



HM Inspectorate
of Probation

An inspection of probation services in:
Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland PDU
The Probation Service – East Midlands region

HM Inspectorate of Probation, February 2023



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Acknowledgements

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The role of HM Inspectorate of Probation

HM 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.

Please note that throughout the report the names in the practice examples have been changed to protect the individual's identity.

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Foreword

This was the first Probation Delivery Unit (PDU) inspection of probation services within Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland since unification of the Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) and National Probation Service (NPS) in June 2021. This was a disappointing inspection. The quality of work delivered to manage people on probation was insufficient across all five of our standards for casework with particularly poor results for the quality of court reports. Overall, we have rated this PDU as 'Inadequate'.

Although staff were committed and dedicated to their roles, high workloads, a problem that has existed over a prolonged period of time, had taken their toll, leading to low morale across the PDU.

As we have found in other recent PDU inspections, there were significant gaps in probation practitioner and administrative officer grades. These were most pronounced in the court team where there was a vacancy rate of 43 per cent. In addition to resourcing issues, we were particularly concerned about the quality of court work, with only five per cent of cases inspected being judged as sufficient. Essential assessments and domestic abuse and child safeguarding checks were missing in far too many cases. Despite efforts from the PDU and the region to improve the staffing levels, this remains a critical issue and a national approach is needed to assist with the appropriate recruitment and retention of staff.

During this critical time, staff must be clear on their roles and responsibilities; however, messaging from leaders to staff regarding what to prioritise was not understood, which led to insufficient work being delivered to people on probation and to keep communities safe. Opportunities to utilise areas of business where there was more capacity were being missed and the PDU was operating at near crisis management levels.

Improvements were needed in the quality of work to assess and manage risks that people on probation pose to the wider community. This was particularly poor in assessment, where only 31 per cent of cases we inspected had an assessment which effectively supported the safety of other people.

Despite the resourcing challenges, we did see some evidence of innovation within the PDU, with the creation of young adults and women's teams to improve the quality of work delivered to these groups. These teams were in their early stages and, like the rest of the PDU, their workloads are high, but aspirations for what can be delivered are positive. Good strategic partnership working had also been maintained.

It is hoped that this inspection can help assist with the foundations needed to support the required improvement. This will, however, only be possible if appropriate regional and national support is in place to address the staffing needs.



Justin Russell

Chief Inspector of Probation

Ratings

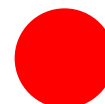
Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland PDU

Fieldwork started November 2022

Score **2/27**

Overall rating

Inadequate



1. Organisational delivery

1.1 Leadership

Inadequate



1.2 Staff

Inadequate



1.3 Services

Requires improvement



1.4 Information and facilities

Requires improvement



2. Court work and case supervision

2.1 Court work

Inadequate



2.2 Assessment

Inadequate



2.3 Planning

Inadequate



2.4 Implementation and delivery

Inadequate



2.5 Reviewing

Inadequate



Recommendations

As a result of our inspection findings we have made a number of recommendations that we believe, if implemented, will have a positive impact on the quality of probation services.¹

Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland PDU should:

1. improve the quality of work to assess, plan for, manage and review risk of harm
2. improve the probation staffing levels in court, and the quality of court reports to inform sentencing
3. ensure risk-related information is obtained and shared with other agencies in all relevant cases to support the assessment and management of risk of harm
4. ensure that accredited programmes, targeted interventions and other services necessary to improve desistance and reduce risk of harm are fully utilised
5. address the poor staff morale, ensure adequate support is available for staff when required
6. address the clear knowledge gap that currently exists with some staff not understanding the key priorities of their role and what they need to deliver
7. address the deficiencies in the effectiveness of quality assurance and management oversight of all casework
8. ensure there is a blended offer in place of in-person training and that delivery of training is prioritised to enhance the skills of the workforce.

East Midlands region should:

9. ensure priorities are clearly communicated and understood by probation practitioners and middle managers
10. review stand-alone unpaid work sentence management arrangements, to address the deficiencies identified in assessments and that these are accurate, thorough and inform placement allocation
11. revise the CRS contract for accommodation support services to better provide an effective service which meets the needs of people on probation.

HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) should:

12. address the need for improved staff recruitment and retention
13. improve the support to sites assessed as 'red' under the Prioritisation Framework (PF) in particular through additional resourcing.

¹ Progress against previous inspection recommendations for the relevant CRC or NPS division are included in annexe one.

Background

We conducted fieldwork in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland between 28 November 2022 and 02 December 2022. We inspected 102 cases where sentences and licences had commenced between 18 April 2022 to 24 April 2022 and 09 May 2022 to 15 May 2022. We also conducted 79 interviews with probation practitioners.

Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland PDU is one of six PDUs within the East Midlands probation region. The PDU delivers probation work across eight sites and covers two magistrates' courts and a Crown Court. Prior to unification, in June 2021, the East Midlands region was made up of an NPS Midlands division and Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire and Rutland CRC. Accredited programmes are managed regionally as well as the majority of stand-alone unpaid work orders, with the exception being those assessed as high risk of serious harm, who are managed within the PDU sentence management teams.

Covering a large geographical area of both the city of Leicester, and the surrounding county of Leicestershire and the county of Rutland, the PDU is the fifth largest in the country. It covers the local authorities of Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council, Rutland County Council and seven other district local authorities. This can present challenges as there is duplication of partnership meetings at both strategic and operational level. The city of Leicester is the most densely populated area within the PDU and has a higher reoffending rate of 27 per cent² compared to that of Leicestershire, which has a reoffending rate of 19 per cent.

The total caseload of the East Midlands region is 15,372³, with this PDU's caseload accounting for 2,380 (15 per cent) of the region's cases at the time of the inspection. The number of people aged 18 to 25 on probation is the highest in the East Midlands region and 31 per cent of the caseload is from a black, Asian or minority ethnic background.

A range of commissioned rehabilitative services (CRS) were delivered across the PDU. These included personal wellbeing services delivered by Ingeus, women's services delivered by New Dawn New Day and accommodation delivered by Nacro. The PDU has access to services from the Commissioned Finance Organisation's hubs (which are funded through the European Social Fund), and substance misuse services provided by Turning Point which covers both the city and county.

Since September 2022, as a result of staffing resource challenges, the PDU has been operating under 'red status' under the Prioritisation Framework⁴. Whilst rated as red, PDUs continue to operate to national standards but are allowed to make concessions such as lower expectations for face-to-face appointments and prioritisation of cases assessed as high or very high risk of serious harm. The staffing and workload issues highlighted in this report have been an issue for over 18 months.

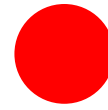
² Ministry of Justice (October 2022). *Proven reoffending statistics: January 2020 to December 2020*.

³ Ministry of Justice (2022). *Offender Management Caseload Statistics*, 30 June 2022.

⁴ The framework is designed to assist regions in identifying areas of flexibility in response to capacity and workload concerns. This has been nationally developed by HMPPS.

1. Organisational delivery

1.1. Leadership



The leadership of the PDU enables delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all people on probation.

Inadequate

In this inspection, all five domain two standards were rated 'Inadequate'; which would have resulted in an overall inadequate rating for leadership under the HM Inspectorate decision rules. However, if these rules were not applied, we would still have rated leadership as 'inadequate' against our standards.

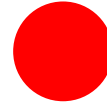
Strengths:

- The delivery plan for the PDU sets the vision and priorities and was aligned to the regional strategy.
- Relationships with key partners were strong and the senior leadership team were integral in several partnership forums, including the violence reduction network.
- Change management of the move to a blended caseload was delivered well. Probation practitioners and administrators were consulted and given options. The majority of staff received their first or second preference.

Areas for improvement:

- The delivery plan was based on operating under business-as-usual arrangements. There was no clear approach to understanding the key priorities arising from the staffing issues and staff were left confused.
- Communication was inconsistently received by staff, who felt overwhelmed by the volume of messaging. As a result, engagement in forums was mixed.
- There was limited evidence of the PDU managing the demand for services at an acceptable level of quality. While the 'red status' recognised the issues faced by the PDU, the exit plan was unclear.
- Whilst senior managers were aware that the 'red status' designation transfers the risk carried by individual staff to the organisation, this was not understood by all staff. Practitioners viewed 'red status' as a recognition of the PDU's staffing challenges and were not clear on what their focus should be, reporting 'everything was a priority'.
- There was little evidence of engaging the views of people on probation. Work to address this was underway.
- Court work was very poor, often cases were sentenced without consideration of accredited programmes or other requirements, despite the person on probation being suitable.
- There was poor oversight of cases. In nearly three quarters of cases (74 per cent) inspected, inspectors found management oversight was either insufficient, ineffective or absent.
- Oversight of the quality of sentence management work being delivered by unpaid work teams was weak. Assessments were not individualised and the assessment of risk of serious harm factors questioned how safe allocation to projects was taking place in the absence of sufficient information.

1.2. Staff



Staff are enabled to deliver a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all people on probation.

Inadequate

Strengths:

- The senior and middle management team were fully staffed and were experienced, dedicated and described as being supportive by practitioners.
- Staff at all grades felt well supported by their colleagues, often describing them as a critical part of their support network. This included assisting each other with workloads, sharing knowledge and supporting wellbeing.
- Active recruitment was ongoing to remedy the staffing challenges. Regional and PDU managers recognised the difficulties in recruiting qualified probation practitioners and were considering alternative arrangements, such as over recruiting in other practitioner roles to add resilience to the workforce.
- The reward and recognition process had been used regularly as a way of thanking staff working in the challenging environment.
- Despite the staffing challenges, 81 per cent of cases had no more than two practitioners, providing consistency and supportive relationships.

Areas for improvement:

- Morale was low, particularly for probation practitioners; staff expressed frustration, feeling burnt out and some considering leaving. This comes as no surprise given the staffing and workload challenges.
- Whilst improving, staffing levels were insufficient, with vacancy rates at the time of inspection announcement at 19 per cent for Probation Officer grade and 43 per cent for court staff. Agency staff and increased numbers of Professional Qualification in Probation trainees addressed some of the staffing issues.
- Vetting of new staff remains lengthy, approximately 12 weeks before staff received a start date. There were occasions where potential new recruits found positions elsewhere.
- Practitioners' workloads were too high and described as not manageable by nearly two-thirds of practitioners (65 per cent). The workload measurement tool reported an average for Probation Officer grade at 131 per cent.
- Sickness was high across the PDU, with the average annual days lost at 13.8, higher than the regional average of 12.9 days, an additional pressure on workloads.
- Insufficient focus was given to staff training, which was largely online, with staff feedback that it had limited value.
- Mechanisms to improve staff wellbeing, such as reflective practice from the offender personality disorder team, were on hold due to staffing challenges.

1.3. Services



A comprehensive range of high-quality services is in place, supporting a tailored and responsive service for all people on probation.

Requires improvement

Despite some strengths, this had not translated into the casework, evidenced by the inadequate domain two scores, where services delivered to effectively support the safety of others were judged sufficient in only 43 per cent of cases inspected.

Strengths:

- Substance misuse services delivered by Turning Point were impressive, reflected in good communication, flexible approaches to working with individuals and effective strategic relationships.
- There was a wide offer of services available through CRS and other commissioning arrangements, including the Shaw Trust offering a 'one stop shop' of services.
- The young adults team launched in May 2022 was a promising initiative. This was a response to the PDU having the highest number of people aged 18 to 25 in the region, providing a collaborative approach with youth justice services and the YMCA to assist with accommodation for young adults.
- Similarly, the women's team had positive foundations, with the embedded work of the subcontracted CRS women's services provider New Dawn New Day. The team were working at seven locations across the PDU, with strong multi-agency links. Regular contract monitoring meetings were being held, with work delivered for women both in custodial and community settings.

Areas for improvement:

- Unpaid work delivery was poor. The caseload was 1,312, with 47 per cent of unpaid work requirements with hours outstanding beyond 12 months.
- The assessment process for individuals on unpaid work was deemed by inspectors to be a paperwork exercise, with an absence of risk factors being sufficiently analysed and that unpaid work was purely punitive.
- The quality of court reports was poor, with only five per cent of cases inspected judged as sufficient to support the court's decision-making.
- Despite proactive promotion with stakeholders, to increase the number of accredited programme referrals, the service remained underutilised.
- Given the PDU's 'red status', utilisation of CRS provision to manage workloads was under-used. Referral rates for CRS other than accommodation were significantly below capacity, despite proactive promotion by the provider.

Resettlement work

Strengths:

- Home visits were regularly undertaken for post-release cases and were judged as necessary and supportive of managing the risk of harm posed by the individual in nearly two thirds of relevant cases. Probation practitioners were using this opportunity to gather vital information for their risk assessments and support engagement from the person on probation.

Areas for improvement:

- There was insufficient contact with people on probation prior to release, with this being judged as sufficient in less than half of post-releases cases. This was a missed opportunity to start the period of supervision well and set a positive foundation for further work.
- Not enough work was completed to address the key resettlement and desistance needs of people on probation prior to being released from custody, with only half of cases judged as sufficient. This resulted in people being released without supportive plans in place.
- In almost half (15 out of 32) of post-release cases assessed; the probation practitioner did not address key risk of harm needs prior to release. This led to factors linked to risk of serious harm not being managed appropriately and placing people at risk.

1.4. Information and facilities



Timely and relevant information is available and appropriate facilities are in place to support a high-quality, personalised and responsive approach for all people on probation.

Requires improvement

Strengths:

- Offices were accessible for people on probation across the city, county and Rutland area. The Cobden Street office was refurbished to a high standard, creating a welcoming environment.
- The PDU utilises 'One Note' for staff to access polices, local procedural forms, duty rotas and guidance to areas of practice. Briefings were delivered to staff to improve the use of the system. Staff welcomed the functionality.
- Staff had access to a live caseload dashboard, providing data on pending enforcement action, live interventions and eligibility of toolkits.
- There was Wi-Fi access in the Cobden Street office and staff had appropriate ICT equipment and systems to support remote and satellite working.
- Learning from serious further offences was disseminated regularly to Senior Probation Officers to be delivered in team meetings to practitioners. This reflected an understanding of the key themes emerging and sharing learning with all staff, not just isolated learning with practitioners involved in those cases.

Areas for improvement:

- Despite the recent refurbishment, the lift at Cobden Street office was out of use at the time of inspection. Staff with mobility needs were asked to work on the ground floor, often away from where their team was based. While a request to undertake the repairs was underway, such requests are handled nationally and involve significant waiting times.
- The Loughborough office did not have the same inviting and positive working environment as the Cobden Street office and staff were using network cables for internet connection and lacked reliable Wi-Fi access. This unsurprisingly, led to frustration amongst staff, with unreliable connections resulting in delays.
- Court staff were placed in unsuitable offices in court premises which did not allow for the whole team to be based together. This meant that staff did not develop a team culture and felt isolated.
- There were various methods to communicate learning, but this was not landing with staff, demonstrated by the inadequate domain two data. Demands of the role meant staff did not feel they had the capacity to take in learning from the briefings.
- At a senior leadership level, there was a clear drive to achieve performance measures. However, with the staffing struggles and red status, this drive was not supporting staff to understand the key priorities and achieve quality in at least those cases that should have been afforded priority under the PF.

Feedback from people on probation

User Voice, working with HM Inspectorate of Probation, had contact with 70 people on probation as part of this inspection. Of these, 53 per cent reported that they were subject to a community sentence and 36 per cent were being supervised having been released from prison. Eleven per cent of respondents did not specify their sentence type. The respondents were largely representative of the caseload demographics in terms of gender but slightly under representative in terms of ethnic diversity.

Strengths:

- People on probation overwhelmingly felt safe accessing probation services (97 per cent) and were able to have private conversations with their probation practitioner (82 per cent).
- The area that was rated most positively by people on probation about their experience of supervision was their relationship with their practitioner:

“My probation worker has been good with me and gives me confidence in myself. I wouldn’t have been able to get on with my life without confronting my past and she’s helped do that.”

Areas for improvement:

- Communication was highlighted as an issue, particularly for those undertaking unpaid work. There were occasions where individuals were not informed about changes to their appointments and their allocated officer:

“Community service has taken three years and extended my time on probation because of this. I have missed out on so many jobs as a result of this. They have changed my probation worker eight times in three years too. I was only done for drink driving but all this time coming to probation because I wasn’t able to get my community service done. It took them six months to transfer my community service to the voluntary work I do.”

- Under half of individuals consulted by User Voice (46 per cent) felt that their views had been considered as part of their supervision. There were similar findings in engagement in some areas of our case inspection, such as assessment where only 50 per cent of cases were judged to have been engaged sufficiently. This missed a key opportunity to include the person on probation fully in their sentence and enhance the engagement of the person on probation.
- There was an overall sense from User Voice findings that the challenges regarding workloads and staffing the PDU were being felt by people on probation. Individuals reported to often being kept waiting for long periods of time for appointments and changes in practitioner. Of those surveyed, 37 per cent stated there are no positives from their probation experience.

Diversity and inclusion

Strengths:

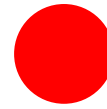
- Diversity was managed at a regional level and the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion (EDI) & Belonging Roadmap 2022/2023 was comprehensive in its ambitions. Its priorities include maximising people on probation's insights, including those of a black, Asian and minority ethnic background, developing peer mentors, committing to staff with lived experience, improving staff engagement, developing standards of excellence, and further involving courts and sentencers.
- Twenty-seven per cent of the workforce in the PDU identified as black, Asian and minority ethnic, compared to 31 per cent of the caseload. This was largely representative of the caseload demographic.
- The PDU had a diversity action group in place with the aim of promoting all elements of EDI across the PDU. Events had been held in the PDU to mark areas such as Black History Month and Pride Month.

Areas for improvement:

- Despite the sizeable proportion of people on probation from a black, Asian or minority ethnic background (31 per cent of the caseload), there were few specific services being delivered for this demographic.
- Insufficient priority was given to equality and diversity at a strategic and operational level. Although there were EDI events that had taken place there was a lack of any further detailed work underway to strengthen this area of practice.
- Considering the diverse population of Leicester, there was little evidence of staff awareness of cultural issues in specific communities. There were instances where the heritage of cases was not fully considered and even dismissed, impacting on the quality of the delivery of the case.
- There was an over-representation of women in the PDU's workforce, with 83 per cent of female staff compared to 10 per cent of the caseload.
- In 48 per cent of the cases we inspected assessment neither analysed the protected characteristics of the person on probation nor considered the impact of these on their ability to comply and engage with service delivery.
- Although there was a diversity action group in place, staff knew little about what its role was, and some staff felt that it had lost momentum due to workloads. A further example of this was a proposed delivery of 'banter' workshops, but this had not taken place due to other demands within the PDU.

2. Court work and case supervision

2.1. Court work



The pre-sentence information and advice provided to court supports its decision-making.

Inadequate

Our rating⁵ for court work is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against the key question:

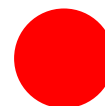
Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
Is the pre-sentence information and advice provided to court sufficiently analytical and personalised to the individual, supporting the court's decision-making?	5%

Areas for improvement:

- In total, 19 reports were inspected in a cohort of 102 cases. Only one piece of the court work inspected was judged as sufficient.
- The vast majority of reports failed to sufficiently analyse information available, leading to sentencing proposals based on limited analysis.
- Appropriate domestic abuse enquires were not made prior to sentencing in 16 out of 19 relevant cases and, in regard to safeguarding enquires, these only occurred in four out of 15 cases inspected. Without this information, the appropriateness of sentencing was questionable.
- Resourcing issues in the court teams contributed to poor service delivery and lack of confidence from sentencers using rehabilitative requirements such as accredited programmes.
- Although improvements were made in recent months to improve the relationship with courts and the delivery of the service probation provides, this was still work in progress. We heard that court staff had '*got used to us not being there*' during the pandemic and that therefore did not question this being the case after the pandemic period.

⁵ The rating for the standard is driven by the score for the key question, which is placed in a rating band. [Full data and further information about inspection methodology is available in the data workbook for this inspection in the data annexe.](#)

2.2. Assessment



Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the person on probation.

Inadequate

Our rating⁶ for assessment is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against three key questions:

Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
Does assessment focus sufficiently on engaging the person on probation?	57%
Does assessment focus sufficiently on the factors linked to offending and desistance?	49%
Does assessment focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	31%

Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland PDU is rated as 'Inadequate' for assessment as the lowest score out of the three questions was 31 per cent. Concerningly, this relates to whether there was sufficient focus on keeping other people safe.

Strengths:

- Probation practitioners were involving and engaging people on probation in the assessment process. Information had been gathered on their views, personal circumstances and strengths, which was used to inform the identification of future work as part of their order or licence.

Areas for improvement:

- Improvements need to be made around gathering information on domestic abuse and child safeguarding. Information sharing did not always take place and some staff were not making the necessary enquires.
- In too many cases the safety of victims and potential victims was missing. Assessments failed to analyse specific concerns and risks related to victims, with this occurring in only 45 out of 95 relevant cases.
- There was a failure to identify and analyse the risk of harm posed in 59 out of the 96 cases inspected. Additionally, over two thirds of assessments did not draw sufficiently on information from other agencies and past behaviour. Without a strong assessment and a full understanding of risk, it is difficult to identify what probation practitioners were to focus on throughout the period of supervision.

⁶ The rating for the standard is driven by the score for the key question, which is placed in a rating band. [Full data and further information about inspection methodology is available in the data workbook for this inspection in the data annexe.](#)

2.3. Planning



Planning is well-informed, holistic and personalised, actively involving the person on probation.

Inadequate

Our rating⁷ for planning is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against three key questions:

Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
Does planning focus sufficiently on engaging the person on probation?	50%
Does planning focus sufficiently on reducing reoffending and supporting desistance?	52%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	40%

The PDU is rated as 'Inadequate' for planning as the lowest score of the three key questions was 40 per cent.

Strengths:

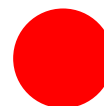
- In 62 per cent of cases inspected, planning sufficiently set out the requirements of the sentence or licence and delivery arrangements in the available timescales. This led to appropriate and realistic plans being developed. The majority of plans took into account the individual's views, circumstances, readiness and motivation to change.

Areas for improvement:

- Insufficient links were made to the work of other agencies, with this occurring in just 38 per cent of relevant cases. By failing to involve relevant agencies, key information and opportunities were missed in the planning for a sentence or supervision period.
- Contingency arrangements that effectively manage the risks that have been identified were judged as sufficient in just 34 out of 93 cases. Plans were often brief and failed to consider actions required to mitigate risks to the individual. There was also not enough consideration of critical factors linked to risk of harm, with this being sufficient in only 40 out of 93 relevant cases.
- Too often, planning did not reflect the most crucial factors linked to offending. Less than half of the relevant cases inspected did not have the necessary constructive and restrictive interventions in place to keep others safe.

⁷ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. [Full data and further information about inspection methodology is available in the data workbook for this inspection in the data annexe.](#)

2.4. Implementation and delivery



High-quality well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging the person on probation.

Inadequate

Our rating⁸ for implementation and delivery is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against three key questions:

Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
Is the sentence or post-custody period implemented effectively with a focus on engaging the person on probation?	57%
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support desistance?	40%
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?	43%

The PDU is rated as 'Inadequate' for implementation and delivery as the lowest score of the three key questions was 40 per cent. Although only marginally, the lowest area was supporting reducing reoffending.

Strengths:

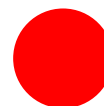
- Practitioners were operating in a flexible manner to improve engagement with the person on probation. There was consideration for individuals' circumstances and practitioners were proactive in re-engaging the person on probation after enforcement action had taken place.

Areas for improvement:

- Not enough work was completed with people on probation to support their desistance. Services to support rehabilitation and reduce the likelihood of reoffending were not always utilised, despite this being part of planning.
- The coordination of multi-agency working to manage risk of harm was poor in too many cases, assessed sufficient by inspectors in only 36 out of 62 relevant cases. Inspectors found instances of information either not being shared, or when it was it was, not being used as part of the delivery of work with the person on probation.
- Home visits were not routinely completed, despite the significant contribution that they can make in the identification of risk factors and engagement with individuals. Although the PF limited home visits, there would have been benefits for them have been undertaken.

⁸ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. [Full data and further information about inspection methodology is available in the data workbook for this inspection in the data annexe.](#)

2.5. Reviewing



Reviewing of progress is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the person on probation.

Inadequate

Our rating⁹ for reviewing is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against three key questions:

Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the compliance and engagement of the person on probation?	61%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting desistance?	55%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	44%

The PDU is rated as 'Inadequate' for reviewing as the lowest score of the three key questions was 44 per cent in relation to keeping people safe.

Strengths:

- Formal reviews were regularly completed by practitioners, with sufficient focus on both desistance and keeping other people safe. This is despite the fact that formal reviews are not required for low and medium risk of harm cases, which formed nearly three quarters of the cases inspected.

Areas for improvement:

- People on probation were not involved enough in the review of work undertaken on their sentences, with this being judged as sufficient in less than half of inspected cases. This was a missed opportunity to take stock of progress made, acknowledge positive change and identify future work.
- When reviewing the risk of harm posed by individuals, practitioners are not involving both the person on probation and any key individuals in their life enough. This was a further missed opportunity to improve engagement and gather up-to-date information for the review process.
- Although formal reviews were routinely taking place, the overall quality of reviewing needs to improve. Too often, significant information within reviews was missing, demonstrated by the fact that 48 out of 77 cases failed to identify and address changes in factors related to risk of harm.

⁹ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table.

2.6. Outcomes

Early outcomes are positive, demonstrating reasonable progress for the person on probation.

We do not currently rate the Outcomes standard but provide this data for information and benchmarking purposes only.

Outcomes	Percentage 'Yes'
Do early outcomes demonstrate that reasonable progress has been made, in line with the personalised needs of the person on probation?	39%

Strengths:

- An increase in offending was found in only 16 per cent of cases inspected. Given the resourcing and workload issues, it was positive to see that the reoffending rate on the cases we inspected was relatively low.
- Compliance was an overall positive picture. This was often evidenced through practitioners' building and maintaining impactful relationships with people on probation.
- Enforcement action was not required in nearly two thirds of cases inspected, further highlighting good levels of engagement with the person on probation to comply with the requirements of their order.

Areas for improvement:

- Early outcomes only demonstrated sufficient progress in 39 out of 100 cases. Whilst it is acknowledged that this is the early stages for some orders and licences, this figure is disappointing.
- Insufficient work was undertaken to address and reduce the risk of serious harm posed by individuals, with improvements seen in only a quarter of inspected cases. Out of 45 cases where domestic abuse was linked as a factor to keeping others safe, inspectors judged that improvements had been made in just four cases.
- Early outcomes indicated that limited progress had been made to address factors including accommodation, finance, benefits and debt, all of which were linked to offending. Although scores varied, overall improvements were made in less than half of cases.

Annexe one – Web links

Full data from this inspection and further information about the methodology used to conduct this inspection is available [the data workbook for this inspection](#).

A glossary of terms used in this report is available on our website using the following link: [Glossary \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/glossary)