



HM Inspectorate
of Probation

An inspection of probation services in:
Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight PDU
The Probation Service – South Central region

HM Inspectorate of Probation, July 2023



Contents

Foreword.....	3
Ratings.....	4
Recommendations	5
Background.....	6
1. Organisational delivery	7
2. Court work and case supervision	18
Annexe one – Web links.....	25

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The role of HM Inspectorate of Probation

HM Inspectorate of Probation is the independent inspector of youth offending and probation services in England and Wales. We report on the effectiveness of probation and youth offending service work with adults and children.

We inspect these services and publish inspection reports. We highlight good and poor practice, and use our data and information to encourage high-quality services. We are independent of government, and speak independently.

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

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Foreword

We have rated Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight Probation Delivery Unit (PDU) as 'Requires improvement.' Although we saw some positive aspects of practice, more was needed to ensure that a sufficient quality of work was being undertaken with people on probation.

Staff were committed and there was a clear plan to deliver the priorities of the PDU. The PDU also benefitted from many well-established strategic partnership arrangements. The leadership team were well-established, experienced and supported new developments and innovation.

As we have seen across many services over the last 18 months, high staff vacancies have meant workloads that are not manageable. Probation Officer (PO) vacancies were at 23 per cent in the PDU and over half the staff we surveyed did not think their workload was manageable. Management oversight was not providing the direction needed, which is no surprise given the resourcing challenges. The excessive spans of line management control of the Senior Probation Officers (SPO) had limited their ability to engage in reflective discussions with staff and monitor key aspects of delivery, in particular, work to keep people safe. Child safeguarding enquiries and assessments were missing in far too many cases.

Leaders were clear in their priorities and open to feedback, with plans to address some issues, highlighted in this report, already in place. Staffing levels remain a critical issue, and the challenge will be supporting the high volume of Professional Qualification in Probation (PQiP) trainees that are due to qualify this year. New practitioners require more time and further training to develop their skills which will impact the workloads of more experienced staff.

While we found a suitable range of commissioned rehabilitative service (CRS) provision, staff were not always utilising what was available to them and referrals into partnerships were not at the expected level. It was disappointing to see that not enough people on probation had made progress in addressing the factors that were linked to their offending and potential harm to others.

It is hoped that this inspection can assist the PDU in achieving their aims. Regional and national support is needed to address staff vacancies. Some important building blocks are in place but there are still improvements required with a greater focus on the fundamentals of assessing and managing risk.



Justin Russell

Chief Inspector of Probation

Ratings

Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight

Fieldwork started May 2023

Score **6/27**

Overall rating

Requires improvement



1. Organisational delivery

1.1 Leadership

Requires improvement



1.2 Staff

Requires improvement



1.3 Services

Requires improvement



1.4 Information and facilities

Good



2. Court work and case supervision

2.1 Court work

Requires improvement



2.2 Assessment

Inadequate



2.3 Planning

Inadequate



2.4 Implementation and delivery

Inadequate



2.5 Reviewing

Inadequate



Recommendations

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

Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight PDU should:

1. increase middle management capacity to ensure sufficient resource is in place to provide enhanced management oversight
2. ensure interventions and services available locally are utilised to deliver appropriate services to support desistance and address the risk of harm
3. improve the quality and impact of work to manage the risk of harm and to keep actual and potential victims safe
4. ensure that appropriate processes are in place to obtain and assess child safeguarding and domestic abuse information.

South Central region should:

5. reduce waiting times for accredited programmes, particularly Building Better Relationships (BBR)
6. review the use and referral rates of CRS contracts to ensure they are meeting the needs of people on probation.

HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) should:

7. ensure PDUs and probation regions are sufficiently resourced to protect the public
8. ensure all probation offices have reliable Wi-Fi access.

Background

We conducted fieldwork in Portsmouth and Isle of Wight PDU over the period of a week, beginning 22 May 2023. We inspected 41 cases where sentences and licences had commenced between 17 October 2022 to 23 October 2022 and 07 November 2022 and 13 November 2022. We also conducted 35 interviews with probation practitioners.

Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight is one of seven PDUs in the South Central region of The Probation Service. They operate from three offices, two in central Portsmouth and one on the Isle of Wight and there is one prison in the PDU (HM Prison Isle of Wight). Before probation services were unified in June 2021, they were covered by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community Rehabilitation Company, operated by Purple Futures, and the South West South Central region of the National Probation Service. The PDU provides probation services to the Crown Courts and magistrates' courts in Portsmouth and on the Isle of Wight. Accredited programmes and stand-alone unpaid work (UPW) orders are managed regionally.

Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight are separate unitary authorities that are covered by Hampshire and Isle of Wight police. Portsmouth has a population 206,828 with a crime rate of 133 per 1,000 residents. It has socio-economic challenges as it is in the top 20 per cent of the most deprived unitary authorities and districts of the country. The ethnicity of Portsmouth is 85.2 per cent white, with an unemployment rate of 3.8 per cent. The Isle of Wight is larger geographically and has a mixture of rural and urban areas with a population of 140,889 and a crime rate of 81 per 1,000 residents. The median age of the Isle of Wight is 51, compared to 35 in Portsmouth, with a third of the population retired and 97 per cent identifying as white. Unemployment on the Isle of Wight is 4.9 per cent, which is significantly higher than the average in England of 3.6 per cent, with one of the major employment sectors linked to tourism.

CRS cover the following work: Catch 22 for personal wellbeing; Ingeus for education, training and employment (ETE); finance, benefit and debt and accommodation. There is a range of women-only provisions across the PDU which includes the registered charity Advance Minerva along with Women on Wight who provide a reporting centre on the Isle of Wight. Substance misuse intervention is provided by workers from Inclusion and Change, Grow, Live (CGL).

The staffing target of the PDU was 91.63 full-time equivalent (FTE) but the staff in post at the time of the inspection was 84.63 FTE. In line with other areas we have inspected, the main concern with staffing was the vacancy rate with POs. Of the seven PDUs in the South Central region, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight was the only one that was rated green on the probation prioritisation framework at the time we inspected it. The PDU manages 1,012 people on probation, 55 per cent of those on community or suspended sentence orders, 34 per cent supervised on licence and 11 per cent in custody.

1. Organisational delivery

1.1. Leadership



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

Requires improvement

As a result of the domain 2 ratings, the inspectorate's rating decision guidance would normally require leadership to be rated as "Inadequate". However, in recognition of the strengths seen at a strategic level, leadership is rated as "Requires improvement".

Strengths:

- There was a clear plan to deliver the vision and priorities of the PDU which aligned with the regional strategy.
- The move to a 'concentrator model' in the Portsmouth Offices was delivered well. Probation practitioners were consulted and given options as to their preferred area of work.
- Arrangements were in place to identify emerging risks, supported by effective local and regional governance arrangements. We saw proactive business continuity and risk review activity.
- The PDU was currently in Green status under the prioritisation framework despite and were expecting to soon meet the criteria for Amber. It was the only PDU in the region that was not in Amber. Senior leaders set out clear priorities to achieve the ambition of the region and PDU with a considered approach.
- Staff were positive about their experiences of leadership, which was illustrated in responses to our survey: 22 out of 24 staff thought the organisation prioritised quality and adherence to evidence; the open culture, constructive challenge and encouraging ideas were viewed positively by 19 out of 24 staff as was communication and implementation of change.
- Relationships with strategic partners from the local authority and the police were strong. One benefit of these arrangements was the information exchange with Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) police. The PDU head was an active presence in both the Youth Offending Board and Community Safety Partnerships.

Areas for improvement:

- The vision for the PDU was not being achieved due to the insufficient levels of staff. As a consequence, there was a primary focus on the early part of sentences; assessment, planning and the completion of OASys. Our case review indicated that this focus was at the expense of subsequent work, implementation and reviewing. Scores relating to engagement and desistance were positive in the early part of orders but faded later on.

- There was an insufficient focus on managing risk. In too many cases enquiries to the police and children's services about domestic abuse during the assessment stage were not undertaken or, when information was received, not sufficiently analysed. Plans to introduce an improved system to manage domestic abuse checks and children's services enquiries were yet to come to fruition.
- Management oversight was insufficient in 29 of the 38 eligible cases we reviewed during the inspection. Guidance given to manage the risk of serious harm was not consistent, with factors such as child safeguarding, often overlooked.
- The PDU was not sufficiently resourced at SPO grade to undertake the necessary oversight of case management, and the leadership team have been stretched to meet a range of competing demands. SPOs could not fully engage with the lead responsibilities they were given due to excessive workloads.
- The PDU has three separate delivery sites with a limited unified approach or culture. Since reunification, staff integration was not fully embedded with differing practices across the PDU.

1.2. Staff



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

Requires improvement

Strengths:

- A recent, temporary, Senior Operational Support Manager had been created to support Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight, and a neighbouring PDU, focusing on improving quality and performance. This was a recognition by the region of the pressures on leaders, but it was too early to see the impact.
- Of the staff surveyed, 18 out of 22 reported they had regular supervision, 16 out of 21 relevant responses said it enhanced the quality of their work.
- Of the cases inspected, 92 per cent had either the same or one other practitioner since the start of their order or licence, thus offering continuity to people on probation to develop working relationships.
- Excellent use was made of the reward and recognition system, with nominations and awards submitted via a wellbeing committee. Staff acknowledged and appreciated the recognition they received.
- Despite the pressure many staff were under, in our survey, 15 out of 22 respondents said there was sufficient attention given to their wellbeing.
- Career development was actively encouraged in the PDU with SPOs being recently appointed from within the team and opportunities for Probation Service Officers (PSOs) and case administrators to advance into different roles.
- Despite high workloads and staffing shortages, staff were motivated to deliver a high-quality service. There was a culture of peer-to-peer support and the attrition rate of staff leaving the PDU was less than the regional average.
- Despite pressure from other PDUs in the vicinity whose staffing levels were worse than Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight, nine PQiPs are due to qualify this year. It is anticipated that the staffing situation will have improved in the next few months.
- Administrative staff are directly aligned to teams across the PDU offering continuity and consistency to practitioners.

Areas for improvement:

- Although there was ongoing active recruitment, there remains prominent gaps with vacancy rates of 6.93 FTE (23 per cent) for PO grade, 3.85 FTE (51 per cent) for reception roles and 4.3 FTE (28 per cent) for case administrators.
- Although 21 out of 28 practitioners interviewed, and 17 out of 21 respondents in our survey said they had no more than 40 cases to manage, there remained considerable variation with, for instance POs ranging from 110 to 150 per cent on the workload management tool. Many staff described the

complexity of cases leading to a sense of being overwhelmed which impacted substantially on their morale and motivation.

- In our staff survey, 12 out of 21 relevant responses did not think their workload was manageable and 18 out of 22 considered the staffing level insufficient. This was further reflected through our focus groups. Over a third of practitioners interviewed as part of our case analysis raised similar concerns.
- Although our staff survey results indicated that 20 out of 21 respondents considered they had the right skills and experience for the cases they had been allocated, this was brought into question by the finding of our case reviews.
- SPOs had limited time to be fully engaged with their lead role and line management responsibilities. They had difficulty allocating PO cases and were, on occasion, having to supervise people on probation as part of workload management, compounding, in some cases their inability to effectively offer management oversight to casework.
- Induction for new case administrators and PSOs was not appropriately sequenced or responsive to their needs. Those promoted to SPO did not consider that their own induction appropriately prepared them for their additional tasks and the processes of line management.
- There was a 10 per cent vacancy rate in the court team. This impacted its ability to prepare timely reports and oral reports were rare. This impacted further on the welfare of staff and, despite positive feedback from sentencers, attention was needed to alleviate some of this pressure.
- Sickness across the PDU was high, averaging 10.6 days per annum, adding additional pressures to workloads. This was having a disproportionate impact on the PO grade with five absent during our fieldwork.
- Staff on the Isle of Wight raised concerns about the level of support they received and access to services. However, there was no indication from our review of cases that this impacted their management of work.
- Supervision was welfare led and while the focus on wellbeing is valuable, the current format lacks rigour in respect of case oversight and staff learning. Too often, case discussions relied on the practitioner identifying cases of concern rather than the manager proactively reviewing and selecting them.

1.3. Services



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

Requires improvement

In rating services, the effective arrangements in place to develop, commission and make available relevant services and interventions have been considered against the inadequate domain 2 rating for implementation and delivery. The strengths recognised, including a range of other services have led to the overall rating of "Requires improvement" for services.

Strengths:

- There was a reasonable range of services available for practitioners to access for support in managing cases.
- A number of partner agencies were co-located in PDU offices including a permanent Ingeus worker on the Isle of Wight providing guidance on ETE and finance, benefit and debt.
- There was good accommodation support. People on probation have access to three 'IOM houses' in Hampshire with 21 spaces available. Probation staff can nominate cases via a panel with accommodation offered for up to a year with move-on support.
- Portsmouth City Council provide a variety of tenancy support for people on probation and are accessible and responsive to referrals. This includes respite housing for women who are victims of domestic violence, trafficking and sex work. The safer communities housing scheme also provides accommodation and support for MAPPA, avoiding disclosures with private providers.
- 'Shaping Portsmouth' provides a bespoke employability and mentoring scheme to people on probation in Portsmouth. Although the partnership is in its early stages, it demonstrates the PDU leadership is receptive to innovative links that remove barriers to community integration.
- UPW was managed by the regional UPW team and we saw a good range of projects across this PDU.

Areas for improvement:

- Referrals to CRS providers were infrequent with services not accessed as often as they needed. Although co-located services were more likely to be accessed, for many staff, there was a preference to rely on already established provision. More needed to be done to encourage referrals and use of the full range of provision. Disappointingly, in only 61 per cent of cases we reviewed the services most likely to support desistance provided and in only 39 per cent of cases inspected did delivery of services support the safety of other people.
- The use of structured interventions and offending behaviour work was low. Toolkits were available but we found that they were inconsistently used. Staff

expressed a lack of confidence in using them and there was no evidence of effective feedback if they did.

- Waiting times for accredited programmes were too long at around 18 weeks for BBR and 21 weeks for the Thinking Skills Programme. There was little pre-programmed work undertaken to compensate for these delays. Access to programmes to address sex offending had shorter waiting times because of relatively low numbers.
- People on probation who lived on the Isle of Wight had to access BBR and other structured interventions on the mainland. A group room was available on the Isle of Wight but had limited capacity (five). There was, however, no indication that waiting times were longer.
- Women had access to a single refer and monitor process offering dedicated provision across a good range of support along with women-only reporting sessions. We only had a small sample of females in our case review (seven) and while, in all of these, planning was judged to be sufficient, the implementation of work to address desistence was insufficient in five cases. More needs to be done to understand why this is the case.
- Despite good relationships with police and safeguarding services, responses to enquiries by probation practitioners were not always forthcoming. The introduction of a planned system for direct access to information was hoped to improve matters but, at the time of our inspection, was not yet in place.

Resettlement work

Strengths:

- There was not a specific resettlement team in the PDU. The concentrator model was implemented in the Portsmouth offices with selected staff focusing on a short sentence function approach. This was to allow more consistency of practice through the handover from prison to community supervision. Staff in the Isle of Wight were working to a generic model due to smaller case numbers.
- Although our sample only included nine people on probation released on licence, the assessments identified and analysed offending-related factors in all but one of the cases.
- Sufficient focus was given to engaging services that support desistance (78 per cent) and also the safety of others (67 per cent). This was statistically better than for those on a community sentence (31 per cent).

Areas for improvement:

- Work focusing on planning for engagement and desistance required further attention. Fewer than half the licence cases we reviewed had their views considered compared to 75 per cent of people on probation on a community sentence.
- Although better than those on community sentence, in only 44 per cent (four out of nine) of licence cases did the assessment focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe.

1.4. Information and facilities



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

Good

Strengths:

- Overall, staff felt safe, and in our survey, 19 out of 22 respondents felt that sufficient attention was paid to their safety.
- Performance and accountability meetings ensured that learning was cascaded to staff. This included information about service level measures and access to structured interventions, including accredited programmes.
- Information can also be accessed by staff via SharePoint which includes a practitioner dashboard for sentence management, performance metrics and an enforcement hub. This ensured staff were aware of their own targets and the priority of their work.
- Communication across the PDU was managed reasonably well with weekly regional bulletins and a dedicated staff Teams channel alongside regular face-to-face meetings. The PDU head led a monthly information exchange for all staff. Information relating to policies and procedures were available to staff via SharePoint.
- Gathering information about the views of people on probation was managed primarily at a regional level but worked well. Regular forums were held and the PDU had seconded an SPO into this process to co-ordinate activity responses.
- The integration of Jitbit has allowed administrative staff to manage and prioritise their workload.
- The regional learning, effectiveness and accountability panel meetings is a forum to discuss topics including, for example, learning from SFOs and audits. This forum was replicated at PDU level to cascade learning to staff.

Areas for improvement:

- The approach of the PDU to ensuring the quality of performance was not always evident. The audit of R-CATs, for instance, did not, on the basis of our case review, indicate that their impact was effective.
- Although information relating to the diverse needs of people on probation was known, it was not used to evaluate the proportionate impact of services on individual groups, such as those with a disability, by gender or age. No distinction was made between those on the Isle of Wight and the mainland to ensure equal access to services.
- Some staff told us that workload pressures meant that they did not consistently have time to focus on learning nor reflect sufficiently on their practice.

- There was no Wi-Fi in the Isle of Wight office. Plans to install government Wi-Fi were scheduled for the business year 2023/2024. This led to frustration amongst staff and was an indication to some that they were not considered a priority.
- Concerns over risk assessment and analysis has been a recurring theme both regionally and in the PDU performance and quality meetings. This was also an area of weakness in our inspection, with only 13 out of 41 cases considered sufficient in the assessment of keeping others safe.

Feedback from people on probation

User Voice, working with HM Inspectorate of Probation, had contact with people on probation as part of this inspection. Of these, 63 per cent reported that they were being supervised after having been released from a prison sentence, and 33 per cent were subject to a community sentence. The respondents were largely representative of the caseload demographics in terms of ethnic diversity and gender. People on probation who considered themselves to have a disability were underrepresented in the User Voice survey (14 per cent) when compared to the PDU's data of 69 per cent.

Strengths:

- People on probation generally felt safe accessing the probation office (92 per cent) and were able to have private conversations with their probation practitioner (80 per cent).
- Despite seeing a limited deployment of services in the cases inspected, 72 per cent of respondents to User Voice felt they had been helped to access the services they needed.

"The support has been good, and they have been able to signpost me to support services I have needed. This has improved my mental health."

- When discussing their experience with User Voice, nobody stated that the relationship with the probation practitioner was a problem with staff credited as being friendly and helpful by people on probation.

"Staff are really helpful, and they have gone out of their way to support me. The appointments have been good."

- People on probation (82 per cent) had been able to have appointments at a time that suited them. This corresponds with the findings of the inspection in which sufficient efforts were made to enable the individual to complete their sentence in 32 out of 41 cases.

"Getting to my appointments has been fine and they call me on the phone to check in with me. They have been able to refer me to support services."

Areas for improvement:

- One of the main causes of dissatisfaction was travelling to appointments, specifically on the Isle of Wight. Full refunds for travel recently stopped and a wider concern was noted by one respondent:

"They are on about stopping paying for the buses. If this happens, then I may not be able to get to probation as I am on benefits and already in debt."

Diversity and inclusion

Strengths:

- In 88 per cent of the cases inspected, there was evidence that the person on probation had been asked about their diversity characteristics at the start of the period of supervision.
- There was a varied offer of services contained within the regional services directory which can be filtered down to PDU level. These included partnerships that specialised in autism, LGBTQ+, veterans and women's services.
- The local accommodation provision through Portsmouth City Council for women was impressive. It included the use of respite accommodation for those who were victims of domestic violence, trafficking or sex work.
- There was a regional equality and diversity strategy with specific pledges for both employees and people on probation. Links were included for staff networks along with relevant key documents.

Areas for improvement:

- The profile of staff across the PDU did not fully represent the general population of the population. Despite attempts to build a more reflective staff group there remained fewer staff from a black, Asian and minority ethnic background and more women than in the general population of Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight.
- We found that planning for services to address desistance to be statistically better for women than males on probation. However, implementation of these services was weaker for women with only two out of seven cases (29 per cent) considered sufficient compared to 69 per cent of males on probation.
- Census data highlighted some significant differences between the populations of the Isle of Wight and Portsmouth. More was needed to be done to ensure that both populations were able to access services to meet their needs.

2. Court work and case supervision

2.1 Court work



Our rating¹ for court work is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against the key question:

Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
Is the pre-sentence information and advice provided to court sufficiently analytical and personalised to the individual, supporting the court's decision-making?	48%

We used professional discretion to upgrade the score for court work from 'Inadequate' to 'Requires improvement'. That is possible because the score was within two per cent of the boundary for requires improvement and, overall, we found examples of good practice combined with high levels of sentencer confidence.

Strengths:

- Mechanisms to obtain domestic abuse information worked effectively at court, with enquiries made with police in 21 out of 23 cases. All but one of these had been returned prior to sentencing. This ensured appropriate information was available when considering proposals for the court.
- Meaningful engagement between individuals and staff preparing court reports was undertaken in all of the cases inspected. This meant people on probation were positively involved in the process.
- There was appropriate consideration given to the individual's personal circumstances and diversity information in 91 per cent of cases. A suitable proposal had been made to the court in a large majority (82 per cent) of the reports inspected.
- These findings reflected, broadly, what sentencers said during our fieldwork.

Areas for improvement:

- In only half of the relevant cases reviewed was an enquiry made with children's services. As a consequence of this, we assessed that in only 41 per cent of cases did the information and advice given draw sufficiently on available sources of information.
- The court team are experienced and offers peer-to-peer support but do not have sufficient staff numbers to provide the required service to court. Adjournments for reports were extended up to six weeks resulting in a delay of sentencing individuals.

¹ The rating for the standard is driven by the score for the key question, which is placed in a rating band. [Full data and further information about inspection methodology is available in the data workbook for this inspection on our website.](#)

2.2. Assessment



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

Inadequate

Our rating² for assessment is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against three key questions:

Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
Does assessment focus sufficiently on engaging the person on probation?	71%
Does assessment focus sufficiently on the factors linked to offending and desistance?	73%
Does assessment focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	32%

Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight PDU is rated as 'Inadequate' for assessment as the lowest score out of the three key questions was 32 per cent. Concerningly, this relates to whether there was sufficient focus on keeping other people safe.

Strengths:

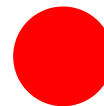
- Most assessments (71 per cent) meaningfully involved the person on probation. Information had been gathered on their views and personal circumstances to inform future work as part of their order or licence.
- In 76 per cent of cases, practitioners identified and sufficiently analysed the offending related factors relevant in the case. This demonstrated an appropriate focus on both engaging people on probation in their own assessment and focussing on their offending behaviour and desistance needs.

Areas for improvement:

- The assessment of risk is a fundamental component of any assessment but, disappointingly, in only 16 out of 37 relevant cases was a sufficient analysis of the harm posed to actual or potential victims undertaken and over half the cases we reviewed did not clearly identify relevant factors linked to the risk of harm towards others.
- Furthermore, child safeguarding enquiries were not made in over half of the relevant cases inspected. Consequently, valuable information was missing to inform accurate risk assessments.

² The rating for the standard is driven by the score for the key question, which is placed in a rating band. [Full data and further information about inspection methodology is available in the data workbook for this inspection on our website.](#)

2.3. Planning



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

Inadequate

Our rating³ for planning is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against three key questions:

Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
Does planning focus sufficiently on engaging the person on probation?	66%
Does planning focus sufficiently on reducing reoffending and supporting desistance?	68%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	37%

Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight PDU is rated as 'Inadequate' for planning as only 37 per cent of cases were assessed as sufficient in relation to keeping other people safe.

Strengths:

- In a reasonable majority of the cases we reviewed, planning focussed sufficiently on engaging individuals. In particular this considered the personal circumstances of the person on probation (71 per cent) and their motivation to change (76 per cent of cases).
- In most cases, probation practitioners prioritised the most important factors linked to reducing the likelihood of offending. Similarly, planning identified the services that would support desistance in 68 per cent of cases.

Areas for improvement:

- Almost inevitably, when there is not a sufficient analysis of the risk of harm to others, planning to address these risks is limited which was evident in too many of the cases we inspected.
- Specific actions and contingencies to address known or potential threats were insufficient in 12 out of 37 relevant cases. Plans were too generic to fully mitigate the risk posed and too few accounted for current and potential victims. Additionally, more attention needs to be given to considering the critical factors linked to serious harm, which was insufficient in 22 out of 38 relevant cases.

³ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. [Full data and further information about inspection methodology is available in the data workbook for this inspection on our website.](#)

- Although planning for engagement and desistance was prioritised by staff in the PQiP role, their practice for planning to keep others safe was sufficient in only two out of nine cases. Further oversight and support is required for PQiPs to understand the assessment of risk and planning to protect potential victims.

2.4. Implementation and delivery



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

Inadequate

Our rating⁴ for implementation and delivery is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against three key questions:

Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
Is the sentence or post-custody period implemented effectively focusing on engaging the person on probation?	61%
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support desistance?	61%
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?	39%

Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight PDU is rated as 'Inadequate' for implementation and delivery as fewer than 50 per cent of cases were assessed as sufficient in relation to keeping other people safe.

Strengths:

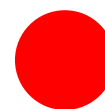
- In 76 per cent of cases inspected, there was sufficient focus on maintaining working relationships with individuals, and a flexible approach was taken to enable people to complete their sentence in 32 out of 41 cases.
- We saw some good examples of joint work with other agencies including CGL, Ingeus, support for autism and housing links, to mention just a few. Work was well co-ordinated in 22 out of 34 relevant cases with multiple agencies across many cases. However, this was not as consistent as we would have liked to have seen.

Areas for improvement:

- In 20 out of 34 cases, we found that there was insufficient coordination of other agencies in managing the risk of harm. In too many cases, children's social care information was either not requested or the information received wasn't sufficiently acted on, including engagement with relevant social workers.
- Enforcement decisions were found to be an area of concern during our inspection where half of relevant cases did not have enforcement actions taken when appropriate. We found too many cases where the verification of reasons given for non-attendance was not prioritised.

⁴ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. [Full data and further information about inspection methodology is available in the data workbook for this inspection on our website.](#)

2.5. Reviewing



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

Inadequate

Our rating⁵ for reviewing is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against three key questions:

Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the compliance and engagement of the person on probation?	59%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting desistance?	59%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	46%

Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight PDU is rated as 'Inadequate' for reviewing as the lowest score out of the three questions is 46 per cent.

Strengths:

- Formal reviews were completed by practitioners (26 out of 33) relevant cases), and reviewing was informed by necessary input from other agencies working to support desistance with the person on probation in 22 out of 34 relevant cases which helped support subsequent planning.
- There was a sufficient focus on reviewing the protective factors of the person on probation in 25 out of 33 of relevant cases. Practitioners understood what was linked to desistance and how the strengths of the person could be developed.

Areas for improvement:

- Despite work focussing on desistance, in only half of relevant cases was the review of harm informed by other agencies. This was a missed opportunity to gather up-to-date information and improve the involvement and coordination of partnerships involved.
- When reviewing the risk of harm posed by individuals, practitioners are not involving the person on probation and any key individuals in their life enough (18 out of 36 relevant cases).
- The management of risk of harm was not always effective when circumstances changed. In less than half of relevant cases, probation practitioners did not adjust the plan of work following a change in risk of harm.

⁵ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table.

2.6. Outcomes

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

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

Outcomes	Percentage 'Yes'
Do early outcomes demonstrate that reasonable progress has been made in line with the personalised needs of the person on probation?	46%

Strengths:

- An increase in offending was found in only 20 per cent of cases inspected. Given the resourcing and workload issues, it was positive to see that the reoffending rate on the cases we inspected was relatively low.

Areas for improvement:

- A reduction in factors most closely related to risk of harm to others had only taken place in 14 per cent of cases. That corresponds with our findings that work to protect others from harm was an area of weakness.
- Although there was a sufficient range of services, we saw too few cases (26 per cent) where factors closely related to offending had improved. For example, of the 30 cases where alcohol was linked to offending, only five appeared to have made progress in the area.
- It is a concern that there was insufficient compliance in too many of the cases we inspected (42 per cent). Staff were not consistently understanding the reasons and barriers that were preventing people on probation from attending appointments.

Annexe one – Web links

Full data and further information about inspection methodology is available in the data workbook for this inspection [on our website](#).

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