



Her Majesty's  
Inspectorate of  
Probation

Response to the consultation on  
HM Inspectorate of Probation's inspection  
framework and programmes for 2021/2022

HM Inspectorate of Probation, September 2021

# 1. Introduction

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- 1.1. Under the *Police and Criminal Justice Act 2006*, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation is required to consult named key stakeholders – other inspectorates and ministers – each year on its inspection framework and programmes of inspection. It is our practice to consult more widely, with those we inspect and associated bodies who can provide valuable insight and information as we develop our framework and programmes. This consultation covered our proposed plans for the period 2021/2022.
- 1.2. The 2021/2022 consultation letter was issued on the 22 March 2021, setting a deadline for responses of 30 April 2021. The [consultation letter](#) was also published on our website.
- 1.3. The consultation set out the following two requests:

## Consultation question – thematic inspections

1. Do you have any alternative proposals for thematic topics for 2021/2022?

## Consultation question – research

2. Do you have any alternative proposals for research projects in 2021/2022?

In both cases, we provided the following guidance to respondents.

*The projects described are those we intend to conduct unless an exceptional case is made by respondents. Where alternative suggestions are proposed, please outline the following in support of your proposals:*

- what is the compelling evidence to suggest your proposal needs to be covered by HM Inspectorate of Probation, as a thematic or research project, in this next financial year?
  - if you offer more than one proposal what priority order do your suggestions take and why?
  - which project(s) would you replace with your proposal(s) and why?
- 1.4 This document summarises the responses received to the consultation request and sets out the decisions made by HM Inspectorate of Probation in response.

## 2. Summary of HM Inspectorate of Probation priorities for 2021/2022

	Question	Post-consultation decision
1	<p><b>Thematic inspections</b></p> <p>Do you have any alternative proposals for thematic topics for 2021/2022?</p>	<p>There was overwhelming support from respondents to our proposals for thematics in 2021/2022.</p> <p>Due to competing resource demands we decided to remove the thematic on youth to adult transitions. This will be re-considered for 2022/2023 alongside other priorities.</p> <p>The thematic programme for 2021/2022 now includes:</p> <p><b>Adult</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p><b>Mental health</b></p> <p>A joint thematic with HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire &amp; Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and HM Inspectorate of Prisons with input from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW) looking at the quality of mental health provision at every stage of the criminal justice system.</p> </li> <li> <p><b>Electronic monitoring</b></p> <p>A HM Inspectorate of Probation only thematic looking at the use of electronic monitoring as a tool for probation in reducing reoffending and managing risk including the use of new GPS technology.</p> </li> <li> <p><b>Offender Management in Custody (OMiC)</b></p> <p>A joint thematic with HM Inspectorate of Prisons looking at how the new OMiC model is embedding in practice.</p> </li> <li> <p><b>MAPPA</b></p> <p>A joint thematic on Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements for high risk offenders, including the effectiveness of joint working arrangements between probation, police and other agencies to manage risk of serious harm. To involve HM Inspectorate of Probation, HM Inspectorate of Prisons and HMICFRS.</p> </li> </ul> <p><b>Youth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p><b>Race</b></p> <p>A thematic review of the quality of youth offending service delivery specifically to black and mixed heritage boys.</p> </li> <li> <p><b>Education, training and employment (ETE)</b></p> <p>A joint thematic with Ofsted and Estyn in Wales</p> </li> </ul>

	<p>on the provision of education, training and employment opportunities to children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Girls</b> A joint thematic review, with HM Inspectorate of Prisons (lead), CQC and Ofsted on the experience of girls in custody and on post-release supervision.</li> <li>• <b>Serious youth violence</b> A joint thematic, led by HMICFRS, with Ofsted and CQC on serious youth violence (among those up to the age of 25 years).</li> </ul> <p>We have also already agreed to conduct two joint thematics in 2022/2023. On the community supervision of those considered extremist/radicalised/TACT and another on victims.</p> <p>Our thematic choices are based on the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. has this been identified as an ongoing area of weakness/concern in our core inspections?</li> <li>2. is this a ministerial priority?</li> <li>3. are there major change programmes or major national changes being applied to the operating model that require external oversight and assurance?</li> </ol>
<p><b>2</b></p> <p><b>Research</b></p> <p>Do you have any alternative proposals for research projects in 2021/2022?</p>	<p>Respondents particularly supported our shift to focus on youth issues.</p> <p>As proposed, we will complete the following projects in 2021/2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• knife crime and young people (exploring promising strategy, interventions and casework in YOTs)</li> <li>• staff experiences of supervising service users at risk of self-harm and/or suicide</li> <li>• working with trauma in adult probation.</li> </ul> <p>We will embark on primary research projects on the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contextual safeguarding</li> <li>• community resolutions.</li> </ul> <p>We will continue to undertake secondary analysis of existing inspection data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the quality of delivery of out-of-court disposals in youth justice</li> <li>• the identification of safety concerns by youth offending services</li> </ul>

- inspecting youth offending services: a technical review of our standards framework
- delivery of probation services: links between inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes
- delivery of youth offending services: links between inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes.

We continue to use the risk/impact matrix to prioritise our research activity.

We will also commission leading academics to contribute to our Academic Insights series. These publications will present key insights on selected topics, assisting with informed debate and aiding understanding of what helps and what hinders probation and youth justice service delivery.

The topics already commissioned include:

- needs assessment: risk, desistance and engagement
- mentoring
- procedural justice
- blended public protection
- social capital and desistance
- professional curiosity
- technology and probation
- women
- co-creation in youth justice
- youth justice – reconciling the evidence
- adolescent to parent violence.

### 3. Summary of responses

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3.1 We received 13 responses from the following respondents:

- Prisons Minister
- Ofsted
- Youth Justice Board (YJB)
- Alliance for Youth Justice (AYJ)
- Howard League (HL)
- NAPO
- London Strategic Youth Justice Leaders Network
- Cornwall & Isles of Scilly YOS
- Derby City YOS
- Doncaster Children's Service Trust
- West Berks YOT
- Nottingham County Council
- Knowsley YOS

#### Consultation question – thematic inspections

The projects described are those we intend to conduct unless an exceptional case is made by respondents. Where alternative suggestions are proposed, please outline the following in support of your proposals:

- what is the compelling evidence to suggest your proposal needs to be covered by HM Inspectorate of Probation, as a thematic, in this next financial year?
- if you offer more than one proposal what priority order do your suggestions take and why?
- which project(s) described above would you replace with your proposal(s) and why?

Q1: Taking into account the criteria above, do you have any alternative proposals for thematic topics for 2021/2022?

3.2 There was support for our proposed thematic inspections. While no respondent offered evidence for a priority order or a view on what might be replaced, the following additional topics were offered for thematic review.

## **Probation inspection**

Prolific offenders

We will see what the impact of the IOM thematic is before considering anything further on prolific offenders

Post-sentence supervision

We will consider alongside other priorities for 2022/2023

Case transfers

To be put on hold until the transition has embedded

Staff retention/ attrition

Staff training

Data to be collected as part of our core inspections

Approved premises

To be considered for a future repeated thematic

Problem gambling

We will await the outcome of the Howard League Commission on Crime and Problem Gambling

## **Youth inspection**

Mental health of those have recently transitioned to adult services

Could be considered a strand of investigation as part of a thematic on transitions should that go ahead in 2022/2023

Youth mental health as a cross-cutting theme

The joint thematic on adult mental health will inform whether this is viable

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

To be considered for a future thematic

Children Looked After

To be considered for a future thematic

Child criminal exploitation alongside Serious Youth Violence thematic

Project yet to be scoped

Victim and restorative justice work

Joint thematic on victims agreed for 2022/2023. Will consider coverage of young victims

Parenting work including parenting orders

Will consider whether inspection evidence supports the specificity of topic

## Consultation question – research projects

The projects described are those we intend to conduct unless an exceptional case is made by respondents. Where alternative suggestions are proposed, please outline the following in support of your proposals:

- what is the compelling evidence to suggest your proposal needs to be covered by HM Inspectorate of Probation, as a research project, in this next financial year?
- if you offer more than one proposal what priority order do your suggestions take and why?
- which project(s) described above would you replace with your proposal(s) and why?

Q2: Taking into account the criteria above, do you have any alternative proposals for research projects in 2021/2022?

- 3.3. There was support for the research topics proposed for 2021/2022. Again, no respondent offered evidence for a priority order or a view on what might be replaced, though the following additional topics were offered for research analysis.

### Research

County lines to be extended to include child criminal exploitation  
Scoping yet to be completed

Research on overuse of APs for 18-year olds  
Links to thematic topic proposed above

Monitoring use of recall  
Recall thematic completed and published 2020

Public health approach to data analytics on YOTs' work on reoffending  
Would rely on the input of the healthcare inspectorates

- 3.4. The full list of business plan activities for 2021/2022 are set out in our [corporate plan](#).

## 4. Stakeholder feedback

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- 4.1 In early 2021, Dr Jake Phillips, Lecturer at Sheffield Hallam University, published a report of his findings on [understanding the impact of inspection on probation](#). While this piece of research was not commissioned by the Inspectorate, we fully supported and facilitated the research and are closely considering the findings.
- 4.2 As this research drew significantly on the feedback of probation practitioners, through to senior policy and operational officials as well as key external stakeholders, we did not conduct our own stakeholder feedback exercise for 2020/2021. Not only did this reduce repetition but also recognises the strength of the independent perspective.