

An inspection of

Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire & Hertfordshire

Community Rehabilitation Company

MAY 2019

This inspection was led by HM Inspector Eileen O’Sullivan, supported by a team of inspectors, operations, communications and corporate staff. The manager responsible for this inspection programme is Helen Rinaldi. We would like to thank all those who participated in any way in this inspection. Without their help and cooperation, the inspection would not have been possible.

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Foreword

This report relates to our recent inspection of the Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire & Hertfordshire (BeNCH) Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) and follows a previous inspection in Northamptonshire in April 2017 as part of our Quality and Impact inspection programme.

We have given the CRC a 'Requires improvement' rating. Leadership is strong, and staff are eager to deliver the organisation's strategy and vision. Engagement with staff is a strength and a high priority for the organisation; there are good local partnerships in place, and a range of interventions.

Quality is an issue in this CRC. Leaders have begun to implement a substantial programme of change to drive improvement in the quality of case management. The renewed focus on quality is welcomed by practitioners and leaders, but the programme has not been fully embedded.

While staff are committed and motivated to support people to reduce reoffending, and there is some good work done, we found case management poor overall. Alongside the more general improvements needed, this CRC needs to give urgent attention to keeping people safe: we saw examples where a history of domestic abuse call-outs was not investigated, and where child safeguarding concerns were not responded to.

Most interactions with an individual under probation supervision take place in open booths that do not provide sufficient privacy and do not support confidential exchanges. We have reported before that these arrangements are contrary to good probation practice, and risk both rehabilitation and the protection of the public.

Individuals sentenced to unpaid work are well-supported, and we were encouraged to see placements begin promptly. The quality of Through the Gate work falls far short of expectation, however. Coordination of resettlement activity was notably ineffective, with one in three individuals released from prison to no fixed abode on their first night.

We hope this report and recommendations will enable the committed leaders and staff in this organisation to improve.



Dame Glenys Stacey
Chief Inspector of Probation

Overall findings

Overall, Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire & Hertfordshire CRC is rated as: **Requires improvement**. This rating has been determined by inspecting this provider in three areas of its work, referred to as 'domains'. The findings and subsequent ratings in those three domains are described here:

	Organisational delivery
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Our key findings about the organisation are as follows:

- **There is strong leadership at both senior and operational manager levels but the focus on quality has not been fully embedded**

BeNCH has begun to implement a programme of change to drive improvement in the quality of case management, so that quality is the responsibility of all, but it is not fully established.

The introduction of a new operating model in October 2018 has hampered the speed at which the quality agenda has become established as business as usual; we saw this in our review of individual cases. The organisation has recently established improvement plans with measures in place to address this deficiency.

- **Staff are committed, motivated and supported to deliver the vision and strategy of the CRC**

Workforce planning within BeNCH is well developed and responsive. In the summer of 2018, the CRC analysed caseloads and workload, and identified that more qualified officers were required. Following this, the CRC recruited new staff, with some taking up post in the first half of 2019. Practitioners report a reduction in individual caseloads, compared with the previous year. There is still further work to do to achieve the required allocation of cases between responsible officers at differing grades.

Staff are enthusiastic and consistently positive about the level of support from, and accessibility of, their managers. Good performance management and appraisal systems are in place, and there is a very positive approach to engaging proactively with staff who felt listened to and fully engaged, and could see how their role supported the CRC's vision.

The foundations are in place to support high-quality, personalised delivery of services, and staff are encouraged to be active participants in delivering this agenda. Training for staff is prioritised by leaders; staff surveyed during the inspection felt their training and development needs were well met.

- **A range of services and interventions are in place, but more emphasis is needed on reviewing and evaluating the quality and outcomes from initiatives**

BeNCH provides two accredited programmes, delivered by a dedicated team of staff. In addition, it has developed non-accredited interventions, including a suite of Rehabilitation Activity Requirements (RARs) to address an individual's identified needs and risks. We found that RAR interventions, however, are not consistently available across all geographical areas. Better use of management information is needed to understand the impact of interventions, to drive service planning, delivery and commissioning.

The CRC has worked hard to showcase its interventions and services with partners and stakeholders. However, despite the CRC providing some good services, these were not always being used to reduce risk of harm and reoffending in the case records we inspected. Recent training on risk delivered to practitioners was well received by staff, but we did not see its impact on the quality of practice in case management.

- **Policies and guidance are clearly communicated, and although there are positive aspects to the estates and information and communication technology (ICT) strategy, there are some concerns**

Sodexo has implemented its estates strategy, the overarching aim of which is to enhance the engagement of individuals under probation supervision by creating modern, bright and welcoming spaces. However, there are examples where facilities and access are of concern.

Although time and investment went into developing Sodexo's own offender management system, this was recently abandoned and BeNCH continues to use the national case management system, nDelius, and the national assessment system, OASys, and will do so for the foreseeable future. Staff in BeNCH experience frustration with the speed of access to national systems, as elsewhere.

Overall, we found that ICT systems within the CRC are strong. Leaders have created a culture that encourages learning; the challenge now is to make better use of information systems and analysis to inform this.

	<h2>Case supervision</h2>
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Our key findings about case supervision are as follows:

- **Assessment focused well on engaging the individual but did not sufficiently identify and analyse factors related to offending or keeping other people safe**

Case supervision is not delivered to a sufficient standard and quality. While staff are committed and motivated to support people in reducing reoffending, they do not pay sufficient attention to ensuring that good-quality case management routinely happens in practice.

- **Individuals under probation supervision were meaningfully involved in planning but this did not adequately focus on keeping other people safe**

Adequate planning to address domestic abuse issues, child safeguarding or child protection issues was not undertaken. The impact of this is that the deficits identified in assessment, particularly concerning keeping other people safe, were then further compounded when it came to planning.

- **Work to engage the individual was effective but this was not always supported by implementation and delivery of interventions**

Implementation and delivery of services to support desistance and address factors related to offending (such as relationships, substance misuse, and education, training and employment (ETE)) were not always delivered. More positively, where strengths or protective factors existed, the delivery of services built upon these, particularly factors relating to non-criminal identity and an individuals' motivation to change.

- **Where a review was needed, this was carried out in the majority of cases and involved other agencies, as required**

In cases where other agencies were involved in managing the individual's risk of harm, input from them to inform reviewing was not sufficient. Of particular concern was that reviews did not focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe.



Unpaid work and Through the Gate

Our key findings about other core activities specific to CRCs were as follows:

Unpaid work

Delivery of unpaid work requires improvement. While arrangements support an individual to engage and comply with the sentence, recording does not sufficiently detail the actual work undertaken, or the personal development and skills that an individual may gain. In the cases inspected, there was limited evidence that supervisors had provided feedback. There was no routine mechanism for recording this in a way that would contribute to the responsible officer's overall assessment of the work completed on the order.

Through the Gate

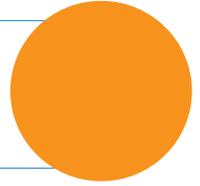
The quality of Through the Gate work is inadequate. We found that work is not being recorded and transferred into nDelius. We also saw examples of pre-release plans describing what should happen once the individual is released, as often the work needing to be done had not happened in prison.

Service: Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire & Hertfordshire Community Rehabilitation Company

Fieldwork started: January 2019

Overall rating

Requires improvement



1. Organisational delivery

1.1	Leadership	Good	
1.2	Staff	Outstanding	
1.3	Services	Requires improvement	
1.4	Information and facilities	Requires improvement	

2. Case supervision

2.1	Assessment	Requires improvement	
2.2	Planning	Inadequate	
2.3	Implementation and delivery	Inadequate	
2.4	Reviewing	Requires improvement	

4. CRC specific

4.1 ¹	Unpaid work	Requires improvement	
4.2	Through the Gate	Inadequate	

¹CRC aspects of domain three work are listed within HMI Probation's Standards as 4.1 and 4.2. Those for the NPS are listed as 3.1 and 3.2.

Recommendations

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

Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire & Hertfordshire CRC should:

1. improve the standard of both case management practice and management oversight in assessment, planning, service delivery and reviewing so that actual and potential victims are kept safe
2. ensure delivery of interventions (especially those to be delivered as part of a Rehabilitation Activity Requirement (RAR)) is consistent across the organisation
3. improve the use of management information, intelligence and data to drive service planning, delivery and commissioning
4. improve the coordination and delivery of resettlement services to increase the likelihood of successful community reintegration for released prisoners
5. ensure that all premises and facilities are accessible and provide a safe environment for individuals under probation supervision and staff.

Background

An explanation of probation services

Around 260,000 adults are supervised by probation services annually.² Probation services supervise individuals serving community orders, provide offenders with resettlement services while they are in prison (in anticipation of their release) and supervise for a minimum of 12 months all individuals released from prison.³

To protect the public, probation staff assess and manage the risks that offenders pose to the community. They help to rehabilitate these individuals by dealing with problems such as drug and alcohol misuse and lack of employment or housing, to reduce the prospect of reoffending. They monitor whether individuals are complying with court requirements, to make sure they abide by their sentence. If offenders fail to comply, probation staff generally report them to court or request recall to prison.

These services are currently provided by a publicly owned National Probation Service and 21 privately owned CRCs that provide services under contract. The government intends to change the arrangements for delivering probation services, and has given notice to CRCs of its intention to terminate their contracts early, by October 2020. It is currently considering alternative models of delivery of probation services, following a consultation exercise.

The NPS advises courts on sentencing all offenders, and manages those who present a high or very high risk of serious harm or who are managed under

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). CRCs supervise most other offenders who present a low or medium risk of harm.

Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire & Hertfordshire CRC

Sodexo Justice Services is part of a large multinational private company with a wide range of commercial interests. It took over formal ownership of BeNCH CRC on 01 February 2015. It operates in strategic partnership with a well-known charity, Nacro. With contracts to deliver probation services across six CRCs⁴, it is the third largest CRC-owning company in the country by contract value, and has 18 per cent of the market share.⁵ Sodexo also runs four of the 14 private prisons in England and Wales, with all four located in England.⁶

Two Sodexo senior staff (Regional Chief Executive Officers) each have oversight of a region – one in the north and one in the south of England – with each responsible

² Ministry of Justice. (2018). Offender management caseload statistics, as at 30 June 2018.

³ All those sentenced, for offences committed after the implementation of the *Offender Rehabilitation Act 2014*, to more than one day and less than 24 months in custody, are supervised in the community for 12 months post-release. Others serving longer custodial sentences may have longer total periods of supervision on licence.

⁴ The six CRCs owned by Sodexo are: BeNCH; Cumbria & Lancashire; Essex; Norfolk & Suffolk; Northumbria; and South Yorkshire.

⁵ Ministry of Justice. (2018). Offender management statistics quarterly, April to June 2018 Table 4.8: Offenders supervised in the community at period end, by National Probation Service region, division and CRC, England and Wales.

⁶ Ministry of Justice. (2017). Private prisons run by Sodexo are: HMP Bronzefield; HMP/YOI Forest Bank; HMP Peterborough; and HMP Northumberland.

for three CRCs, and working to the Director of Operations (Community) in Sodexo Justice Services. Corporate support services are provided by staff based in London and Salford and supplemented by regional CRC personnel covering human resources, finance, business development and communications.

Each individual CRC is led by a director with overall responsibility for business management and performance, supported by deputy directors.

For more information about this CRC, including details of its operating model, please see Annex 3 of this report.

The role of HM Inspectorate of Probation

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation is the independent inspector of youth offending and probation services in England and Wales. We report on the effectiveness of probation and youth offending service work with adults and children. We inspect these services and publish inspection reports. We highlight good and poor practice, and use our data and information to encourage high-quality services. We are independent of government, and speak independently.

HM Inspectorate of Probation standards

We inspect against 10 standards. These standards are based on established models and frameworks, which are grounded in evidence, learning and experience. They are designed to drive improvements in the quality of work with people who have offended.⁷

⁷ HM Inspectorate of Probation's standards can be found here:
<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/about-our-work/our-standards-and-ratings/>

Contextual facts

154,471

The total number of individuals subject to probation supervision by CRCs across England and Wales⁸

6

The number of CRCs owned by Sodexo

7,415

The number of individuals supervised by BeNCH CRC

46%

The adjusted proportion of BeNCH CRC's service users with a proven reoffence⁹

79%

The proportion of individuals who were recorded as having successfully completed their community orders or suspended sentence orders for BeNCH CRC. The performance figure for all England and Wales was 79%, against a target of 75%¹⁰

75%

The proportion of positive compliance outcomes with licences and, where applicable, post-sentence supervision periods for BeNCH CRC. The performance figure for all England and Wales was 71% against a target of 65%¹¹

91%

The proportion of positive completions of unpaid work requirements for BeNCH CRC. The performance figure for all England and Wales was 88%, against a target of 90%¹²

13

The number of local management centres in BeNCH CRC: one Central Head Office and Administrative Hub; and 12 Offices Sites¹³

⁸ Ministry of Justice. (2018). Offender management caseload statistics, as at 30 June 2018

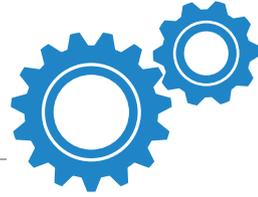
⁹ Ministry of Justice. (2018). Proven reoffending, Payment by results, October to December 2016 cohort.

¹⁰ Ministry of Justice. (2018). CRC Service Level 8, Community performance quarterly statistics, April 2017 - June 2018, Q1.

¹¹ Ministry of Justice. (2018). CRC Assurance Metric J, Community performance quarterly statistics, April 2017 - June 2018, Q1.

¹² Ministry of Justice. (2018). CRC Service Level 10, Community performance quarterly statistics, April 2017 - June 2018, Q1.

¹³ Source: BeNCH CRC.



1. Organisational delivery

BeNCH CRC has evolved from four independent probation trusts. It has established a clear and unified vision, strategy and culture, supported and driven by strong leaders. This is illustrated in its Annual Service Plan 2018-2019, *Changing lives for the better*.

Strengths:

- The senior leadership team is visible and accessible. It actively engages with staff and practitioners, as well as external partners, to promote the CRC's vision and strategy.
- There are mechanisms for cascading information and the detail of plans through the organisation, from the director to deputy directors, to middle managers and then to operational staff and practitioners. These include fortnightly telephone calls to discuss performance and quality, and team meetings.
- Staff and managers interviewed in the inspection consistently spoke with enthusiasm about their work and their employer. They demonstrated commitment to making a difference in their engagement with individuals.
- The Sodexo operating model is clearly described, and involves a colour banding system to ensure that cases are allocated appropriately, taking account of the individual's risk of serious harm classification and risk of reoffending and the responsible officer's level of experience.

Areas for improvement:

- For non-accredited programmes, there is limited evidence to date of outcomes from interventions; we saw little analysis of management information to inform the development and use of RARs.
- The needs and risk profile of individuals have been mapped across the area; however, it was not clear how this information and data would be used to inform service delivery and commissioning.
- A number of the offices visited offered an accessible, bright and welcoming environment. There was one example, the Cambridge office, where the building was not accessible to all individuals or staff with mobility needs.

1.1. Leadership	Good
The leadership of the organisation supports and promotes the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all service users.	

There is a clear vision and strategy for delivering high-quality services, and in the last 12 months the CRC has introduced initiatives to ensure the vision is communicated clearly to all. Senior and middle managers hold regular meetings,

which enables leaders to be responsive to operational needs and deliver consistent messages across the workforce. Leaders emphasise the need to improve quality across the CRC, and they have put in place a programme of work to address this.

The BeNCH CRC Annual Service Plan 2018-2019 is part of the wider Sodexo Justice Strategy. The Annual Service Plan presents the CRC's delivery plan under each of the four strategic priorities: improve the quality of life of service users; improve the quality of life of our people; develop and grow our services; and increase value through innovation. The plan is understood by staff and managers, and actively promoted by senior leaders. Progress and performance against the plan are monitored quarterly, communicated in an annual service report, and supported by a Continuous Improvement Plan.

The Annual Service Plan is articulated and communicated, both within the CRC and more widely, and supported by a regional staff engagement group. Information is published on the intranet and regular blogs. The bi-monthly leadership forum is chaired by the CRC director and the senior leadership team, which includes deputy directors and middle managers. The senior leadership team is visible and accessible, and actively engages with staff and practitioners, as well as external partners, to promote the CRC's vision and strategy.

Internal meetings promote accountability for delivering and implementing plans. There are mechanisms for cascading information and the detail of plans through the organisation, from the director to deputy directors, to middle managers and then to operational staff and practitioners; these include fortnightly telephone calls to discuss performance and quality, and team meetings.

Improving communication with sentencers has been a focus for the CRC. However, more can be done. Sentencers would welcome more detailed information about the content of RARs; in particular, they are interested in learning more about the evidence for why and how RARs are effective for certain types of offence, to improve their confidence in sentencing.

The risk register for BeNCH CRC identifies both current and anticipated future risks. The register details how risks are mitigated and the controls in place; it is updated regularly, reported on and reviewed on a monthly basis by the senior leadership team.

Business continuity plans are in place, with a local plan developed for each area of the CRC's business. The CRC tested plans in September 2018, and the health and safety manager produced a report identifying actions and learning. This was shared within the CRC and at the quarterly regional health and safety meeting.

ICT systems, processes, policies and equipment have been reviewed and meet the specifications set out in the contract. BeNCH has maintained ISO27001 accreditation for information security.

The Sodexo operating model uses a colour banding system so that cases are appropriately allocated; this takes account of the individual's risk of serious harm classification and risk of reoffending, and the responsible officer's level of experience. Face-to-face contact has been introduced for all individuals from October 2018, replacing the previous model in which some cases held in the hub received only telephone contact.

A recent change in the choice of assessment tool – moving from the Justice Star assessment tool to the previously-used OASys layer 3 – was introduced in October 2018. To support this different way of working, the CRC issued assessment and

planning guidance to staff. The CRC is mindful of the impact of this change, recognising that OASys is new for many staff, and that its use will take time to become established.

1.2 Staff	Outstanding
Staff within the organisation are empowered to deliver a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all service users.	

Leaders acknowledge the challenges they have faced in recruiting and retaining staff. They have worked hard to bring workforce levels to full complement this year, recruiting 10 new practitioners and significantly reducing the use of agency staff in the process. They have conducted a 'root and branch' exercise in each local management centre to understand caseloads and individuals' workloads. They have also invested in two development programmes to train existing staff within the CRC to transition to front-line practitioner jobs.

Staff and managers interviewed in the inspection consistently spoke with enthusiasm about their work and their employer, and demonstrated a commitment to making a difference in engaging with individuals on probation supervision. Many spoke of the importance of their work in reducing reoffending and the risk to victims. This was impressive.

Of those responsible officers interviewed, 81 per cent stated that the service prioritises quality; we found the focus on improving quality shared by practitioners and managers alike. Supervision is a high priority for managers, and we found that 87 per cent of responsible officers interviewed reported receiving supervision that enhanced their learning.

The CRC has a well-developed workforce planning strategy and is in the process of developing a workload management framework. The strategy has included employing former service users in the CRC. A new mentoring programme offers further opportunities for training and development for individuals under probation supervision.

The geography of BeNCH, and its proximity to London, has affected recruitment and retention, resulting in the high use of agency staff until recently. Thirty-five percent of the current workforce has been with the CRC for two years or less, but equally, a large number of staff have been in post for many years. Recruitment difficulties have proved a significant obstacle to delivery of high-quality services, but senior leaders are alert to this problem and have worked hard to address it, by recruiting additional practitioners.

Operational managers' spans of control are stretched, with an average of 10 staff to supervise each, depending on location and other responsibilities, but they do not report undue work pressures.

The CRC is supporting members of staff through the Professional Qualification in Probation (PQiP). There are currently six members of staff completing PQiP; two members of staff are due to commence PQiP in July 2019; and there are eight members of staff who are currently completing the 12-month level five programme and are due to start PQiP in January 2020. Further recruitment for PQiP will take place in April and May 2019. BeNCH is developing its workforce, which it describes as the 'growing our own' approach. An example of this is its Practice Enhancement

Programme, which a number of staff are participating in; this continuing professional development programme trains practitioners to be able to supervise more complex cases, and to prepare for the higher qualification.

We found that training is widely available, and staff training and development needs considered and responded to effectively. Of the staff surveyed, 89 per cent confirmed having sufficient access to in-service training. We saw evidence that the organisation promotes a culture of learning and continuous improvement.

Mechanisms for management oversight are in place. These include regular case audits, dip sampling and use of the 'health check' information system to monitor case management tasks and track progress on tasks; this tool, alongside dashboards, is used by both practitioners and managers. From the cases inspected, we did not find, however, this to have been effective in improving practice.

Processes to improve performance are in place and monitored by the organisation. We saw examples of staff, practitioners and managers with different roles and functions working together to solve problems and address common issues, such as the quality of breach reports. Managers at all levels described the leadership forum, held every two months, as a positive and proactive place to engage in robust discussion and challenge. They gave examples of improvements that had resulted from this, such as better allocation of cases, which have had a positive impact across the CRC.

The CRC has deployed the well-respected 'Skills for Effective Engagement, Development and Supervision (SEEDS)' approach to developing practice, and gathers direct evidence of work through observed practice, to feed into staff appraisals. Managers and staff spoke positively about the supervision process, and how this balances discussion about cases with learning and development. A supervision template, with a standardised agenda to support reflective practice, has helped with this, comprised of the following steps: Check-in, Review, Implement, Summarise, Set tasks (CRISS). These initiatives should support improvements in the quality of practice.

Training and development needs of staff and managers are considered at each supervision session. Leaders have taken seriously the results of the 2018 staff engagement survey. In response, the CRC has developed pathways for career progression and skills development. The CRC has a wide-ranging learning and development plan for Sodexo's southern CRCs; training is delivered by a justice training provider, Laurus, and more recently by CRC staff. OASys training and workshops were delivered in October and November 2018. Feedback from staff on the recent delivery of risk training and domestic abuse training, both utilising the 'So What Now?' approach, was very positive, with the training well received.

Across the CRC, the staff sickness absence rate is measured in percentage of lost time per month; currently this stands at 5.7 per cent. Sickness absence rates have fluctuated across the four counties and between roles; the priority for managers and the senior leadership team is to reduce sickness absence rates further. Concerted efforts to reduce the previous high use of agency staff have been successful, resulting in a more stable and resilient workforce.

A regional staff engagement group for the southern region is in place. An employee engagement strategy has been developed from this, involving representatives from BeNCH CRC. Meaningful staff engagement is high on the agenda in BeNCH, and managers and leaders actively encourage staff to share ideas, good news stories, innovation and learning.

Managers have ensured that there are support groups for staff with protected characteristics, together with diversity and inclusion networks, to ensure wider well-being. Attention has been given to helping staff to be resilient. There is evidence that counselling and support services are available. We also saw examples of staff being recognised and rewarded, with nominations for excellence across the organisation.

1.3. Services	Requires improvement
A comprehensive range of high-quality services is in place, supporting a tailored and responsive service for all service users.	

The needs and risk profile of individuals have been mapped across the area. However, it was not clear how this information and data would be used to inform service delivery and commissioning.

Equality and inclusion monitoring of individuals and staff takes place, actions are reviewed and future plans developed. The proportions of medium and low-risk cases are clearly identified; the risk of serious harm profile of the case load is medium 55 per cent and low 45 per cent.

A range of services are in place across the four counties of BeNCH. These are available in-house and delivered by operational partners. Two accredited programmes and non-accredited interventions are delivered by CRC staff, with further interventions delivered via operational partners.

Partnerships are a strength and CRC leaders have worked closely with partners to develop services. Particular examples include work with the four Police and Crime Commissioners and development of accommodation services, using the newly introduced Homelessness Reduction Act as a lever. The CRC has used an innovation fund to commission services in response to gaps in provision and identified need; these include trauma-informed services and a mental health treatment requirement pilot for women in Northamptonshire.

Operational partners are generally positive about the relationship with the CRC. Some, however, viewed the emphasis on delivering the contract, where they would welcome more opportunities to share learning and outcomes from their work. There are some partners who are uncertain about whether they will continue to be commissioned by the CRC. This affects their ability to plan business delivery in the longer term, and they would welcome more clarity here.

The CRC makes good use of the two available accredited programmes. Building Better Relationships (BBR) is used more than the Thinking Skills Programme (TSP), which reflects the risk and offence profile in BeNCH. In 2017-2018, BeNCH delivered 22 BBR and 14 TSP groups, with 298 individuals completing their programme requirement. Waiting times to start accredited programmes have now reduced from 16 weeks to 6 to 8 weeks.

The number of interventions delivered was not always consistent with what had been identified in sentence plans; we saw evidence where an individuals' needs and risks had been identified, but delivery of interventions did not always happen in practice. A structured plan for delivering RAR days was not evident, and we found some gaps

in knowledge about what services were available. Communication between operational partners and some responsible officers was described as mixed.

For example, some RAR groups are not delivered consistently in all areas: long waiting lists and no evening groups in some office locations hampers progress in addressing offending behaviour. We saw evidence that some responsible officers were seeing large numbers of individuals on late night reporting, so at times there were limited opportunities to complete interventions.

BeNCH identified that nine per cent of offending in the CRC in 2017-2018 was drink driving, but there is no RAR work specifically for driving offences that do not meet the threshold for an accredited programme. Therefore, it is unclear how individuals who need this intervention are being supported to address their behaviour and reduce reoffending.

Service provision for black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) people is lacking, yet BeNCH identified that 18.2 per cent of its caseload is from a BAME background. A newly developed RAR for black and minority ethnic individuals under probation supervision is to be piloted, initially in Luton, to cater for the high representation in caseloads in some office locations, but this is not yet at the delivery stage.

Leaders acknowledge that more needs to be done to address the gaps in data collection; although all individuals should have an assessment of their diversity needs, 10 per cent of the caseload have no ethnicity stated, by choice or omission of data. This needs to be addressed, to inform development and delivery of appropriate interventions.

We saw more attention being given to providing services for women. There is evidence that, although small in number, women are overrepresented in recall statistics. This has led to a renewed focus on this group; an internal audit has led to the identification of a number of issues relevant to women: mental health, accommodation and getting to appointments.

In responding to these needs and delivering its women's strategy, the CRC has ensured availability of women-only reporting arrangements and delivery of specific interventions at women's centres across the area. New services had been developed to respond to gaps in one county, and accommodation provision created for women leaving HMP Peterborough. There is a dedicated responsible officer for women, who is able to support access to and signposting to specific services (both in the CRC and in the community). There are women's champions in each office, in addition to a female link worker in HMP Peterborough.

The CRC acknowledges that access to mental health services for individuals under probation supervision is a challenge. To address this, the CRC currently supports the community treatment sentencing requirement in Northamptonshire, and now in Bedfordshire. This has a focus on mental health treatment requirements, as well as being a holistic approach to addressing other areas of need.

We visited a safeguarding partnership project hosted in children's social care services with probation officer practitioners seconded from the CRC; here we saw an opportunity to share good practice, but there was no evidence that learning from this had impacted on wider practice in the CRC.

Substance misuse services are delivered through an operational partner, Change, Grow, Live. We found that more detailed information needed to be shared with responsible officers, to describe what work and interventions had taken place.

The management team identifies partnership working as a strength, both as an active member and in taking the initiative to develop new partnerships. Where possible, the senior leadership team attends partnership meetings across the four counties, but the volume of meetings means this is not always possible.

Relationships with the NPS are good, with annual joint leadership forums taking place with NPS and CRC management over the last two years. There is evidence of regular dialogue between CRC and NPS colleagues, such as at middle manager interface meetings in each LDU, quarterly senior management meetings, and monthly chief executive officer level meetings.

1.4. Information and facilities	Requires improvement
Timely and relevant information is available and appropriate facilities are in place to support a high-quality, personalised and responsive approach for all service users.	

Appropriate policies and procedures are in place and understood by staff; these are communicated to staff in a variety of ways, including the intranet.

Of the staff surveyed, 94 per cent stated that policies and guidance are communicated effectively, and 100 per cent reported that there is a clear policy on case recording that supports defensible decision-making and effective communication.

Communication materials for staff, people under probation supervision and stakeholders – particularly sentencers – are available. These set out the range of services available via the CRC and through its operational partners.

We visited seven of the office locations. A number of these offices offered an accessible, bright and welcoming environment. This was not the case for all, however. We were particularly concerned about the suitability of the Cambridge office, which has more than 400 individuals under probation supervision at any one time. The premises are inaccessible to staff or people with mobility issues. Those attending group work at the Cambridge office who have a mobility need will have their group work delivered to them at another location within the BeNCH CRC area.

This office is located above a GP surgery, without a door to control entry or exit, or a receptionist. In our view this is not sufficiently safe. Staff have to escort individuals or visitors up and down steep stairs, and there is no waiting area.

With the exception of the Bedford office, a private interview room is available in all locations; most offices also have access to group rooms that can be used with individuals for a private interview. However, most interactions with individuals take place in open booths that do not provide sufficient privacy and do not support confidential exchanges. We have reported before that these arrangements are contrary to good probation practice, and risk both rehabilitation and the protection of the public. Efforts to mitigate this problem with 'white noise' are largely ineffective.

In different offices, we saw examples of people waiting in small reception areas for appointments, or for a booth to become free. Some of the booths are located on walkways where staff pass to enter an office or use the staff toilet.

Practitioners have laptops and mobile telephones, enabling them to work flexibly across the CRC, although for new staff there have been delays in being issued with the necessary equipment, hampering their ability to work remotely.

The organisation recognises that ICT is a key enabler to support staff to deliver quality services. A comprehensive service level agreement is in place to facilitate this; 69 per cent of staff thought the available ICT supported them to deliver a quality service.

Operational partners spoke positively about their ability to access CRC systems directly, and are able to input information directly onto case management systems, as a result of being issued with CRC laptops.

Information systems are in place to collate performance data across the CRC. These are supported by new tools such as the 'health check', which is used to track case management activity. There is, however, a need to use management information systems, intelligence and data to drive service planning and delivery. For example, we did not see evidence of outcomes of the RARs that been developed, to know whether they had been effective. Although a range of interventions are in place, evaluation mechanisms have not routinely been developed to test the efficacy of non-accredited interventions, or inform future commissioning of services.

At the practice level, processes are in place to reflect on learning from internal thematic audits, serious further offences and serious case reviews. We saw evidence of how the CRC was responding to learning through mechanisms such as the leadership forum, with examples of what had changed as a result, such as practice on enforcement.

2. Case supervision



Case supervision is not delivered to a sufficient standard and quality. While staff are committed and motivated to support people in reducing reoffending, we found that good-quality case management does not routinely happen in practice.

We found a lack of an investigative approach in some instances, with basic checks not carried out. We found examples where child safeguarding concerns were not responded to, and where a history of domestic abuse call-outs was not investigated. More analysis of information to assess the risk of serious harm is needed, to keep actual and potential victims safe. This requires urgent attention.

Strengths:

- Responsible officers sufficiently engaged individuals in a timely fashion, following the start of sentence or release on licence.
- In relevant cases, assessments analysed the individual's diversity and personal circumstances and these were considered in planning and delivery.
- Planning sufficiently reflected offending-related factors and prioritised the most critical needs in over two-thirds of cases.
- The CRC has recently started to review cases at the 12-week point.

Areas for improvement:

- Analysis of offending-related factors was poor, and was evident in less than half of the cases inspected. This meant that assessment did not focus sufficiently on the factors linked to offending and desistance.
- Planning did not adequately focus on keeping other people safe.
- The implementation and delivery of services did not effectively support the safety of other people in almost two-thirds of inspected cases.
- Insufficient attention is given to protecting actual and potential victims in the delivery of interventions.

2.1. Assessment	Requires improvement
Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the service user.	

Responsible officers had sufficiently engaged the individual promptly following the start of sentence or release on licence in almost three-quarters of cases. In more than half the cases inspected, the assessment analysed the individual's motivation and readiness to engage and comply with the sentence. In almost three-quarters of

cases there was evidence of the individual being meaningfully involved in their assessment, with their views taken into account.

Assessments analysed the individual's diversity and personal circumstances, and in almost all relevant cases considered how such circumstances affected compliance and engagement. We saw examples of how an individual's employment, access to transport or language needs had been considered at the start of the sentence. One inspector found that:

"The individual is a Polish man, subject to a community order with RAR days. He spoke very little English and so, in order to undertake work, the responsible officer used an interpreter for each planned session, and ensured that letters and texts were sent in Polish. This was well coordinated and, whilst still challenging, allowed at least some work to be completed. It was positive to see that non-English speakers are being given the opportunity to engage in rehabilitative work, rather than simply being directed to unpaid work".

Offending-related factors were identified in assessments in more than three-quarters of cases. However, analysis of offending-related factors was poor, and evident in less than half of cases inspected. The impact of this lack of analysis meant that assessment did not focus sufficiently on the factors linked to offending.

Positively, assessments identified the individual's strengths and protective factors in almost three-quarters of relevant cases. In almost all cases inspected, the Offender Group Reconviction Scale score was calculated at the start of the order or licence.

In spite of this, however, assessments drew sufficiently on available sources of information in less than half the cases assessed. This meant that, by not fully considering all available information, pertinent details critical to the case were overlooked, impacting on public protection or management of risk of serious harm.

In three out of four cases there was no evidence of police domestic abuse checks being carried out before the cases were allocated; sometimes these were not carried out at all, or not recorded. We saw examples where a history of domestic abuse calls-out was not investigated, and where child safeguarding concerns were not responded to. The absence of basic checks, an investigative approach and sufficient analysis of information by responsible officers requires urgent attention.

In more than half of cases, assessments did not clearly identify all relevant factors concerning risk of harm to others. In almost two-thirds of cases, assessment of risk of harm did not include information from partner agencies or involve them where appropriate. Assessments did not specify who is at risk in one in three cases inspected.

Although past behaviour and convictions had been considered in almost two-thirds of inspected cases, one in three cases did not have a sufficient assessment to keep other people safe. In spite of the introduction of a supervision process to improve quality, management oversight of cases is not effective. This requires attention urgently.

2.2. Planning	Inadequate
Planning is well-informed, holistic and personalised, actively involving the service user.	

Individuals were meaningfully involved in planning, with their views being taken into account, in almost two out of three cases. Responsible officers sufficiently considered diversity and personal circumstances that could impact on compliance in almost two-thirds of cases; we saw a significant number of examples where employment or other personal circumstances were appropriately considered in order to support an individual to engage.

In almost three-quarters of cases, planning set out how all the requirements of the sentence or licence would be delivered in the available timescales. Positively, in three out of four cases, planning set a level, pattern and type of contact that was sufficient to engage the individual and support the effectiveness of specific interventions.

Offending-related factors were considered and the most critical issues prioritised in over two-thirds of cases. Where relevant, planning built on the individual's strengths and protective factors in two-thirds of cases. Employment and motivation to change were most often identified as protective factors for an individual.

Planning did not adequately focus on keeping other people safe. In less than half of inspected cases did planning sufficiently address risk of harm factors and prioritise those that were most critical. Of concern was that, in over half of cases where other agencies were involved, planning did not make appropriate links to their work and to any multi-agency plans, and should have done. One inspector found that:

“The man has a history of non-compliance with orders and licences, and for a significant period he has also been street homeless. There was a window of opportunity in the fact he attended for two initial appointments, as well as an appointment with the substance misuse agency. Momentum appears then to have been lost, as he was put on weekly appointments and lost touch. He reported that he was attending a church for support and sleeping in a stairwell, both within a couple of minutes’ walk from the CRC office. There was no proactive approach to keeping in touch or providing the necessary oversight. The space between appointments was too long and he inevitably fell into breach again. The Justice Star was not completed due to non-compliance, despite the opportunity in the first two appointments, so there was no up-to-date assessment or analysis of his circumstances. This hindered a potential housing application. A different and more collaborative approach was needed in this case”.

In cases where necessary and effective contingency arrangements were required to manage identified risks, planning was not sufficient in more than half the cases.

Adequate planning to address domestic abuse issues, where relevant, was evident in more than half the cases; similarly, sufficient planning to address child safeguarding or child protection issues, where relevant, was evident in just over half the cases inspected. The impact of this is that the deficits identified in assessment, particularly concerning keeping other people safe, were then further compounded when it came to planning.

2.3. Implementation and delivery	Inadequate
High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging the service user.	

Implementation and delivery of interventions with a focus on engaging the individual was evident in more than two-thirds of cases. Efforts made to support the individual to complete the sentence and take account of their personal circumstances, where appropriate, were evident in well over three-quarters of cases.

For those serving custodial sentences, however, more than three-quarters of individuals did not receive contact from their responsible officer before release. But work to re-engage with individuals following recall or enforcement action occurred in almost three-quarters of cases, where relevant.

In two out of three cases, risks of non-compliance were identified and addressed quickly to reduce the need for enforcement action. Where enforcement action was required, this was taken in three out of four cases.

Implementation and delivery of services to support desistance were effective in just over half the cases inspected. In most cases, adequate services to address factors related to offending, such as relationships, substance misuse and ETE, were not delivered. Where protective factors existed, such as an individual's motivation to change, delivery of services built on these.

Where other organisations were involved in the delivery of services, this was well coordinated in the majority of cases. In spite of this, however, local services were engaged to reduce reoffending during the sentence and after, in less than half of cases.

The implementation and delivery of services did not support the safety of other people effectively in almost two out of three inspected cases. In just over half the cases, the level and nature of contact offered to manage the risk of harm to others was sufficient. Where actual and potential victims were identified, responsible officers did not pay sufficient attention to protecting them in more than half of the cases inspected; routine checks – for children and adults – were not made often enough even where there was a history of domestic abuse, and/or where the individual was having contact with children.

Involvement of other agencies in managing risk of harm was well coordinated in less than half the cases inspected. Safeguarding checks were not routinely undertaken at the start of an order or licence, and we found many examples where checks had only been done recently; the impact of this practice means that management of risk of harm is reactive, and opportunities are missed to protect victims.

Home visits to support the effective management of risk of harm did not happen in three out of four cases, where relevant.

2.4. Reviewing	Requires improvement
Reviewing of progress is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the service user.	

The CRC has recently started to review cases at the 12-week point. In some cases, staff used the Justice Star tool and a basic layer 1 OASys. From 1 November 2018, the CRC was no longer licensed to use the Justice Star tool; this meant that OASys layer 3 was used to review cases after this date.

Where a review was needed, we found this considered compliance, engagement levels and barriers in almost three-quarters of cases. In more than half of relevant cases, adjustments were made to the ongoing plan of work to take account of any barriers. Written reviews were completed as a formal record of actions in four out of five cases. We found that reviewing sufficiently focused on supporting the individual's compliance and engagement in two-thirds of relevant cases.

Reviewing identified and addressed changes in factors linked to offending in almost two-thirds of cases; however, adjustments to the plan of work to then take account of changes happened in just over half the cases. Where other agencies were involved in working with an individual, in two out of three cases their work informed a review. Where required, a written review was completed as a formal record of the progress towards reducing reoffending in more than three-quarters of cases.

Where there were changes in factors related to risk of harm, reviewing identified these in more than half of cases; but adjustments made to the ongoing plan of work to take account of such changes in risk of harm then only featured in less than half of cases. Written reviews were completed as needed as a formal record of the management of the individual's risk of harm in almost two-thirds of cases. Of concern was that reviews focused sufficiently on keeping other people safe in less than half of relevant cases.

4. Unpaid work and Through the Gate

Individuals under probation supervision are supported to engage with unpaid work and comply with the sentence, with a high level of completions. The detail of actual work undertaken and the personal development and skills gained by an individual are not recorded sufficiently. In cases inspected, we found limited evidence of feedback provided by supervisors; there was not a routine mechanism for recording in a way to contribute to the responsible officer's assessment of work completed on the order.

The quality of Through the Gate work is poor. Recording is very limited, with a lack of robust action planning. We saw examples of the last pre-release plan describing what should happen once the individual is through the prison gate, instead of a clear plan reflecting current needs, and actions taken to specifically address these. Plans were often set in the future, reflecting the status as it would be at the time of completion, when often activity had yet to occur.

Strengths:

- In almost all cases there was evidence that the sentence of the court was appropriately implemented, with unpaid work hours being completed.
- Diversity and personal circumstances are assessed well and taken into account when considering an individual's ability to comply with unpaid work.
- Almost all cases had an OASys resettlement plan for how an individual's needs would be addressed.
- Resettlement plans prioritise the needs of the individual user that are most critical.

Areas for improvement:

- Being unable to undertake qualifications on worksites means that arrangements for unpaid work do not fully maximise opportunities for the personal development of the individual.
- Opportunities to engage in ETE while on unpaid work are limited to basic skills or to securing certification required to work in the construction industry.
- Risk of harm is not routinely referenced in the resettlement plans seen in Through the Gate work, and there are no references to risk flags.
- There is a lack of pre-release contact. This is exacerbated by the prevalence of short custodial sentences and recalls.
- Absence of recorded activity in prison has hampered communication between resettlement staff in prison and responsible officers in the community.
- Partners wanted more detailed information about what the enhanced Through the Gate specification will mean for service delivery.

4.1. Unpaid work	Requires improvement
Unpaid work is delivered safely and effectively, engaging the service user in line with the expectations of the court.	

Unpaid work – or community payback, as it is known locally in BeNCH – requires improvement. We found that in almost two-thirds of cases, assessment did not consider the individual’s motivation to comply with unpaid work. Diversity and personal circumstances were considered in the large majority of cases. Assessment considered the impact these factors have on the individual’s ability to comply and engage with unpaid work in more than half the cases inspected.

Available sources of information were drawn on in assessment, and issues relating to the health and safety or potential vulnerability of the individual were considered in almost two out of three cases. Risk of harm to other individuals, staff or the public was assessed in almost three-quarters of cases.

In more than three-quarters of inspected cases, arrangements for unpaid work focused on supporting the individual’s engagement and compliance with the sentence. Allocated work was assessed as suitable, taking appropriate account of the individual’s diversity and personal circumstances, in almost three-quarters of cases. In four out of five cases, arrangements for unpaid work encouraged the individual’s engagement and compliance with the order. We found arrangements for unpaid work placements took account of risk of harm in almost three-quarters of cases inspected.

Opportunities to maximise the individual’s personal development through unpaid work were evident in only half of cases. We saw very limited use of intensive working, or the opportunity for an individual to use up to 20 per cent of their unpaid work order for ETE activities. In 64 per cent of unpaid work cases inspected, individuals were engaged in outdoor group activity; 24 per cent were working in an individual placement in a charity shop. In the remaining cases, a small number were involved in other projects.

Recording does not detail the actual work undertaken sufficiently, or the personal development and skills that an individual may gain. Of inspected cases, we found limited evidence that supervisors had provided feedback, with no standard way of recording feedback that responsible officers could use to assess progress on the order and the unpaid work activity completed.

Positively, in almost all cases the sentence of the court was implemented appropriately, with unpaid work beginning promptly in more than three out of four cases inspected. Recording of any missed appointments happened in three out of four cases; but enforcement action was taken, when required, in less than half the cases. Stand-downs had occurred in less than half of cases inspected.

4.2. Through the Gate	Inadequate
Through the Gate services are personalised and coordinated, addressing the service user's resettlement needs.	

The quality of Through the Gate work is poor. Almost all cases had an OASys resettlement plan for how an individual's needs would be addressed, but this did not draw sufficiently on available sources of information in more than three out of four cases. Resettlement activity did not take sufficient account of factors related to risk of harm in almost three-quarters of cases.

In only half of cases inspected were individuals meaningfully involved in planning their resettlement. Further, the plan sufficiently took account of the individual's diversity and personal circumstances in less than half of the cases. Of most concern is the management of risk of harm. We found that, in four out of five cases, the resettlement plan did not take account of factors related to risk of harm when it should have done.

Activity focused sufficiently on supporting the individual's resettlement in only half of the cases inspected. In just over half the cases reviewed, the service user received services that prioritised their most critical needs.

We saw examples of the last pre-release plan describing what should happen once the individual is through the prison gate, instead of a clear plan reflecting current needs, and actions taken to specifically address these. Plans were often set in the future, reflecting the status as it would be at the time of completion, when often activity had yet to occur. Communication with the responsible officer in the community, before and at the point of release, was assessed as effective in less than half the cases inspected.

Despite resettlement services being in place, continuity of service delivery after release happened in just over one-third of cases inspected. Effective coordination of resettlement activity with other services being delivered in the prison was evident in less than half the cases inspected, with a lack of robust action planning. One in three individuals were released from prison to no fixed abode on their first night. Almost two in three individuals were unemployed immediately after release.

We heard from staff how logistical barriers in some establishments have impacted on delivery. Leaders acknowledge the deficits in the quality of current resettlement work, and in response have increased the CRC's resourcing of the new, enhanced model of Through the Gate, and are engaged in succession planning to ensure the new leader for this work will be in place at the beginning of the contract change.

Annex 1: Methodology

The inspection methodology is summarised below, linked to the three domains in our standards framework. We focused on obtaining evidence against the standards, key questions and prompts in our inspection framework.

Domain one: organisational delivery

The provider submitted evidence in advance and the CRC's Chief Executive Officer delivered a presentation covering the following areas:

- How does the leadership of the organisation support and promote the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all service users?
- How are staff in the organisation empowered to deliver a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all service users?
- Is there a comprehensive range of high-quality services in place, supporting a tailored and responsive service for all service users?
- Is timely and relevant information available, and are there appropriate facilities to support a high-quality, personalised and responsive approach for all service users?
- What are your priorities for further improvement, and why?

During the main fieldwork phase, we interviewed 64 individual responsible officers, asking them about their experiences of training, development, management supervision and leadership. We held various meetings and focus groups, which allowed us to triangulate evidence and information. In total, we conducted 44 meetings with a range of staff internal and external to the CRC. The evidence explored under this domain was judged against our published ratings characteristics.¹⁴

Domain two: case supervision

We completed case assessments over a two-week period, examining service users' files and interviewing responsible officers. The cases selected were those of individuals who had been under community supervision for approximately six to seven months (either through a community sentence or following release from custody). This enabled us to examine work in relation to assessing, planning, implementing and reviewing. Where necessary, interviews with other people closely involved in the case also took place.

We examined 130 cases from across the four counties of the CRC, covering all local delivery units. The sample size was set to achieve a confidence level of 80 per cent (with a margin of error of 5 per cent), and we ensured that the ratios in relation to

¹⁴ HM Inspectorate's domain one ratings characteristics can be found here: <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2018/05/Probation-Domain-One-rating-characteristics-March-18-final.pdf>

gender, type of disposal and risk of serious harm level matched those in the eligible population.

Domain three: sector-specific work

We completed case assessments for two further samples: (i) unpaid work and (ii) Through the Gate. As in domain two, sample sizes were set to achieve a confidence level of 80 per cent (with a margin of error of 5 per cent).

Unpaid work

We examined 50 cases with unpaid work requirements that had begun at least three months previously. The sample included cases managed by the NPS as well as cases managed by the CRC. We ensured that the ratios in relation to gender and risk of serious harm level matched those in the eligible population. We used the case management and assessment systems to inspect these cases.

We also held meetings with the following individuals/groups, which allowed us to triangulate evidence and information:

- the senior manager with overall responsibility for the delivery of unpaid work
- middle managers with responsibilities for unpaid work
- a group of supervisors of unpaid work, from a range of geographical locations.

Through the Gate

We examined 38 custodial cases in which the individual had been released on licence or post-sentence supervision six weeks earlier from the CRC's resettlement prisons, over a two-week period. The sample included those entitled to pre-release Through the Gate services from the CRC who were then supervised post-release by the CRC or the NPS. We used the case management and assessment systems to inspect these cases.

We also held meetings with the following individuals/groups:

- the senior manager in the CRC responsible for Through the Gate services
- a group of middle managers responsible for Through the Gate services in specific prisons
- a group of CRC resettlement workers directly responsible for preparing resettlement plans and/or meeting identified resettlement needs.

Annex 2: Inspection results: domains two and three

2. Case supervision

Standard/Key question	Rating/% yes
2.1. Assessment	Requires improvement
Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the service user	
2.1.1. Does assessment focus sufficiently on engaging the service user?	66%
2.1.2. Does assessment focus sufficiently on the factors linked to offending and desistance?	60%
2.1.3. Does assessment focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	53%
2.2. Planning	Inadequate
Planning is well-informed, holistic and personalised, actively involving the service user.	
2.2.1. Does planning focus sufficiently on engaging the service user?	66%
2.2.2. Does planning focus sufficiently on reducing reoffending and supporting the service user's desistance?	67%
2.2.3. Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe? ¹⁵	44%
2.3. Implementation and delivery	Inadequate
High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging the service user	
2.3.1. Is the sentence/post-custody period implemented effectively with a focus on engaging the service user?	68%
2.3.2. Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the service user's desistance?	54%
2.3.3. Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?	40%

¹⁵ Please note: percentages relating to questions 2.2.3, 2.3.3 and 2.4.3 are calculated for the *relevant* sub-sample, that is, those cases where risk of serious harm issues apply, rather than for the *total* inspected sample.

2.4. Reviewing	Requires improvement¹⁶
Reviewing of progress is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the service user	
2.4.1. Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the service user's compliance and engagement?	66%
2.4.2. Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the service user's desistance?	57%
2.4.3. Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	49%

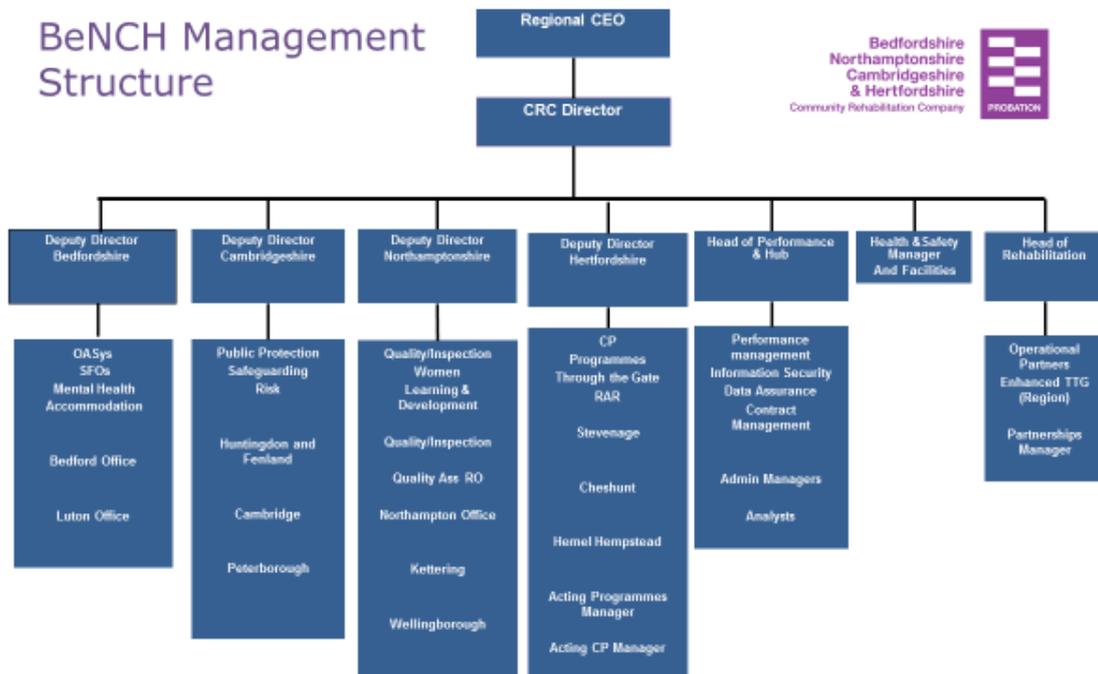
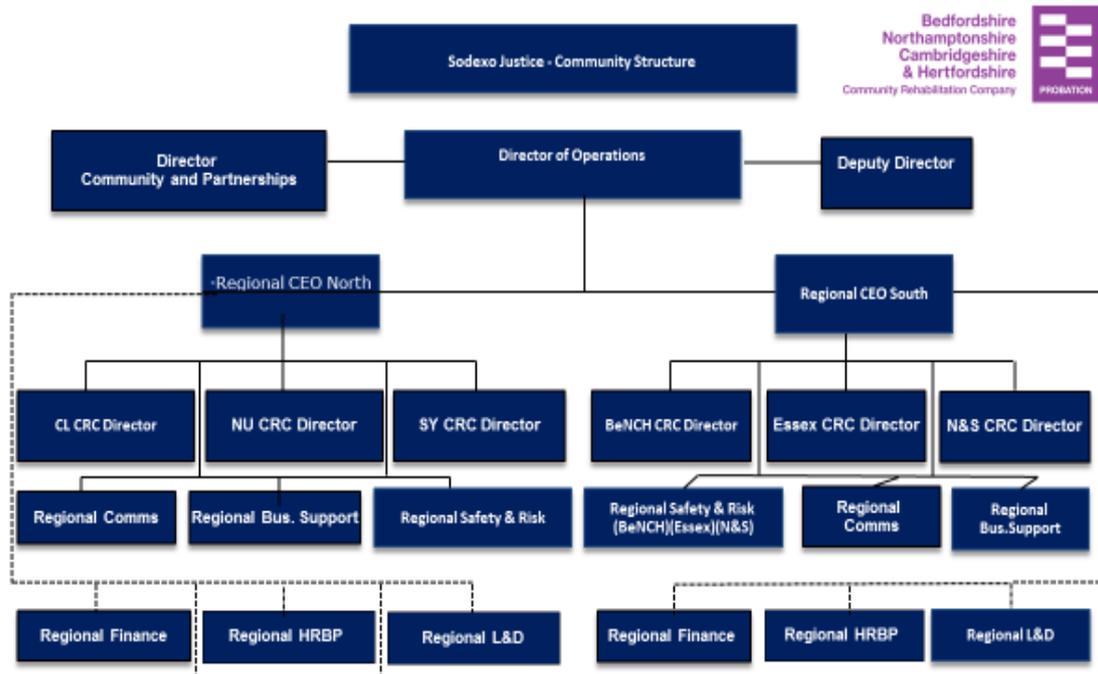
4. CRC-specific work

Standard/Key question	Rating/% yes
4.1. Unpaid work	Requires improvement
Unpaid work is delivered safely and effectively, engaging the service user in line with the expectations of the court	
4.1.1. Does assessment focus on the key issues relevant to unpaid work?	54%
4.1.2. Do arrangements for unpaid work focus sufficiently on supporting the service user's engagement and compliance with the sentence?	78%
4.1.3. Do arrangements for unpaid work maximise the opportunity for the service user's personal development?	50%
4.1.4. Is the sentence of the court implemented appropriately?	90%
4.2. Through the Gate	Inadequate
Through the Gate services are personalised and coordinated, addressing the service user's resettlement needs	
4.2.1. Does resettlement planning focus sufficiently on the service user's resettlement needs and on factors linked to offending and desistance?	65%
4.2.2. Does resettlement activity focus sufficiently on supporting the service user's resettlement?	50%
4.2.3. Is there effective coordination of resettlement activity?	42%

¹⁶ In arriving at the rating for reviewing, we have exercised professional discretion in relation to the case data, to take into account wider evidence gathered about this particular aspect of practice.

Annex 3: Operating model

This information has been provided by BeNCH CRC.



Colour banding allocation guidance

Offender	Minimum face to face contact hours	Minimum support	Supplementary activities
RAR – Green (Low harm/ low reoffending ¹)	12	2 hours at the New Direction meeting 10 hours of face to face contact – this may include 1-1 sessions and/or group-work delivered internally or by the supply chain Signposting to community agencies	
RAR – Yellow (Low harm/ high reoffending ² / low C2C AND Medium harm/ low reoffending/ all C2C)	24	2 hours at the New Direction meeting 22 hours of face to face contact – this may include a combination of 1-1 sessions, group-work, family/low intensity mentoring and/or Community Integration Service support	Further motivational work, mentoring, group-work, Community Integration Service support, victim awareness and assessment for RJ conferencing
RAR – Blue (Medium harm/ high reoffending/ low C2C)	35	2 hours at the New Direction meeting 33 hours of face to face contact including a combination of 1-1 sessions with CRC practitioner, group-work, family/low intensity mentoring and Community Integration Service support	Further motivational work, mentoring, offending behaviour group-work, Community Integration Service support, victim awareness and assessment for RJ conferencing
RAR – Red (Low harm/ high reoffending/ high C2C)	35	2 hours at the New Direction meeting 33 hours of face to face contact including a	Further group-work, Restorative Justice conferencing, Community Integration Service

AND Medium harm/ high reoffending/ high C2C)		combination of 1-1 sessions with CRC practitioner, group-work, high intensity mentoring and Community Integration Service support	support and other bespoke activities where need is identified
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Responsible Officer functions are carried out by either Probation Service Officer (PSO) or Probation Officer (PO) grade staff.

Typically, Probation Service Officers (PSOs) will supervise "Green" and "Yellow" cases, namely those that present a lower risk of reoffending and reduced risk of harm. According to the operating model these service users will receive less interventions in accordance with their reduced risk and need; as such this should enable Probation Service Officers to carry a greater caseload than Probation Officers (POs). Probation Officers will supervise "Blue" and "Red" cases, namely those that present the greatest risk of reoffending and risk of harm, typically perpetrators of domestic violence. According to the greater risk entailed, these cases should receive increased levels of intervention and support; as such PO caseloads should be less than PSOs.

Practice Standards state: "All assessments must be reviewed three months after the initial assessment. It allows you to take stock with the service user, acknowledge progress and possibly an offence free period, and to initiate any outstanding requirements. A termination review should be completed in the last eight weeks of the sentence (or Post Sentence Supervision period)."

Available services delivered by the CRC and its operational partners include:

- **Accredited programmes:**
 - Building Better Relationships
 - Thinking Skills Programme
- **10 RARs**, to support individuals on probation supervision with:
 - motivation, thinking skills, victim empathy, ETE, parenting and resettlement
 - Young adults: Fearless Futures RAR programme developed in-house
- **Women's services**
 - Variety of initiatives across the BeNCH CRC area
- **Peer Mentors:** partnership with User Voice. Mentors will provide through the gate, licence and community order support, on an individualised or group basis. The mentoring service can also account for court ordered RAR days.
- **Through the Gate:**

BeNCH CRC is the lead host in:

 - HMP Peterborough (male estate)
 - HMP Peterborough (female estate)

- HMP The Mount
- HMP Bedford

And host in:

- HMP Woodhill
- HMP Littlehey is a non-resettlement prison in the BeNCH area; Through the Gate provision is not currently delivered in this prison but is under discussion.

Operational partners and services include:

Provider	Service	Service Area
St Giles Trust	In Custody – The Mount, Bedford, Woodhill, Peterborough	BCST2 & Release Planning & ETE
Nacro	In Custody – Bedford, Woodhill	Accommodation, Finance, Benefit & Debt
St Mungo Community Housing Association	In Custody – The Mount	Accommodation, Finance, Benefit & Debt
Nacro	Community – Bedfordshire & Northamptonshire	Accommodation, Finance, Benefit & Debt
St Mungo Community Housing Association	Community – Hertfordshire	Accommodation, Finance, Benefit & Debt
Bold Moves	Community – BeNCH-wide & HMP Peterborough	DV Programmes, Veterans Programmes
Ormiston Families	Community - Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire & HMP Peterborough	Family Support Programmes
Cambridge Women’s Resource Centre	Community – Cambridge & Peterborough	Women’s Services
Family Groups (Bedford)	Community – Bedford Area	Women’s Services
Stepping Stones (Luton)	Community – Luton Area	Women’s Services

C2C	Community – Northamptonshire	Women’s Services
St Giles Trust	Custody - HMP Peterborough Male & Female & Community - Cambridgeshire	Accommodation, Finance, Benefit & Debt, ETE
User Voice	Community – Stevenage & Peterborough	Service User Council and Service User Feedback

Map of the area

BeNCH is made up of six Local Management Centres (LMCs), and six Neighbourhood Centres (NC), supported by the Hub based in Huntingdon, which acts as a 'nerve centre', providing umbrella administrative support, head office and case management functions.



Annex 4: Glossary

Assessment	The process by which a decision is made about the things an individual may need to do to reduce the likelihood of them reoffending and/or causing further harm
Barriers	The things that make it difficult for an individual to change
BBR	Building Better Relationships: a nationally accredited group work programme designed to reduce reoffending by adult male perpetrators of intimate partner violence
BCST2	Basic Custody Screening Tool 2: assessments that take account of each prisoner's capabilities, strengths, barriers to changing their lives and their motivation for doing so
BeNCH	Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire & Hertfordshire (BeNCH): the four independent probation trusts that amalgamated to become one CRC
Breach (of an order or licence)	Where an offender fails to comply with the conditions of a court order or licence. Enforcement action may be taken to return the offender to court for additional action or recall them to prison
Business plan	A plan that sets out an organisation's objectives. It may also be known as an organisational plan or corporate plan
Child protection	Work to make sure that all reasonable action has been taken to keep to a minimum the risk of a child coming to harm
Child safeguarding	The ability to demonstrate that a child or young person's well-being has been 'safeguarded'. This includes – but can be broader than – child protection. The term 'safeguarding' is also used in relation to vulnerable adults
Community integration service	Services to support an individual in reintegrating into the community
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 CRCs were set up in June 2014, to manage most offenders who present low or medium risk of serious harm
Criminal justice system	Involves any or all of the agencies involved in upholding and implementing the law – police, courts, youth offending teams, probation and prisons
CRISS	A supervision agenda to support reflective practice comprised of the following steps: Check-in, Review, Implement, Summarise, Set tasks (CRISS) supervision agenda
C2C	C2C Social Action is a Northamptonshire-based charity that offers practical and pastoral support to offenders, helping them turn away from crime
Desistance	The cessation of offending or other antisocial behaviour
Discretionary service	The name given to a service or intervention delivered to individuals; it is offered via the rate card and is selected by

	responsible officers to form part of a sentence plan
Diversity	The extent to which people within an organisation recognise, appreciate and utilise the characteristics that make an organisation and its service users unique. Diversity can relate to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sex
Enforcement	Action taken by a responsible officer in response to an individual's non-compliance with a community sentence or licence. Enforcement can be punitive or motivational
Equality	Ensuring that everyone is treated with dignity and respect, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sex. It also means recognising that diverse groups have different needs, and ensuring that they have equal and fair access to appropriate opportunities
ETE	Education, training and employment: work to improve an individual's learning, and to increase their employment prospects
HMP	Her Majesty's Prison
HMPPS	Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service: from 01 April 2017, HMPPS became the single agency responsible for delivering prison and probation services across England and Wales. At the same time, the Ministry of Justice took on responsibility for overall policy direction, setting standards, scrutinising prison performance and commissioning services. These used to fall under the remit of the National Offender Management Service (the agency that has been replaced by HMPPS)
Homelessness Reduction Act	Legislation to prevent and reduce homelessness that came into force in April 2018
Host CRC	A CRC, which is not the lead host of Through the Gate services, that provides services to some but not all prisoners in a particular prison. They are likely to deliver services exclusively to prisoners who will be released within their contract package area
Hub	A centralised administrative hub that administers correspondence, makes referrals, completes enforcement documentation and takes all telephone calls at first point of contact
Intervention	Work with an individual that is designed to change their offending behaviour and/or to support public protection. A constructive intervention is where the primary purpose is to reduce the likelihood of reoffending. A restrictive intervention is where the primary purpose is to keep to a minimum the individual's risk of harm to others. With a sexual offender, for example, a constructive intervention might be to put them through an accredited sex offender treatment programme; a restrictive intervention (to minimise their risk of harm to others) might be to monitor regularly and meticulously their accommodation, their employment and the places they frequent, imposing and enforcing clear restrictions as appropriate to each case. Both types of intervention are important
Justice Star	A needs assessment used to support service users in the criminal justice system
Lead host	The CRC delivering the main Through the Gate services in a

	prison, to all prisoners except those who are the responsibility of another host CRC
Licence	This is a period of supervision immediately following release from custody, and is typically implemented after an offender has served half of their sentence. Any breaches to the conditions of the licence can lead to a recall to prison where the offender could remain in custody for the duration of their original sentence
Local delivery unit	An operational unit comprising an office or offices, generally coterminous with police basic command units and local authority structures
Local management centre	A larger office where staff deliver interventions and meet with individuals under probation supervision
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements: where NPS, 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
Mentoring	The advice and guidance offered by a more experienced person to develop an individual's potential
MoJ	Ministry of Justice: the government department with responsibility for the criminal justice system in the United Kingdom
Nacro	Formerly known by the acronym of NACRO (National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders), Nacro is a social justice charity which for over 50 years has offered a range of services to support people to change their lives and to prevent crime and the risk of reoffending
nDelius	National Delius: the approved case management system used by the CRCs and the NPS in England and Wales
No fixed abode	Without a permanent home
NPS	National Probation Service: a single national service that 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 in England and Wales
OASys	Offender Assessment System: currently used in England and Wales by most CRCs and the NPS to measure the risks and needs of offenders under supervision
Offender management	A core principle of offender management is that a single practitioner takes responsibility for managing an offender throughout their sentence, whether in custody or the community
Partners	Partners include statutory and non-statutory organisations, working with the participant/offender through a partnership agreement with a CRC or the NPS
Practice Enhancement Programme	A programme to develop practitioners to be able to supervise more complex cases through additional learning and training

PO	Probation officer: this is the term for a responsible officer who has completed a higher-education-based professional qualification. The name of the qualification and content of the training varies depending on when it was undertaken. They manage more complex cases
Pre-sentence report	This refers to any report prepared for a court, whether delivered orally or in a written format
PQiP	Professional Qualification in Probation
Providers	Providers deliver a service or input commissioned by and provided under contract to a CRC or the NPS. This includes the staff and services provided under the contract, even when they are integrated or located within a CRC or the NPS
PSO	Probation services officer: this is the term for a responsible officer who was originally recruited with no professional 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 writing 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	A directory of services offered by the CRC for the NPS to use with its offenders, detailing the price
Responsible officer	The term used for the officer (previously entitled 'offender manager') who holds lead responsibility for managing a case
Restorative Justice	This practice enables victims to meet or communicate with their offender to explain the real impact of the crime. In an RJ conference, victims have a chance to tell the individual how they have been affected. Service users gain empathy and understanding for those they have harmed and the opportunity to make amends
SEEDS	Skills for Effective Engagement Development and Supervision: a skills-based practice framework for enhancing offender engagement
Serious Case Review	Reviews undertaken by English Local Safeguarding Children Boards for every case where abuse or neglect is known – or suspected – and either a child dies or a child is seriously harmed and there are concerns about how organisations or professionals worked together to protect the child
Serious further offence	Where an individual subject to (or recently subject to) probation commits one of a number of serious offences (such as murder, manslaughter or rape). The CRC and/or NPS must notify HMPPS of any such individual charged with one of these offences. A review is then conducted with a view to identifying lessons learned
Stakeholder	A person, group or organisation that has a direct or indirect stake or interest in the organisation because it can either affect the organisation, or be affected by it. Examples of external

	stakeholders are owners (shareholders), customers, suppliers, partners, government agencies and representatives of the community. Examples of internal stakeholders are people or groups of people within the organisation
Supply chain	Providers of services commissioned by the CRC
Thinking Skills Programme	An accredited group programme designed to develop an offender's thinking skills to help them stay out of trouble
Through the Gate	Through the Gate services are designed to help those sentenced to more than one day in prison to settle back into the community upon release and receive rehabilitation support so they can turn their lives around
<i>Transforming Rehabilitation</i>	The government's programme for how offenders are managed in England and Wales from June 2014
Unpaid work	A court can include an unpaid work requirement as part of a community order. Offenders can be required to work for up to 300 hours on community projects under supervision. Since February 2015, unpaid work has been delivered by CRCs
Women's centre	A centre dedicated to services for women. This may include education, training and interventions to help with confidence and self-esteem



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