



effective practice

Where we see our standards
delivered well, in practice.



HM Inspectorate
of Probation

AN HM INSPECTORATE OF PROBATION EFFECTIVE PRACTICE GUIDE



Effective practice guide

Working with people subject to custodial sentences

Based on: **Offender management in custody – release**

A joint inspection by HM Inspectorate of Probation and HM Inspectorate of Prisons

March 2023

Acknowledgements

This effective practice guide is based on information sourced while undertaking the thematic inspection *Offender Management in Custody – post-release*. The inspection was led by HM Inspector Tony Kirk, supported by a team of probation and prisons inspectors, and operations, research, communications, and corporate staff. DWRM (a social enterprise 'which offers a clear pathway to rehabilitation through experience-led consultancy, advocacy and administration, facilitating further and higher education in prison') undertook interviews with people on probation, who shared valuable insights about their experience of Offender Management in Custody (OMiC). The manager responsible for this inspection programme is Helen Davies.

In collaboration with Tammie Burroughs, effective practice lead, Tony Kirk has identified some of the key themes associated with effective practice when working with people released from a custodial sentence.

We would like to thank all those who participated in any way in this inspection; without their help and cooperation, the inspection and effective practice guide would not have been possible.

Please note that, throughout the report, the names in the practice examples have been changed to protect the individuals' identities.

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HM Inspectorate of Probation
1st Floor Civil Justice Centre
1 Bridge Street West
Manchester
M3 3FX

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Introduction

About this guide

HM Inspectorate of Probation has a duty to identify and disseminate effective practice.¹

We assure the quality of youth offending and probation provision and test its effectiveness. Critically, we make recommendations designed to highlight and disseminate best practice, challenge poor performance, and encourage the Probation Service to improve.

Here, following on from the pre-release effective practice guide, we provide some themes to guide effective practice with individuals released from custody. Where available, we also highlight examples within these themes where we have seen our standards delivered well. These guides are designed to help commissioners and providers improve this area of their work with people in prison and on probation.

I am grateful to all the areas that participated in our thematic inspection, and for their additional help in producing this effective practice guide. We publish these guides to complement our reports and the standards against which we inspect youth offending and probation.

I hope this effective practice guide will be of interest to everyone working in prisons and probation services and seeking to improve their practice. We welcome feedback on this and our other guides, to ensure that they are as useful as possible to future readers.



Justin Russell

HM Chief Inspector of Probation



Finding your way



Tools for practitioners



Useful links

Contact us



We would love to hear what you think of this guide. Our contact details are on the [HM Inspectorate of Probation Effective Practice page](#).

¹ **For adult services** – Section 7 of the *Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)*, as amended by the *Offender Management Act (2007)*, section 12(3)(a). **For youth services** – inspection and reporting on youth offending teams is established under section 39 of the *Crime and Disorder Act (1998)*.

Background

The Offender Management in Custody (OMiC) model was implemented from April 2018 to coordinate an individual's journey through custody and into the community. The vision of the model is that:



"everyone in prison should have the opportunity to transform their lives by using their time in custody constructively to reduce their risk of harm and reoffending; to plan their resettlement; and to improve their prospects of becoming a safe, law-abiding and valuable member of society".

In November 2022 we published our joint thematic inspection report, alongside HM Inspectorate of Prison, *Offender Management in Custody – pre-release*. On this inspection, we found that the OMiC model was not working as intended, and recommended a fundamental review of current practice. However, we also saw some examples of effective practice, which we featured in a guide published alongside the thematic report.



You can access the thematic inspection report and all associated documents via this link: [A joint thematic inspection of Offender Management in Custody – pre-release](#)

Part two of this thematic inspection tracked the same people in prison, following them into the community, to examine how well the resettlement and rehabilitation aims of the model are being achieved.



You can access the thematic inspection report [here](#).

This guide will focus on the work completed with people released from prison, frequently referred to as 'resettlement'.² It explores elements of effective practice found in case work, to illustrate the significant themes that we identified during the inspection. This guide should be read in conjunction with the effective practice guide for pre-release work, for an overview of the whole journey, including organisational delivery.



This can be accessed here [effective practice guide OMiC, pre-release](#).

We define effective practice as:



"Where we see our standards delivered well in practice, with our standards being based on established models and frameworks, and grounded in evidence, learning and experience."

The examples in this guide are drawn from evidence of effective practice identified during our post-release fieldwork. This was completed in seven probation service regions: the North East, Wales, East of England, North West, Greater Manchester, Kent, Surrey and Sussex, and London.

² There is debate about the term 'resettlement', given the prefix 're', as many individuals face structural barriers that exclude them from society even before they have received a custodial sentence. However, we have used this term, because of its widespread and official use.

Why is resettlement important?

As a group or on your own: Consider your daily routine. What do you do from the moment you open your eyes until the point when you go back to sleep? Reflect on the decisions you make throughout your day, who you interact with formally and informally, by choice or circumstances, through necessity or desire. What products or technology do you use throughout your day? What roles do you play throughout your day? For example, are you a parent or carer, a sports person, dog walker, mental health ally, aspiring comedian? What responsibilities do you have as a result of these roles (for example, prepping meals, or ensuring other people get up, dressed and adhere to their routines)?



Reflect on the specific details of all you do on your typical day, starting with waking up. For example:

Do you wake up to an alarm you have set the evening before? Do you plan multiple alarms, knowing you like the snooze button? Do you wake immediately?

Mentally walk through your whole day and consider how these decisions, roles and interactions are part of who you are, your identity, the things which make you unique.

Consider, for instance, whether you have a specific brand of coffee, or use that special hairbrush that makes your hair look just right. If you cannot have/use these, what impact might this have on you?

Think through everything you do:

Are you a morning scroller on your phone? Do you reach out to send a morning text to someone? Do you eat breakfast? Is there something specific to you that starts your day right, maybe a food, maybe a brand of coffee?

Think through all of these little details, which are unique to you, your household, your family, your workplace and your local community.

Now imagine what it would be like if all of your choices were removed, and your routine was dictated to you, and you could not choose what you use, the timings of your routine, who you interact with:

- How would you feel?
- How might this alter your day?
- How might this make you feel about your self-identity?

Now consider how it might be to get into that new routine, which is dictated to you, over a significant period of time, say three months, or a year, or maybe over a 10-year period. So, this now becomes your routine; you get familiar with this new, imposed structure to your day.

Then you are suddenly given back all of the choices and you have the freedom again to decide how you shape your day, what structure you follow, who you associate with.

Only maybe these things may have changed, even if only slightly – instead of talking about Facebook or Instagram to connect to people, people are talking about TikTok and BeReal; maybe they have stopped making your favourite coffee.

- How might you feel to suddenly get choice and freedom back?
- How might this impact on your day?
- How might this make you feel about your identity?

This exercise illustrates that the transition to custody and from custody can be experienced in the same way, and for some will create feelings of stress and anxiety and may be experienced as traumatic. This may well be exacerbated by the multiple needs of people in custody, especially if they do not know where they will be going in sufficient time before their release, and do not know about or understand the controls that will be imposed, or the official and unofficial expectations of them on release.

People can be disorientated by the move away from a very structured routine, and will have to re-establish, or develop, relationships with those in the community. Reoffending and breach of licence conditions are most common in the critical period just after release, and it is important to manage the resettlement process.

Some of the challenges are evident in this quote from one of the people interviewed by DWRM,³ the lived experience organisation that conducted peer research for the thematic inspection:

“It’s hard for people [friends and family] to understand because they expect me to be the same person I was before prison. I look the same, I speak the same, but I am not the same person. I am homeless, jobless, staying with a mate. They think I should be doing better than I am. They said that because I have been out for 3 months I should be going to work by now. They don’t understand what it’s like.”



³ For further details on DWRM, please see page 11 of this guide.

Principles of effective resettlement

An Academic Insights paper written by Dr Matt Cracknell (2023)⁴ identifies six key principles of effective resettlement support. An overview of each is provided below:



Figure 1: six key principles of effective resettlement support



Early identification of needs and through-the-gate support: planning for resettlement should begin when the individual first enters prison.



Plans produced co-productively and not solely risk-focused: resettlement plans should blend supporting desistance with risk management and allow controls that bend and flex with an individual's specific set of circumstances. In order to develop 'well-informed, holistic and personalised' plans, as per our standards, it is vital to meaningfully involve the individual in the planning process.



Emphasis on continuity and the relational aspects of supervision: consistent support from a named probation practitioner enables a supportive relationship to develop. The knowledge gained from such a relationship will allow the practitioner to take a more flexible approach to oversight, as it can be tailored to the individual's protected characteristics, capacity, capability, motivation and personal circumstances, and will increase the sense of procedural justice.⁵

⁴ [Academic Insights 2023/01 - Effective practice in Resettlement \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/academic-insights/2023/01-effective-practice-in-resettlement/)

⁵ Procedural justice theory states that, if people feel they are treated in a procedurally fair and just way, starting from the very first contact, they will view those in authority as more legitimate and respect them more.



Bond and bridge to social capital: people in prison and being released require support to access appropriate resources to address their needs and increase any existent strengths. However, it can be difficult to seize opportunities presented, for a range of reasons, including the stigma from prison, social skills, confidence and/or capacity, so practitioners need to act as a bridge to these resources and facilitate a bond.

Dr Cracknell also highlights that:

“the promotion of social capital and practical support should be combined alongside therapeutic and motivational work, particularly as providing practical support alone is often not sufficient in reintegrating individuals back into society, with practical help needing to be reinforced by addressing thinking and behaviour.”



Awareness of intersectionality: practitioners need to be aware of the individual’s identity and how any protected characteristics intersect, as this will help them to understand how these different aspects combine to create discrimination and privilege.

For example:

- access to mental health treatment services may be influenced by previous racial trauma and stigmatisation that affect the individual’s level of trust in services
- women may have distinct needs linked to trauma.



Restorative and strengths-based practices: resettlement plans should build on the individual’s strengths, including their personal strengths and the social and community networks they have available to them. People also benefit when practitioners provide opportunities for those being released from prison to make amends.

All of these principles are interlinked; for instance, strengths-based practices must be co-produced to identify the strengths, and the individual and practitioner need to have a good relationship so that they can be open about the strengths and challenges. The earlier these discussions begin the better, as then the practitioner can have a greater understanding of all layers of the individual’s identity. The potential impact of work aligned with these principles can be seen in a quote from one of the individuals interviewed by DWRM:

“They’ve offered loads of support because I have been willing to turn my life around. I’ve got nothing but good to say about them ... they are really interested; before it just felt like I was there to tick a box ... this time it feels like they care.”



As noted, the above is a summary of Dr Cracknell’s [Academic Insights paper](#). We would encourage you to read the full paper, which provides a more comprehensive oversight, alongside some of the challenges in adhering to these principles, especially in light of the current resource challenges.



In addition, HM Inspectorate of Probation’s research team has developed a webpage under ‘the evidence base – probation services’ page on [custody and resettlement](#). This webpage provides key findings about custody and resettlement, the background to OMiC, and a summary of the evidence that supports delivery and implementation.

Learning from people in prison and on probation

We commissioned the services of 'DWRM' (Doing What Really Matters) – a social enterprise 'which offers a clear pathway to rehabilitation through experience-led consultancy, advocacy and administration, facilitating further and higher education in prison, to give a voice to those in the criminal justice system'.



During phase one of this inspection, they interviewed 72 people who were preparing for release from prison, to gather their perspectives on the services that they had received. For phase two, DWRM lived experience consultants completed 53 follow-up interviews with prison leavers who had been included in the pre-release case sample, including with four individuals who had been recalled to prison following their release.

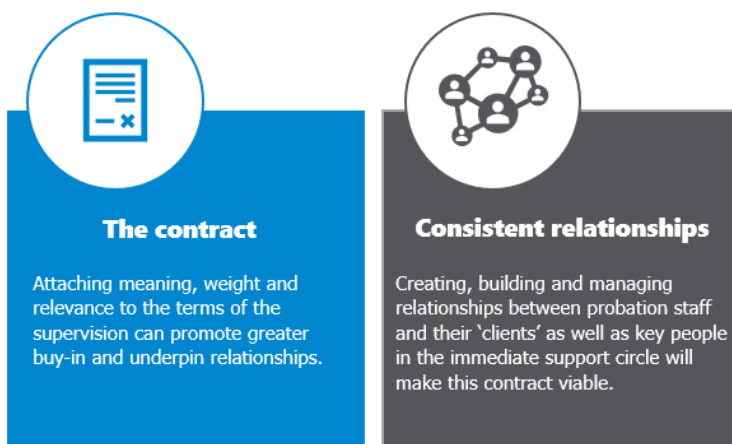
We are grateful for the insights of these individuals, whose feedback we have used to inform the findings of the thematic inspection.

During phase one, DWRM identified three key themes, summarised below:



DWRM have produced a [Participation and engagement OMiC report](#), which explains their methodology, their findings in full and the research that supports the solutions they offer.

During phase two, DWRM identified two key themes, summarised below:



DWRM have identified the significance of the contract signed at the start of supervision for the future progress of the person on probation. Some of the key elements include:



Figure 2: Proposed contract principles from DWRM



You can access a printable version of the above [here](#).

The second theme was consistent relationships; while there are many facets to this, the key points that came across from the participants in the DWRM research were:



Figure 3: Principles of a consistent relationship from DWRM



You can access a printable version of the above [here](#).



Chapter 4 of our thematic report was prepared by DWRM and provides further detail of their methodology and findings, which can be accessed [here](#).



Reflection questions

Reflecting on this section:

From a strategic perspective:

- Does the current deployment of staff allow the service to maximise resettlement outcomes for people in prison and on probation?
 - If so, how can you sustain this? And share with other areas?
 - If not, what could you do differently?
- How do you use your management information constructively to evaluate the service you provide and use comparator analysis with outcomes for community interventions?
 - And do you segment the analysis across different demographics?
- How are the voices of people in prison and on probation heard by the region?
 - And what impact does this have on service delivery?

- On a scale of 1 to 10, to what extent is service delivery individualised?
 - How could you move this score higher?
- How are you assured of the quality of resettlement work, including release planning, licence conditions and induction processes?
- To what extent does the service recognise and celebrate the progress of people in prison and on probation?
- What measures have you put in place to ensure that your team and partners have a consistent and shared understanding of resettlement practice?

From an operational perspective:

- At what point do you think about the resettlement of the people you are working with who are in custody, and why?
- What do you think impacts on the way a person in custody views their resettlement plan?
 - How does this influence how you engage with them?
- Thinking about the people you are working with who are in custody:
 - what barriers do they face in working towards a pro-social identity?
 - how do you discuss these with them and work with them to mitigate these barriers?
 - how do you integrate this into their assessment and plan?
- What strategies do you have to meaningfully involve the person in prison and on probation in their assessments, plans, implementation of interventions and reviews?
- How do you ensure that the person you are working with is clear about the expectations on them at all stages of their sentence and understands the rationale for any controls imposed?
- How do you work with the person in prison and on probation to build and sustain hope?
- How do you coordinate planning across the different agencies working with a person you are supporting through custody and back into the community?

Services to meet the needs of people released from prison

As a group or on your own: Consider the basic needs of any human being in order to survive. Think about their various needs, including physiological, safety, social, esteem and self-actualisation needs.

You now have two options to consider this further, depending on what is available to you. You can either gather 15 paper cups, 15 sticky notes and a pen or, alternatively, you can use this [template](#).



Write one of each of these 15 words on a sticky note:

Growth, food, water, self-esteem, health, shelter, safety, stability, love, belonging, family and friends, air, employment, achievement, sleep.



Build a pyramid with the cups (five at the bottom, four on top of these, then three, two and one at the top). The pyramid you have built, or the one on the template, represents the needs humans have.

The basic needs are at the bottom, representing a secure foundation. These are essential. Place the relevant sticky notes with these basic needs on the bottom layer of cups. The next four most important needs should go on the next row, and so on until you have used all of the sticky notes. The one at the top is the least significant need, and perceived as nice to have, rather than essential.

If you are doing this in pairs, discuss what goes where and why. How do you think the answers may differ across different protected characteristics and why?

- How do you think this might relate to the work you do with people in prison/on probation?

Now either remove one of the cups (or visualise this if doing it on paper) along the bottom row, with a basic need written on it:

- What happens to the structure?
- What happens if you move more than one of the cups?
- How does this relate to your work?

It should be noted that removing one of the basic needs does not destroy the structure, so does not stop someone progressing, but it does make the foundations less stable and progress much challenging. The fewer basic needs are met, the more challenging progression becomes.

Conversely, when the basic needs can be added to the structure, and reinforced with additional support, it can make the foundations even stronger.

This exercise is a representation of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which can be seen in the figure below. Many of these needs can be linked to the resettlement pathways for people being released from prison, which will be addressed in the section below.

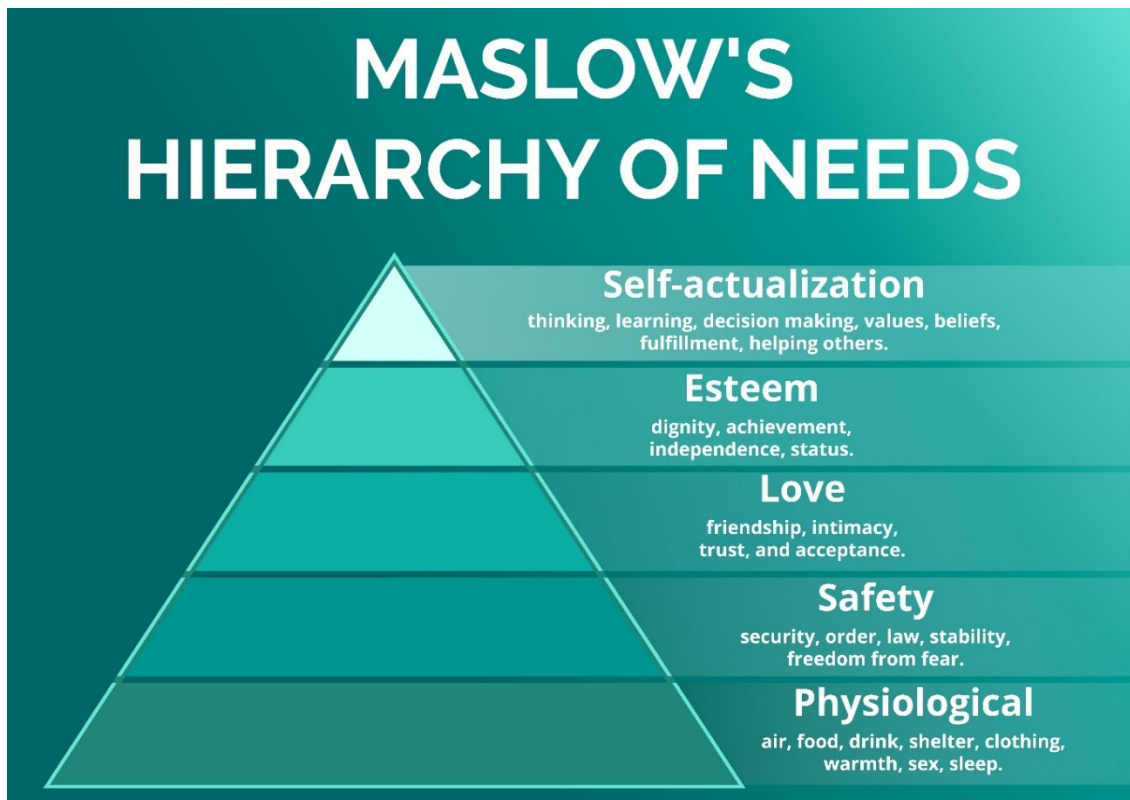


Figure 4: Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Accommodation

Having somewhere safe to live that one can call home is one of the most basic human needs. Stable accommodation is associated with reduced reoffending and is often related to supportive family relationships. Without this, it is difficult for probation to manage individuals safely or do effective rehabilitative work.

The scale of the challenge of assisting individuals to obtain and retain settled and suitable accommodation is huge, particularly given the multiple barriers faced by people on probation, including:

'a shortage of housing stock, delays in obtaining benefits, high up-front costs of renting, low priority on housing registers, insufficient support services, and providers who are averse to accommodating people with substantial criminal records.' (HM Inspectorate of Probation, 2020).⁶

Responsibility for housing and homelessness sits with local authorities. However, under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, probation services have a duty to refer to them people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. While local authorities have a duty to prevent and relieve homelessness, they do not have a duty to house such individuals unless they are particularly vulnerable, which excludes many single individuals on probation supervision.

⁶ HM Inspectorate of Probation. (2020). [Accommodation and support for adult offenders in the community and on release from prison in England \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmip/)

Resettlement services should form a bridge between the accommodation services available in the community and the accommodation tasks that can be delivered in custody.

"I needed a risk assessment from my previous PO. It was not sent in time, so my accommodation was lost. I see this as a fault of the system rather than the individual. The form was very long and time consuming, the PO is very busy and over-stretched with case load."



The example below illustrates how:

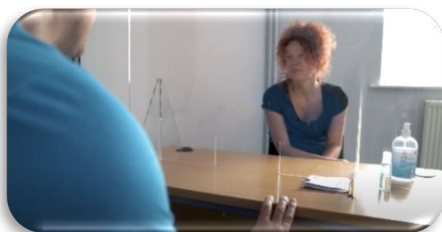
"early resettlement planning is vital, especially where people have complex needs. The practitioner completes a comprehensive assessment, drawing on multiple sources of information and uses this effectively to evidence the need for a bespoke accommodation package. There is evidence of well-developed partnership communication, which enables those working with Ian to be responsive to his needs and changes in his circumstances".

For example:⁷

Ian is a 75-year-old man who was released after serving a two-year sentence for arson at his property, following a dispute with his daughter who lived there too.

Much work was undertaken to secure housing and support for his release, including an adult social care referral and assessment. A duty to refer application was made to the local authority, and a Wise Group mentor was allocated and worked hard to secure a private rented flat. Ian has a number of health problems and is a wheelchair user. Good-quality ground floor accommodation was secured in an appropriate area. The private landlord paid for emergency accommodation when it became clear that the flat was not yet appropriately configured, to avoid Ian being street homeless while adaptations were made.

The availability of community accommodation services – tier 3 (CAS3) is positive. The thematic inspection found that CAS3 accommodation services have worked well in the five probation regions where they have fully operated since July 2021. CAS3 provides temporary accommodation for up to 84 nights for homeless prison leavers and for those moving on from approved premises and CAS2 (formerly Bail Accommodation Support Services), as well as assistance to help people move on into settled accommodation. This has significantly reduced homelessness on release from custody or approved premises in the regions where it operates. HMPPS estimates that 35 to 40 per cent of people on probation move on to settled housing once they have left CAS3 accommodation.



In this 1:48 YouTube video, produced by HMPPS, probation officer Lindsay discusses the benefits of [Community Accommodation Services Tier 3](#)

⁷ This example is taken from our thematic report on accommodation: HM Inspectorate of Probation. (2020). [Accommodation and support for adult offenders in the community and on release from prison in England \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmip/)

Education, training and employment (ETE)

In 2020, the Inspectorate published an evidence review, which examined 33 interventions across a range of community and custodial settings. The researchers found that, on average, ETE interventions were associated with nine percent fewer participants reoffending compared with those who did not take part.⁸

Research into former prisoners' outcomes in the community found that undertaking any form of prison learning, regardless of qualification, significantly reduced reoffending on release. Encouraging any form of participation in learning should be a primary goal for those working with prisoners and probation service users.

Furthermore, engaging in ETE on release helps prison leavers to develop new networks, and reinforces an identity away from that of 'offender'. Consequently, it was positive to see practitioners working creatively and flexibly to support ETE. For example, they offered volunteering opportunities or supported discussions with employers about conditions, such as exclusion zones, to ensure the person on probation was not put in a difficult position in their work.

The cases below are examples of effective ETE work.

The inspector commented:

"the practitioner made appropriate referrals to support Tyrone to engage in ETE activities. The third sector organisation also provided practical support to enable him to work towards his goals".

For example:

Tyrone served a long custodial sentence for serious violence, and has a pattern of similar offences.

He was referred to the National Careers Service in custody and completed a level two personal training course. Tyrone expressed a wish to complete the level three qualification and eventually secure employment as a personal trainer.

The community offender manager (COM) referred him to the Shaw Trust for ETE support, and an appointment was arranged promptly once he had been released. The Shaw Trust offered to help Tyrone find and enrol on to a course. They also agreed to pay his travel expenses and help him to find gyms where he could undertake practical work. The Shaw Trust later helped Tyrone to secure part-time work in an unrelated field. This supported his engagement, desistance and resettlement into the community.

Wellbeing

Rates of mental ill-health are high among those who pass through the criminal justice system. Around a third of people who find themselves in police custody have some form of mental health difficulty, as do 47 per cent of men and 71 per cent of women in prison. Forty-nine per cent had a past/lifetime mental illness, and 39 per cent of people on probation supervision are recorded as having a mental health issue.⁹

⁸ HM Inspectorate of Probation. [Education, training and employment \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://justiceinspectorates.gov.uk). Accessed 21.12.2022.

⁹ HM Inspectorate of Probation. (2021). [A joint thematic inspection of the criminal justice journey for individuals with mental health needs and disorders \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://justiceinspectorates.gov.uk)

It is important that practitioners recognise this, so that they can help people to access the appropriate treatment. They will need to analyse how someone's mental health impacts on their ability to comply with their sentence, to engage throughout their sentence, to manage their risks and to promote keeping them and the public safe. It is essential that those with a mental health condition or disorder are identified as early as possible, particularly when that problem is severe. Once the mental health issue is identified, information relevant to the issue must be shared between agencies so that appropriate support and treatment can be offered at the earliest opportunity, and the right decisions made at each step of the journey from arrest to sentence and post-sentence supervision in custody or in the community.

An inspector commented:

"This was a very well-managed case, with many good aspects. The frequency of contact kept and offered was good; the practitioner had worked hard to form a good working relationship; the use of motivational interviewing was exceptional; the quality of recording was detailed, and the reviewing of progress was dynamic."

"Contact was meaningful, with an excellent focus on mental health and good liaison with all agencies involved in her support."

For example:¹⁰

Nick was subject to an eight-month licence for an offence of domestic abuse. After sentencing, when he arrived at the receiving prison, there was evidence of a health screening in reception, which identified issues with depression and anxiety. As a result, Nick was appropriately referred to primary care mental health, for psychologically informed treatment. After some weeks on the waiting list, the healthcare service sent a letter to Nick explaining that there were delays to treatment caused by Covid-19, and advised him on how he could access day-to-day support if he felt his mental health was deteriorating. Given the length of his wait, this was also followed up with a welfare check call to his cell by mental health services.

Nick was seen immediately before his release. He was screened in relation to the need for community follow-up and to ensure he had his medication in place. The case was co-worked by a probation officer and a probation service officer, which was communicated well to Nick.

On his release from custody, it was evident that Nick had failed to understand his post-sentence supervision licence, including the expectations, conditions and consequences of breach. Therefore, the practitioner took their time to explain what it meant and asked Nick to confirm he understood by clarifying the details of the conditions. The practitioner also explored any potential barriers to engagement and was particularly alert to those arising from Nick's mental health and ADHD. The practitioner was able to draw on knowledge about Nick's personal circumstances, because they had already established a relationship.

Formal assessments were comprehensive, identifying Nick's complex issues, including ADHD, substance misuse, anxiety and depression and active self-harming. The records clearly indicated information from previous assessments, and the practitioner drew on and analysed a range of sources to inform supervision and the management of licence conditions.

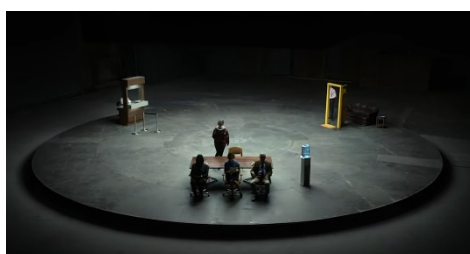
¹⁰ The example is taken from HM Inspectorate of Probation. (2022). [Effective Practice guide: mental health \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/effective-practice-guide-mental-health/)

The assessment also clearly documented a high risk of serious harm to Nick's former partner and children. The risk management plan was clear about who was at risk, of what, the imminence of the risk and how it would be managed. The practitioner also considered Nick's mental health needs, learning disability and own vulnerabilities. This included active engagement with children's social care, which then further informed supervision and ongoing assessments. Specialist personality disorder services were consulted, and the case formulation received informed Nick's assessments and service delivery. This was evident in the records. Nick was referred to and engaged with the local facility for mental health treatment in the community. He also received support with substance misuse.

Finance, benefits and debt

As a group or on your own: Watch this 1:02 minute advert from HSBC and Shelter, available via the [YouTube link – Vicious circle](#)

Now consider the following. What identification did you need to access:



- your current accommodation?
- your current employment?
- your GP?
- identification documents themselves, such as a passport or driving licence?



Did you have access to all that was required? Was it immediate access or did you have to apply for some? Did you have to print something off? Do you have access to a printer? Do you have bills registered in your name to make these available to you?

The evidence required to open an account is:

Passport (costs £82.50 online and £93 by post), driving licence (provisional costs £34 online and £43 by post), council tax bill, UK utility bill, such as gas or electricity, bank or building society statement, credit card statement, HM Revenue and Customs letter or tax statement, mortgage statement, tenancy agreement, benefits statement.

Now imagine someone you work with on your caseload. Maybe they have been in care and do not have their birth certificate; perhaps they have been in transient accommodation for a decade or more. Maybe they only own what they carry. Maybe they use top-up cards for amenities and phones.

Reflect back on the above. How easy might they find it to provide the relevant documents to give them access to a bank account, and to provide access to benefits, and equity in the employment and the housing market?

NB: If people do not have photographic identification or a permanent address, or are not named on a tenancy agreement or bills, banks should accept alternatives such as a benefits letter; immigration status document; or a letter from a prison governor, care-home manager, homeless shelter or place of study.

If you want to hear more about this, you can watch this 3:05 minute [YouTube video – HSBC tackling homelessness with Shelter](#), which explains the importance of a bank account.

Beck, Vogel and Mheen (2020)¹¹ suggest that:

"little is known about the relationship between debt and crime in adults. Notwithstanding the relevance of the existing studies, firm conclusions about the direction of the link between debt and crime, especially among adults, cannot be drawn yet. The presence of problematic debt could be a risk factor for criminal behaviour, as the strain theory would suggest, and criminal behaviour might create a trajectory of debt, given that offenders are more likely to have debt later in life."

Nonetheless, they suggest:

"Offenders may have more difficulties adjusting to society after life in prison because of their debt and debt may thus hinder resocialization, which in turn increases the likelihood that they will re-offend. More generally, during supervision and training attention should thus be paid to dealing with money and budgeting. Given that crime predicts later debt, targeting debt in resocialization programs, for instance, in the form of budgeting courses, could effectively reduce the risk of future offences."

It is important that people in prison are given practical support with matters such as this, as they can feel overwhelming, as illustrated in this quote:



"I was apprehensive about coming out. I did not know what to expect. Was in prison for 7 years."

An inspector commented:

"Approved premises staff were persistent in advocating on Stephen's behalf to ensure he was able to access public funds to allow him to pursue his resettlement plan in moving on to more stable and long-term accommodation".

For example:

Stephen was given a lengthy custodial sentence for supplying drugs. He was released from custody to an approved premises. He had no formal identification documents and, consequently, was unable to access his pension credit.

Approved premises staff offered daily support; they also extended his placement until he had secured access. This took four months from his release, during which he had no access to public funds. At this point, he was able to move on into CAS3 supported accommodation.

¹¹ G van Beek, V de Vogel, and D van de Mheen. (2020). The relationship between debt and crime: A systematic and coping review. *European Journal of Probation*. Volume 13, Issue 1. [The relationship between debt and crime: A systematic and scoping review - Gercoline van Beek, Vivienne de Vogel, Dike van de Mheen, 2021 \(sagepub.com\)](#) (accessed 3 January 2023).

Family and relationships

Criminal justice and allied professionals have long acknowledged the importance of engaging with the family to support successful rehabilitation. Family relationships were given new focus by the ground-breaking review by Lord Farmer in 2017,¹² which pulled together the evidence base and urged a renewed focus by the government and all those working in prisons, probation and youth justice services.

The HM Inspectorate of Probation website¹³ notes that:

Families can be a strength to those with convictions and they can be powerful allies to those working in probation. Research has demonstrated that families can:

- *provide motivation and support to cease offending*
- *help with adherence to substance misuse treatment and supervision requirements*
- *encourage self-belief and engender hope in the possibility of change*
- *widen access to information and resources, especially employment and housing.*

An inspector commented:

“this was a carefully considered release plan, which balanced the needs of Paul, family members and any associated risks. The plan drew on multiple sources of information, and careful analysis and consideration of what this information meant for the risks within the case”.

For example:

The plan for release takes account of the fact that Paul’s father is elderly and has care needs. The practitioner involves Paul’s family members in an assessment of the suitability of him being released to his father’s address – to also help with his care.

A home visit is conducted in person to support this assessment, which involves his daughters. Paul experiences anxiety, and therefore the practitioner ensures he is updated in a timely fashion.

Substance use

There is a high prevalence of people in prison who have problematic drug use. Palmer et al. (2011) indicate that it is between 30 and 50 per cent. The high recall rates we found in the second part of our thematic inspection of OMiC were linked mainly to homelessness and/or relapse into substance misuse. There was a lack of continuity of care before and after release, which led to prison leavers not being able to access the right levels of support to sustain their resettlement.

Our 2020 thematic report on substance misuse¹⁴ found that:

Of 26 people who were released from prison in our six fieldwork areas in the 12 months to March 2020 who had been assessed as needing follow-up drug treatment in the community, only 10 (38 per cent) were supported sufficiently to access these services.

¹² Lord Farmer. (2017). *The Importance of Strengthening Prisoners’ Family Ties to Prevent Reoffending and Reduce Intergenerational Crime*. London: Ministry of Justice.

¹³ HM Inspectorate of Probation. [Family relationships \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/family-relationships/). Accessed 21.12.2022.

¹⁴ HM Inspectorate of Probation. (2020). [A joint thematic inspection of community-based drug treatment and recovery work with people on probation \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/a-joint-thematic-inspection-of-community-based-drug-treatment-and-recovery-work-with-people-on-probation/)

There are a range of reasons for this, including stigma, disenchantment and lack of motivational work to support them. The reduction in the level and type of community services may also have contributed.

This is particularly pertinent for people released from prison, as they are at their most vulnerable in terms of risk to themselves and the risk of reoffending. Therefore, it is beneficial to consider substance use needs at the earliest opportunity when developing licence conditions and planning for successful release, including strategies to mitigate such barriers.



This is reiterated in this 1:26 minute YouTube video produced by HMPPS (2021), in which Louise Sandow discusses [HMP New Hall: Helping prisoners with substance misuse](#).



In an Academic Insights paper prepared in 2019, David Best provides a useful [model for resettlement based on the principles of desistance and recovery](#) to support practitioners when working with individuals with substance misuse needs.

It is beneficial for practitioners to analyse the impact of substance use on the individual's identity, thoughts and behaviours, and to consider strategies to promote recovery/reduce substance use in the sentence plan, in collaboration with the person on probation. In this example, the inspector commented:

"the practitioner enabled the person on probation to understand triggers for their alcohol use. Supervision sessions then focused on how to mitigate these triggers and regularly reviewed his progress".

For example:

During supervision, the practitioner encouraged Theo to identify the triggers to his alcohol use, through structured discussions. He learned it was linked to boredom – filling time with alcohol consumption – and a lack of connectedness, as he felt he had no social networks. They explored options to address this, and as a result Theo has now joined a gym and tennis club.

The practitioner continues to help Theo to monitor his use, and he reports that he has no motivation to return to binge drinking.

Thinking and behaviour, and attitudes to offending

It is important that practitioners continue to address the underlying causes of offending behaviour. Therefore, it was positive to see examples of offence-focused work, as illustrated below.

An inspector commented:

"as a result of the practitioner's engagement with Lee, she was clear about his motivation to engage and what she needed to do to support him with this. She rolled with the resistance presented and explored different strategies to encourage him to open up. This approach enabled him to explore the index offence and begin to acknowledge some responsibility, which in turn has allowed him to engage in the appropriate treatment programme to begin to address his risk".

For example:

Lee had refused to engage in any offence-focused work throughout his custodial sentence, in part because he struggled to accept accountability and, consequently, was not assessed as suitable. The probation practitioner was consistent about the need for Lee to work on his offending behaviour on release. She explored the circumstances of the offence and critically analysed these with him, which revealed justifications and minimisations. As a result, they completed one-to-one work around consent. This was described as a 'light bulb moment' for Lee, and he has now agreed to complete the programme.

At the time of the inspection, Lee had started the pre-group session.

In relation to this example, an inspector noted:

"it was positive to see the practitioner working with Mark to embed the work completed throughout the custodial sentence. From this work, the practitioner was able to identify gaps in his understanding and learning and, consequently, revised the supervisions to complete more intensive offence-focused work.

The practitioner also balanced this work with managing potential future risks, for example exploring his relationships and keeping the police informed of any new information".

For example:

Mark is subject to a four-year licence for offences of a sexual nature. Although he completed the Horizon programme in custody, he expresses reluctance to engage with the offending behaviour aspects of his sentence plan. The practitioner probes this further during supervision to understand what is driving this behaviour, and Mark admits he paid lip service to it and did not really take on board the learning.

Consequently, the practitioner begins to revisit the work, focusing on the benefits of compliance for Mark, for example to improve the quality of his personal relationships. Simultaneously, they share concerns with the police, as Mark has a new partner.

The practitioner balances risks, needs and engagement well, and has also referred Mark to personal wellbeing and ETE services.

Case management themes

Working for the Probation Service is a demanding, albeit rewarding, career. Anyone involved in service delivery will understand how complex the work is, especially as following the same processes can result in different outcomes with different individuals. Furthermore, what proved a successful strategy on one occasion may be completely inept on other occasions, with the same individual. People change, risk is dynamic, and needs and circumstances change. Practitioners need the time and skills to be able to recognise cues in the body language (a slight shift in the seat or lack of eye contact), and nuances in communication and behaviour, to support effective supervision and risk management.

There is a wealth of literature available on the core skills of probation practitioners who deliver supervision, interventions and support services. In this section, we share the common themes we identified from the thematic inspection, which supported effective practice for individuals being released from prison. There may be other skills that you feel are equally important, but those included below were the most pertinent in the cases inspected and for the people DWRM spoke with.

Effective working relationships: between the practitioner and person in prison/on probation

A fundamental aspect of case management is to build positive working relationships in order to effect change. The Confederation of European Probation Rules Commentary¹⁵ (2010) notes:

“Probation agencies are distinguished by their emphasis on assistance, guidance and persuasion in working with [people on probation]. Personal relationships are central to this. There is authoritative research evidence to show that strong professional relationships are effective in bringing about change in offenders’ attitudes and behaviour. There is also evidence to suggest that relationships are more influential than any single specific method or technique.”

McIvor and Barry¹⁶ (1998) produced the following diagram to illustrate people on probation’s perceptions of helpful and unhelpful features of a practitioner’s approach to supervision.

¹⁵ Confederation of European Probation. (2010). Commentary to Recommendation CM/Rec (2010) 1 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the Council of Europe probation rules. [CommentaryRec_201_1_E \(cep-probation.org\)](https://www.cep-probation.org) (accessed 3 January 2023).

¹⁶ McIvor, G. and Barry, M. (1998). *Social work and criminal justice: volume 6 – probation*. Edinburgh: Scottish Office Central Research Unit.

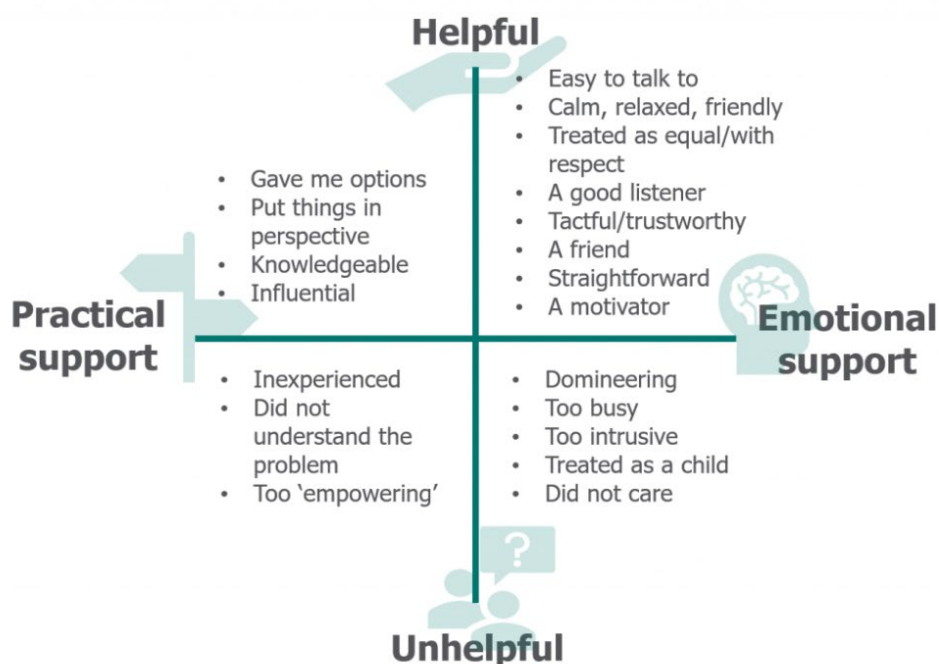


Figure 5: People on probation's perceptions of helpful and unhelpful features of supervision.

Below, we explore the important facets of this working relationship, as found in our inspection.

Care/warmth

Relationships were felt to be beneficial when staff demonstrated a genuine care and warmth towards those they were working with, and wanted to support them to improve their lives and keep themselves and others safe.

We identified an excellent example of this at the Blackpool probation office. Inspectors commented:

"there was a respectful culture in the office. The receptionists were kind and calm, you could hear them dealing with some frustrated people on the phone in a calm manner, they had a lovely approach. It was also good to see staff had set up a clothes rail in reception with donated clothing. They had a foodbank at the office and staff had made prison release bags. These bags were handmade and contained toiletries and a towel."

" At the very time that our people on probation need support to get their lives back on track, Blackpool probation want to be there to help. This brings hope to those we work with to support them to make different decisions for their future. **"**

Karen Donnelly (pictured) and Kirsty Bargh, probation practitioners, described as the driving force for this work.



Figure 6:
Blackpool office
'hope corner'.



Janine Weatherington, SPO, said they have called this the hope corner.

The noticeboard features information on soup kitchens and other relevant services for those in need.



Engagement

The thematic inspection found that some practitioners engaged well with people on probation, and many people on probation spoke highly of their COM. Planning focused sufficiently on engaging the person on probation in 64 per cent of cases, and there was an effective focus on engagement after release in 75 per cent of cases. We saw examples where practitioners had maintained regular contact, and there was judicious use of managers' warnings to secure compliance and engagement.

This is important, as people need to be meaningfully involved in all aspects of their supervision, from assessments, planning and interventions, to reviews to keep people safe. This will ensure work is conducted 'with' people and not 'to' them.

Conversely, inspectors found there was sometimes a reluctance to challenge and ask probing questions about risk and needs. It is important for the relationship to be both

challenging and supportive, referred to as 'supportive authority' (Bush et al., 2016;¹⁷ Maruna, 2012¹⁸).

A number of factors will support effective engagement, including being clear about the purpose of your role, blending risk and desistance, connecting people to resources to promote tertiary desistance, separating the individual from their behaviour, developing trust by pursuing procedural justice, and personalising work undertaken within assessments, planning, implementation and reviews.

Be clear about the purpose of your role: the blend of risk and desistance

Current research highlights the importance of blending practice that manages risks and promotes desistance. The Probation Service aims to support the person on probation to move through the various stages of desistance, as illustrated in figure 7. To do so, it is vital that we engage people, and promote safety and desistance. Focusing exclusively on any one of these elements can be problematic. For example, if we simply impose controls to manage risk, when those controls are removed the likelihood of a lapse or relapse is high, as individuals will have no sense of agency.¹⁹

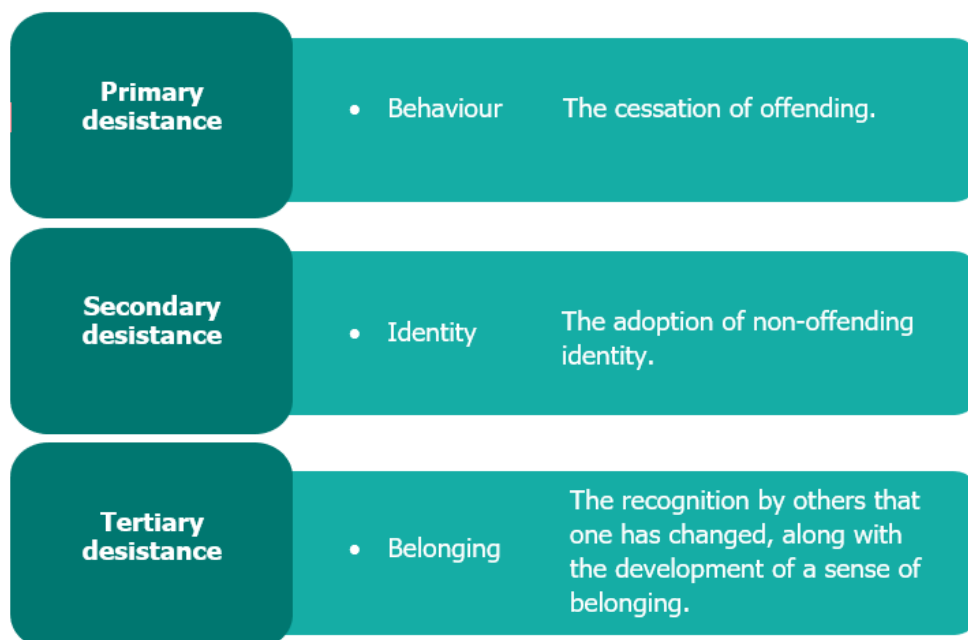


Figure 7: The three stages of desistance

If we encourage engagement to the detriment of other factors, we are less likely to have meaningful conversations linked to risk and protective factors. And if we focus solely on desistance, we may not develop a full understanding of the underlying causes of the offending behaviour to work with the person to bring about positive changes. Consequently, effective case supervision relies on a sound knowledge of the individual. You need to be attuned to their circumstances, so that you know how to purposefully engage them, when to impose more controls and when to relax these, and which positive factors to reinforce and strengthen. People in prison and on probation need to understand the purpose of their

¹⁷ Bush, J., Harris, D.M. and Parker, R.J. (2016). Cognitive Self Change: How Offenders Experience the World and What We Can Do About It. John Wiley. See chapter 4, *Supportive Authority and the Strategy of Choices*. pp. 97-117.

¹⁸ Maruna, S. (2012). 'Elements of Successful Desistance Signalling', *Criminology and Public Policy*, 11(1), pp. 73-86.

¹⁹ Self-agency is the sense that an individual's actions are self-generated, which allows them to feel that they have control over their own life and can influence their own thoughts and behaviour.

sentence, and the roles and responsibilities of those working with them during their sentence.

The people DWRM spoke with appeared to be confused about the different aspects of the role, with comments such as:

"Probation are just trying to manage me; they need to know my plans for the week in advance."

"Like an old friend."

"Their role is to make you fail – by putting tags on people. When they put them on they think they own you."

"To make sure I don't go back to jail."

"They did not know anything about my risk factors."

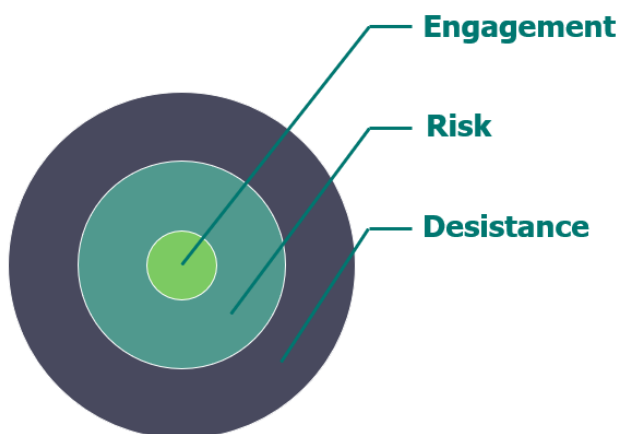
"Like being told off by your mum."

"They've offered loads of support because I have been willing to turn my life around."

"It might be protect the public, but it is more down to the individual and having the kind of supervision I am subject to isn't protective."

It is important to be clear about all elements of probation practice, engagement, risk and desistance. The focus on, and intensity of, these elements will bend and flex depending on the individual, their circumstances and where they are on the cycle of change.²⁰

- Engaging the person sufficiently to understand their individual identity, goals, aspirations, strengths and resources, what will keep people safe and what will promote positive change.
- Risk, including knowledge of static risk factors, stable dynamic risk factors (those that tend to change over a longer period of time, such as problem-solving ability) and acute dynamic factors (those that can change rapidly, often due to specific triggers), and how practitioners can support the individual to manage these to promote safety. This should include the nature and intensity of controls required and the skills and strengths the individual currently has, which can be built upon. People on probation need to understand that the controls may bend and flex alongside their progress.
- Desistance – to recognise and develop strengths, fostering agency through relationships and individualised interventions designed to develop personal and social capital.



²⁰ Prochaska, J. O. and DiClemente, C. C. (1983). Stages and processes of self-change of smoking: Toward an integrative model of change. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 51(3), pp. 390-395.

It is important to consider an individual's risk and the desistance process in the context of all systems that impact on the individual. Kemshall and McCartan (2022)²¹ provide this useful overview of each of these, which they refer to as the four socio-ecological stages.

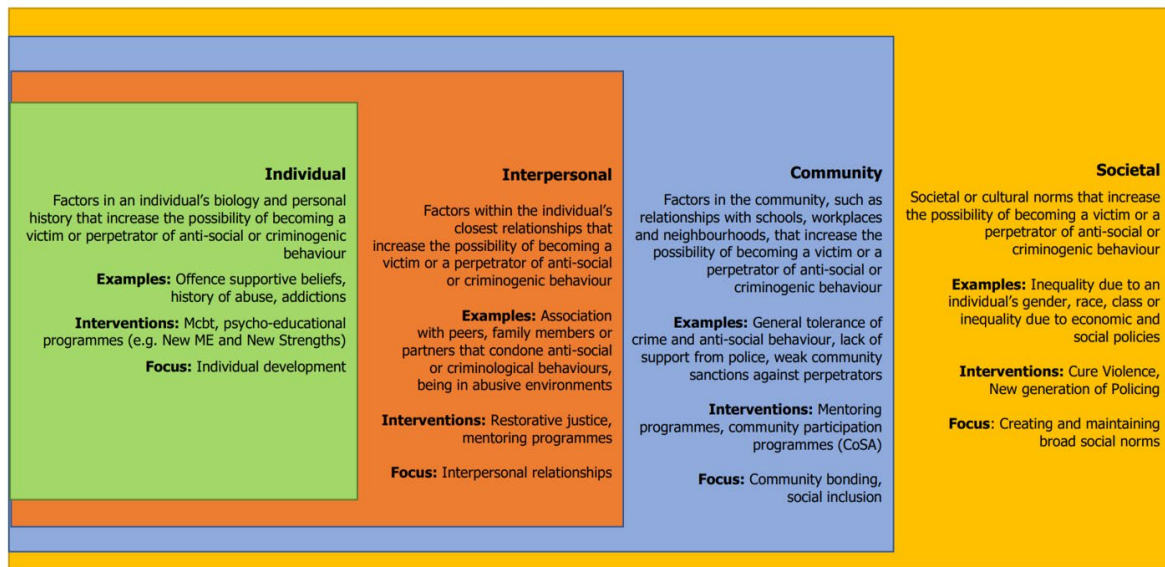


Figure 8: The four socio-ecological stages

They refer to this in the context of recovery capital, which they state:

"is not just about the individual's competence and capacity to desist, and how to enhance this through one-to-one work; it is also about equity of access to necessary capital for individuals and groups, and a recognition that structural determinants if left unaddressed can constrain individual access to capital (Farrall, 2019)."



You can read more about [risk and desistance: a blended approach to risk management](#) and [desistance, recovery, and justice capital](#) in these Academic Insights papers.

Pursuing work in this manner can make a real difference to those under supervision, as can be seen in these quotes:

"I talk to her about a lot of things, personal things and that. She keeps me on the straight and narrow."

"I had no trust at all in probation before I was released ... but the lady I have got, she is brilliant, she's straight down the line, not even had an issue with her. I was a bit down when I first came out, didn't know what to do and she was basically, 'come on, you need to pull your head out of your arse' – that's the way I need to be spoken to."



In the following example, the inspector commented:

"The practitioner worked hard with other agencies to balance public protection concerns with things that were important to the individual and may support desistance. The practitioner and the MAPPA panel considered what was needed in this case and requested bespoke licence conditions to support the risk management plan."

²¹ Kemshall, H and McCartan, K. (2022) [Desistance, recovery, and justice capital: \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmip/) HM Inspectorate of Probation.

For example:²²

Shakil was sentenced to a long period in custody for sexual offences committed over a protracted period while in a position of trust, teaching children in their own homes. Planning for Shakil's management on release started early, while he was in custody. He was referred to MAPPA level 2 to support the coordination of information-sharing, primarily from children's social care services, as he had a large number of grandchildren and a network of associates who also had children. Applications were made for bespoke and discretionary licence conditions. Shakil was restricted from contact with all children, a more stringent restriction than the more common restriction not to have unsupervised contact with children, due to concerns that family members would not adequately safeguard their children. A polygraph testing condition was also added to provide further monitoring around child contact. Safeguarding measures were put in place and disclosures were made to the appropriate individuals in places where Shakil intended to worship.

Despite the need for significant public protection measures in the case, the practitioner was able to use principles of protective integration. Shakil's attendance at a place of worship was risk assessed and permitted, with appropriate written agreements and disclosure in place.

Work to increase resources: personal and social

The inspection found limited evidence of practitioners building on the person on probation's strengths and supporting change to a pro-social lifestyle.

It is vital that people are encouraged to collaborate beyond the confines of the Probation Service and formal organisations. This helps to develop their skills and social networks, also known as social capital, and to promote and reinforce the pro-social aspects of their new identity.

There are numerous aspects to social capital (as shown in figure 9), which help to build and reinforce it, hence why Cracknell highlights the importance of gluing and bridging capital.

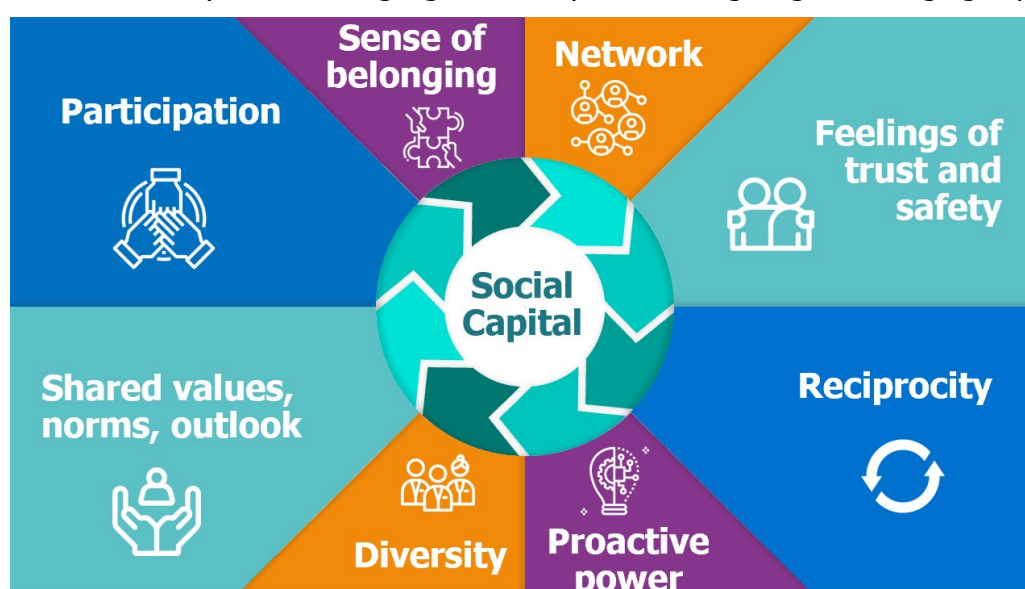


Figure 9: Aspects of the social capital framework

²² This example is taken from: HM Inspectorate of Probation. (2022). [Effective practice guide: MAPPA](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/mappa/) ([justiceinspectorates.gov.uk](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/mappa/)).

Social capital framework:

- **A sense of belonging** – a shared sense of identity that can bond people together and bridge gaps. *For example, when you go to a new area and feel a bit lost, and you bump into someone you know from your area and feel drawn to them because of the shared sense of belonging and because they may be able to help you find your way.*
- **Feeling like we are part of a whole network** – viewing relationships as a web rather than individual connections; some we are closely bonded with, and some are more distant.
- **Experiencing feelings of trust and safety** – the level of trust, collaboration, group cohesion and social support are all factors that go into making relationships viable. We become more willing to rely on the actions of others as and when we require. *For example, being consistent and meeting in an informal setting can help increase trust and understanding.*
- **Reciprocity** – this includes mutual support, responding to a positive action with another positive action, and rewarding kind actions. Social capital is best when there is give and take, otherwise social capital is depleted – nobody likes people who only take and don't provide anything in return. By trying to build as much social capital as possible, it becomes more likely that you can benefit from it when and how you need it. Social capital is not an individual commodity; it is something that is built and shared with others, including friends, family, co-workers, colleagues, clients, employers and acquaintances, as well as your shopkeeper, barber, bus driver, children, teachers, neighbours, postman, members of your sporting groups, social groups, and professional groups. It comes from sharing and giving, and from belonging and socialising, and this holds so much value, as it helps us achieve mutual goals.
- **Proactive power** – when we engage together as citizens in a proactive manner, it gives us power, and this reinforces our networks.
- **Diversity** – networks perform best when they are diverse, and include people capable of helping your cause who you may not normally encounter or regularly interact with.
- **Shared values, norms** – these help with group cohesion; they represent individuals' knowledge of what others do and think that they should do. Social norms are informal understandings that drive the behaviour of members of society, and these guide our behaviour in certain situations/environments and therefore can promote behaviours in others and help to promote pro-social behaviour/identities.

Shared values are based on things or actions that are important; they can be defined as broad preferences concerning appropriate courses of action or outcomes. As such, values reflect a person's sense of right and wrong or what 'ought' to be. Values and norms influence our attitudes and behaviours, and this also illustrates why social networks may change, as values and norms may change, and as people change. *For example, someone who usually associates with peers every weekend to drink to excess may move away from this behaviour on entering a new intimate relationship. It is likely that they now want to spend their weekends with their partner, and any discretionary expenditure on activities with this partner, making memories or building a home. As a result, they may develop a different social circle, as they no longer have those shared experiences with the associates they were drinking with.*

- **Participation** – it is important that people on probation are encouraged to actively engage with these networks, to continue to strengthen them, bring cohesion across the network and reinforce social capital. People have to proactively find new friends/associates in order to expand their networks. It can be nerve-racking at first, but the payoff will be significant, as these relationships and interactions have the power to support transformation. These networks can support our mental health, as an individual, promote wellbeing in our communities, and provide access to opportunities, education and the labour market.

All of the above will have a positive impact on self-esteem and enable people to grow and transform. However, it is difficult to forge these new relationships, so people on probation need to be supported, and their progress should be recognised and reinforced. This is particularly important given the 'pains of desistance' (Nugent and Schinkel, 2016),²³ identified as pains from isolation and loneliness, failure to achieve goals, and hopelessness.

The case below is a good example of the above and a number of other themes featured in this guide. The inspector commented:

"The practitioner was persistent in her attempts to support Lewis to secure employment, recognising the benefits for him. However, she was also aware of the challenges, and so provided additional support through the mentoring service and made herself available and flexible in supervision to explore alternatives. She held him to account when his behaviour was beginning to slip, capturing him at the earliest point, and encouraged him to seek additional support.

In addition, the records illustrated examples of recognising positive progress and there was discussion and acknowledgement of protective factors."

For example:

Lewis was sentenced to a lengthy custodial sentence for aggravated burglary. The probation practitioner planned appropriately for his release, carrying out the relevant police and safeguarding enquiries, and, as a result, Lewis was not able to return to the address originally planned. Lewis was informed of this and the reasons with sufficient time to explore alternative options, and an address was secured with a member of his wider family. He was also referred to a mentor he had met before his release, to support him with practical things, such as setting up a bank account and a job centre application, as he acknowledged how overwhelming this felt.

The mentoring continued after release, and he was supported to undertake a Railtrack course, which started within three weeks of release. This led to full-time employment. Lewis was told he needed to move home areas for this work, and he was supported to do so. The proposed new area presented as a heightened risk for Lewis, and he moved to an alternative area. However, Lewis felt isolated and admitted being homesick; consequently, he was referred back to CRS ETE, who helped him obtain work in a warehouse. He was supported to move to a different family member's home. However, he was treated poorly at the new job and left. The probation practitioner was persistent in her efforts to support Lewis and showed belief in him, reinforcing his honesty and engagement, and he was re-referred to ETE provision.

As part of his release licence, Lewis was subject to ad hoc drug tests. When he tested positive, given the progress he had made in other areas, his practitioner gave him a

²³ Nugent, B. and Schinkel, M. (2016). The pains of desistance. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, 16(5), pp. 568–584. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1748895816634812> (accessed 6 January 2023).

verbal warning and undertook some further work around this area. At the time of the inspection, there had been no further positive tests.

The practitioner recognised the importance of family for Lewis. She encouraged him to comply with social services, supporting him throughout the process, so they could complete assessments on the appropriateness of him meeting with siblings, who were under 18 years of age.

There is proactive engagement between Lewis, his family members, the practitioner, mentor and social care throughout the licence to support progress and hold him to account.

Separate the person from their behaviour

An important aspect of engagement is understanding the individual and what drives their behaviour.

This permits the practitioner to separate the behaviour from the person. In doing so, the practitioner is able to engage the person and support them to develop strategies to address their behaviour.

We view our 'here and now' through the lens of 'there and then'



Figure 10: Transference image.

With thanks to @creative.clinical.psychologist on Instagram for the use of this drawing

The case below is a good example of this. The inspector commented:

"Given the barriers to engagement identified at the point of release, the practitioner works hard to engage Jade in her licence. A large focus of the work post-release has been motivating Jade and keeping her engaged."

For example:

Jade received a lengthy sentence for offences against a child. The assessment highlighted a significant history of adverse childhood experiences and ongoing trauma in her adult relationships. This was verified by a psychiatric report. The analysis of the impact of this indicated that Jade struggles to express her thoughts and feelings. This manifests itself in difficulties with socialisation and a mistrust of professionals.

The probation practitioner identified this in the pre-release work and was responsive in developing a strategy to help mitigate some of the challenges. She arranged for a colleague to act as a co-worker, and secondary point of contact, in the event of her absence, to ensure Jade did not have to report to someone she did not know.

Given the significance and nature of the barriers to engagement in Jade's case and the impact on her of engaging with strangers (increased anxiety) the co-working arrangement ensured she was always able to contact a familiar probation practitioner. This supported her engagement with licence supervision, and she maintained contact with her probation practitioner despite her struggles to reintegrate into the community.

Trust

Another core aspect of the engagement process is trust; people on probation need to have trust in their probation practitioner. Practitioners need to be reliable, follow through on their promises, hold clear and appropriate boundaries in terms of engagement, and model this to people on probation. Staff should be consistent in their approach. During times of transition for the service, practitioner or individual, they need to communicate with transparency about the changes. Furthermore, when pursuing enforcement, this also needs to be transparent, timely and flexible, in order to be responsive to the individual's protected characteristics and circumstances.

People on probation need to have a clear understanding of the practitioner's roles, expectations and boundaries.

Procedural justice theory is a way of working that can help build trust. The theory states that, if people feel they are treated in a procedurally fair and just way, starting from the very first contact, they will view those in authority as more legitimate and respect them more. This concept features strongly in part one of this guide.



"My PO is too strict and not willing to reconsider decisions. I don't believe I should be categorized as high risk and feel misunderstood. [Feels that PO does not want to help her and wants her to fail. She is Muslim and feels that her cultural beliefs are not being respected.]"

"It did not fill me with confidence because at my first meeting she had not read my case notes, did not know anything about my risk factors."

The below case is an example of effective management of a relapse in desistance. It illustrates collaborative working, with clear boundaries to support the person's progress and hold him to account when he fails to comply. The inspector commented:

"Requirements of the sentence started on time and Daryl was seen on the day of release by the practitioner. When he started employment there was flexibility, as he was seen in the evening and employment was appropriately verified."

Daryl's behaviour was challenging at times, and he was reminded of the expectations of his licence and warned of the consequences. His behaviour further deteriorated, and he was recalled for failing to return to the AP. However, the practitioner remained consistent in their approach, spoke to him and encouraged him to hand himself in."

For example:

On the day of release, Daryl was seen for his induction, and the licence conditions and expectations of supervision were clearly set out. The practitioner clarified his understanding of each condition and the consequences of breach.

As Daryl progressed and secured employment, the practitioner was consistent with what had been agreed on induction and requested verification of work. Once this was received, appointments were moved to the evening and Daryl was given some flexibility with other licence conditions to recognise his progress.

However, when Daryl's behaviour deteriorated, the frequency of reporting was increased, and he was warned about his behaviour. When he failed to return to the approved premises, he was appropriately recalled. The probation practitioner spoke to Daryl and reiterated the rationale for the recall, encouraged him to hand himself in and spoke about what would happen next.

The records also indicate that the practitioner kept the key agencies (social care and the police) informed of Daryl's progress in the case.

Encourage to take personal responsibility

As part of the engagement process, people in prison and on probation need to be challenged to help them take on personal responsibility to grow and change.

The case below is a good example of this. Inspectors commented:

"as well as a bespoke sentence plan, which has considered Levi's specific needs, the assessment contains analysis. For instance, the finances section of OASys – finances are not linked to his offending and it would have been easy to write something very minimal. However, there is some analysis around why finances might be a motivating factor in his lifestyle, for status but also to support his mother and his perceived role in the family.

The practitioner sets specific tasks for the person on probation to pursue and requests updates on progress at further sessions".

For example:

Levi is subject to a lengthy sentence for violence.

There is a meaningful sentence plan, which covers all areas the inspector would hope to see. Objectives are populated with clear, specific, bespoke pieces of work. An example is the case manager using Levi's post-programme report to identify areas of work for the future. Levi also has to update his officer about his plans for university each month. However, too often objectives in the plan are left blank, and it is not clear what the work looks like.

Another example is the conversations with Levi about violence and risk. The case manager sets out the types of conversations that they think will be valuable, rather than keeping it generalised. These include violent attitudes, attitudes towards carrying a knife, conflict resolution, and the need for retaliation/vengeance. Therefore, are specifically targeted at the relevant risk factors.

The case notes also depict planning within sessions through bite-size tasks. These include actions for Levi to contact his mentor or to attend the jobcentre.

Demonstrate belief in the change process

While it is important to be realistic about the complexity and challenges of desistance, practitioners need to build and sustain hope, holding a belief in the individual's ability to change. People in prison and on probation may be at different stages in the process of change and, consequently, work needs to be responsive to the stage the individual has reached, as well as their level of motivation, capacity and capability. For example, some individuals may require more extensive controls than others.

For those who are making progress through the various stages of change, it is important to recognise, reinforce and reward this progress to help to promote self-worth and further propel positive changes.

The cases below illustrate this. The inspector commented:

"despite the history of poor compliance, the practitioner works hard to engage Raj, exploring the reasons for his previous lack of engagement and, together, they explore strategies to address these. The practitioner reflects back when progress is made to reinforce this, which also serves to strengthen their working relationship".

For example:

Raj has an entrenched history of offending and poor compliance, and was released on a lengthy licence. The probation practitioner's assessment analyses his past poor compliance in an attempt to mitigate this. There is evidence on record that the practitioner has discussed this with Raj, and both share the belief that there is a marked improvement this time round, especially in terms of his willingness to disclose what is going on in his life.

Raj's first hostel appointment is a three-way meeting with his COM and approved premises key worker, where a hostel move-on plan is devised. There is collaboration between the three, and Raj's voice and views are apparent in the plan. This is a good way to engage Raj in his licence supervision.

The practitioner identifies that personal circumstances and family emergencies have had an impact on Raj's emotional wellbeing, but notes that he remains engaged; the acknowledgement of this helps to reinforce his current level of engagement. This has allowed work to be undertaken around his offending behaviour, and there is evidence of an improvement in his problem-solving skills and attitude to future offending. Although he has only been in the community a few months, the progress to date is positive.

Inspectors commented:

"delivery was well coordinated with the leaving care worker, mentor and adolescent services. This demonstrated effective practice in addressing alcohol misuse. One-to-one work with Harry was structured and purposeful.

The practitioner consistently demonstrate belief in Harry, supporting him to work towards a more pro-social identity. This was further affirmed when they attended the Duke of Edinburgh awards ceremony, which was such a significant achievement for Harry and a marker of that new identity."

For example:

Harry is sentenced to custody for an offence of arson. There was good engagement by the probation practitioner, which started before he was released, and continued weekly in the community. Supervision was well structured and purposeful. The COM also coordinated services well, including with the leaving care social worker, a mentor, and adolescent services, which provided a 'team around the person' approach to supporting Harry on release from prison. While in prison, Harry achieved a Duke of Edinburgh's Award and was supported to return to HMP Lancaster Farms, after his release, to collect his award. His practitioner also attended to bear witness to his positive achievements.

Personalised

Our standards highlight the importance of taking a personalised approach to working with people in prison/on probation. This personalised approach should consider protected characteristics, diversity in terms of 'intersectionality', personal circumstances, motivation and readiness to engage, comply and change, capacity and capability, and strengths and protective factors.

Probation practitioners need to gain an understanding of the individuals they work with: be curious about their current identity, who they want to be, their strengths, areas of concerns, motivation, capacity and capability. This understanding will enable the work to be much more meaningfully tailored to the individual to maximise the likelihood of keeping people, including themselves, safe.

A good example of this is the notion that some individuals are 'hard to reach' or 'difficult to engage'.

As figure 11 illustrates well, we should question whether individuals are as described or whether we do not know them well enough to make our services accessible for their specific set of circumstances.

Within our case sample, this was illustrated for those from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups, where we frequently saw that their ethnicity was not explored or understood well enough in assessments, and that plans did not routinely account for diversity factors.

Conversely, there were some examples where supervision had considered such aspects.

The case below is a good example of this. Inspectors commented:

"the practitioner engages well with Rashad and explores how his identity impacts on his thoughts, behaviour and level of compliance. As a result, work focuses on culture and maturity, and sessions are arranged to fit around work commitments – illustrated an individually tailored approach for Rashad."

For example:

Rashad is assessed as a high risk of harm following his release for an aggravated burglary and involvement in serious group offending. The records indicate that a diversity form is completed, which initiates a supervision discussion about his mixed heritage. The practitioner explores this in some depth with Rashad and offers an analysis of the impact of this within the assessment, notably the impact of his estrangement from his Black, Muslim father on his identity and access to meaningful cultural experiences and relationships.

As such, when scheduling future appointments with Rashad, the practitioner acknowledges the importance of him attending Muslim prayers and participating in religious holidays. The practitioner was also flexible around his rotating shift pattern.

In addition, based on their discussions, the practitioner recognises some deficits in Rashad's thinking and behaviour, especially around his social skills, which had impeded his progress in developing more pro-social networks. Consequently, Rashad and the



Figure 11: Hard to reach image.

With thanks to @creative.clinical.psychologist on Instagram for the use of this drawing.

practitioner identify work from the choices and changes resource pack. The work and potential benefits are discussed with Rashad and it is included on his sentence plan.

In this case, inspectors noted:

"the practitioner was tenacious in her efforts to engage Jasmine, viewing the more disruptive behaviour in the context of her previous history of trauma. The senior probation officer supported the practitioner in reinforcing the licence requirements in a constructive manner which supported future work, holding strong to the boundaries of the relationship. In addition, the practitioner illustrated an awareness of ethnicity and cultural identity and facilitated additional specialist support to strengthen her engagement further and support the change process."

For example:²⁴

The practitioner made face-to-face contact with Jasmine via video link before her release, to build the basis for an effective working relationship. The practitioner showed perseverance and resilience in continuing to manage Jasmine, given her complaints and extreme demands. The senior probation officer met with Jasmine to re-enforce boundaries, and wrote to her to evidence the discussion and the outcomes required. This was done in a motivational and encouraging manner. The practitioner was aware of Jasmine's personal circumstances and adverse childhood experiences, which potentially impacted on her behaviour and engagement. It was evident that the practitioner had some awareness of Jasmine's mixed race, ethnicity and cultural identity. She encouraged Jasmine to access other professional agencies that could support her complex needs, despite Jasmine's reluctance to engage. An early referral was made to Anawim (Birmingham's Centre for Women) and the personality disorder pathway. The practitioner used the personality disorder assessment to plan and deliver work with Jasmine.

Practicalities of the working relationship

Accessibility

A theme among people on probation was the benefit of easy access to their practitioners and some flexibility in their approach to be responsive to specific needs. For example, arranging supervision appointments around religious commitments or employment and using preferred methods of communication. Some practitioners had access to funds to buy mobile phones, so that they could contact those who were homeless or had complex needs.

"It is easy to get hold of my COM. I have an email and phone number and can make requests quite easily ... [on the other hand he stated he] doesn't often get understandable or supportive responses."



The case below is a good example of this. Inspectors commented:

"the practitioner worked hard to engage Kayode and to enable him to see the benefits of genuine compliance, while continuing to deliver interventions to support desistance. They provide information in a written format, as requested, to meet his needs."

It was also noted that information-sharing and risk management between the practitioner and police is well managed in this case."

²⁴ This example is taken from: HM Inspectorate of Probation. (2021). [Race equality in probation: the experiences of black, Asian and minority ethnic probation service users and staff](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/race-equality-in-probation-the-experiences-of-black-asian-and-minority-ethnic-probation-service-users-and-staff/) ([justiceinspectorates.gov.uk](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/race-equality-in-probation-the-experiences-of-black-asian-and-minority-ethnic-probation-service-users-and-staff/))

For example:

Kayode was sentenced to custody for offences of a sexual nature. The assessment indicates that he has been diagnosed with depression and anxiety, and he self-reports autism spectrum condition traits. The practitioner follows up the latter with his GP.

There is some analysis of how this impacts on supervision, and Kayode reports that he prefers information to be shared in writing so he can digest it, which the practitioner acknowledges.

Consistency

It may sometimes be necessary to transfer people on licence to a different practitioner, because they have moved to a different area or changed accommodation providers, or to meet the individual's needs or access resources in a particular office. Changes of location and/or practitioner can be disruptive for people on probation, and may have an impact on relationships, keeping people safe and supporting change.

The impact of multiple changes is evident from the quotes:

"My current PO is changing all the time, so [it's] hard to know how to raise issues. Whole point of probation should be to develop a relationship. If it keeps changing, I don't see the point. My PO apologised for this and I've now had same person for the last four months. It's nothing personal, but I feel I need more consistency. I am an individual, should have been allocated to someone who can stay around until licence finishes in six months. I do have regular appointments, but have to keep repeating myself."



"Such frequent transfers make it very difficult to build up rapport. I have been moved to my third PO in four months."

Wherever possible, moves should be planned, and transfers managed to mitigate these risks as much as possible.

Conversely, a managed move can provide a new opportunity to engage the person on probation within a different environment. Therefore, it is also important to help the individual to identify and build on these potential benefits, to help keep them and others safe from the move.

This is set out in HMPPS's transfer guidance:²⁵

'Regular themes arise from findings from various Serious Case Reviews and inspection reports that are pertinent in consideration of the transfer of cases. These include:



Sharing information – where information is not shared appropriately gaps in risk management arise



Handovers – clear lines of communication are needed to facilitate a good quality handover

²⁵ HMPPS (2021). *Policy Framework for Case Transfers*. Available at: [Policy Framework for Case Transfers \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk).



Consistency – *variation of approach in transferring of cases has created inconsistent practice in the management of case transfers across the regions.'*

A review that is carried out well, at the point of transfer, could be an opportunity to enhance service delivery and lead to improved outcomes. Risk is dynamic, and probation practitioners need to be proactive in responding when the circumstances of an individual they are supervising change. Circumstances for those with complex needs change frequently, so reviewing must not be seen as simply a task that needs to be completed but as an important tool to effect lasting change. The active involvement of individuals in the reviewing process is critical. This enables them, for example, to better understand what progress has been made, why progress has not been made and what more they need to do to turn their lives around.

However, this opportunity can be missed if practitioners are not transparent about the rationale, there have been multiple changes of practitioner in a short period of time, or records are not sufficiently up to date, leading to people on probation having to repeat themselves. The issue of transfers felt more significant for many because of some inconsistencies in approach:



"I was worried because you never know who you will get."

"It's the luck of the draw; you don't get a choice of who your probation officer is, just as probation officers don't get a choice of which prisoner they get."

Therefore, it is important that practitioners follow a consistent approach in line with policy and guidance.

Effective relationships also depend on a consistent approach by the individual probation practitioner. This includes consistently developing and using relationship skills, including being respectful, caring, enthusiastic, collaborative, motivational and valuing the person in prison or on probation's personal autonomy. It also includes being consistent within the expectations and enforcement practice.

The case below illustrates how the service had been flexible in its approach, to support consistency. Inspectors commented:

"Ethan became IOM shortly after being released, which should have resulted in a change of officer, moving his case to the IOM team. However, the practitioner provided a clear rationale regarding the benefits of retaining his case and was supported to do so. This was with the proviso that the practitioner engaged in the IOM processes, such as case review meetings, which supported effective case work."

For example:

Ethan was sentenced to a custodial sentence for an offence of robbery.

The COM challenged the intended change of allocation shortly after Ethan was released. The case was moved to the IOM team, which usually entails a change of allocated COM. However, the COM made clear they had built a supportive relationship with Ethan in custody, and he was settling well in the two months he had been in the community.

It was agreed that he would remain with the COM, who agreed to attend IOM meetings to discuss him and to maintain contact with an IOM officer. This supported the engagement

that had already been created, where he had numerous agencies he was working with and was making positive progress since release.

The COM also considered Ethan's protective factors in the assessment, and subsequent planning and interventions, including drawing on his previous youth offending team assessment (ASSET) to identify what would help in reducing offending.

Provide clarity of expectations

A consistent theme, presented by DWRM, was the number of people who disclosed anxiety about their release, because they did not understand the expectations, were uncertain about next steps, did not know who their officer would be or where they had to go, or had heard negative perceptions from others about their probation practitioners. Plus, they feared that they would swiftly be returned to prison. For some, this only served to exacerbate the anxiety they already felt about adjusting to life back in the community. This can be seen in some of the quotes below:

"I was apprehensive about coming out. I did not know what to expect [he had been in prison for 7 years]."



"The last thing I want to do is inadvertently go and breach one of those [licence conditions] ... and end up getting recalled to prison."

"I hear loads in prison that probation just want to get you recalled so that's one less person they have to worry about, but I haven't personally got that impression."

"I understood it wasn't going to be easy when I got released. Every day I was getting closer to my date and I was looking forward to being released. I had so many things in my head that I wanted to do, people I wanted to go and see, um, and then when I come out it's like, er, it's like someone squeezed me, squeezed the life out of me. I don't feel like someone who's living a life right now. I go from my house to probation, from my house to the doctor's, my house to the job centre. I don't feel comfortable around other people."

"I was not expecting this level of supervision, thought I would have a weekly meeting and a quick check-in. It's just been a nightmare."

The supervision process is more effective when practitioners are clear about their role, the boundaries, expectations of the licence conditions, and the contingency plans, so that people on probation know what to expect on their release and the consequences of any lack of compliance.

In the case below, the practitioner:

"clarified Matthew's understanding of all aspects of his licence and used the records on file and a discussion with him to analyse his progress to date. This information was then used to review his sentence and assess the ongoing suitability of the current sentence plan objectives."

For example:

Matthew was subject to a lengthy sentence for acquisitive offences. The original practitioner allocated to him resigned, and he was allocated a new officer. Unfortunately, there was not an opportunity to undertake a formal handover. However, the records show that the first face-to-face session with his new practitioner was spent reviewing what had been achieved to date and areas of concern, and confirming that the current sentence plan objectives remained appropriate.

This discussion also included clarification of Matthew's understanding of the licence conditions in place, such as the Buddi GPS tag, and how these were supporting him and keeping him motivated to stay away from certain high-risk locations.

Multi-agency work

People on probation who sustain positive change are frequently those who have been supported by multiple agencies, working in close partnership, with effective information-sharing agreements.

Collaborating with partners allows practitioners to address a wide range of risk factors that contribute to offending behaviour, and bolster positive and protective factors for long-term change. Multi-agency work also provides a more comprehensive understanding of an individual and their circumstances, as multiple perspectives are feeding into the supervision process. Building this understanding also means interventions and risk management strategies will be more tailored to the individual.

Our inspections illustrate the benefits of multi-agency work and using multiple sources of information to support case supervision, as this enables you to triangulate the information available. The examples below all illustrate effective multi-agency work seen on this inspection.

For example:

Induction in Uxbridge and Hillingdon probation offices is carried out jointly by the probation service and Jigsaw, the police public protection team. This ensures that registration of sexual offenders is completed, provides effective joint management to keep other people safe, and reduces uncertainty for the person on probation.

For example:

There is an effective working relationship between the Cheshire probation delivery units (PDU) and Seetec. This is maintained through regular contact with contract managers, PDU heads, managers and practitioners. The employment adviser is co-located in probation offices. This helps the practitioner to gain a good understanding of referral processes, and leads to closer working relationships and more targeted support for people on probation.

For example:

Grand Avenues is an HMPPS in Wales priority project, based in the Ely and Caerau areas of Cardiff. The project brings together a neighbourhood team of probation practitioners and local community partners to deliver joined-up services in the local community. The community hub is an innovative response to high rates of recidivism, and the lack of trust between people on probation, the criminal justice system and wider public services.

The case below illustrates effective practice in this area. Inspectors commented:

“this case reaped the benefits of effective pre-release planning across multiple partnerships to ensure Michelle’s complex needs were accounted for. The work commenced in custody was followed upon his release, supporting an effective transition into the community.

This also enabled a positive relationship to develop, facilitating Michelle’s openness when experiencing challenges in her release accommodation. The support networks were quickly able to mobilise and pursue the well-considered contingency plan when her accommodation deteriorated. Furthermore, this collaboration was evident when Michelle began to disengage and her IOM officer did a lot of work to turn it around whilst the practitioner was on leave, due to the shared knowledge and responsibility”.

For example:

Michelle has a lengthy history of offending behaviour, linked to acquisitive crime; she received a custodial sentence for offences of this nature. She has some physical health difficulties and anxiety and depression. Therefore, she was referred to a wellbeing coach, who worked with her throughout her custodial sentence, and on release.

Michelle was also allocated to the IOM team. On the day of Michelle’s release, the IOM officer and probation practitioner completed a home visit and set clear expectations as to the licence requirements. This included ongoing work with a wellbeing coach. The practitioner also attended the first community session with the coach to ensure all were clear on roles and responsibilities.

All of the agencies worked together well, pursuing their individual roles and responsibilities and communicating effectively about any progress made, which was evidenced within the records.

This fostered a good level of engagement with Michelle, who was then able to be more transparent about her triggers and risk factors. For example, she disclosed when her mental health deteriorated and acknowledged that she was too anxious to go to appointments alone, so the wellbeing coach attended a GP appointment with her and advocated for treatment and provided updates to the IOM team.

Since her release, Michelle has become more stable. She has her own supported accommodation, a bank account, personal independence payment, universal credit and a SIM card, and she was receiving support and appropriate medication from her GP. Encouragingly, Michelle has developed a trusting relationship with professionals, including with the police.

Information-sharing

A significant aspect of multi-agency work is information-sharing, carrying out enquiries to verify assessments, risk classifications, progress and concerns.

The thematic inspection found that practitioners experienced significant difficulties and delays in receiving information from children’s services. In these circumstances, it is important to record the action taken to address these issues, provide an overview of what is outstanding and follow escalation routes with seniors. Where practitioners feel the information is necessary to make an informed decision about changes in risk management, such as amending a risk clarification, address or altering licence conditions, it is important to be transparent with the person on probation.

In the example below, the inspector commented:

"overall, there was a coordinated approach towards managing risk, and even after recall, when he remained unlawfully at large, the practitioner continued to liaise with the police, social care and across boroughs (due to the location of the risks) to ensure the children of a new partner were safe."

For example:

Michael was sentenced to imprisonment for an offence of robbery. He also had a history of domestic abuse against previous partners, which had been witnessed by his children.

The practitioner had a comprehensive understanding of the case, attending monthly pre-release MAPPA meetings, liaising with the POM and managing Michael's expectations before release.

Information-sharing with key agencies, including children's social care and the police, was effective. Approved premises personal curfew conditions were gradually removed in line with progress made. The practitioner proactively involved Michael, creating an opportunity for him to take responsibility, especially regarding contact arrangements with his children on release. Thus, information shared by Michael regarding social services involvement with his partner's children and the disclosure of domestic abuse offences, supported the risk management plan. The information shared regarding the identified risks and the work placement with an employer were all verified. The previous COM and the new COM took a consistent approach to managing him, including understanding that he could at times seek to control the engagement.

On release, there was a change of practitioner mid-way through his stay at the approved premises. There was a smooth handover and continued communication with the previous practitioner to support consistency in approach. There was a good understanding of the level of risk and evidence of responsivity in the case, and acknowledgement of progress made. This was evidenced in the staggered increase in curfew times, with daytime sign-in and evening curfews relaxed over time.

The cases below are further examples of positive actions to verify information to support risk management. The inspector commented:

"the practitioner responded in a timely way to a request to vary licence conditions to allow Gavin to attend his daughter's wedding. The implications of this were discussed and the appropriateness of his attendance analysed in the context of enquiries with the Jigsaw team and social care. The decision was then considered in the light of his specific circumstances, his compliance to date and understanding of expectations."

For example:

Gavin was subject to specific restrictions because he had been convicted of sexual offences. Before his release, he informed his practitioner that his daughter was due to get married once he was in the community, and sought permission to attend.

The practitioner gathered information about the location, the guests who would be present and Gavin's relationships with them. This information was then used to conduct safeguarding enquiries to assess whether it would be suitable for Gavin to attend the wedding. They discussed the logistics of the wedding day, how he would manage himself, contingency planning and expectations about his behaviour. Records suggest that this served to alleviate some of Gavin's anxieties. The outcomes and plans were shared with

the police Jigsaw officer. The practitioner's notes suggest that he considered this work to be important, as it helped to strengthen his relationship with Gavin and promote effective engagement.

In the case below, the inspector commented:

"the strongest work in this case has been in keeping others safe. The staff at the approved premises and practitioner had established effective partnership working arrangements, evidenced in their communication. The practitioner illustrated professional curiosity about his relationships, based on the information shared, and this resulted in action being taken around his move on accommodation and disclosure to his new partner".

For example:

Jayden was released with a licence condition to disclose personal relationships. The probation practitioner received information from the staff at the AP that suggested he was in a relationship and expressed some concerns for the partner and Jayden's failure to disclose the relationship.

The practitioner worked with the police to ensure a Clare's Law disclosure was delivered to the partner. She also continued to engage with the gangs unit, and worked with social care. Through them she discovered Jayden had been dishonest about his move on address, which was actually that of his mum and some siblings and new partner. She removed that option and worked with the local authority to offer him emergency accommodation.

The inspector commented the case below illustrates:

"the power of an effective working relationship with the person on probation and partners and a comprehensive assessment.

The practitioner used disclosures from the person on probation to inform case management and the development of further objectives.

Furthermore, when the case was transferred to a new practitioner there was little impact on Imran, as the rest of the support agencies remained in place; there were strong and well-developed relationships between partners, and good records allowed the progress to continue as opposed to having to go back over information".

For example:

Imran was released on licence as an IOM case; records illustrated regular and responsive contacts between the police and probation practitioner, who were in constant communication regarding his compliance and progress.

Imran had entrenched substance misuse with multiple and complex needs. He claimed significantly reduced use and the police and practitioner conducted a home visit in an attempt to verify this and assess his home circumstances. During the visit Imran disclosed a developing reliance on pregabalin (a prescribed medication to treat anxiety). The practitioner supported him by referring his case back to his GP. When Imran's leg swelled and he was bedridden, the practitioner continued to conduct home visits to Imran and arranged for his tag to be removed, and refitted once the issue had been dealt with.

Records indicated this responsive and collaborative approach between all parties was a 'turning point' in how Imran perceived probation in general. Reports suggest he felt like he was listened to, which translated to a greater willingness to engage.



Reflection questions

Reflecting on this section:

From a strategic perspective:

- This guide contains multiple illustrations of effective practice. How do you collect and celebrate such examples from your region, PDU and office?
- What factors in your region contribute most to the risk of reoffending following a custodial sentence?
 - How does this influence your service delivery?
- What quality assurance do you have in relation to resettlement work and how does the learning from this influence service delivery?
- Given the positive influence of multi-agency work, on a scale from 1 to 10, how would you rate the quality of your partnership arrangements? Consider whether you have the right people involved, and whether services match the demographics and needs in your area.
 - Why did you give it this number?
 - Where appropriate, what action can you and your team take to increase the score?

From an operational perspective:

- How do you feel when you read the examples used in this section? Interested? Enthusiastic to apply to your own cases? Curious? Indifferent? And why do you feel this way?
- In what ways do you consider and implement some of the themes seen here in your own practice?
- How do you consider an individual's diversity needs and personal circumstances in your resettlement practice?
- What challenges have you faced in your resettlement practice?
 - How would you tackle these challenges with the knowledge you have gained from your experience and reflections?
- Think of an example of a person you worked with who was able to smoothly transition into the community:
 - What factors made this successful?
 - How did you and the partnership contribute to this?
 - What lessons can/did you take from this for your future practice?
- Reflecting on Maslow's hierarchy of needs and the resettlement pathways into and out of offending:
 - How do you ensure you have considered these needs in your assessment?
 - How do you develop plans, with the individual, to address these?