

24 January 2022



Her Majesty's  
Inspectorate of  
Probation

**THE USE OF ELECTRONIC  
MONITORING AS A TOOL FOR THE  
PROBATION SERVICE IN REDUCING  
REOFFENDING AND MANAGING RISK**



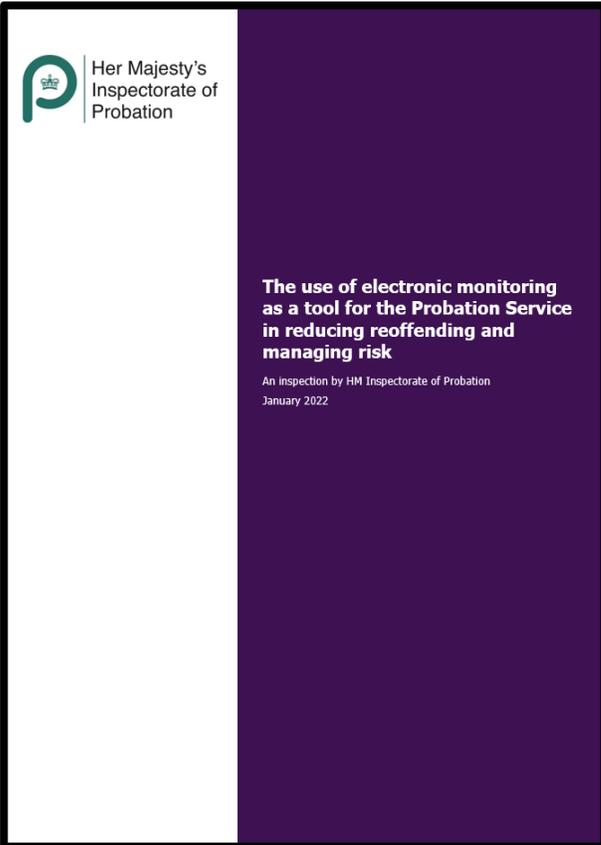
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## About this report

**The topic of electronic monitoring was last inspected by HM Inspectorate of Probation in 2012.**

**This thematic inspection is the first to consider electronic monitoring including radio frequency, global positioning system and alcohol abstinence tags and examined:**

- leadership, strategy and policy at a national level
- pre-sentence and pre-release information provided to inform sentencing decisions and licence conditions
- Probation Service - implementation, delivery, review and enforcement of electronic monitoring requirements
- New interventions and current pilots





## CONTEXT

1999

- Electronic monitoring introduced in to England and Wales to support release on Home Detention Curfew

2000

- Electronic monitoring introduced as an option for monitoring court imposed curfew requirements

2010

- Police introduced use of Global Positioning System (GPS monitoring) on a voluntary basis with cases

2018/  
2019

- GPS introduced as a sentencing option nationally in courts, and for use as a licence condition in specific cases

2019

- Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (London) launch GPS tagging pilot for knife crime offences, building on previous pilot for GPS tagging of persistent offenders

Oct  
2020

- Alcohol monitoring tags introduced in Wales; rolled out in England March 2021. Used to monitor alcohol abstinence as part of a community order

Apr  
2021

- Acquisitive crime pathfinder launched in six police force areas, expanded to an additional 13 police force areas in September 2021

Nov  
2021

- Pilot in Wales of the use of alcohol monitoring tags as a licence condition to monitor alcohol use/abstinence



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## CONTEXT

8,000

The approximate number of **people on probation subject to tagging** at any one time

10,214

The number of **people released on Home Detention Curfew** (Apr 2020 – Mar 2021)

19,265

The number of **community curfew requirements** issued (Feb 2020-Jan 2021)

473

The number of **community GPS requirements** imposed (Feb 2020 – Jan 2021)

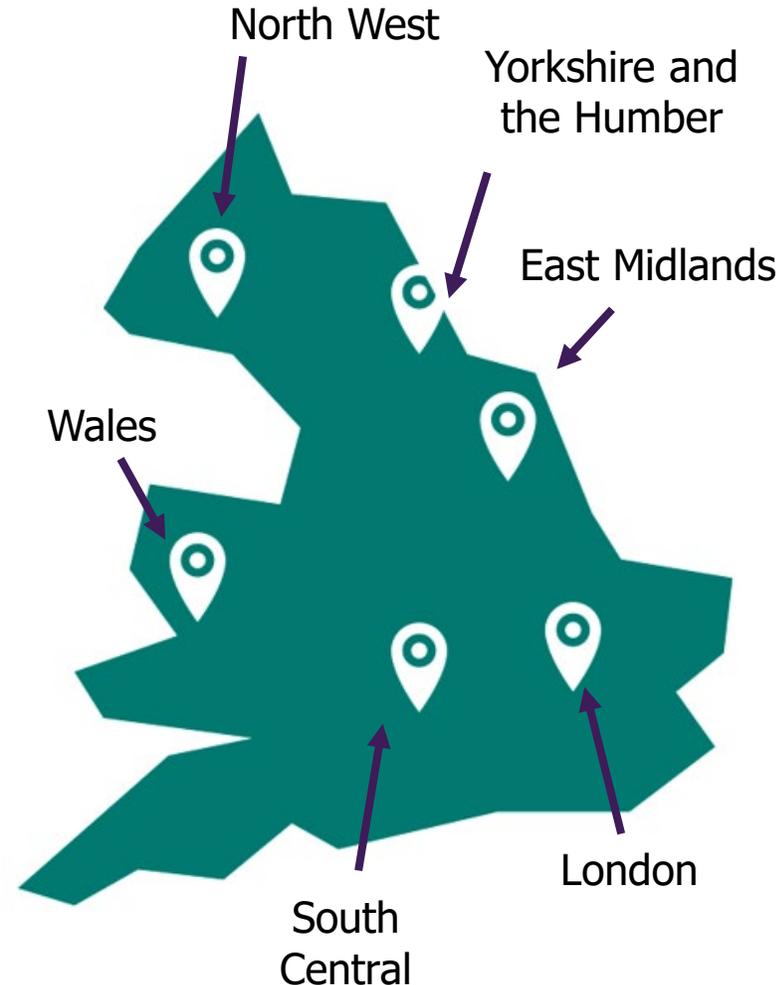
1,565

The number of **alcohol abstinence monitoring requirements** issued (Nov 2020 to Sep 2021)



# Methodology

- **Fieldwork completed July to September 2021**
- **6 regions**
- **172 cases** inspected that had an electronically monitored requirement as part of a community sentence or licence condition, including home detention curfew
- **102 probation practitioners** interviewed



- **19 sentencers**
- **42 interviews** conducted by Penal Reform Solutions with people on probation to understand their experience of electronic monitoring
- **Visited EMS** (providers of electronic monitoring) and spoke with national electronic monitoring programme team.



## Overall Key Findings

### resource

Electronic monitoring as a **resource is underused** and not delivering to its full potential.

### safety

Domestic abuse and child **safeguarding checks**, used to inform curfew recommendations, need urgent improvements to keep people safe.

### strategy

There is a **lack of clear strategy** about the uses of electronic monitoring in Probation Service and current contracts with providers do not fully reflect Probation Practitioner need.

### practice

Probation **practitioners miss opportunities** to embed electronic monitoring in to their overall case management.



## Leadership, policy and strategy – Key findings



There is a **lack of strategic direction** of electronic monitoring set at a national level across HMPPS.



There is **no clear vision** at a national level of how electronic monitoring can enhance the management of people on probation and there is a lack of a clearly defined purpose for implementing electronic monitoring as part of sentences.



There is **insufficient data collection or analysis** at a national and regional level in regard to the demographic of people made subject to electronic monitoring, types of technologies being used, the impact of such interventions and the outcomes being achieved.



## Pre-sentence and Pre-release - Key findings:

**\*28%**

cases where assessment pre-release on **Home Detention Curfew** were **assessed as suitably analytical and personalised**

**37%**

cases where **DA checks were undertaken before a curfew requirement** imposed at court

**61%**

cases where **child safeguarding checks were undertaken before a curfew requirement** imposed at court

**79%**

cases where **child safeguarding checks were undertaken before release** on Home Detention Curfew

**68%**

cases where **DA checks were undertaken before release** on Home Detention Curfew



## Probation Service delivery - Key findings:

57%

The percentage of overall **enforcement of community orders**

28%

The percentage of **staff that have received EM training**

87%

The percentage of overall **enforcement of licence conditions**

88%

The percentage of probation **practitioners that thought EM was helpful in supporting desistance** – only reflected in 11% of sentence plans

92%

The percentage of probation **practitioners that thought EM was helpful in managing risk** – reflected in 60 per cent of risk management plans



## Probation Service delivery - Key findings:



The use of Global Positioning Systems as a sentencing option is not fully understood.



There is insufficient access to information and accurate map data to make the use of electronic monitoring meaningful in many cases.



The scope for inclusion of electronic monitoring in the management of high risk cases is too narrow, with this only being an option when imposed via the Parole Board for specific sentence types (life sentences, imprisonment for public protection and extended determinate sentences).



## Ministry of Justice – Recommendations:

### Three key recommendations



Improve **data collection and analysis**



Commission structured **research** to better understand the impact of electronic monitoring **and evaluate** where it can achieve the best outcomes



Ensure future **contracts** for provision of electronic monitoring understand the delivery needs of the Probation Service, including making immediate changes to current contract requirements



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## Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service – Key Recommendations:

### Eight overall recommendations for HMPPS including:



Mandate the requirement to make domestic abuse and safeguarding checks before recommending a sentence or release on electronically monitored curfew. Work with police and children's social care at a national level to ensure that probation practitioners in every region are able to access timely information.



Update HDC address check processes to require probation practitioners to specify if the proposed release address is assessed as suitable (i.e. that there are no potential risks to the householder – or to the person on probation), to inform safe decision-making by prisons.



Ensure electronic monitoring is available as an option for the management of people on probation subject to standard determinate prison sentences who are identified as presenting a high risk of serious harm after release from custody



## The Probation Service - Key Recommendations:

### Six overall recommendations including:



Ensure that all probation practitioners receive training in electronic monitoring and how to integrate the different types of technology available into the overall case management of people on probation



Ensure that probation practitioners clearly identify electronic monitoring requirements within sentence planning processes, including reviewing progress regularly with the person on probation and analyse how electronic monitoring will support the risk management of people on probation



Ensure all cases are enforced as required.



## New interventions and current pilots

### Alcohol Abstinence Monitoring Requirement

- Lack of identification of how the AAMR would enhance protective factors or address offending related factors

### Acquisitive Crime Pathway

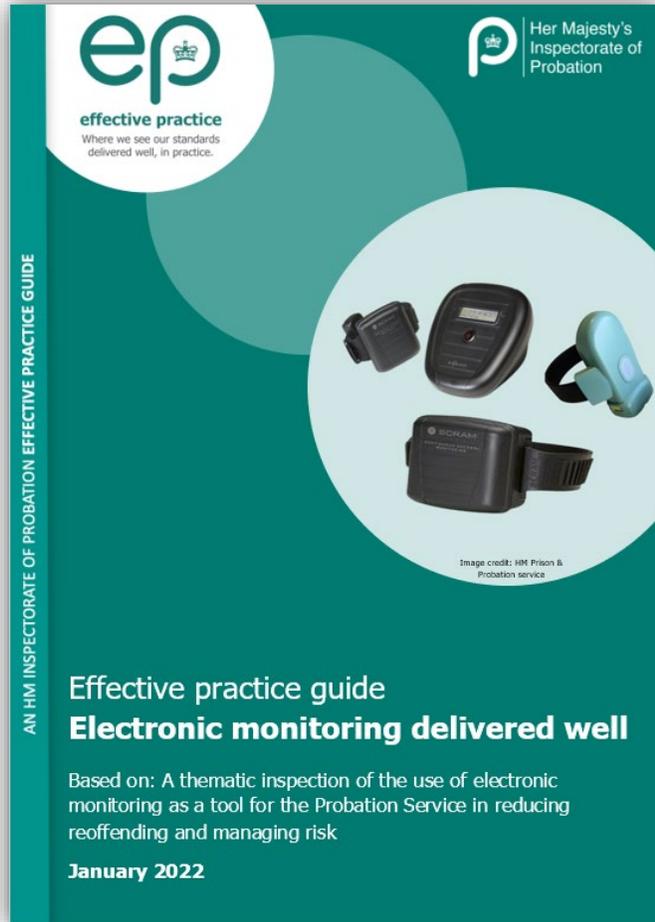
- Live in 19 police force areas

### Mayor's Office of Policing and Crime GPS Pilots



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## Effective practice guide



### Guide contents:

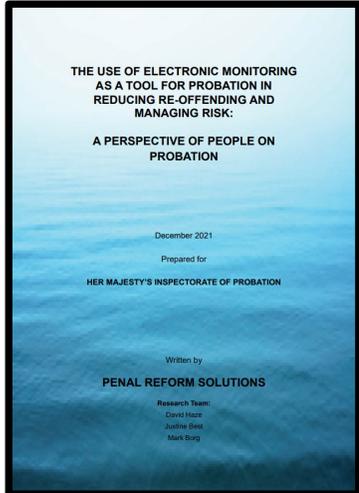
- An overview of the **sentence and requirement types** that can have EM applied with details of which technology can be used.
- A **summary of the themes** which arose from the PRS research.
- A PowerPoint presentation exploring **EM delivered well**.
- A **key takeaway guide** for practitioners.
- **Case studies** from the inspection sample and reflective questions.
- **Conclusion** highlighting factors in managing EM sentences which meet our standards.



# Dr Sarah Lewis – Penal Reform Solutions



## PRS Report: A perspective of people on probation



### AIMS

- To capture the voices of people on probation, exploring their experience of being subject to electronic monitoring.

### SAMPLE

- 42 participants - 32 identified as male, eight as female and two who identified as other.
- 37 participants were subject to a curfew requirement, seven of whom were subject to home detention curfew, three participants were subject to an alcohol abstinence monitoring requirement and two were subject to exclusion zones monitored by GPS.
- With respect to ethnicity, 86 per cent of the participants were White British, though there was some variation across ethnic backgrounds in the remaining 14 per cent.

### METHODOLOGY

- Structured telephone interviews

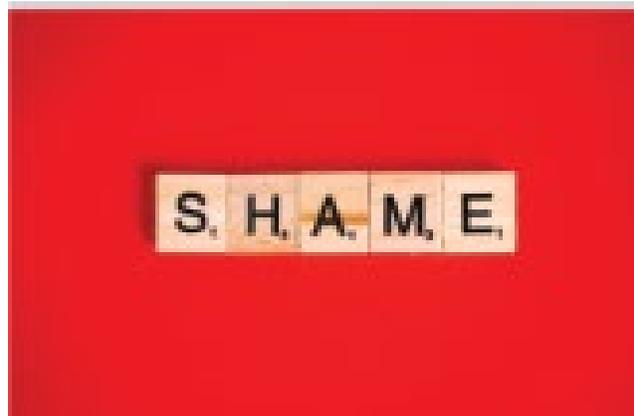


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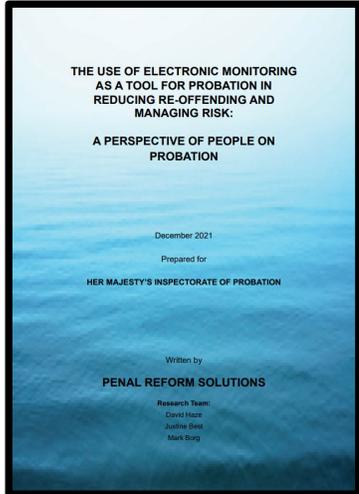


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### Solutions:

- Engage and communicate with the person on probation
- Consider the design of devices
- Improve understanding about who is being made subject to electronic monitoring, and what impact this has

**Access the report and podcast at:**

**<https://penalreformsolutions.com/electronic-monitoring/>**

**Get in touch:**

**[info@penalreformsolutions.com](mailto:info@penalreformsolutions.com)**



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## Next Steps:

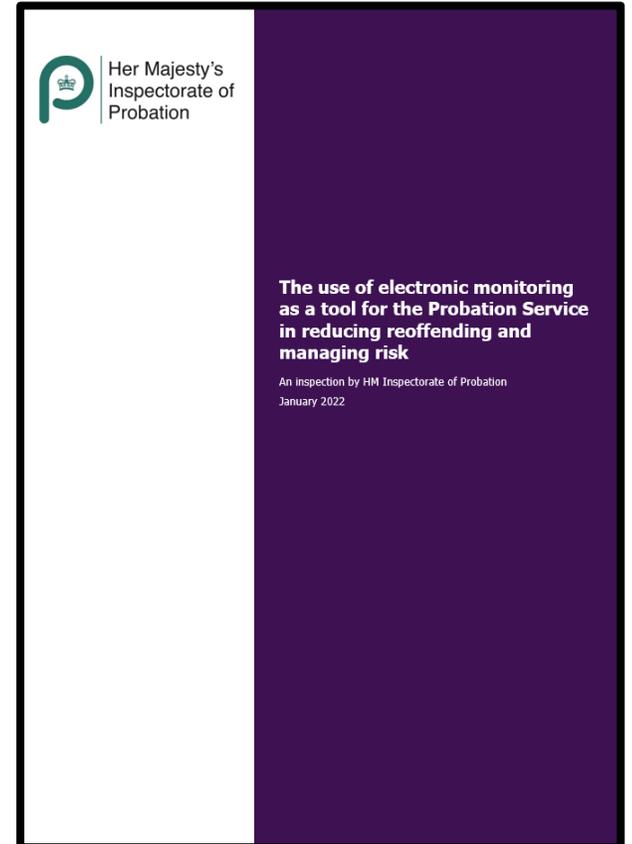
### Links to reports and supporting documents:

The thematic review of 'the use of electronic monitoring as a tool for the Probation Service in reducing reoffending and managing risk' and the accompanying Penal Reform Solutions report are available on HM Inspectorate of Probation's website.

Read HM Inspectorate of Probation's 'Electronic monitoring delivered well: Effective practice pack' including:

- Key takeaways guide
- Case studies
- Electronic monitoring: managing risk and supporting desistance infographic.

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/inspections/electronic-monitoring/>





**QUESTIONS?**