



HM Inspectorate  
of Probation

**HM Inspectorate of Probation**

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Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice  
Minister for Prisons and Probation  
Minister for Victims and Safeguarding  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Justice  
Chief Inspectors of Criminal Justice  
HM Chief Inspector, Ofsted  
Victims Commissioner for England and Wales  
Chief Executive, Care Quality Commission  
Chief Inspector, Estyn  
Chief Executive, Healthcare Inspectorate Wales  
Chief Executive, Care Inspectorate Wales

20 March 2024

**Re: HM Inspectorate of Probation's response to the  
consultation on the Inspectorate's thematic inspection and  
research programmes for 2024/2025**

**1. Background**

- 1.1. We would like to thank those who responded to our consultation on our thematic inspection and research programmes for 2024/2025. In total, we received 17 responses to our consultation, which we have now reviewed. A list of respondents can be found at **Annex 1**.
- 1.2. Under the Police and Criminal Justice Act 2006, we are required to consult key stakeholders on our inspection frameworks and programmes. It is our practice to consult more widely, with those we inspect and associated bodies who can provide valuable insight and information as we develop our framework and programmes.
- 1.3. Our consultation opened on 22 November 2023 and closed on 6 December 2023. The consultation letter was published on our website and can be viewed here: [Consultation-letter-HMI-Probation-thematic-and-research-consultation-2024-2025.pdf \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/consultation-2024-2025.pdf)

- 1.4. The consultation set out proposals for our upcoming thematic inspection and research programmes, which included a list of suggested topics. We proposed the following questions:

1. Do you have any preferred thematic inspection topics from our list for 2024/2025?
2. Do you have any additional proposals for thematic inspection topics for 2024/2025?
3. Do you have any preferred research topics from our list for 2024/2025?
4. Do you have any alternative proposals on research topics for 2024/2025?

- 1.5. We asked for evidence for any alternative proposals and a sense of prioritisation of topics.

## 2. Summary of responses

### *Thematic inspection programme 2024/2025*

- 2.1. We received strong support for our suggested top three priority topics of (1) Unpaid work (2) Recruitment, retention and training, and (3) Youth pre-court disposals.
- 2.2. We also received a high-level of support for the topic of youth justice services and children's social care.
- 2.3. Respondents also put forward the below additional topics:
  - Foreign national offenders
  - Romany, gypsy and Irish traveller communities
  - Mortality under probation
  - Serious youth violence
  - Workforce and staffing
  - Girls in the youth justice system
  - Education, training and employment, along with SEND
- 2.4. Most of the additional topics suggested above were limited to one response. Many have been subject to recent inspection or research: serious youth violence (current Joint Targeted Area Inspection), girls in the youth justice system (with HMI Prisons, 2022), Education Training and Employment (with Ofsted and Estyn, 2022). Deaths while under probation supervision is closely related to the research we published in 2022 on probation staff experiences of working with people at risk of suicide and/or

self-harm. Workforce and staffing can be included in our recruitment, retention and training inspection.

#### *Research programme 2024/2025*

- 2.5. Respondents welcomed our priority research topic of approved premises. Support was also given to the proposed research projects on: (i) serious further offence (SFO) reviews and learning culture; (ii) youth justice work with victims; and (iii) the interventions landscape in youth justice.
- 2.6. The following additional topics were suggested by respondents:
  - Understanding the increase of girls coming into youth justice services – including YJS response
  - The impact of youth justice services in supporting young people with SEND who have offended
  - Wider determinants/public health needs of those on probation (incl. ETE, access to health services, and housing)
  - Experiences of Black and mixed heritage children and their access to services
- 2.7. The additional topics suggested above were all limited to one response and we will focus on secondary analysis of our existing data in the first instance.

### **3. Decisions**

#### *Thematics inspection programme 2024/2025*

- 3.1. We will be looking to carry out up to four thematic inspections during 2024/2025.
- 3.2. We will complete thematic inspections on the following topics in 2024/2025:
  - a) Unpaid work (adult)**
  - b) Recruitment, retention and training (adult)**
  - c) Youth pre-court disposals, undertaken jointly with HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)**
- 3.3. We will scope a further fourth topic from our priority list later this year.

#### *Research programme 2024/2025*

- 3.4. Our commissioned project on 'transitional safeguarding' will continue into 2024/2025.

- 3.5. We set out our intention in the consultation to carry out primary research on the topic of approved premises and we will progress this research project in 2024/2025.
- 3.6. In addition to approved premises, we will prioritise two additional research projects in 2024/2025. Our research projects for 2024/2025 will be:
  - a) Approved premises**
  - b) SFO reviews and learning culture**
  - c) Youth justice work with victims**
- 3.7. All of these projects have close links to our current and proposed inspection activities. While there was also support for the project on 'the interventions landscape in youth justice', it was highlighted that there was a need to consider the related work of the Youth Endowment Fund and to liaise with the Youth Justice Board. Further consideration will thus be given to the added value of any project led by ourselves and to the potential for any collaboration before proceeding any further.
- 3.8. In addition to our primary research projects, we will continue with secondary analysis of our inspection data and the publication of Academic Insights papers and reflections from research videos.

## Annex 1: List of respondents

Consultation respondents
Minister of State for Justice
Youth Justice Board (YJB)
Alliance for Youth Justice (AYJ)
HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)
Ofsted
Estyn
Care Inspectorate Wales
Public Health Wales
South West Probation Region
North Yorkshire Youth Justice Service
Medway Council
Hertfordshire Youth Justice Service
Lancashire Youth Justice Service
Derby Youth Justice Service
User Voice
HM Inspector (x2)