



HM Inspectorate
of Probation

An inspection of probation services in:

East Kent PDU

The Probation Service – Kent, Surrey and Sussex region

HM Inspectorate of Probation, March 2024



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Acknowledgements

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The role of HM Inspectorate of Probation

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Foreword

This is the third Probation Delivery Unit (PDU) inspection of the five within the Kent, Surrey and Sussex probation region. Despite efforts by the leadership team across East Kent PDU, along with a passionate and committed staff group and some promising innovation, the quality of work to reduce reoffending and manage risk of harm was insufficient, resulting in an overall rating of 'Inadequate'.

Geographical factors had created significant challenges in relation to recruitment and retention of frontline staff, but shortfalls in staffing were gradually being addressed and the PDU was making some progress in reaching its target operating model.

However, the level of inexperience across all grades of staff was evident in the cases we inspected. Too often indicators of risk of harm were not identified, explored, or sufficiently understood by practitioners. This led to a lack of effective liaison and information-sharing with police and children's social care to safeguard children and victims of domestic abuse. Middle managers, many of whom were also new in post, were overwhelmed by the demands of their role compounded by the extent of the training and development needs of their staff, and were unable to provide the necessary level of oversight required across the caseload.

Leaders were concerned about staff welfare and had attempted to mitigate the impact of resourcing issues by adopting a prioritisation model. However, the principles of this approach were not being fully adhered to. Service delivery by commissioned providers was insufficient to reduce reoffending and harm and improve outcomes for people on probation.

Recognition and analysis of diversity factors needed to be strengthened to enable people with protected characteristics to overcome barriers to engagement, and a more collaborative approach to assessment and planning was required to promote compliance and support desistance.

Although not yet evidenced in the casework we inspected, the PDU leadership were implementing appropriate processes and systems to drive up the quality of service delivery, and it was positive to see they had prioritised staff and middle manager induction, training and development to increase retention.

Undoubtedly, staff and leaders in East Kent PDU will be disappointed by our findings, but we hope they will not be deterred from continuing to make the improvements which will enable them to realise their vision that East Kent PDU will become a high-performing and inspiring place to work.



Martin Jones CBE

HM Chief Inspector of Probation

Ratings

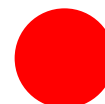
East Kent PDU

Fieldwork started December 2023

Score **3/21**

Overall rating

Inadequate



1. Organisational arrangements and activity

P 1.1 Leadership

Requires improvement



P 1.2 Staffing

Requires improvement



P 1.3 Services

Requires improvement



2. Service delivery

P 2.1 Assessment

Inadequate



P 2.2 Planning

Inadequate



P 2.3 Implementation and delivery

Inadequate



P 2.4 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.

East Kent PDU should:

1. ensure all actual and potential victims of domestic abuse are identified accurately
2. ensure domestic abuse and safeguarding information is analysed sufficiently to inform the quality of assessment, planning and management of people on probation
3. ensure work is undertaken with other agencies to manage domestic abuse and child safeguarding, such as the police and children's social care services, to ensure actual and potential victims are sufficiently protected
4. develop practitioners' confidence and skills in the use of professional curiosity and challenging conversations to identify, analyse, assess, plan, and respond to indicators of risk effectively
5. ensure sufficient attention is paid to promote equality, diversity and inclusion, addressing actual and potential barriers (for engagement/compliance) for people on probation
6. improve the use of interventions and services to manage the risk of harm and support the desistance of people on probation
7. ensure middle managers have sufficient capacity to provide the appropriate level of oversight according to the needs of staff members and casework in the team.

Background

We conducted fieldwork in East Kent over a period of two weeks beginning 11 December 2023. We inspected 35 community orders and 16 releases on licence from custody where sentences and licences had commenced between 15 May and 21 May 2023, and 12 June and 18 June 2023. We also conducted 37 interviews with probation practitioners.

East Kent PDU encompasses a large geographical area, serving six local authorities of Kent County Council (Ashford, Canterbury, Dover, Folkestone and Hythe, Swale, and Thanet). Its significant coastline features the port of Dover, which is one of Europe's largest and busiest passenger ports, and the channel tunnel crossing connecting Folkestone to France for both passenger and freight trains.

There are three local prisons on the nearby Isle of Sheppey; HM Prison (HMP) Elmley, a Category B and C male prison; HMP Standford Hill, a Category D male prison; and HMP Swaleside, a Category B male prison. There are also three courts; Canterbury Crown Court and Magistrates' Court, Folkestone Magistrates' Court and Margate Magistrates' Court. The PDU is covered by Kent Police.

Staff in the PDU currently work out of four probation offices situated in Ashford, Canterbury, Folkestone and Ramsgate. Closures of the Sittingbourne and Margate offices due to unsafe working conditions have negatively impacted the morale of staff who had to relocate without notice.

The transport links by road and rail provide easy access to London, making it attractive for commuters, which further impacts the cost of living in the area and has created a challenge in relation to recruitment and retention of probation staff.

At the time of our fieldwork, the PDU employed 208 full-time equivalent staff, the majority of whom were female (80 per cent) and managed a caseload of 3,350, comprising 1,404 people subject to community and suspended sentence orders, 824 people on post-release licences, and 1,122 people in prison. The East Kent staff group has limited ethnic diversity (five per cent). This is indicative of the local demography but is low in comparison to the 8.21 per cent of people from ethnic minorities in the PDU's caseload resulting from a disproportionate rise in foreign nationals being sentenced for illegal entry to the United Kingdom.

Commissioned rehabilitative services (CRS) providers delivered interventions across the following pathways; Interventions Alliance for accommodation, personal wellbeing, and education, training and employment; Advance charity for women's services; and Change, Grow, Live for dependency and recovery services.

1. Organisational arrangements and activity

1.1. Leadership



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

Requires improvement

In this inspection, all four domain two standards were rated 'Inadequate', however we identified a number of areas of effective leadership which were driving positive progress. This supported an overall rating for leadership of 'Requires improvement'.

Strengths:

- There was effective leadership in the PDU with the PDU head and deputy operating as a cohesive team. They were recognised by staff, managers and partners for their presence and commitment. The PDU head was realistic about the challenges in the PDU and the right mechanisms were in place, but many of these had yet to impact substantially on delivering a high-quality service for all people on probation.
- The deputy head of service's extensive local knowledge and experience in East Kent underpinned collaborative, high-quality relationships with statutory partners.
- The PDU was in red status under the national Prioritisation Framework (PF) and had been for almost a year. Senior leaders were clear in their communication and direction to staff on the implications for work.
- The communication and engagement strategy featured regular staff bulletins from the PDU head complemented by weekly team 'huddles' to reinforce key messages. Monthly question and answer sessions and quarterly staff engagement forums provided opportunities for staff to ask questions, offer constructive challenge and contribute ideas. A staff intranet provided a central repository for updates and guidance. In our survey, 23 out of 33 respondents felt the vision and strategy of the PDU drove a high-quality service for people on probation.
- The PDU faced a significant challenge in upskilling a largely inexperienced staff and middle manager group. To mitigate this and improve service delivery the PDU head and deputy prioritised work focused on the targeted quality improvement plan within the constraints of the PF guidance.
- To improve the quality and efficacy of management oversight, the PDU head had commissioned a leadership development programme facilitated by an experienced senior manager comprising of one-to-one coaching sessions, reflective practice sessions and workshops. This had achieved some improvements, although it was acknowledged that more were necessary.
- A number of initiatives had been launched to better organise service delivery. These included the Probation Operational Delivery (POD) structure for priority cohorts, the integration of young adults into the Integrated Offender

Management (IOM) scheme, and work with foreign nationals which had incorporated a multi-agency approach.

Areas for improvement:

- Despite the strengths we found, the inexperience at middle manager level and across all grades of staff significantly undermined the quality of casework delivery, which was particularly poor in relation to keeping people safe.
- Leaders needed to address shortcomings in the work to safeguard children and address domestic abuse. Too many staff did not recognise the need for safeguarding and police enquiries, and there was insufficient follow-up when responses were lacking detail and inconsistent use of the data to inform practice.
- As a result of sustained high workloads, probation practitioners in particular felt overwhelmed by the pace of change in the PDU as leaders sought to drive improvements. While the majority of people who responded to our survey (26 out of 33) felt their safety was prioritised by the PDU, 14 out of 33 did not feel sufficient attention was paid to their wellbeing. More than half (18 out of 33) of the respondents to our survey felt the organisation did not value staff sufficiently, which was a view echoed, in particular, by case administration staff.
- The quality of the estates provision across the PDU was inconsistent. Two sites were closed in 2023 due to health and safety concerns, resulting in staff and people on probation having further to travel which caused stress for staff and triggered a reduction in people on probation's compliance.
- Despite the attempts of leaders to address some cultural issues and reduce silo working, some staff had not yet bought into the vision for the PDU and there were some examples of cross-office divisions.

1.2. Staffing



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

Requires improvement

Strengths:

- Successful recruitment campaigns and a comparatively low staff attrition rate (eight per cent) had recently contributed to improved staffing at all grades except Probation Officers, whose numbers were gradually being replenished with newly qualified officers completing the Professional Qualification in Probation (PQiP) training programme.
- The current PQiP provision, viewed as positive by trainees, was facilitated by protected caseloads and supportive Practice Tutor Assessors and Senior Probation Officers (SPOs).
- In response to feedback from new starters, a Probation Services Officer (PSO) development programme had been implemented to improve retention of PSOs by providing a comprehensive induction and training programme with built-in protected learning time.
- In line with its People plan, the PDU had established a learning and development board. The board's oversight contributed to improved completion rates for mandatory training, which were high.
- The regional 'Fundamentals First' programme positively provided staff and managers with protected learning time through monthly face-to-face development sessions. In our survey, 25 out of 33 respondents said the PDU supported a culture of learning.
- The PDU head set minimum expectations for supervision by line managers which she actively monitored. In our survey, 24 out of 33 respondents reported that they had supervision sufficiently frequently.
- It was positive that newly appointed SPOs were 'buddied up' with an experienced colleague to provide peer support for their first six months in post. A checklist of essential training, experience, knowledge and skills was created to guide their development activities.
- SPOs attended the Skills for Effective Engagement in Supervision training. The PDU head and deputy observed supervision sessions and provided constructive feedback to further support SPOs' development.
- There was a strong focus by the PDU head on addressing performance and conduct issues in a robust way to drive improvements and increase accountability.

Areas for improvement:

- Despite attempts to manage workloads effectively, only 13 out of 33 respondents to our survey and 19 out of 37 practitioners we interviewed said their workloads were manageable. We heard staff describing the current situation as a "test of endurance" and being under "constant and relentless

pressure". The sickness level in the PDU was higher than any of the other PDUs across the region.

- Practitioners viewed their managers as supportive but powerless to improve the situation. Some were frustrated by repeated changes of line manager which interrupted the continuity of management oversight, impacting on both their personal wellbeing and practice.
- The PDU had the highest number of PQiPs in the region, requiring an intensive level of resource. With only two PQiP SPOs, both were working with higher than the recommended spans of control.
- Our survey revealed that only 11 out of 20 respondents who had changed role in the preceding two years felt they had received an effective induction into their new role.
- Although some teams in the PDU were better resourced than others, redeployment of staff to distribute resources more equally was a significant challenge, given the geography of East Kent.
- SPOs struggled to plan and manage their work due to the wide scope of their role and responsibilities. Workloads were impacted significantly by the proportion of new and inexperienced staff within their span of control.
- Senior Administration Officers experienced similar issues with high numbers of new staff, compounded by an expectation they would resolve facilities management issues.
- Management oversight was insufficient, ineffective, or absent in 47 out of the 50 cases where this was required. In too many of these cases, notes on file were perfunctory.
- Both practitioners and SPOs described sometimes operating in a "culture of fear", especially around potential serious further offences. Management oversight was frequently sought or added to alleviate such anxieties but often actually added little value.
- In some of the cases we reviewed, SPOs had countersigned assessments to meet a performance target even when they were aware the quality of the assessment was insufficient.

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

Strengths:

- Referral rates to CRS providers were positive, and practitioners spoke enthusiastically about the provision for personal wellbeing and dependency and recovery services, and some elements of the women's services.
- Where there were gaps in CRS provision, SPOs and probation practitioners had proactively identified non-commissioned sources of support for people on probation across a range of areas including StepChange for debt management and the Shannon Trust for literacy support services.
- There were good strategic relationships with both the police and children's social care services across Kent. The small but effective probation safeguarding team had direct access to children's social care systems to facilitate enquiries. Information was also provided back to police, children's social care and Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences.
- The IOM scheme was characterised by positive and collaborative relationships between police and probation, who had strengthened governance arrangements for the scheme. East Kent PDU also benefited from being involved in the national pilot for Electronic Monitoring Acquisitive Crime.
- The East Kent foreign nationals strategy had created a positive network of passionate and proactive foreign national leads across the PDU who worked as a virtual team to drive forward improved ways of working through a foreign nationals forum established by the deputy head of service. Initiatives to promote improved resettlement outcomes included prison in-reach via a drop-in clinic at HMP Elmley and an essential information guide for people newly released from custody which had been translated into Arabic.

Areas for improvement:

- The quality of CRS provision was inconsistent in our inspection of service delivery. There were examples of delays in appointments being offered to people on probation, accessibility issues with some services only being offered remotely, and ineffective information-sharing and record-keeping which meant it was unclear what intervention work had been completed.
- There was no CRS provision in relation to finance, benefit and debt, and the employment advocacy provision was being decommissioned and no longer accepted referrals.

- The recent increase in women's services was positive but there remained a number of limitations. The women-only reporting space was only accessible for women living in Canterbury and the women's services CRS provider's acceptance criteria was too narrow. Inductions to the women's services CRS provision were undertaken remotely by phone, which was a further barrier to effective engagement.
- The average conversion rate from referrals to starts across all CRS providers was only 46 per cent, and just 30 per cent for women's services.
- Effective practice leads were located in each office to promote awareness and understanding among probation practitioners of the approved practitioner toolkits and structured interventions. However, under the PF much of this work was not prioritised and we saw little evidence of their use.
- Resourcing issues in the accredited programmes team had impacted on the pace of delivery of accredited programmes and structured interventions. Capacity issues in some offices meant people on probation with accredited programme requirements were usually required to travel significant distances to attend their intervention.
- Due to staffing pressures, one of the probation practitioners allocated to the safeguarding team had been returned to frontline work, diminishing the useful oversight previously available.

Feedback from people on probation

User Voice, working with HM Inspectorate of Probation, surveyed 70 people on probation as part of this inspection. Of these, 44 per cent reported that they were subject to a community sentence and 50 per cent were being supervised after being released from prison. Six per cent of respondents did not specify their sentence type.

The respondents were largely representative of the caseload demographics in terms of ethnicity, but 21 per cent identified as female, which was an overrepresentation of the overall caseload.

- The majority of respondents (87 per cent) understood what was expected of them on probation.

“My relationship with my probation officer is a respectful one. Probation has helped me with work and keeping away from drugs and crime and helped me keep my strong mind set about not reoffending. Appointments are good, you get help with your needs and it also gives you a reminder about why you’re on probation and gives you motivation to keep out of trouble.”

- Only 38 per cent of respondents said they had been involved in creating their sentence plan with their probation practitioner and this lack of collaborative approach had implications for the quality of subsequent engagement.

“They explained what I could and couldn’t do but they used some words I didn’t understand.”

- Although 76 per cent of respondents had a good relationship with their probation practitioner, it was disappointing that only 37 per cent felt their probation appointments had helped them with their rehabilitation.

“I feel supported but there are certain areas they can’t help with. Things like actually getting me somewhere to live that isn’t temporary is beyond their control. As someone to talk problems though with, they’re okay.”

- Some respondents felt frustrated by repeated changes of supervising officer.

“I think if I had the same worker, it wouldn’t be so bad. I spend more time going over what I did wrong than trying to get it right going forward.”

- About three-quarters (52 out of 70) of respondents said they needed support with their rehabilitation from external providers, although only just over half of those individuals (56 per cent) felt probation had helped them access services relevant to their circumstances. The greatest areas of need identified were related to mental health (31 respondents, 13 of whom still needed access to support) and accommodation (25 respondents, 18 of whom still needed access to support).

“They’ve helped because they got me the AA and mental health help but without housing, I don’t know how long I’ll feel like that.”

Diversity and inclusion

Strengths:

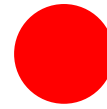
- A POD structure had been implemented to improve the quality and continuity of work with priority cohorts, including women, domestic abuse perpetrators, people sentenced to short custodial sentences, and those with the highest reoffending rates. Staff working in specialist roles demonstrated a genuine interest and passion for their area of work.
- Young adults aged 20-25 whose offending was characterised by violence and weapons possession had been adopted into the IOM scheme to enhance the intervention and controls afforded to this inherently risky and vulnerable cohort.
- An engaging people on probation forum was relaunched in 2023 to provide a voice to people on probation and increase their input to decision-making. It was supported by a group of staff and managers who were passionate about the initiative. In response to feedback from forum members, improvements had been made to interview rooms to create a more welcoming environment, conducive to positive engagement and relationship-building and sensitive to the needs of people with neurodiverse conditions.
- Appropriate action had been taken in response to findings that a disproportionate number of women were sentenced to custody in East Kent. The court SPO and regional strategic women's lead delivered briefings to sentencers and court officers to promote the use of pre-sentence reports to inform the sentencing of women and people from other protected cohorts. The court SPO prioritised gatekeeping of these pre-sentence reports to assure their quality.
- The majority of respondents to our staff survey who required reasonable adjustments to accommodate their protected characteristics (12 out of 15) confirmed these had been implemented.

Areas for improvement:

- In 88 per cent of cases we inspected, people on probation were asked about their protected characteristics. However, analysis of the potential impact of these factors on individuals' engagement and compliance was evident in fewer than half (41 per cent) of the cases, and planning only took account of protected characteristics in a third (16 out of 49) of relevant cases.
- While the PDU head recognised the importance of using needs analysis and diversity information to inform commissioning opportunities, this work had not been prioritised given the extent of the challenges within the PDU.
- The demography of the workforce was not representative of the caseload as a result of the unprecedented rise in foreign national cases since the enactment of the Borders and Nationality Act in June 2022.

2. Service delivery

2.1. Assessment



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

Inadequate

Our rating¹ for assessment is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against three key questions and is driven by the lowest score:

Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
Does assessment focus sufficiently on engaging the person on probation?	41%
Does assessment focus sufficiently on the factors linked to offending and desistance?	55%
Does assessment focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	16%

- While it was positive that people on probation had been asked about their diversity characteristics in 88 per cent of the cases we inspected, practitioners did not sufficiently consider the impact of factors such as mental illness and learning disabilities on individuals' ability to engage with the requirements of their sentence. People on probation were not meaningfully involved in the assessment of their needs and risks in nearly half (47 per cent) of the cases in our cohort. These were missed opportunities to maximise engagement and identify potential barriers to compliance.
- Seventy-one per cent of assessments identified strengths and protective factors which could be developed to support desistance. However, the overall quality of assessments was frequently undermined by little or no analysis of individuals' offending-related factors, resulting in gaps in knowledge and understanding of the motivation and triggers for offending.
- Some probation practitioners did not recognise potential domestic abuse and child safeguarding risks, while others made enquiries with police and children's social care but demonstrated a lack of professional curiosity in relation to the intelligence they received. Consequently, information about domestic abuse was only used in the assessments of 15 out of 44 relevant cases, and child safeguarding information was used in just 13 out of 46 relevant cases. This contributed to inaccurate judgements in relation to the likelihood and imminence of harm.

¹ 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.](#)

P 2.2. Planning



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

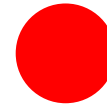
Inadequate

Our rating for planning is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against three key questions and is driven by the lowest score:

Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
Does planning focus sufficiently on engaging the person on probation?	29%
Does planning focus sufficiently on reducing reoffending and supporting desistance?	47%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	22%

- We found a continuing theme in planning in relation to the lack of attention to protected characteristics and insufficient collaboration with people on probation to ensure plans were personalised to make them relevant and meaningful to the individual.
- In 53 per cent of cases, the plan did not clearly explain how sentence requirements would be delivered, and there was a lack of attention to sequencing activities to ensure the most critical elements were prioritised.
- Less than half (47 per cent) of plans comprehensively addressed offending-related factors and it was concerning that plans effectively addressed risk of harm factors in only 10 out of 49 relevant cases. Some cases did not have a risk management plan due to the practitioner's underestimation of the risk of harm posed by the person on probation.
- Insufficient attention was paid to addressing domestic abuse and child safeguarding concerns and there was ineffective contingency planning to protect intimate partners, family members and children. Practitioners were often working in isolation, as only 12 out of 45 relevant cases included evidence that partner agencies were informed and involved in the creation of sentence plans and risk management plans.

P 2.3. Implementation and delivery



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

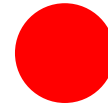
Inadequate

Our rating for implementation and delivery is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against three key questions and is driven by the lowest score:

Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
Is the sentence or post-custody period implemented effectively with a focus on engaging the person on probation?	45%
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support desistance?	33%
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?	14%

- Although we saw small pockets of good practice in terms of positively engaging people on probation and the delivery of interventions to reduce reoffending, the quality of the work to keep people safe through the implementation and delivery of the sentence was a cause for concern.
- It was positive to note that in 65 per cent of cases, practitioners worked flexibly with people on probation to take account of their personal circumstances; however, the level and nature of contact with people on probation was insufficient to support desistance or manage and minimise their risk of harm. Home visits were only undertaken in 11 out of 47 cases where they were needed.
- In 45 per cent of cases, the person on probation had been managed by two or more practitioners since their order or licence commenced. This was a source of frustration for respondents surveyed by User Voice who felt it impacted the quality of their relationship with their officer and hindered their progress.
- Commencement of sentence requirements was not timely in 63 per cent of the cases. This was in part due to poor compliance by people on probation, but probation practitioners did not take appropriate enforcement action to address this in over a third (12 out of 33) of cases where it was required.
- Not enough attention was given to protecting actual and potential victims in the majority (42 out of 49) of relevant cases. We found little evidence of effective multi-agency work and information-sharing with external agencies to safeguard children and victims of domestic abuse. Worryingly, sufficient services to address the high prevalence of risk of harm linked to family and relationships were only delivered in one out of 40 relevant cases.

P 2.4. Reviewing



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

Inadequate

Our rating for reviewing is based on the percentage of cases we inspected being judged satisfactory against three key questions and is driven by the lowest score:

Key question	Percentage 'Yes'
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the compliance and engagement of the person on probation?	39%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting desistance?	31%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	22%

- The lack of collaboration evidenced in assessment and planning continued in relation to reviewing activity. People on probation were only meaningfully involved in reviewing their progress in 39 per cent of the cases we inspected and contributed to reviews of their risk of harm in just five out of 44 relevant cases.
- Probation practitioners were not sufficiently responsive to changes in personal circumstances which could increase the risk of reoffending and harm, including homelessness, mental illness, and substance misuse. In 30 out of 49 relevant cases, reviewing did not address changes in factors linked to offending behaviour, and in 37 out of 44 relevant cases, reviewing did not address changes in factors related to risk of harm.
- Where reviews were undertaken, practitioners missed opportunities to improve the quality of their original assessments and plans, and continued to demonstrate a lack of professional curiosity in relation to domestic abuse and safeguarding concerns. Too often information was not obtained or shared with police and/or children's social care to effectively manage risk of harm when people on probation disclosed new or re-established intimate relationships and contact with children, or where there were reported incidents of domestic abuse. Reviews of risk of harm assessments were only informed by input from other agencies involved in managing risk of harm in 10 out of 44 relevant cases.

Outcomes

Strengths:

- In our case inspection cohort, we found there had been sufficient improvements in factors most closely linked to offending in a small number of cases (nine) between the commencement of orders and the time of our inspection.
- During this period, it was of note that there was a very small reduction in the number of people on probation (six) who were homeless at the start of their order or licence.
- Encouragingly, we also found there had been a small increase in the number of people on probation (five) who had secured full or part-time employment and a reduction in the number in unemployment.

Areas for improvement:

- Overall, delivery of services only had a positive impact on individuals' strengths and protective factors in fewer than half (49 per cent) of the cases we inspected.
- Of the people on probation in this cohort, 13 (25 per cent) had been charged or convicted of a new offence.
- There was only a reduction in factors most closely linked to risk of harm to others in six out of 50 relevant cases. This was disappointing, but corresponded with our findings that work to protect others from harm needed to improve across all areas of case management.

Annexe one – Web links

Full data from this inspection and further information about the methodology used to conduct this inspection is available [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)