. We summarised the outcomes from our 2010 inspection in the following table:

	Scores from the English regions that have been inspected to date			Scores for Derbyshire
	Lowest	Highest	Average	
'Control' – 'Risk of Harm to others' work (action to protect the public)	64%	81%	70%	80%
'Help' and 'Change' – Likelihood of Reoffending work (individual less likely to reoffend)	62%	76%	69%	77%
'Punish' – Compliance and Enforcement work (individual serves his/her sentence)	69%	84%	77%	84%

In the next section of this report, we consider the effectiveness of the CRC and the NPS in the area in relation to:

- protecting the public
- reducing reoffending
- abiding by the sentence.

We also report on how effective the two organisations are in working together and with others.

We set out our inspection methodology in Appendix 1 and our data analysis from inspected cases in Appendix 2.

3. An evaluation of the quality of probation services in Derbyshire

- Protecting the public
- Reducing reoffending
- Abiding by the sentence

Protecting the public

CRC effectiveness

CRC performance was poor overall.

Assessment and planning

With a substantial number of on the day pre-sentence report (PSR) completions, it was not always possible for NPS court staff to obtain relevant information prior to allocation. Where information about Child Protection or domestic abuse call-outs remained outstanding, NPS court staff made a record of what needed to be done on the Case Allocation System (CAS) form. We found some CRC responsible officers were unaware of the CAS form and/or unable to locate it within the case management system, nDelius. Not reading the CAS form reduced the ability of responsible officers to recognise and respond appropriately to the relevant risk of harm issues.

The risk of serious harm classification was correctly identified throughout the period of supervision in most of the cases in our sample; we thought one case identified as being medium risk should have been assessed as high risk, and five assessed as medium risk of serious harm should have been low.

In our sample, one-third of the offenders had been sentenced at Crown Court and the remainder at magistrates' courts. In 14 of the 39 cases inspected, the offender had been sentenced for violent offences. Fifteen offenders had a history of domestic abuse and eight cases involved concerns about potential child safeguarding issues.

The majority of our sample cases were assessed as presenting a medium risk of serious harm. This is not an unusual CRC risk portfolio, in our experience to date. Of the 39 cases reviewed, we assessed that 1 posed a high risk of serious harm, 26 were assessed as medium risk of serious harm, and 12 as low risk of serious harm. CRC staff were, therefore, regularly dealing with cases where there was the potential for harmful behaviour, often involving domestic abuse and potential harm to children.

Assessment and planning to address the risk of harm was not always sufficient. Over one in four cases contained an insufficient assessment of risk of harm posed by the service user to the general public or to children. Planning failed to manage and minimise the risk of harm to known victims and children in a similar proportion of cases.

Poor practice example: *In the case of Gerry, the Risk of Serious Harm assessment did not sufficiently analyse his behaviour and the degree to which the criminal damage Gerry had caused in the parental home was harmful to family members, or could escalate to physical violence. Court information indicated there were siblings at home. Their ages had not been confirmed and no Child Protection enquiries had been undertaken.*

Usually, the initial work was a basic Layer one OASys and the sections on offence analysis and risk of serious harm were adequate. Most contained such basic information, however, that they did not support a fuller analysis of the offence-related factors. In some cases involving domestic abuse and Child Protection concerns there was no contextual information recorded, such as details about accommodation or employment. Such information could be relevant to any emerging public, or child, protection concern.

Few responsible officers had reviewed fully the information about the service users that was available to them. In one case, for example, historic information about a previous allegation of rape and potential targeting of vulnerable female victims had not been picked up within the assessment.

***Poor practice example:** In Patrick's case, the documentation centred on a basic Layer one OASys at commencement and termination. There was evidence that the risk posed to his partner was escalating. Patrick had twice assaulted her in public and caused criminal damage at her property. This was not reflected in any assessments or reviews.*

There was also evidence that Patrick presented a risk to staff. He had had three changes of responsible officer due to his aggressive behaviour towards staff but this was not reflected in the assessments. The responsible officer said that workload pressures meant reviews were not completed.

Managing and reviewing the risk of harm

Alongside rehabilitation, CRCs retain significant responsibilities for managing the risk of harm.

The responsible officer had delivered work sufficiently focused on the service user's risk of harm in less than half of the relevant cases, and we saw many cases where little constructive work was undertaken, in particular for those with relationship issues linked to the risk of harm they posed. We viewed this as a significant gap, given the high proportion of cases involving domestic abuse.

Within the CRC, there was a range of services that would help to address the risk of harm, but not all responsible officers used the services available. Where used, partner agencies, or those providing services under contract, delivered work sufficiently focused on risk of harm in two-thirds of the cases.

***Good practice example:** Over 80% of the IOM caseload in Derbyshire were CRC cases. The IOM team addressed public protection matters for the over 200 IOM cases; which are those with the highest rehabilitative, risk to the public and complex needs. Daily tasking, real-time information sharing, joint home visits and access to interventions enhance public protection for these cases.*

Responsible officers had reviewed progress against public protection priorities in less than one in five of the cases where we thought a review was required, an exceptionally low proportion in our experience. In a slightly higher proportion of cases, they had responded appropriately to the changing circumstances.

We considered that all responsible action had been taken to keep to a minimum the service user's risk of harm to others by the responsible officer in two-thirds of our case sample; by contracted providers in 5 out of 6 relevant cases and by partner agencies in 10 out of 13.

Impact

We assessed if there had been a positive rehabilitative effect on the risk of harm posed by the individual. We were looking for evidence that individuals had changed their attitudes and behaviour or that their circumstances had improved, all of which might help reduce the likelihood that harmful acts would occur.

At the point of inspection, the responsible officer had made sufficient progress in positively influencing the risk of harm posed by the service user to the public in general in almost half of cases (48%); to known victims in 42%; children 38%; and staff 33%. We thought those figures should have been higher. The following example showed what could be achieved with an appropriate focus on the nature of the risk of harm posed:

Good practice example: *Solomon was a 20 year old man who had been sentenced to custody following an offence of dangerous driving. He had previous driving offences and clearly posed a risk to the public from such behaviour. The responsible officer took time to build a positive working relationship with him to help to engage him in a process of change. He had problems with accommodation, physical health, mental health and drug misuse, all of which limited his ability to sustain change. The responsible officer worked with partner organisations to motivate and support Solomon to tackle this range of issues. Solomon made steady progress; he was enabled in this through consistent work by both CRC and partnership practitioners. They monitored his actions and reinforced his motivation for change. The workers recognised and responded to the diversity issues faced by Solomon and this helped him to feel included in the process. Six months into the supervision period, Solomon had secured appropriate accommodation, had considerably reduced his drug use and was engaging with health services in order that he could become fit for work. Solomon remained motivated to continue on a path of positive change and had not reoffended.*

In contrast, another service user told us:

“I was homeless. I had just come out of prison, and was sad at losing members of my family. I had been on bail for two years for an offence; I was not getting help from anyone. I had breached my licence and was put in a house with four men. I was the only girl. [Probation] said they would help me to get some accommodation but that didn’t happen. I just go and get tested and get my script. No one does anything. I’ve done it all by myself. I feel listened to now and I don’t need any support at the moment. When I did need it, I didn’t get it. The worker just kept threatening me with breach and sending me back to prison”.

In another example, however, the work undertaken had clearly had a positive effect on the individual:

Good practice example: *We talked with Ian about his experience of the Control Of Violence for Angry Impulsive Drinkers programme. He spoke positively about the programme, saying that he had learned a great deal. He told us the tutors were sensitive and supportive and had taken account of his personal circumstances in running the group. Ian said the staff were assertive but fair, and always managed things well if the discussions became too overwhelming.*

Management oversight and control

The RRP Board had recently considered the quality of practice in relation to public protection matters. Senior managers asserted that they were attempting to manage change with an emphasis on maintaining safe working practices and on protecting the public. Across the wider organisation, efforts had been made to align policies that related to public protection work, but management attention had been less clearly focused on quality over recent months. This had contributed to a drop in the quality of public protection work. In too many cases, public protection was not being prioritised.

In our view, the approach to delivering public protection work in the CRC was not having the desired effect. While we did not find any cases that required us to take immediate action to address public protection concerns, we did not find public protection managed well enough. Management spans of control of team managers were wide, enabling critical pieces of work to pass unnoticed unless flagged by responsible officers.

Some probation services officers (PSOs) did not feel that their training had equipped them for the more serious work allocated to them, such as domestic abuse and Child Protection matters, and sexual offending. The CRC position was that case assignment was based on a combination of the Offender Group Reconviction Scale (OGRS), the risk of serious harm level and other key risk indicators, such as Child Protection concerns. While the CRC would not expect to see PSOs dealing with sexual offending, we saw more than one instance where the staff member considered a case had been assigned based on the OGRS risk rating alone.

We found examples of complex cases involving Child Protection concerns being assigned to staff who did not have sufficient training, confidence or experience. This had contributed to inadequate work on public protection in some instances. Several responsible officers conveyed a sense of anxiety about their work and felt that role boundaries were becoming blurred. A PSO told us:

“I should never have been allocated this case. I am a PSO and I do not have the skills to effectively manage the case. I am worried that people are being put at risk. I am stressed out”.

In many cases, we considered that home visiting would have been appropriate; few could demonstrate that this was happening. Staff told us that home visits could only be done jointly with another person, and the logistics of this impeded undertaking home visits. Not undertaking home visits, in relevant cases, had a potentially negative effect on the quality of Child Protection and domestic abuse work.

One responsible officer expressed their concerns when they said:

“we are drowning. Critical information is being missed and I am worried that mistakes are going to be made”.

The following table identifies the key barriers to the work of the CRC contributing to public protection. There were no identified enablers.

Barriers	
1.	Insufficient organisational resource had been allocated to gaining a corporate understanding of the quality of public protection work. Consequently, at a corporate level, there was inadequate information about that aspect of performance.
2.	Insufficient resources were available for management oversight of risk of harm work.
3.	Not all staff had the support and training they needed to underpin their work in managing risk of harm.

4.	The process for assigning work within the CRC meant that some staff were given work involving the potential for risk of harm that was beyond their expertise.
5.	A lack of home visits in relevant cases undermined the quality of risk of harm work.

NPS effectiveness

NPS performance was good overall, and strong in managing risk of harm.

Assessment and planning

Of the 21 cases in our sample, we assessed that 8 posed a high risk of serious harm, 12 a medium risk and 1 a low risk. We thought in 18 cases that the risk of serious harm level was correctly identified throughout the supervision period. We judged that two were too high and one too low.

Overall, we found that the quality of assessment of, and planning for, the risk of harm posed to the general public, known victims, children, staff and prisoners was good. The following provides a good example of the responsible officer being fully alert, and responding effectively, to the risks posed:

Good practice example: *Eric had been given a three year community order, including an accredited programme requirement and unpaid work, for offences relating to obscene images of children. He was in denial about the offences.*

The responsible officer, having established a working relationship with Eric, was able to challenge him appropriately. She scrutinised his mobile telephone, for example, as she had suspicions that Eric may be 'grooming' a child. Being concerned about the proximity of his accommodation to a school, she worked closely with police colleagues attached to the Management of Sexual and Violent Offenders (MOSOVO) team, sharing information with them and conducting joint home visits to both his rented flat and to other locations frequented by Eric.

The responsible officer's investigative approach, coupled with the effectiveness of joint work with police colleagues, meant that potential risks to children were kept in focus throughout. At the time of the inspection, Eric had complied with supervision and had not reoffended.

Managing and reviewing the risk of harm

The work delivered by responsible officers, in relation to public protection outcomes, was appropriate in most cases. In two instances the offender's lack of engagement was a barrier to effective work.

In relevant cases, work delivered by contracted providers and partner agencies was sufficiently focused on protecting those at risk of harm. In several cases, however, the service user's non-compliance had hindered the impact of those services.

Responsible officers had reviewed progress against the public protection outcome priorities in over three-quarters of the cases where a review was required, and responded appropriately to changing circumstances in a similar proportion.

***Good practice example:** We received positive feedback from practitioners about the support they received to aid their work with those suffering from personality disorders. They had experienced instances of this joint work having a profound effect on service users. We were given an example of one service user who appeared to have a 'lightbulb moment' on seeing his psychometric test results. Derbyshire had a contract for a psychologist to help responsible officers undertake screenings for personality disorders, funded jointly by the Department of Health and NOMS. The psychologist advised responsible officers about the management of cases. All female NPS cases and those males posing a high risk of harm were screened. The service was also becoming increasingly available for cases of young people 'transitioning' to adult probation services.*

Overall, we considered all reasonable action had been taken to minimise the individual's risk of harm to others by the responsible officer in 86% of cases; by contracted providers in all relevant cases; and by partner agencies in 89%. This is strong performance.

Legacy skills and values underpinned the work of responsible officers in managing public protection issues. This centred on the need to be able to demonstrate defensible decision-making, in respect of public protection. The quality of this work was generally satisfactory and chimed with the findings in our previous inspection in the area. Managers and practitioners acknowledged that there was a need to move beyond the management of risk of harm, towards a position where they could also demonstrate that a positive rehabilitative effect helped to bring down the level of risk of harm posed by individuals.

We noted a strong working relationship with the police in the field of public protection. We saw good joint work with them relating to gangs in the area. Joint work with the police, and others, on the IOM scheme was well developed and operating effectively. In our discussions with the police, it was clear that there was a strong sense of mutual respect between police and NPS staff, and a willingness to work closely for the benefit of the public.

Management oversight and control

There was a clear emphasis given to public protection issues by the NPS. The organisation was well represented in all public protection forums in the Local Delivery Unit area. We found effective relationships and joint working at strategic levels via MAPPA and MOSOVO.

The importance of focusing on the risk of harm that individuals posed was clearly understood by managers and practitioners alike. Staff were supported in using their professional judgement and were able to demonstrate to us their ability to manage public protection issues.

Despite NPS staff having a concentration of high risk cases, local staff and managers said there was insufficient access to independent clinical support for this work.

Impact

We assessed if there had been a positive rehabilitative effect on the risk of harm posed by the individual. At the point of inspection, the responsible officer had made sufficient progress in influencing the risk of harm posed to the general public in 75% of cases; to known victims in 81%; to children in 77%; and to staff in 75%.

The following table identifies the key enablers to the work of the NPS contributing to public protection. There were no identified barriers to this work.

Enablers	
1.	A positive legacy of a professional practice culture underpinned the quality of public protection work.
2.	The organisation prioritised public protection. This supported staff in their work to manage risk of harm and was reinforced through effective management oversight of practice.
3.	Partnership arrangements assisted staff to contribute to effective joint work with partners, including MAPPA, MOSOVO and IOM.

The CRC and NPS working together

The quality of the initial screening of cases at court for risk of harm issues was generally satisfactory.

Managers from both the CRC and the NPS said the escalation process worked well and reflected the positive working relationships between the two organisations. Informal discussions usually took place between the CRC and NPS in advance of a risk escalation form being submitted. We did review one case, however, where the case had been rejected by the NPS, but we could not locate the documentation relating to this decision.

In our view, when risk escalation was rejected, the CRC responsible officer should always complete the nDelius case record to reflect those discussions, so that the rationale underpinning the decision would be available. Such recording would provide crucial evidence in the event of an unforeseen event occurring, such as a Serious Further Offence.

We were not convinced that all CRC staff understood sufficiently the escalation process for transfer to the NPS when the risk of harm increased beyond the agreed threshold. Performance for the CRC and the NPS on the relevant national performance assurance measure 'risk escalation quality' had fluctuated. The numbers of risk escalation cases were so small, however, that it was difficult to draw any meaningful conclusions.

The following table identifies one key barrier to the work of the CRC and NPS working together to achieve positive public protection outcomes. There were no identified enablers to this work.

Barriers	
1.	Not all CRC staff were confident in using the escalation process and this had the potential to undermine the effectiveness of the arrangements.

Reducing reoffending

CRC effectiveness

CRC performance was poor overall, with planning and reviewing progress particularly so.

Assessment and planning

We expected to see initial court-based assessments updated within a reasonable time by the CRC after initial NPS allocation, with the right factors identified and incorporated into a sentence plan to allow a prompt start to work towards the identified objectives. Assessments were not of sufficient quality in slightly more than half of relevant cases.

A high volume of OASys Layer one assessments had been completed and these were sparse. Many responsible officers told us they did not have time to undertake meaningful assessments. Others said they had been told not to complete OASys initial sentence plans.

In too many cases, there was little involvement of service users in initial planning or reviews of the work. In most cases, we could not find evidence of assessments and plans underpinning the interventions offered. Frequent changes of responsible officer limited the scope for staff to build effective working relationships with service users.

The completion of an initial skills checker and alcohol questionnaire as a standard element of induction helped to identify areas of work that needed to be undertaken with service users.

***Good practice example:** The use of peer mentors, that is, former or current service users, in the 'Transition into Hope' RAR was a valuable means of providing effective services.*

In the 39 CRC cases we inspected, the most frequently occurring priority factors for service users that needed to be addressed were thinking and behaviour (30 cases); relationships (20 cases); drug misuse (18 cases); emotional well-being (17 cases); alcohol misuse (15 cases); accommodation (14 cases); and lifestyle and associates (12 cases).

These were the priority areas that we expected to see incorporated into sentence planning. In many instances we found no clear link between the factors planned to be addressed and those identified as being linked to offending. The individual relevant factors that were most often incorporated into planning were attitudes to offending; employment, training and education; thinking and behaviour; and alcohol misuse. Work on accommodation and relationships featured in less than half of the plans in the relevant cases. These were missed opportunities, particularly given the prevalence of domestic abuse cases in our sample.

We also considered if planning had sufficiently supported relevant protective factors, for example, stable accommodation, steady employment, supportive relationships and continuing treatment for mental ill-health or addiction. Where there were protective factors that required supporting, planning included them in half of the cases.

***Poor practice example:** Jack was 40 years old and had been sentenced to custody for offences of common assault, shop theft and breaches of two orders. Jack was a drug user and committed acquisitive offences for financial gain to fund his drug use.*

The responsible officer did not know about previous offences involving harm and so planning did not address this aspect of his offending.

Jack was initially motivated to cease using drugs, and for two months he engaged well with drug treatment. When his partner, who also misused drugs, was released from custody, however, he relapsed and lost all contact with probation. He committed further offences and was again sentenced to custody.

Overall, we judged that many of the plans were not of good enough quality and were unlikely to contribute to positive reducing reoffending outcomes. The mismatch between plans of work, and factors identified as contributing to offending, was a barrier to effective practice.

Delivery

The service users whose cases we inspected had been sentenced to a community order or a suspended sentence order, or had been released on licence. At the time of the inspection, work had been underway for about six months. Sufficient progress had been made in delivering the required interventions in just over half of the cases.

Work to support drugs misuse was satisfactorily delivered in over two-thirds of the cases where required. Enough work had been delivered to address the other factors in only half of the cases. In a number of cases, we found a superficial relationship between the responsible officer and the service user. Too often, the work was confined to a monitoring function, and responding to any crises that might emerge. As such, service delivery was reactive and passive.

A 'light touch' approach to supervision requirements had been adopted by some practitioners. We saw cases where this involved little meaningful contact with the service user beyond the first few weeks. Staff used the term 'step down' to explain how they reduced their level of contact with service users. In some instances it involved interacting with the service user via telephone contact only. While telephone contact has its place, in some of these cases we did not see it used as part of effective practice. Rather it was more an aid to managing workload for hard-pressed staff.

Meeting the needs of service users

We talked with a number of services users, by telephone, face-to-face or in a focus group. They were generally positive about supervision, but some had experienced repeated changes of responsible officer and this was their main complaint. Some said that 'step down', which limited contact with their responsible officer, had been used too readily. Others told us that RAR activities were not always relevant to their needs. None could recall any structured interventions being undertaken with them, but it was evident that some had done some offence-focused work. Where this had happened, it tended to involve one-to-one sessions with their responsible officers.

Nonetheless, we saw some good examples of effective work being delivered, as the following example illustrates:

***Good practice example:** We observed a two hour session entitled 'Skills for Employment, Changing Direction – Disclosure'. The session was for service users with RAR attached to their supervision, those with OGRS scores totalling over 50, or any NPS cases.*

This was a well-planned and well-delivered session that addressed issues around disclosing convictions when seeking employment. The materials had been designed in-house and the content was of good quality. The employment advisers were enthusiastic, knowledgeable and enabled the participants to join in. Follow-up meetings, and links to other sources of assistance, were offered to the participants.

Reviewing progress

We thought that a review of progress against the outcome priorities designed to reduce reoffending was required in 25 of the 39 cases. Such a review had been completed to a sufficient standard in under one-quarter of the relevant cases. The responsible officer had sufficiently adjusted their planning as required in only three cases.

Some practitioners told us their understanding was that the organisation did not expect them to undertake reviews, other than when significant change had taken place in the individual's circumstances. We looked at a number of cases when, in our view, significant change was evident, for example the case of an offender with a history of domestic abuse who had formed a new relationship. No review had taken place.

It was clear that practitioners needed clearer guidance and leadership in respect of reviewing work. The lack of focus on reviewing work, linked with inadequate initial planning in many cases, meant that planning contributed little to achieving outcomes.

Poor practice example: *In the case of Melvin, we found that the handover of the case to a new responsible officer did not allow continuity and momentum to be maintained. For both the staff member and for Melvin, it was a case of having to start again. Consequently, the work in the community made no links to work done in custody.*

Potential impact

We considered what impact the work had had in making service users in our sample less likely to reoffend. In relation to attitudes to offending, we considered that over half of the service users had either achieved the outcome required or had made sufficient progress in this area. For other priority factors, however, an outcome had been achieved, or sufficient progress made, in only two-fifths of the cases. Relationships, drug and alcohol misuse, and emotional well-being were the areas where least progress had been made. In many instances, we thought input from the responsible officer had been insufficient in helping the service user make progress in relation to the required factors.

There were, however, examples of good practice. One service user gave a specific example of a strategy he had learned during supervision, that is, 'positive self-talk'. He had applied this in everyday situations to help him avoid further offending.

Good practice example: *Keith was 29 years old and had been sentenced to a community penalty for a violent offence. While intoxicated, he had head butted a stranger in a nightclub. He had one previous similar offence from five years earlier. Keith was working full time and lived with his partner who was expecting their first child. This had impacted positively on Keith, who had reduced his alcohol consumption.*

The responsible officer built upon this, identifying the priority areas of work and sequencing the planned interventions. At the time of the inspection, Keith had completed victim awareness work and was in the process of beginning anger management work. All sessions involved a discussion about his level of alcohol use.

At the time of the inspection, Keith had not reoffended.

Programmes delivered to female service users looked promising. Women's Work (a charity commissioned by the CRC) ran a number of programmes, including the Change Programme, a ten week rolling course comprising eight group sessions and two one-to-one sessions looking at a range of issues, from self-esteem to problem-solving and relationships. Also on offer for women was the Healthy Relationships Programme, a closed group of five sessions looking at all aspects of relationships, from abusive to healthy, and how to nurture healthy relationships. This

included a three-way meeting with the responsible officer prior to the group starting and a one-to-one session at the end.

The programmes were run at various times and locations in Chesterfield, Derby and Ilkeston. Referrals were mainly received from the CRC or the NPS and the sessions could count towards RAR days. Women could also self-refer and attend voluntarily. Facilitators would sit with people individually if they had difficulties with reading and writing. One service user commented:

“I don’t like probation but I don’t class this as probation. I didn’t want to come but it has made me realise the mistakes I made and that I need to make changes so I look forward to it now”.

In Chesterfield, the group was held in a church and this could potentially have been a barrier for some women. Other groups were held in probation premises where the women had to wait in the reception area alongside male service users. One service user commented that childcare problems made it difficult for her to attend the group. Bus fares were not issued unless the participants lived more than three miles away so one group member had to walk for almost an hour to attend because she could not afford the bus fare.

We talked with some of the female service users and they reported that they felt the group was very supportive but that after the end of the group there was no support in place. One commented:

“I still see the women from the group because we bonded and we give each other support but because we can’t meet here, we meet in the pub”.

This particular group member also commented that she had problems with alcohol.

The following table identifies the key enablers and barriers to the work of the CRC contributing to reoffending outcomes and the strengthening of protective factors against future offending.

Enablers		Barriers	
1.	In those cases where specific services met the needs of service users, this helped with achieving outcomes.	1.	High workloads hindered the efforts of staff to deliver effective services.
2.	Some partnership services consistently met the rehabilitative needs of service users and were valued by them.	2.	Uneven roll-out of the full operating model meant staff were not fully supported in their work.

		3.	Insufficient management attention to the quality of practice limited their impact on service delivery.
		4.	Staff turnover, and service users experiencing regular changes of responsible officer, undermined effective service delivery.
		5.	Inadequate assessments and plans diminished the quality of the work.

NPS effectiveness

NPS performance was generally good, but the NPS was not making full use of the range of interventions available from the CRC and some service users experienced delay in starting programmes.

Court reporting

We inspected 49 cases where a report was prepared for sentencing. Over three-quarters of them contained proposals focused on the right issues. We found some examples where proposals were not aligned to the specific needs of the case, including not suggesting an accredited programme in instances where it could have been beneficial. The following example illustrates another similar missed opportunity:

Poor practice example: *In one case, the PSR did not address vulnerability well. The proposal for unpaid work missed the potential for the woman to be better served through addressing her mental health and alcohol problems.*

Allocating cases

The NPS was effective in allocating cases. The overall assessment at the point of allocation was sufficient in the majority of cases.

Assessment and planning

Following allocation of the case to the NPS, the assessments within the PSRs completed by the court team were being updated as necessary by the responsible officers. We thought the resultant assessments were sufficient in almost all of the cases.

The priority factors that required addressing in the 21 NPS cases we inspected were thinking and behaviour (18 cases); attitudes to offending (12 cases); lifestyle and associates (12 cases); relationships (11 cases); and emotional well-being (10 cases). Planning in almost all instances incorporated sufficiently the identified factors. In over three-quarters of the relevant cases, planning also supported protective factors that were present.

The following example demonstrates how an appropriate plan, underpinned by an accurate assessment, could lead to effective work being done and positive progress being made:

Good practice example: *Alvin was 32 years old and had been convicted of two sexual assaults, two assaults and a witness intimidation offence. All the offences were committed against his partner at the time. Alvin had a learning disability and speech difficulties.*

A comprehensive initial assessment correctly identified the key factors driving his behaviour. The plan focused on key issues and had a clear strategy to address them. There was recognition of the specific needs in this case and the responsible officer took full account of Alvin's diversity needs in deciding how the work would be delivered, and any learning reinforced.

The intervention was delivered at a pace appropriate to Alvin's abilities. The work focused on thinking and attitudes and challenged his views on domestic abuse. It sought to reinforce positive attitudes and change patterns of behaviour.

The work produced some clear and positive results. Alvin quickly came to realise that his actions were not acceptable and he accepted a greater level of responsibility for his behaviour.

Not all plans were so well-focused, however, as the following example illustrates:

Poor practice example: *In a case involving violent offences, the assessment was superficial and lacked analysis. Issues that required further investigation had not been followed up, so gaps in information remained.*

There was limited engagement with the service user, Tom, and the plan lacked clarity about what work would be undertaken and why. For example, one objective specified the BBR programme even though Tom had completed this two years previously and it was not a condition of the current licence.

There had been a recent breakdown in his relationship and information suggested he was continuing to harass an ex-partner. This had not been adequately addressed in the plan of work.

At the point of inspection, the responsible officer had delivered sufficient interventions in most of the cases where required. We thought the offender's lack of engagement was a barrier in five instances, despite sufficient effort from the responsible officer.

Reviewing progress, and likely impact

The responsible officer sufficiently reviewed progress against the outcome priorities of the case in most instances, and, where required, adjusted their planning to make the achievement of desired outcomes more likely. The following two examples illustrate how responsible officers maintained a focus on the goals, keeping progress towards achieving them under review:

Good practice example: *Dino was a 21 year old man, assessed as being at high risk of reoffending, but medium risk of causing serious harm to others. He was managed via the IOM scheme.*

The responsible officer was able to demonstrate a combination of activities that were recorded. These included constructing a genogram to help focus on family and life experience issues; involving a colleague to undertake some shared background experience work; and referrals to supporting agencies (housing and employment services). The responsible officer routinely tested Dino for drugs, the results of which further reinforced the positive strides being made by Dino.

The supervision was geared towards the achievement of defined outcomes, including remaining drug free, securing stable accommodation, gaining employment, and achieving a non-offending lifestyle.

Good practice example: *In one session we observed, the responsible officer checked what had happened for Sandro since they last met, and if there were any concerns. Together they went through a number of safeguarding issues that had resulted from the offence; the victim was the child of a family member.*

The previous RAR session was reviewed to check learning and examples of application of learning from that session were discussed. The responsible officer discussed support networks with Sandro. They used open and reflective questioning which facilitated good engagement and openness. The session focused on internal and external influences on behaviour. The responsible officer explained this well, and was able to apply these concepts to Sandro's life experience and family situation, thus enabling him to understand the key messages.

There was clearly a long-standing good working relationship between the responsible officer and Sandro and this provided a platform for meaningful work to be done.

The NPS cases we examined involved serious violent and/or sexual offences. Because we were examining those cases around six months following sentence or release on licence, we did not always expect to see much progress made in relation to offending-related factors. In a number of instances, particularly for those that had served long prison sentences, the priority was to stabilise the offender and develop a purposeful working relationship before commencing the required rehabilitative work. This was entirely appropriate.

In terms of making the individual less likely to reoffend, we thought good progress was made where offenders had problems with accommodation and/or had relationship issues to address. Partnership service providers were routinely and actively involved in cases involving accommodation and domestic abuse. Less progress was found where an individual had emotional well-being difficulties or problems with alcohol.

We asked whether the work undertaken had made the service user less likely to reoffend. We considered the outcome had been achieved, or sufficient progress made, in over half of the cases. Where relationships issues were concerned, we saw sufficient improvement in almost three-quarters of cases. In relation to attitudes to offending, half of the service users had made sufficient progress towards achievement of positive outcomes. Other priority factors, such as substance misuse, thinking and behaviour, and emotional well-being, were the areas where least progress had been made.

Women offenders supervised by the NPS were offered the opportunity to work with a female responsible officer after sentence. Women could be referred to the CRC 'Women's Work' groups. One female NPS service user commented:

“Probation has helped me a lot with finance, getting more confidence, feeling proud of myself and they have helped me get a job”.

Some practitioners reported that there were long delays in women starting groupwork; this stretched to months in some cases, which risked them losing their motivation to participate. There was a sense among practitioners that there were too few specific services available for women in the NPS, since they only had access to those services (described previously) provided by the CRC. In many cases, we thought input from the responsible officer, through delivering interventions on a one-to-one basis or signposting the service user elsewhere, had helped service users make progress in relation to the factors linked to their offending.

Meeting service user needs

In our focus group meeting, service users reported high levels of satisfaction overall. Some participants, however, referred to having had an initial negative experience with staff. Others felt that programmes were slow to start and that the waiting time could have involved more positive preparatory work. One said:

“There was a gap of five months before I started the group and that caused a lot of anxiety. I was working with social services but they say I couldn’t move forward until I had done the group which was very frustrating. My life was on hold”.

Another said:

“I got given three or four start dates before I actually started which caused a lot of anxiety; I just wanted to get going with it”.

Although our focus group participants felt the probation premises were generally satisfactory, they all highlighted the lack of confidentiality in the reception area. They pointed out in particular that it was possible for other service users to see their names and details of the programme they were attending when standing at the reception desk. They felt this could put them at risk of being harmed. Once started, however, all service users stated the programmes were positive and they could see the benefits of participation. The service users welcomed having had an uninterrupted service.

We had mixed messages from other service users we spoke with about their experiences: some were positive and others less so. Of their responsible officers, service users commented:

“My current probation officer is absolutely fantastic, really engaging; I feel I can be open and honest with her and she gives the impression that she actually does care whereas my previous one felt like it was a matter of formality”.

“Having my probation officer come to my social services meetings has been a real support. She [responsible officer] has also met and spoken to my wife”.

“I know that I have support and I’m not alone. [My responsible officer] is someone I can go to for help that isn’t going to judge and will just do their best to help”.

Less positively, others commented:

“I had a bad experience when I came for [my] pre-sentence [appointment]. The man who did [my PSR] was a bully. He refused to listen to what I said and would talk over me. I was terrified, it was my first time at probation and it was a hostile, horrible experience”.

“I’m on my second one [responsible officer]. The first one I had for three months and it was a waste of time. I’d come in and it was “hi and bye”; it meant I couldn’t make plans for the sake of coming in for five minutes. It was very frustrating”.

“There is a lack of professionalism from some offender managers [responsible officers]. They [responsible officers] should not tar us [service users] all with the same brush”.

“Because there is glass in reception you have to say your name and what group you are here for louder. That makes me feel uncomfortable”.

Of the Sex Offender Treatment Programme, service users commented:

“Meeting the other group members made me realise I’m not alone; they’ve gone through what you’ve gone through”.

“The group is starting to give me back my self-confidence; everyone has a strength they didn’t know they had and that’s down to the facilitators”.

The following table identifies the key enablers and barriers to the work of the NPS contributing to reoffending outcomes and the strengthening of protective factors against future offending.

Enablers		Barriers	
1.	A positive legacy of a professional practice culture underpinned the quality of core probation work.	1.	NPS staff were not accessing fully the CRC services on offer and this risked failing to meet the rehabilitative needs of some of their service users.
2.	Experienced staff working in a stable organisational context promoted effective practice.	2.	Slow commencements on accredited programmes, and negative experiences in reception, were barriers to effective engagement with some service users.

3.	A focus on quality, with good management oversight and staff support arrangements, underpinned effective practice.		
----	--	--	--

The CRC and NPS working together

Working relationships appeared very good, and well-developed. A high level of collaboration between the CRC, the NPS and partner organisations was in evidence.

There was joint commitment to maintaining collaborative management of the delivery of partnership services. The term *'presenting a unified front'* was used to describe the approach taken by CRC and NPS partnership managers. An illustration of this was seen in relation to the IOM arrangements:

Good practice example: *The IOM scheme was supported by both CRC and NPS managers and involved responsible officers from both organisations working together, with a shared provision of administrative support.*

An IOM Strategic Implementation Group oversaw the scheme; this involved senior managers from the CRC and the NPS, the police, the county council, drug services and housing providers. Practice was well-established and regular tasking meetings took place. CRC and NPS responsible officers, police and partner agencies were able to provide prompt updates on the cases reviewed.

The CRC provided employment advice and mentoring support through other providers, such as Sova, and responsible officers had been trained to deliver drug testing. Responsible officers and IOM police officers were able to respond rapidly to deteriorating contact levels; they also undertook joint home visits and collected offenders from the prison gate.

While staff did not have access to aggregated data on quantified outcomes (such as reoffending data), they could point to improved attitudes, behaviours and circumstances in individual cases, such as reduced drug consumption or accommodation secured.

In a similar vein, the CRC and the NPS had worked to sustain local partnerships to support DRR and ATR arrangements, thereby enabling continuity of access to substance misuse interventions. At the time of the inspection, the CRC was re-establishing the former substance misuse unit, with a non-prescription clinic at both CRC and NPS offices and a clinical facility at the new CRC office.

The following table identifies the key enablers to the work of the CRC and NPS working together to achieve reoffending outcomes and the strengthening of protective factors against future offending. There were no identified barriers to this work.

Enablers	
1.	A positive approach to working in partnership with others was underpinned by a legacy of cooperative relationships between CRC and NPS staff at all levels. This supported staff gaining access to relevant services.
2.	Joint legacy services, such as IOM, helped to provide access to high quality services for individuals who had offended.

Abiding by the sentence

CRC effectiveness

CRC performance was adequate.

Delivery

Information about the individual service user provided by the NPS to the CRC at the point of allocation was usually adequate. This was rarely built upon by CRC staff however, and this adversely affected the quality of assessment and planning on initial allocation to the CRC.

Generally, recording of information was sufficient, and the responsible officer took the service user's individual diversity sufficiently into account in relation to assessment in about three-quarters of cases. Diversity issues were taken into account in planning, delivering interventions and reviews in just over half of the cases.

We considered that just over half of all service users were meaningfully involved in planning for the work to be delivered during the period of their order or time on licence. In a similar proportion, the responsible officer had identified obstacles to effective engagement with the service user and had sought ways to overcome such barriers.

Many service users did not receive a copy of their sentence plan – a basic component of effective practice - and there was a lack of clarity about the focus of supervision appointments.

***Good practice example:** Reb had taken steps to link with other agencies prior to receiving his order so had secured a tenancy, gained voluntary work and had support networks in place.*

CRC staff built on this by allowing him to use his contacts with these agencies as part of his order. They also completed one-to-one work on thinking and behaviour and victim awareness to support his desistance from offending.

Reb had some health issues that could have been a barrier, but these were well managed from the start. The PSR author and the responsible officer worked together to find solutions to these issues and afforded Reb appropriate flexibility with his order.

At the point of the inspection, the CRC, and others working on its behalf, had made sufficient progress in a large majority of cases in delivering the requirements of the order or licence. In two-thirds of cases, the service user had abided by the requirements in their order or licence sufficiently well. Contact levels were appropriate to the needs of the service user in the same proportion of cases.

Absences were responded to appropriately in over three-quarters of cases. In many cases, however, the number of absences acted as a barrier to achieving outcomes across the three domains of reducing reoffending, protecting the public and abiding by the sentence.

We judged that the work undertaken by the service user was unlikely to have a positive impact on reducing reoffending, public protection (when relevant) and abiding by the sentence in just over half of the cases. This was often because required rehabilitative work either started too slowly or not at all. In four cases, the service user was unresponsive to what we thought were sufficient efforts by the responsible officer to make them less likely to reoffend and abide by their sentence.

The following case showed the impact which changing the responsible officer could have on an individual and their progress:

Poor practice example: Milo was a 30 year old man subject to a second order following further offences for breaches of a restraining order. He was part way through BBR as part of the previous order.

All relevant criminogenic issues were covered by individual RAR sessions with the responsible officer. There was a good quality assessment of the risk of harm he posed and a plan in place to manage this. Key enablers for achieving outcomes in this case included the support provided to Milo for his attendance on the BBR programme; advice and guidance on managing contact with his daughter; and encouragement and support in managing stress and emotional issues.

Contact levels had been good, until the sudden departure of the responsible officer, when the case was transferred to a colleague with insufficient capacity. Milo continued to attend group programme sessions, but said he had gone two months without any contact from his responsible officer. In one year Milo had been seen by the PSR writer and four different responsible officers.

Review

We saw 15 cases in our case sample (of 39) where we thought a review of the progress of the case was required, but had not been done. In a further four cases, the service user was not sufficiently involved in the review.

Service user feedback

In a focus group meeting with service users, the whole group agreed that CRC staff were friendly, easy to speak to and approachable. They stated their responsible officers generally gave them good advice. All said they had been treated fairly. One said his responsible officer saw him as a “*whole person*” rather than just an offender. Another told us that he had been asked to be a mentor once his supervision had ended. He felt this was a sign of confidence in him and was something positive to come out of the sentence.

Another said:

“my probation officer has saved my life. I have mental health issues. He’s the one person who understands me. I can turn to him whenever I need to”.

In this group, all the service users felt that having a positive relationship with their responsible officer was beneficial and was more likely to help them comply and avoid further offending. For them, the positive relationships appeared to have been maintained, despite a significant period of change. The change in premises had not had a significant impact on them, although they indicated that the new telephone system was problematic and frustrating.

In a meeting with a different group, one individual said he had one appointment every six weeks and thought there was no benefit to this. Another stated he had done the same work on a previous order and, therefore, it was a waste of time doing it again. Yet another felt that some staff, but not their responsible officer:

“just came in to earn a wage and didn’t care about them”.

Three of the service users stated they had experienced a change in responsible officer and that this was not helpful in building up a trusting relationship. One told us:

“When I see my probation officer we just have a chit-chat”.

Several reported that they had little say in their sentence planning.

They all reported frustration at not being able to contact their responsible officer over the telephone. They said they had to go through a call centre which was sometimes unable to put them through. We were also told that service users thought the new CRC building (in Derby) was in a bad location, as drug use was prevalent in that part of the city. We spent some time in the reception area in Derby. An inspector noted:

“we could clearly hear the discussion taking place between a service user and responsible officer in the interview room next to group room one, despite the door being closed. We could also overhear staff conversations in the room next to reception. It appeared that some service users were reporting only; they simply came in, signed a register and left”.

Other observations included:

“we noted when a service user came in 15 minutes early for his appointment and asked if he could be seen earlier as he

had an appointment with his doctor. Given his medical needs, his responsible officer saw him so that he could attend his appointment. All service users were seen within 15 minutes of arrival. Another reported without an appointment. He was seen within four minutes of arrival”.

The following table identifies the key enablers and barriers to the CRC gaining the compliance of individuals with their sentence.

Enablers		Barriers	
1.	Some responsible officers had a good understanding of the individual needs of service users and of barriers to their engagement. They also demonstrated a flexible approach to required work.	1.	Service user engagement was not always enhanced by their involvement, or effective involvement in the planning and reviewing of their circumstances and of the work. Service users were often not given a copy of their sentence plan.
2.	In general, service users were abiding by their sentence requirements.	2.	Communication problems undermined the motivation of service users to fully participate in purposeful supervision.
3.	Adequate attention was being given to making sure that all of the requirements of the orders and licences had been delivered.	3.	In too many cases, contact levels with service users did not support the achievement of rehabilitation goals.
		4.	There had been insufficient attention given to addressing potential barriers to engagement (such as diversity and vulnerability issues) in assessments, plans, interventions and reviews.

NPS performance was good.

Court reports

Overall, Derbyshire courts had well-established processes in place to enable the completion of quality reports, supported by full and accurate risk assessments. Court work had been prioritised within the organisation. The NPS team was seen as being well-organised and efficient in delivering work for the court. The magistrates and the Judge to whom we spoke were positive about the service received from probation staff at court. Magistrates considered that on the day reports were helpful, comprehensive and thorough. In the main, they felt confident about following the proposals in reports. They were routinely offered the full range of sentences including unpaid work, curfews and programmes.

While NPS court staff reported some concerns with their office space and IT equipment, they had found ways of working with these limitations. The court teams were sufficiently staffed and benefited from having administrative support based at court. In addition, the criminal justice mental health team staff member at the magistrates' courts assisted with assessments. This helped achieve on the day sentencing of service users with mental health difficulties. A dedicated ATR/DRR assessor could attend court to make assessments to allow for on the day sentencing of those with drug or alcohol issues. A dedicated domestic abuse court sat on Wednesdays.

With these varied resources to hand, processes were working well to enable the production of on the day reports. There was concern, however, that when the target for on the day reports increased to 90%, this could prove a challenge with the forecast staffing changes. Linked to this, the proposed staffing impact of E3 had just been released to staff and this had caused some anxiety.

Delivery

The offender's individual diversity was sufficiently taken into account by the responsible officer in over three-quarters of cases, in relation to assessment and planning, delivering interventions and reviewing progress of the case. In some instances, however, the offender's lack of engagement was a barrier, despite sufficient efforts by the responsible officer to engage them.

Good practice example: *The NPS in Derbyshire was engaged in developing a Learning Disability Pathway. It was taking developing a partnership response to this complex area of need that had been identified through local research. The formation of a multi-agency project team included a team manager, practitioners (acting as champions) and a health nurse. They were engaged, as a pilot, in developing and delivering a comprehensive training package for staff on recognising and responding to learning disabilities. The approach involved early intervention at the PSR stage in relevant cases. Practitioners were being trained to make reasonable adjustments in working with service users, in order that they could achieve and sustain engagement with a change process.*

In three-quarters of cases, the offender was meaningfully involved in planning their work. In those instances where a review of progress was required, the individual was meaningfully involved in more than half. In over four-fifths of cases, the responsible officer sufficiently identified and, when required, addressed barriers to effective engagement with the offender.

In all of the NPS cases, we considered sufficient progress had been made in delivering the requirements of the order or licence.

Contact levels were sufficient for the needs of the individual who had offended in over four-fifths of the cases, and absences were always responded to appropriately. In just over half of the relevant cases, we thought that the number of absences had acted as a barrier to achieving positive outcomes across the three domains of reducing reoffending, protecting the public and the individual abiding by their sentence.

Overall, we concluded that in over half of the NPS cases, work undertaken with individuals who had offended was likely to have a positive impact on reducing reoffending, protecting the public and abiding by the sentence. In seven cases, the service user's non-compliance acted as a barrier to this and in two instances we felt that the responsible officer should have done more to make sure the work would be likely to have a positive impact.

Half of the NPS service users whose cases we inspected had not sufficiently abided by the requirements of their sentence or licence. In all four of the relevant cases, failure to comply had led to breach.

The following table identifies the key enablers to the NPS gaining the compliance of individuals with their sentence. There were no identified barriers to this work.

Enablers	
1.	Staff developed open and trusting relationships with service users and were setting clear boundaries and expectations.
2.	Staff routinely assessed potential barriers to engagement. They incorporated diversity and vulnerability issues in assessments, plans, interventions and reviews.
3.	Identified plans of work were reviewed routinely and appropriately, so as to give service users the best chance to succeed.
4.	Contact levels with service users were sufficient to deliver the sentences of the court and supported the achievement of rehabilitation goals.
5.	Where required, breach and enforcement action was taken quickly and effectively.

The CRC and NPS working together

Working relationships were good.

We found a good working relationship between CRC and NPS staff at all levels. This aided effective information sharing and joint work in respect of court activities. More broadly, a number of CRC and NPS staff reported having problems with communication, due to teething issues with the new telephone and email systems in the CRC.

We noted some cases where the matching of the conditions and requirements of orders with the needs of the service users was insufficient. Some CRC practitioners complained of missing core documents from court.

Following sentence, those individuals allocated to the CRC were given a first appointment by NPS staff in the courts we visited.

As far as breach was concerned, performance against the national performance measures had improved in recent times, and was now good for both the CRC and NPS. A number of initiatives had contributed to the improved situation. Interface arrangements between the CRC and the NPS around issues such as breach and risk escalation were working well.

Sentencers were kept apprised of the developments in relation to RAR days and the services that could be offered within this remit. NPS staff informed the courts about RAR days and what was available. To aid this, CRC staff had provided information about RAR days to distribute to magistrates. This was in contrast to what we had seen recently in other inspections, where staff and sentencers' knowledge about RAR activities had been relatively limited.

The following table identifies the key enablers and barriers to the work of the CRC and NPS working together to gain compliance of individuals with their sentence.

Enablers		Barriers	
1.	Relationships between CRC and NPS managers were strong, enabling them to discuss issues in a productive and solution-focused manner.	1.	In some instances the arrangements had not made sure that CRC staff commenced their work with sufficient information about the case, and the structure of supervision, to enable rehabilitation goals to be achieved.
2.	Sentencers were sufficiently informed about RAR developments.		

Appendices

- 1: Inspection methodology
- 2: Background data
- 3: Data analysis from inspected cases
- 4: Glossary
- 5: Acknowledgements

Appendix 1: Inspection methodology

HMI Probation's Quality & Impact programme commenced in April 2016, and has been designed to examine probation work in discrete geographical areas, equivalent to a police/Police and Crime Commissioner area, regardless of who delivers the work. We are interested in the work of both the CRC and the NPS, together with that of any partners working with these organisations.

An inspection team visited the area for two full weeks. In the first week, we inspected a pre-determined number of cases (community orders, suspended sentence orders, and licences) of individuals sentenced or released from prison about six months previously. These cases may not have been fully representative of all the eligible cases, but we tried to make sure that the proportions matched in terms of (i) gender, (ii) ethnicity, (iii) sentence type and (iv) office location – with minimum numbers set for (i) and (ii). Cases were also selected from the full range of risk of serious harm and likelihood of reoffending levels, and from as many responsible officers as possible. In Derbyshire, the sample consisted of 60 cases, 39 of which were CRC cases and 21 of which were NPS cases.

The team then returned two weeks later to follow-up issues that had emerged in the first week, and spoke with key staff, managers and partners. We attempted to speak with those service users who provided their consent to being contacted. In this inspection, we spoke with 12 service users (6 from the CRC and 6 from the NPS) whose cases we inspected. We spoke to a further 12 service users via focus groups, comprising 7 from the CRC and 5 from the NPS.

The inspection focused on assessing how the quality of practice contributed to achieving positive outcomes for service users, and evaluating what encouraging impact had been achieved. Inspectors were mindful that current impact could provide evidence of progress towards long-term desistance. In particular, we were seeking to report on whether reoffending was reduced, the public were protected from harm and individuals had abided by their sentence.

Information on the Role of HMI Probation and Code of Practice can be found on our website:

<http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/about-hmi-probation/>

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

Appendix 2: Background data

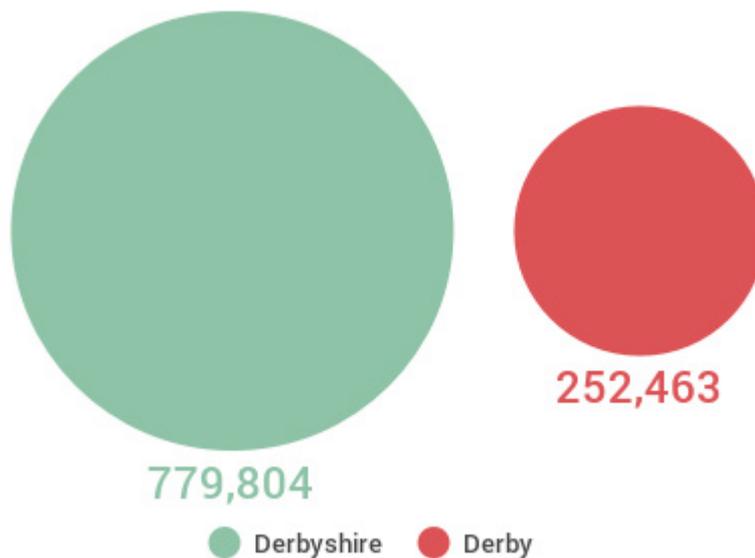
This inspection covers the Derby City and Derbyshire county of the DNLRC and of the Midlands NPS division.

Population demographics

The population of Derbyshire was estimated at 779,804 in 2014.

Separately Derby has a population of 252,463.

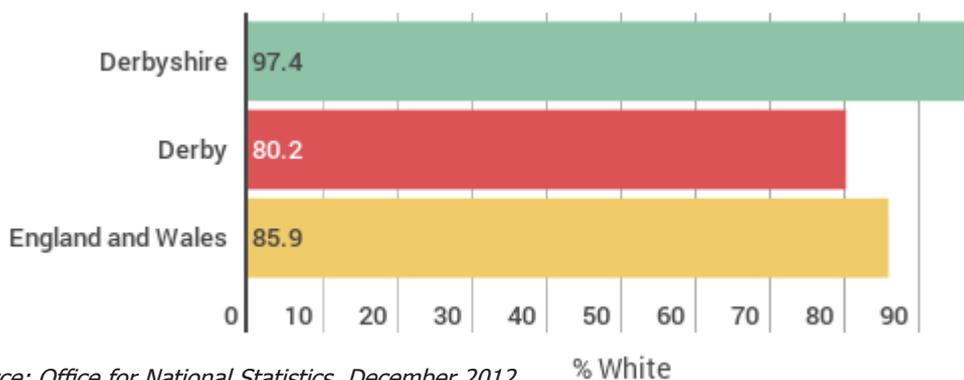
Figure 2.1: Population estimates by local authority, mid-2014



Source: Office for National Statistics, June 2015

There is considerable variation within the area in the proportion of white residents, with Derby having less than the English average (80.2%) and Derbyshire having a much higher proportion of white residents (97.4%).

Figure 2.2: Ethnicity by local authority, 2011 census

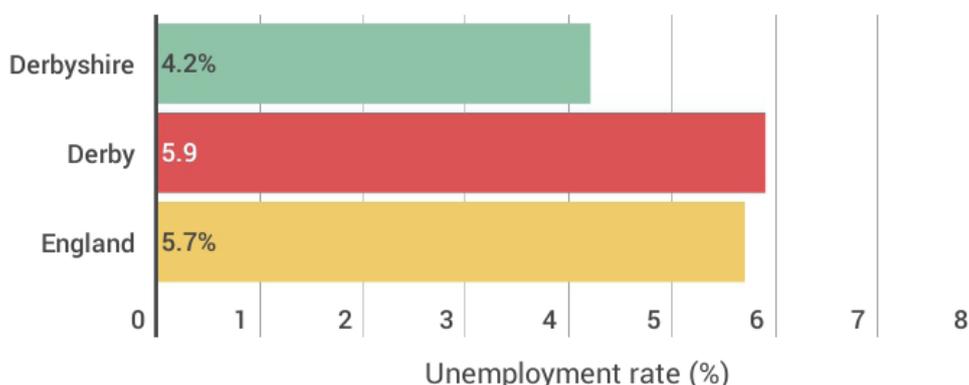


Source: Office for National Statistics, December 2012

Levels of deprivation and crime

As shown by Figure 2.3, unemployment in Derby (5.9%) is about the same as the English average (5.7%), while unemployment in Derbyshire is lower (4.2%). The average, however, masks considerable variation between localities across Derbyshire.

Figure 2.3: Unemployment by local authority, July 2014 to June 2015

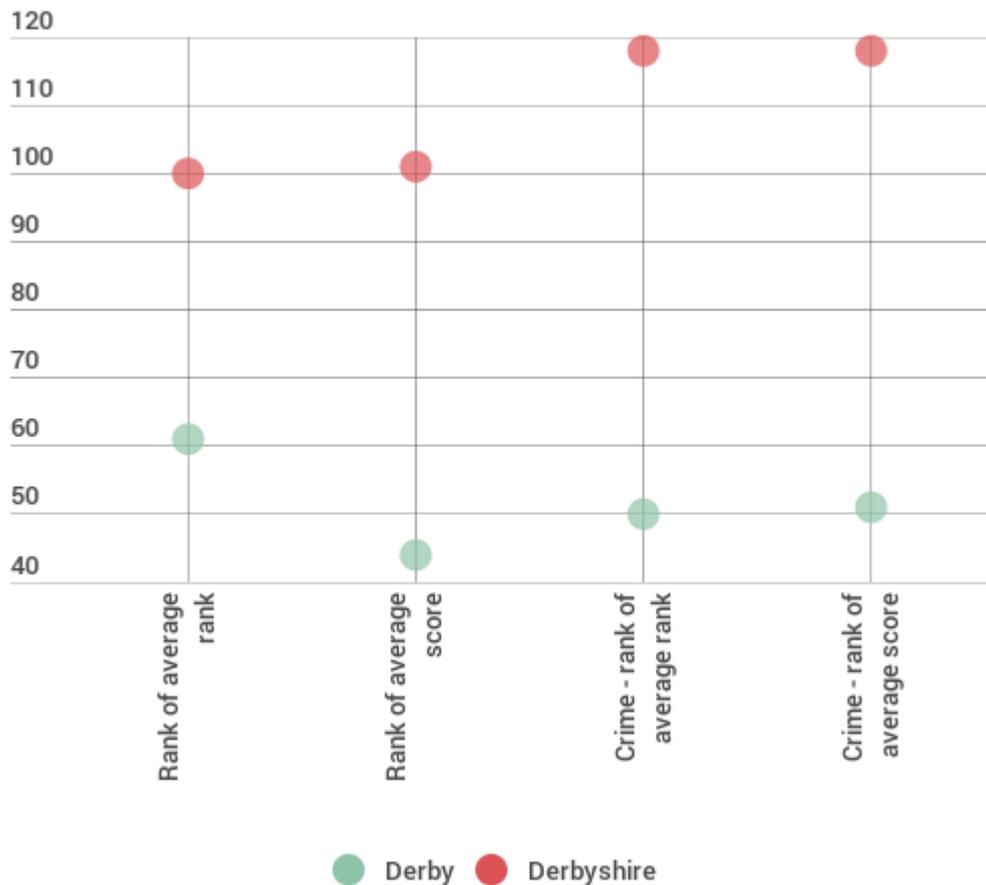


Source: Office for National Statistics, August 2015

Figure 2.4 sets out indices of deprivation. The first two measures are based on the seven domains of (i) income, (ii) employment, (iii) education, skills and training, (iv) health and disability, (v) crime, (vi) barriers to housing and services, and (vii) living environment. The second two measures focus on the crime domain, based upon crime rates relating to violence, burglary, theft and criminal damage. The 'average rank' summarises the average level of deprivation across each local authority as a whole, based on the ranks of the lower level areas in each authority (with population weighting). In the 'average scores', highly polarised areas tend to score higher, with less averaging out than in the average ranks. Across all measures, the local authority with a rank of 1 is the most deprived, and the area ranked 152 is the least deprived.

There is considerable variation across Derbyshire with some areas such as the Derbyshire Dales being among the least deprived and least crime-affected in the country while other areas, particularly Derby, are much more deprived and affected by crime.

Figure 2.4: Multiple deprivation measures by local authority, 2015

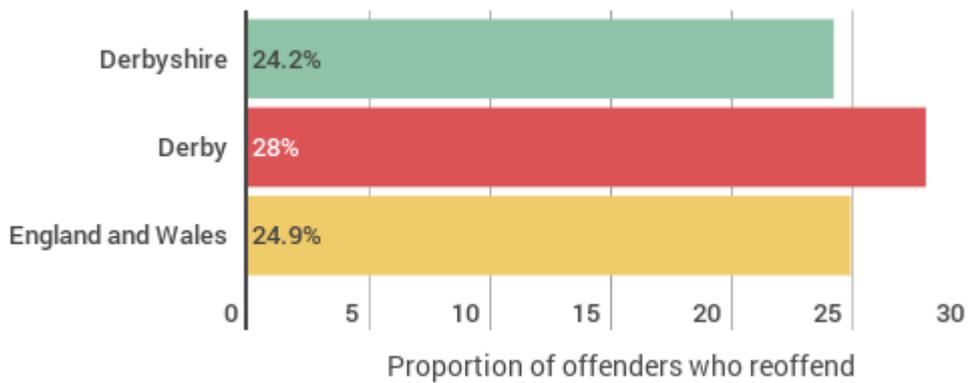


Source: Department of Communities and Local Government, September 2015

Levels of reoffending

Reoffending rates for the two local authorities are set out in Figure 2.5, based upon adult offenders who were released from custody, received a non-custodial conviction at court or received a caution (i.e. not just those who were released from custody) in the period July 2013 to June 2014. Derbyshire has a lower reoffending rate than the England & Wales average while Derby is higher.

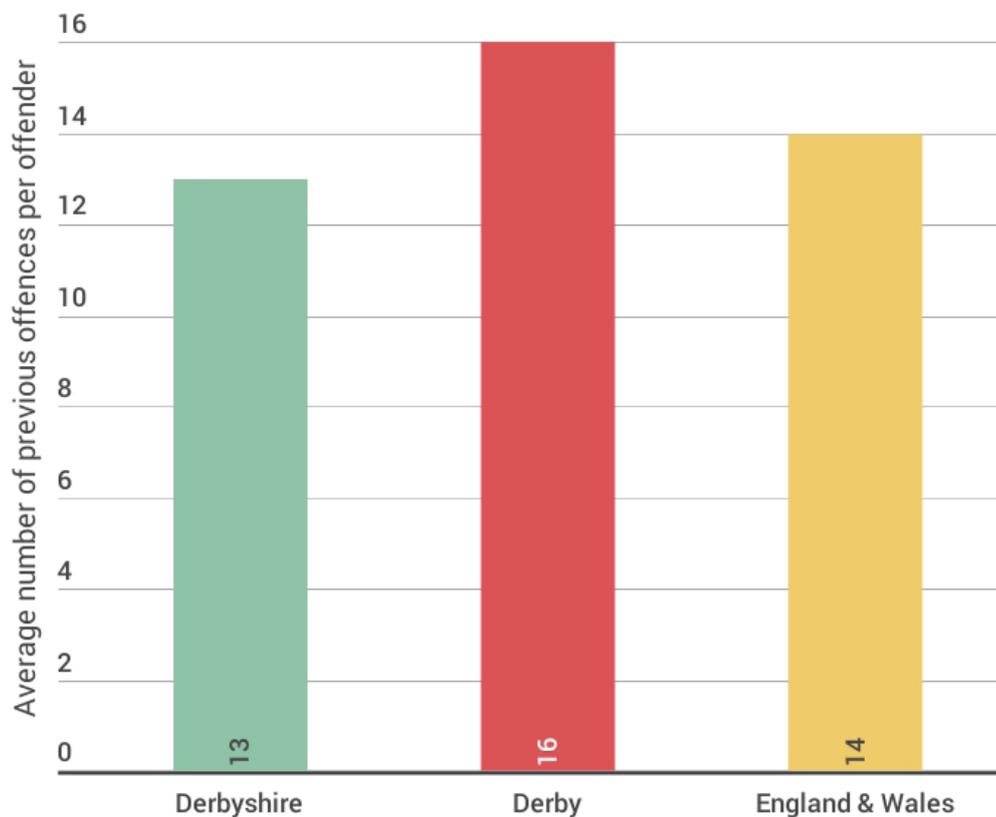
Figure 2.5: Reoffending rate by local authority, July 2013 to June 2014



Source: Ministry of Justice, April 2016

There were fewer previous offences on average for the Derbyshire offender cohort than for England & Wales as a whole, but the Derby cohort average was higher (see Figure 2.6).

Figure 2.6: Offending histories by local authority, July 2013 to June 2014



Source: Ministry of Justice, April 2016

Appendix 3: Data analysis from inspected cases

These charts illustrate key findings from the practice inspection cases. There is one chart for the reducing reoffending domain, two for the public protection domain and one for the abiding by the sentence domain. These are combined figures for the area as a whole, not separated into CRC and NPS cases, due to the small numbers involved. These charts show absolute numbers rather than percentages. This is because the size of the bar chart segments provides an idea of proportion, while the number gives an idea of how large the sample was.

Chart 1: Reducing Reoffending

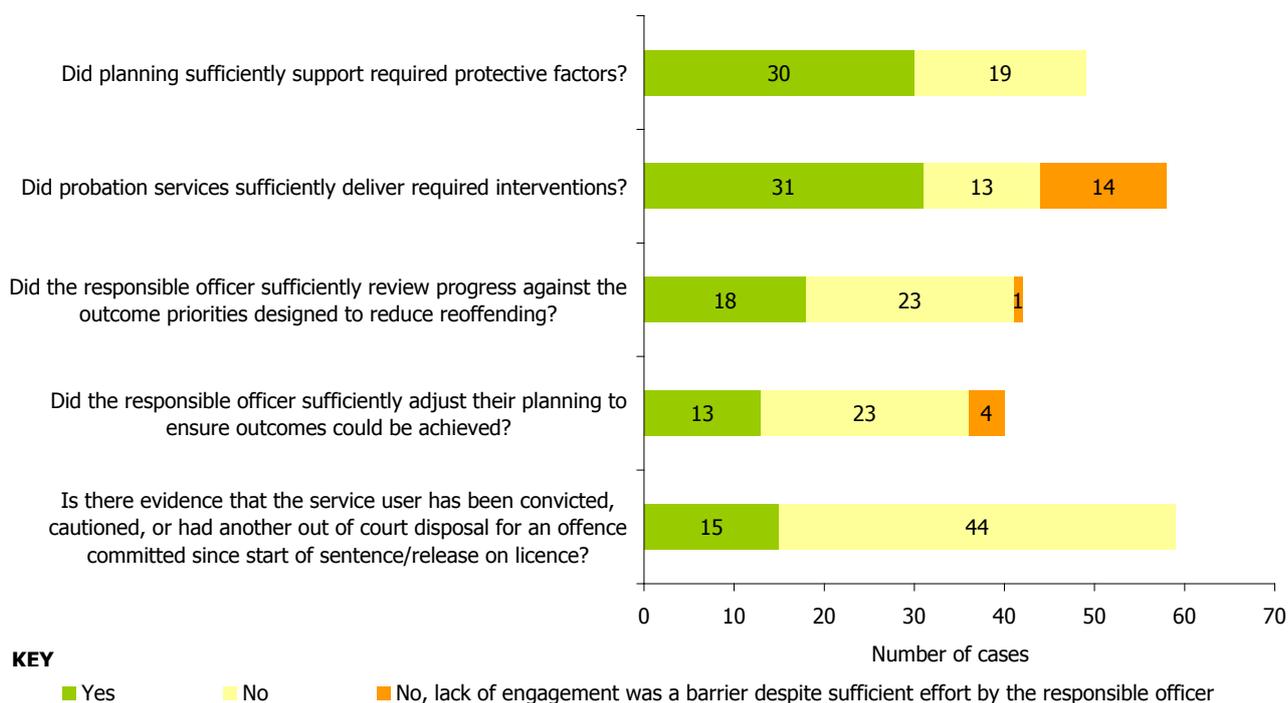


Chart 2: Public Protection

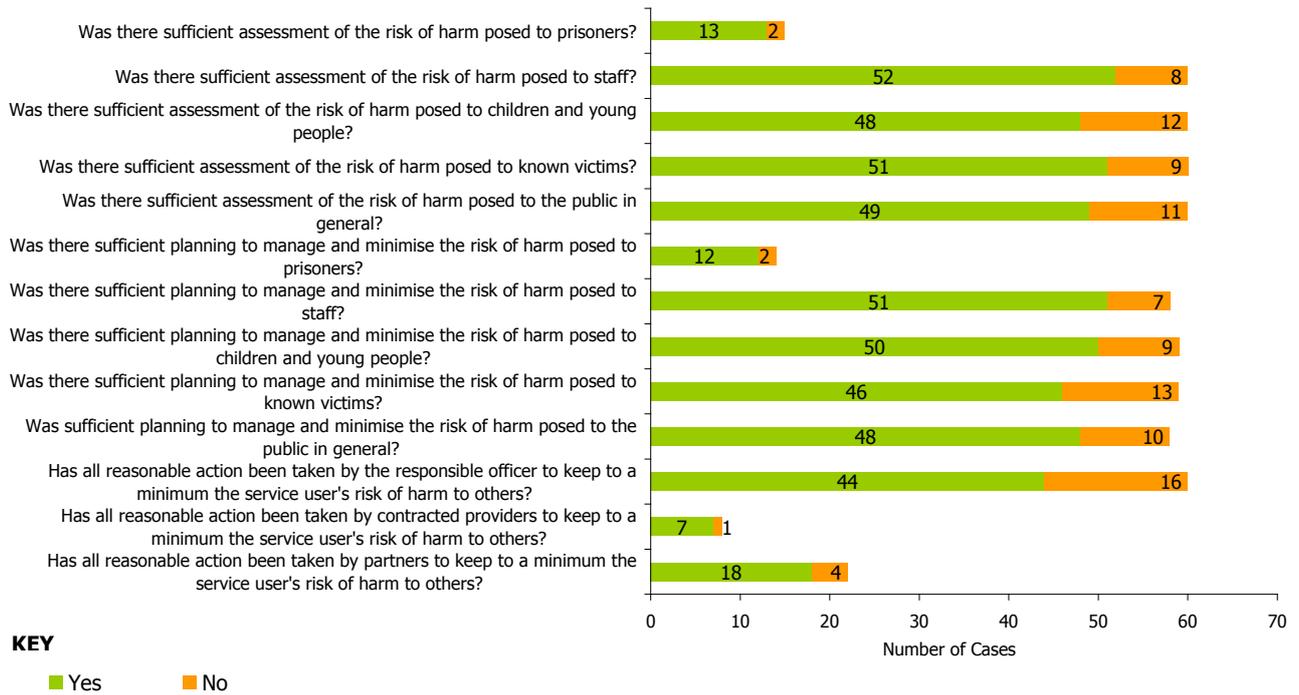


Chart 3: Public Protection

Up to this point in the order/licence, has the responsible officer made sufficient progress in influencing the risk of harm posed by this service user to:

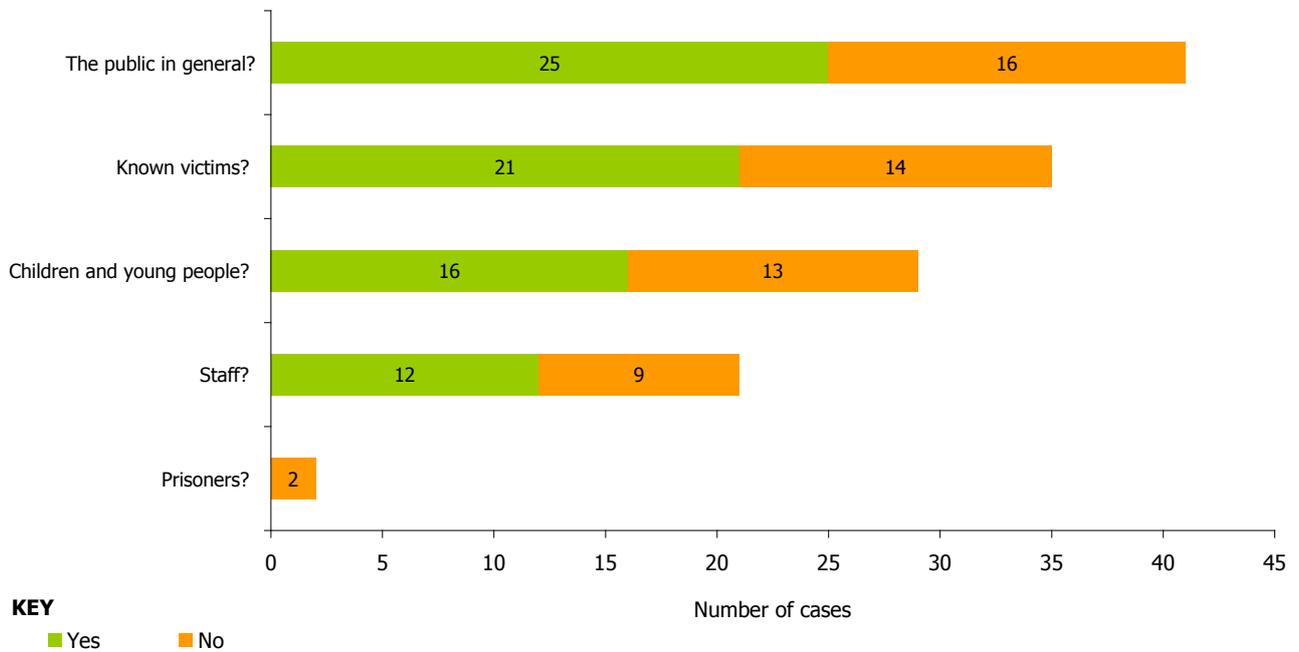
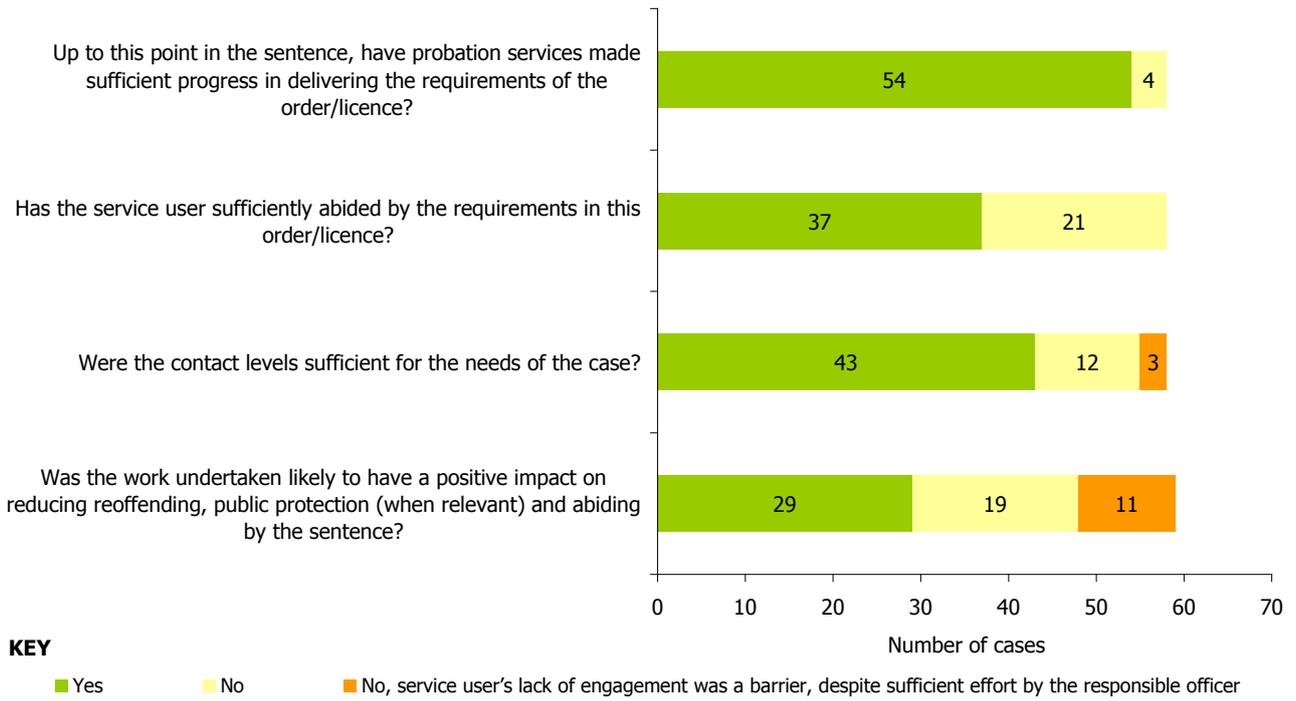


Chart 4: Abiding by the Sentence



Appendix 4: Glossary

ATR	Alcohol Treatment Requirement: a requirement that a court may attach to a community order or a suspended sentence order aimed at tackling alcohol abuse
Allocation	The process by which a decision is made about whether an offender will be supervised by a CRC or the NPS
Assignment	The process by which an offender is linked to a single responsible officer, who will arrange and coordinate all the interventions to be delivered during their sentence
BBR	Building Better Relationships: a nationally accredited groupwork programme designed to reduce reoffending by adult male perpetrators of intimate partner violence
CAS	Case Allocation System: a document that needs to be completed prior to the allocation of a case to a CRC or the NPS
Contract Package Area	The geographical area within which each of the 21 CRCs manages low and medium risk of harm offenders subject to a community order, suspended sentence order or licence
CRC	Community Rehabilitation Company: 21 such companies were set up in June 2014, to manage most offenders who present a low or medium risk of serious harm
DRR	Drug Rehabilitation Requirement: a requirement that a court may attach to a community order or a suspended sentence order aimed at tackling drugs misuse
E3	E3 stands for 'Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Excellence'. The E3 programme was created following the <i>Transforming Rehabilitation</i> programme in June 2014. The basic principle is to standardise NPS delivery, redesigning the NPS structure with six key areas of focus, including: community supervision; court services; custody; youth offending services; victim services; and approved premises
IOM	Integrated Offender Management: brings a cross-agency response to the crime and reoffending threats faced by local communities. The most persistent and problematic offenders are identified and managed jointly by partner agencies working together

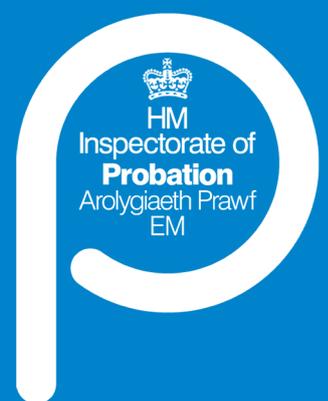
LDU	Local Delivery Unit: an operation unit comprising of an office or offices, generally coterminous with police basic command units and local authority structures
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements: where probation, police, prison and other agencies work together locally to manage offenders who pose a higher risk of harm to others. Level 1 is ordinary agency management where the risks posed by the offender can be managed by the agency responsible for the supervision or case management of the offender. This compares with levels 2 and 3, which require active multi-agency management
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
nDelius	National Delius: the approved case management system used by the CRCs and NPS in England & Wales
NOMS	National Offender Management Service: the single agency responsible for both prisons and probation services
NPS	National Probation Service: a single national service which came into being in June 2014. Its role is to deliver services to courts and to manage specific groups of offenders, including those presenting a high or very high risk of serious harm and those subject to MAPPA
OASys	Offender Assessment System: currently used in England & Wales by CRCs and the to measure the risks and needs of offenders under supervision
OGRS	Offender Group Reconviction Scale: is a predictor of reoffending based upon static risks; age, gender and criminal history
<i>Offender Rehabilitation Act 2014</i>	Implemented in February 2015, applying to offences committed on or after that date
Partners	Partners include statutory and non-statutory organisations, working with the service user/offender through a partnership agreement with the CRC or NPS
Providers	Providers deliver a service or input commissioned by and provided under contract to the CRC or NPS. This includes the staff and services provided under the contract, even when they are integrated or located within the CRC or NPS
PSR	Pre-sentence report: this refers to any report prepared for a court, whether delivered orally or in a written format

PSO	Probation services officer: this is the term for a responsible officer who was originally recruited with no probation qualification. 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 depending on their level of training and experience. Some PSOs work within the court setting, where their duties include the writing of pre-sentence reports
RAR	Rehabilitation Activity Requirement: from February 2015, when the <i>Offender Rehabilitation Act 2014</i> was implemented, courts can specify a number of RAR days within an order; it is for probation services to decide on the precise work to be done during the RAR days awarded
Rate Card	The mechanism through which the NPS pays for services purchased from the CRC
RESOLVE	A moderate intensity cognitive-behavioural intervention that aims to reduce violence in medium risk adult male offenders. The programme includes group and individual sessions and is suitable for offenders with a history of reactive or instrumental violence
Responsible officer	This is the term used for the officer (previously entitled 'offender manager') who holds lead responsibility for managing a specific case
Sova	A Charity in England & Wales that seeks to give individuals the stability and confidence to steer clear of crime, to make better choices and to live healthier lives
Thinking Skills Programme	An accredited group programme designed to develop an offender's thinking skills to help them stay out of trouble

Appendix 5: Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all those who took part in this inspection. We are grateful particularly to senior managers and their personal/executive assistants for facilitating the inspection and making the necessary arrangements for the fieldwork weeks.

Lead Inspector	Joseph Simpson, <i>Inspector</i>
Deputy Lead Inspector	Mike Ryan, <i>Inspector</i>
Inspection Team	Jane Attwood, <i>Inspector</i> Jo Dowling, <i>Assistant Inspector</i> Caroline Nicklin, <i>Inspector</i> Mark Scott, <i>Assistant Inspector</i> Avtar Singh, <i>Inspector</i> Tessa Webb OBE, <i>Inspector</i> Steve Woodgate, <i>Inspector</i>
Support Services	Kevin Ball, <i>Senior Research Officer</i> Pippa Bennett, <i>Support Services Manager</i> Adam Harvey, <i>Support Services Officer</i> Oliver Kenton, <i>Research Officer</i> Alex Pentecost, <i>Head of Operations</i>
Report Editor	Helen Rinaldi, <i>Assistant Chief Inspector</i>



ISBN: 978-1-84099-760-6