

CAPTURING THE VOICE OF PEOPLE ON PROBATION FOR THE SURREY INSPECTION

PUBLISHED MARCH 2024

56 PEOPLE HAD THEIR SAY:

12 ONLINE SURVEYS

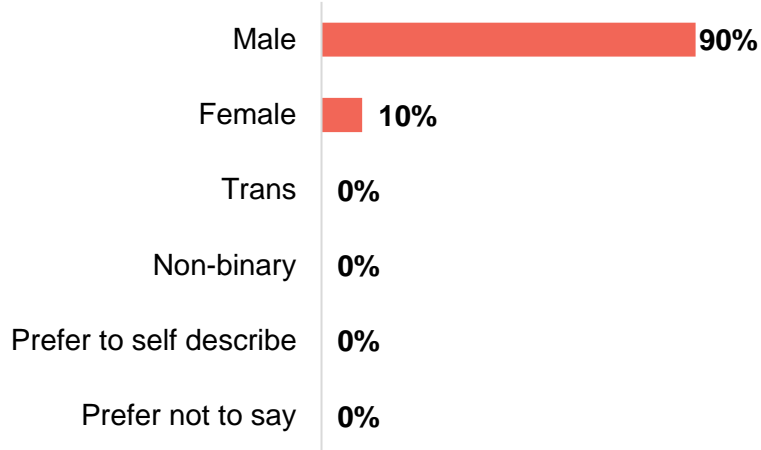
39 FACE TO FACE SURVEYS

5 IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

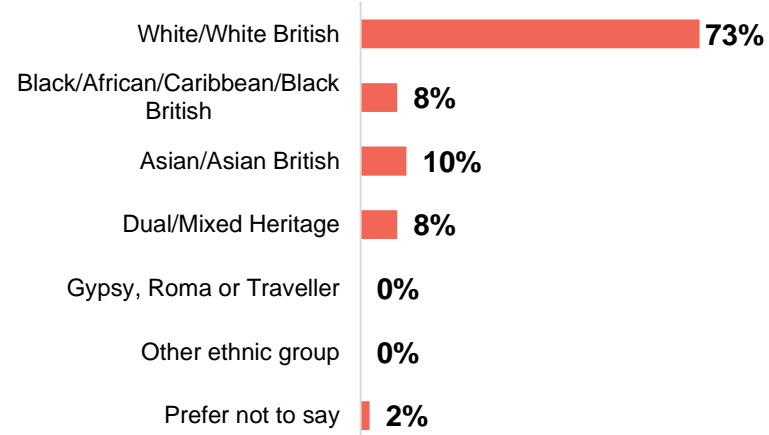
***ALL DATA IN THIS REPORT HAS BEEN CHECKED
FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE. SOME PERCENTAGES DO NOT
TOTAL TO 100% SOLELY FOR REASONS OF ROUNDING**

DEMOGRAPHICS

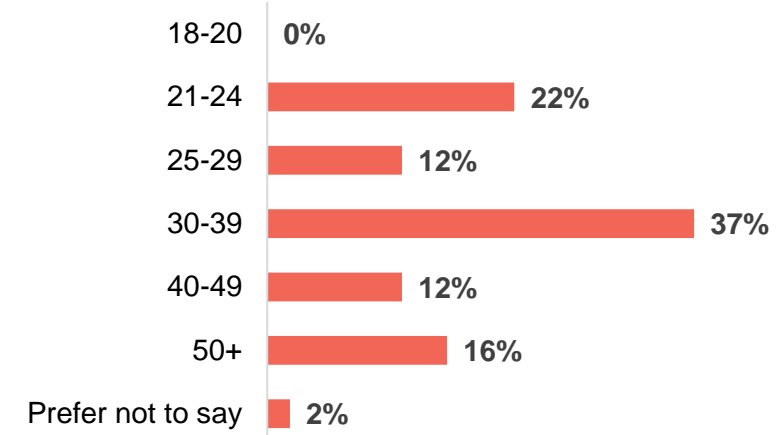
Gender



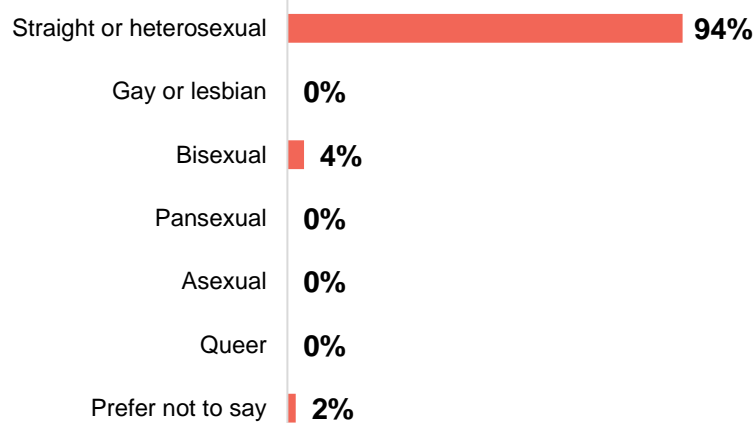
Ethnicity



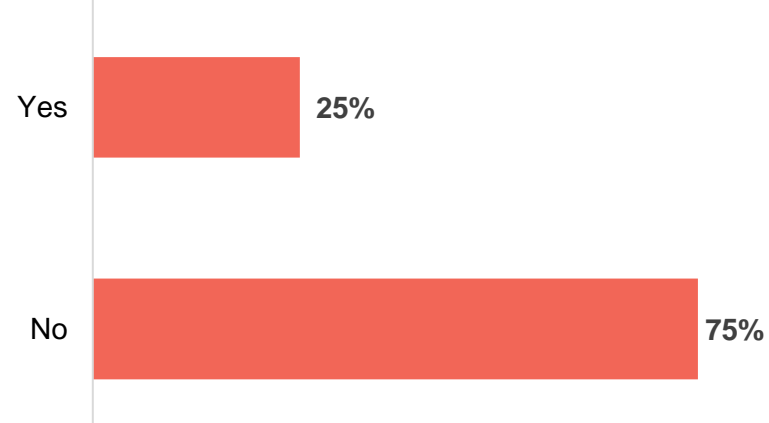
Age



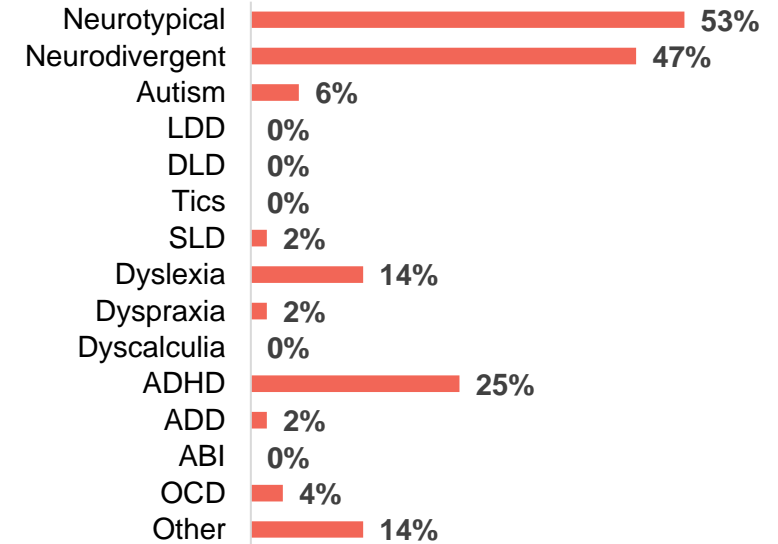
Sexual orientation



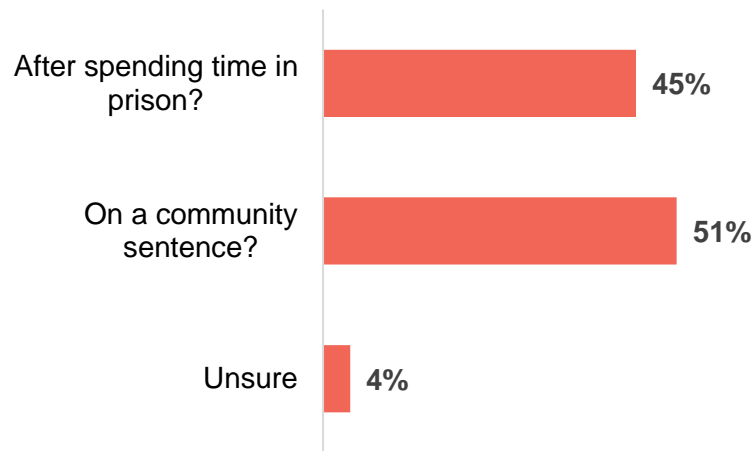
Disability



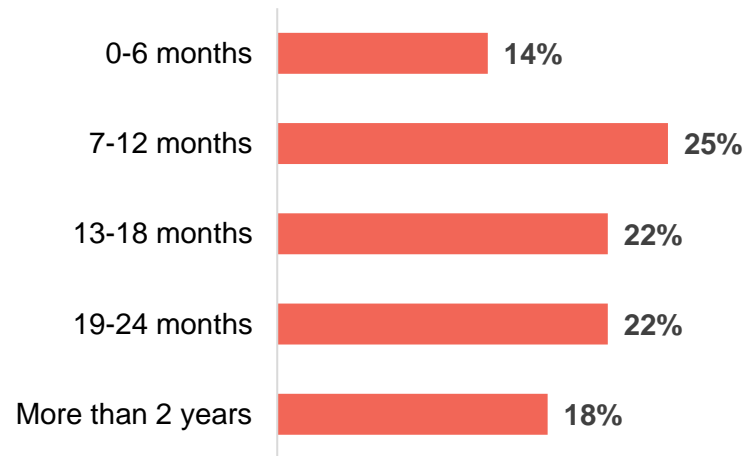
Neurodiversity



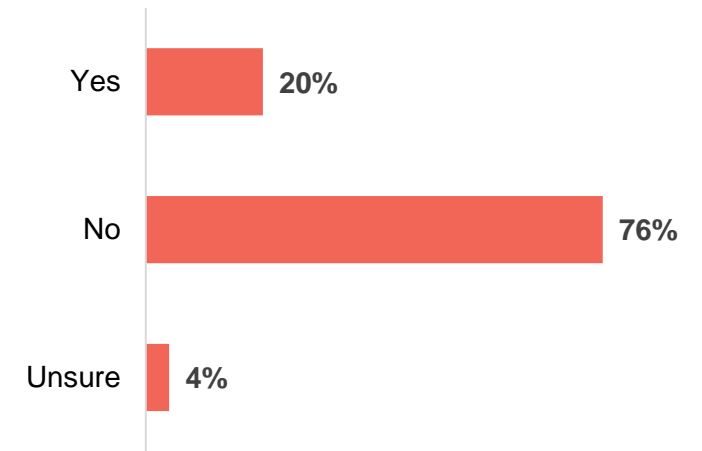
Are you on probation...



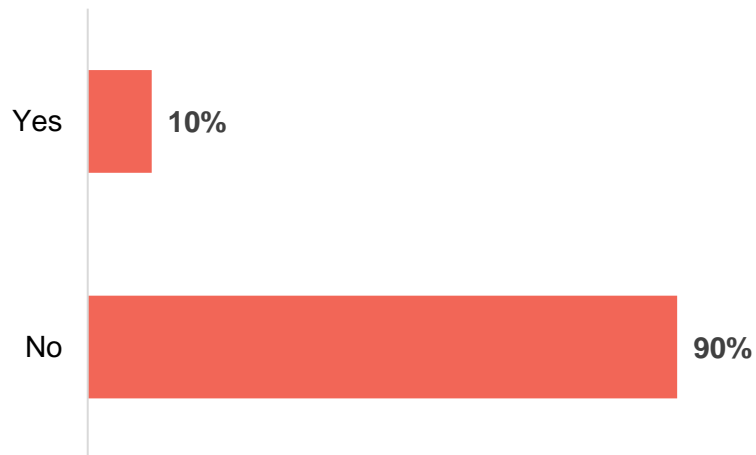
Time on probation



Experience of breach



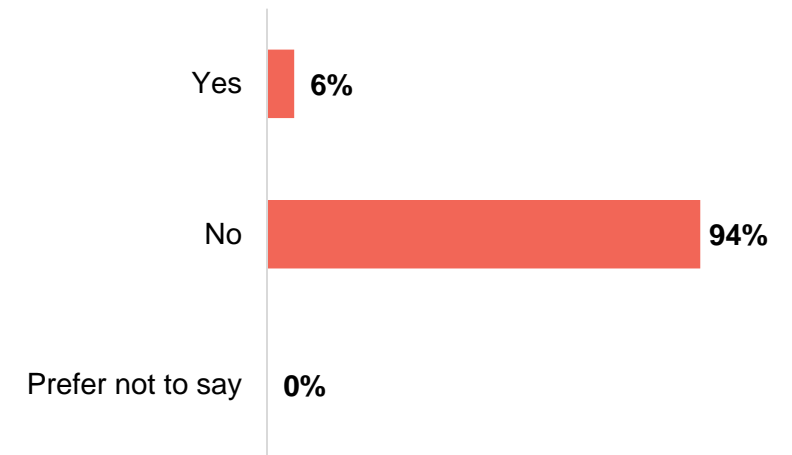
Experience of care as a child



Veteran status



Foreign national status

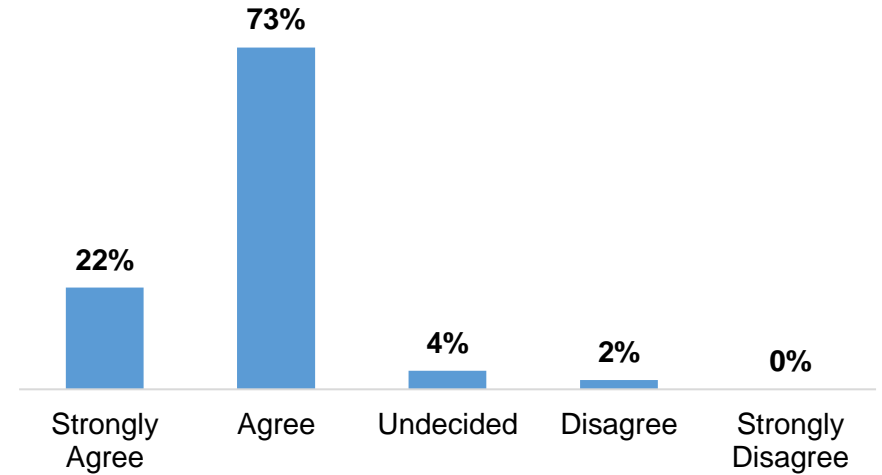


EXPERIENCE WITH INDUCTIONS

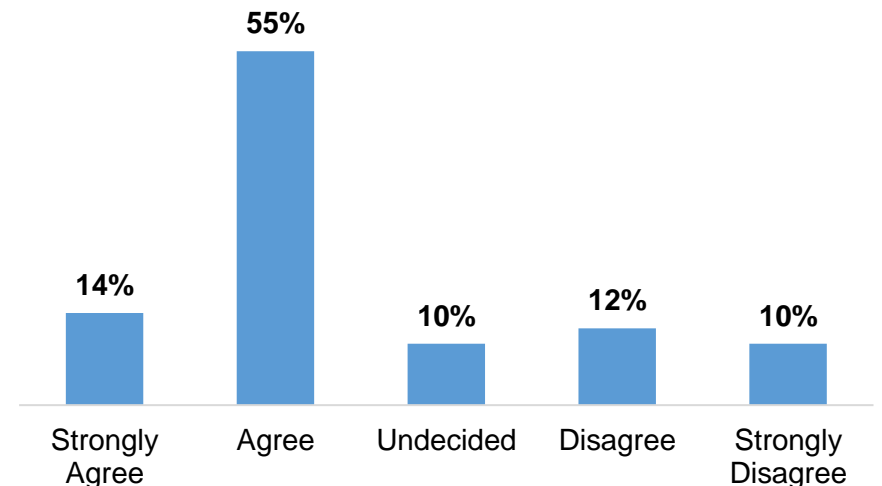
THE VAST MAJORITY UNDERSTAND WHAT IS EXPECTED OF THEM WHILST ON PROBATION IN SURREY

- **94%** (48/51) of survey participants stated that they understand what is expected of them whilst on probation which is very high compared to other PDUs in the region.
- **18%** (9/51) of people surveyed stated that they are not aware of having a sentence plan when asked the question ‘I was involved in creating my sentence plan with my probation practitioner.’
- Of those people that stated they did have a sentence plan, **69%** (29/42) stated that they felt involved in creating their sentence plan with their probation practitioner.
- Whereas just over **1 in 5** (9/42) stated that they either ‘Disagree’ or ‘Strongly Disagree’ that they were involved in creating their sentence plan.

Q1. I understand what is expected of me whilst on probation



Q2. I was involved in creating my sentence plan with my probation practitioner

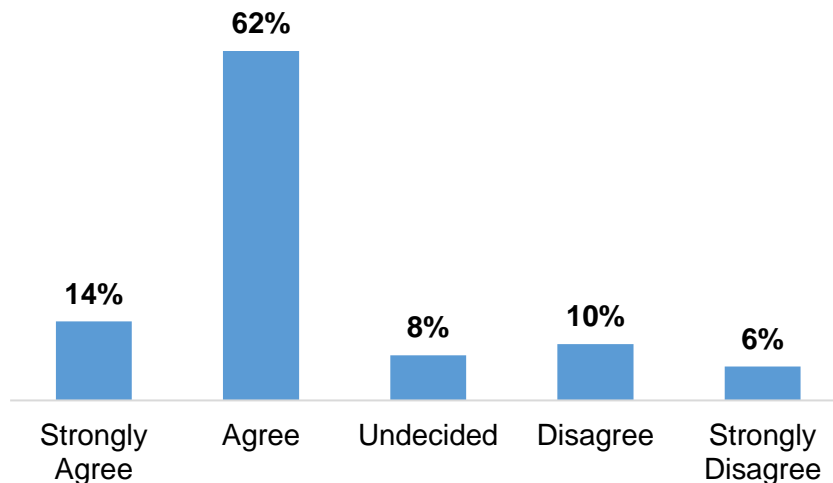


9/51 respondents stated that they are not aware of having a sentence plan. These responses are not included above.

3 IN 4 THINK THEIR PRACTITIONER TOOK THE TIME TO UNDERSTAND THEM DURING AN INDUCTION

- 76% (38/50) participants stated that their probation practitioner took the time to understand their personal needs during an induction.
- 1 person surveyed stated that they did not have an induction.

Q3. My probation practitioner took the time to understand my personal needs during my induction



1/51 respondents stated that they did not have an induction. These responses are not included above.

"No induction as such, because it was COVID it was just over the phone."

"I can't remember an induction. Don't think I had one, just turned up for appointments each week. If there was an induction it didn't seem any different to usual appointments."

"Basic induction upon release explaining license conditions to me then literally passed onto a new officer a few months later after building up a relationship. Then I have to go back to square one."

"It was ok, although I find it very tiring. It also was very informative, I was not aware of the rules that I have to follow. So it was very helpful."

"My induction was very informative in regards to alcohol groups and housing. There was information that was shared which was more than what I was expected."

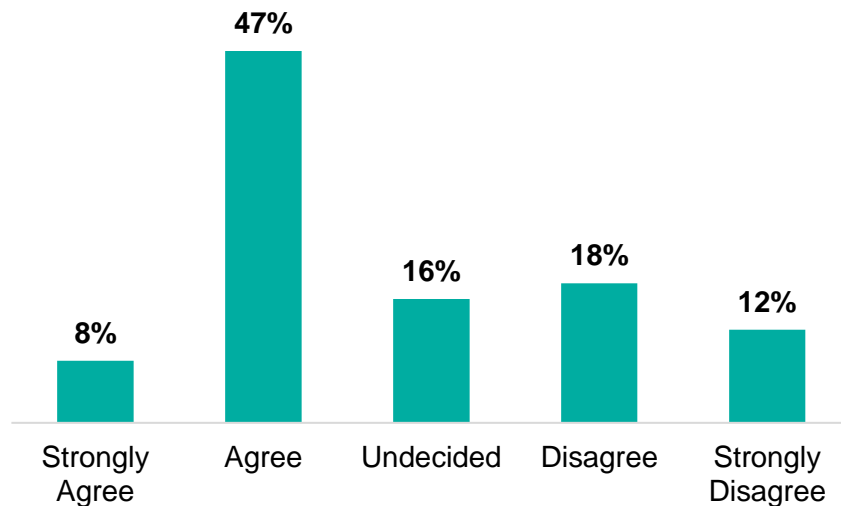
EXPERIENCE WITH APPOINTMENTS

JUST OVER HALF FIND

APPOINTMENTS USEFUL IN SURREY

- **55%** (28/51) of survey participants stated that their appointments are useful in helping them and their rehabilitation.
- Whereas **3 in 10** (15/51) stated that they either 'Disagree' or 'Strongly Disagree' that that their appointments are useful.
- Many of those that didn't find appointments particularly useful did so due to the appointments being repetitive box ticking exercises. People find a lot more benefit in appointments when they're used to signpost people effectively.

Q4. I find my appointments useful in helping me and my rehabilitation



“Some appointment are helpful others just seemed like a tick box exercise where we go round in circles over certain issues.”

“It’s normally a brief check in to see how my week was. So I’m not getting much out of it, although its nice to be asked how things are going and all.”

“Very supportive, they help me with everything I need. In general, it’s very hit and miss though. It’s not same experience for everyone, I’ve been lucky.”

“Just the same old questions with the same old answers.”

“They get me doing something to look forward to. They also recommend me to services which I was not aware of, which is helpful.”

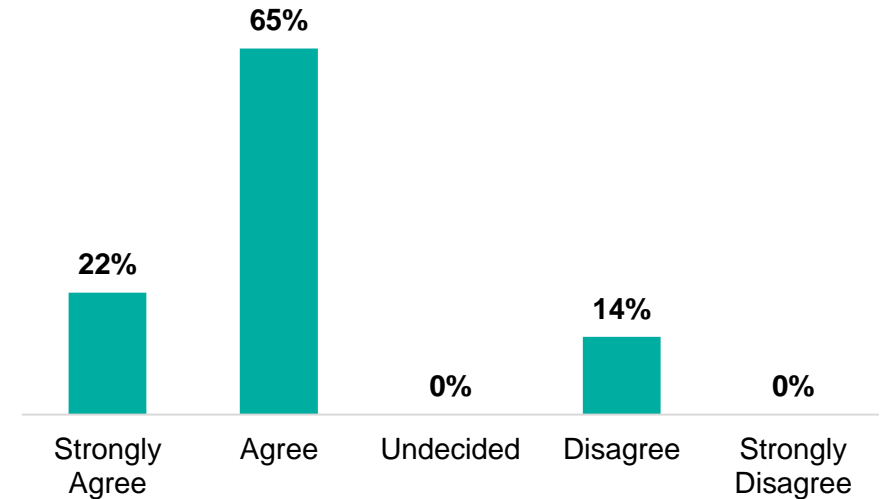
“Appointments help me to get a lot out of the service both physically and emotionally.”

“Been out jail a year when first started was useful. now I’ve been left alone a lot and I’m a lifer, so supervision is for rest my life, and yeah, have known my probation years but I still need support.”

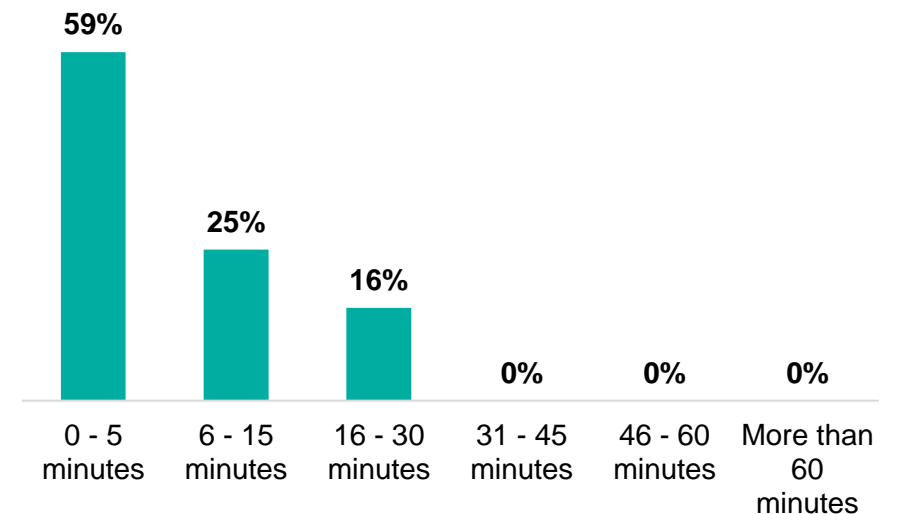
3 IN 5 WAIT LESS THAN FIVE MINUTES AFTER THE AGREED START TIME FOR THEIR APPOINTMENTS IN SURREY

- **86%** (44/51) of survey participants stated that more often than not, their appointments start on time.
- Further, almost **3 in 5** (30/51) people stated that they have to wait less than **5 minutes** for their appointment to start and **1 in 4** (13/51) people stated that their average waiting time is between **6 and 15 minutes**.
- **16%** (8/51) of people stated that their average wait time for appointments is in between **16 and 30 minutes**.

Q6. More often than not, my appointments start on time

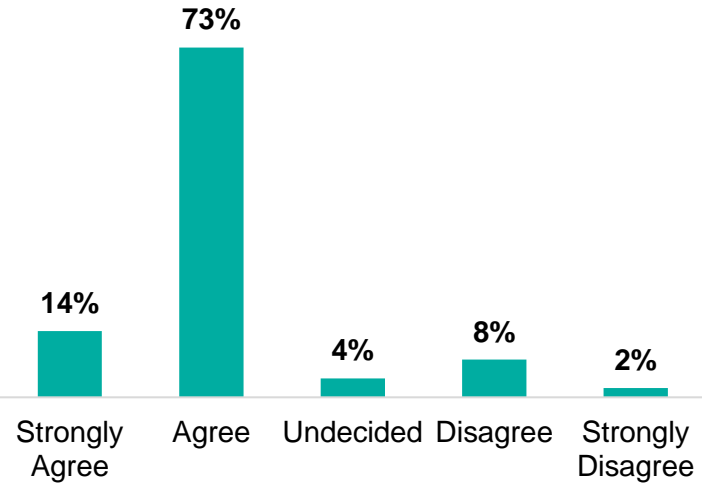


Q6a. What is the average length of time you wait for your appointments after the scheduled time

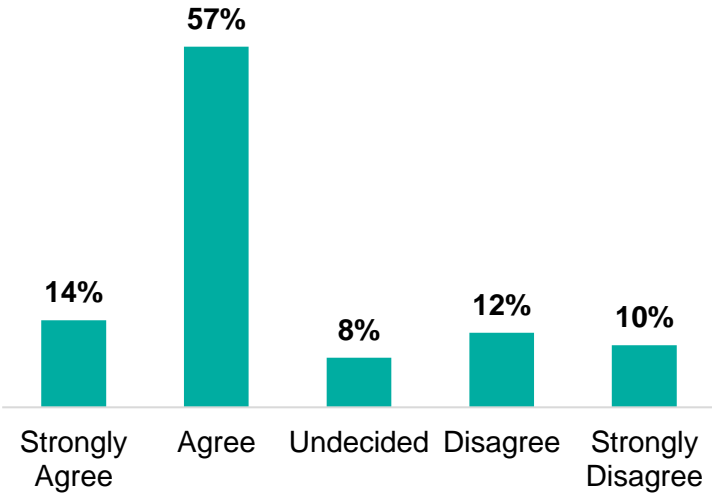


9 IN 10 PEOPLE IN SURREY THINK THAT THE PROBATION OFFICE IS A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

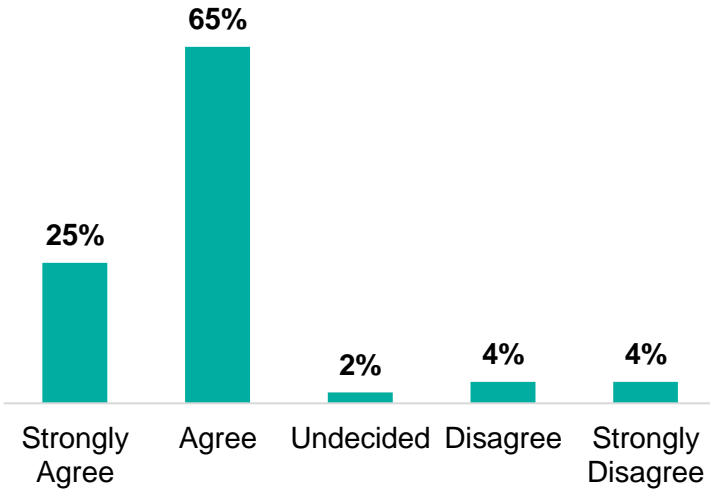
Q5. I have been able to have appointments with my probation practitioner at a time that suits me



Q7. The distance I have to travel to get to appointments is reasonable



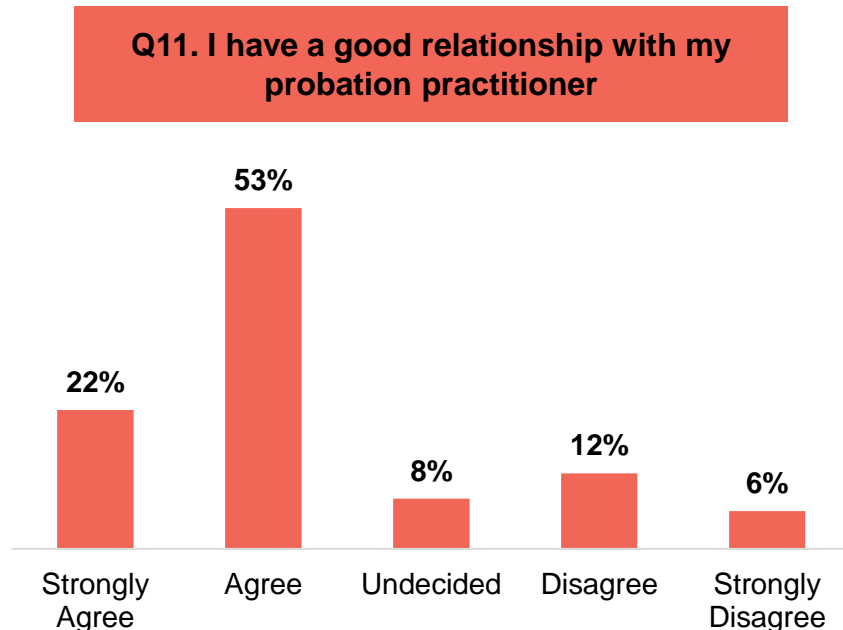
Q8. I feel safe accessing the probation office



RELATIONSHIPS WITH PROBATION PRACTITIONERS

3 IN 4 HAVE A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR PRACTITIONER IN SURREY

- **75%** (38/51) of survey participants stated that they have a good relationship with their probation practitioner.
- Whereas **18%** (9/51) stated that they either 'Disagree' or 'Strongly Disagree' that they have a good relationship.



"She is understanding and considerate. She's helpful and mindful of my addiction."

"My initial officer was off for so long and during that time I wasn't assigned someone so have had no chance to build a relationship with my probation officer."

"I can't be myself around her and I don't believe she understands me."

"Not have any change, same conversation for about 10 years. There have been so many change of probation officers I have had over the period of time."

"Anything I say I'm never judge upon and they always there when I need them even when it's not in a meeting."

"Both my probation officer and I have ADHD, so he understands and there's been seven different. It really helps in the way we communicate without limitation."

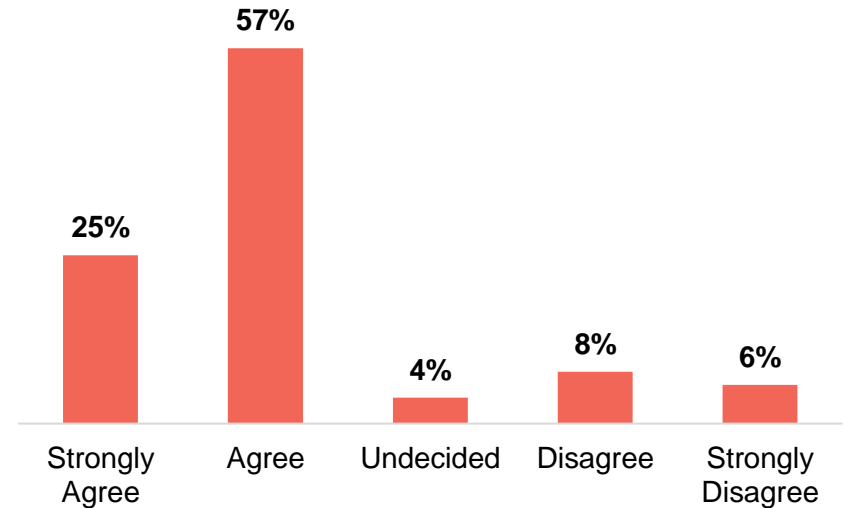
"I don't get to have the same probation worker all the time so it makes it difficult to get what i need from them."

"Been able to be directed to express myself through therapy. Having probation officers that are understanding helps, they've been flexible of outside schedules."

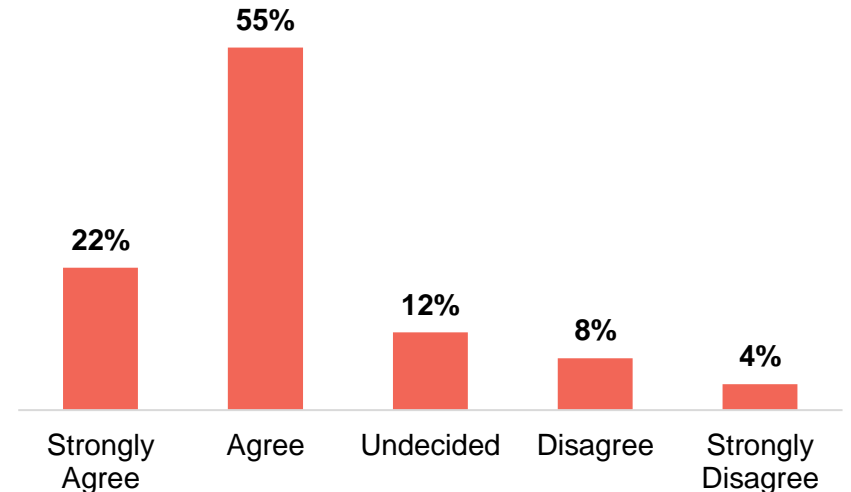
3 IN 4 FEEL THAT THEY GET ENOUGH CONTACT TIME TO SUPPORT THEIR REHABILITATION

- **82%** (42/51) of survey participants stated that have been able to contact their probation practitioner when they have needed to.
- **76%** (39/51) participants feel that have enough contact time with their probation practitioner to help them and their rehabilitation.
- However, **12%** (6/51) stated that they either 'Disagree' or 'Strongly Disagree' to the question 'I have enough contact time with my probation practitioner to help me and my rehabilitation.' Such people feel like their needs do not match their contact time with probation and are therefore not getting the help they need.

Q9. I have been able to contact my probation practitioner when I have needed to (e.g., to change appointments)



Q10. I have enough contact time with my probation practitioner to help me and my rehabilitation

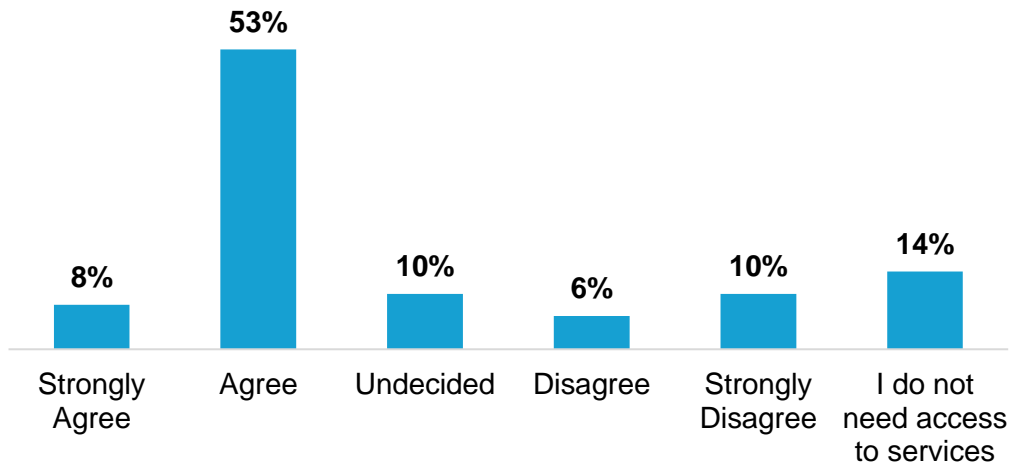


ACCESS TO SERVICES

7 IN 10 ARE GETTING THE SERVICES THEY NEED IN SURREY

- **14%** (7/51) of people surveyed stated that they 'do not need access to services' in Surrey.
- Of those that stated they do need access to services, **7 in 10** (31/44) stated that probation have helped them access services relevant to their personal needs, strengths and circumstances.

Q12. Probation have helped me access services relevant to my personal needs, strengths and circumstances



"I think that the one I got most out of was mental health and they were able to help me understand that probation is there to help and endure."

"Housing services as I was homeless for two years. Probation and partner charities helped to house me."

"The housing issues as I said before has left me homeless, the AP they put me in initially was okay but leaving me in the dark about what is happening and passing the blame on to me is not fair."

"I got put forward to the forward trust and some of the sessions have been really good, I think it's getting me ready to go into employment. I just want some more support in actually finding that employment. ."

"As I am not in need of these services, I cannot make a comment."

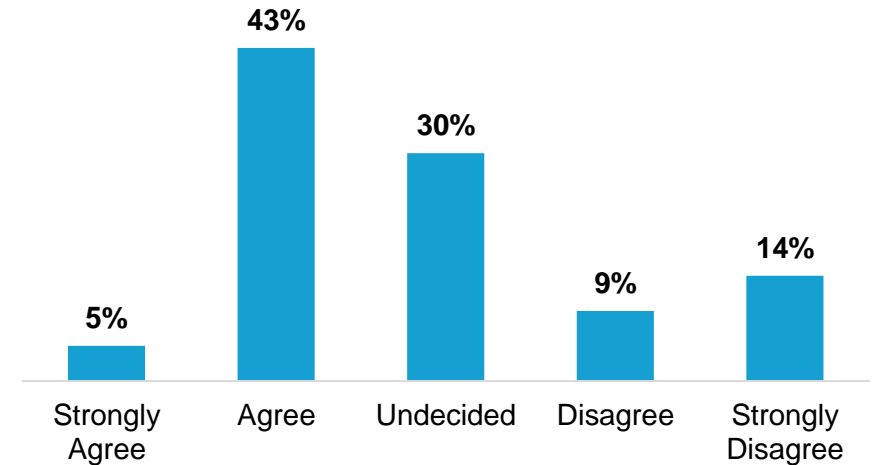
"Made me feel like a kid on the mental health support, asking me to draw pictures for 1 hour instead of actually talking to me.."

"Not really its just the same questions week in week out never offered me services because always passed from pillow to post."

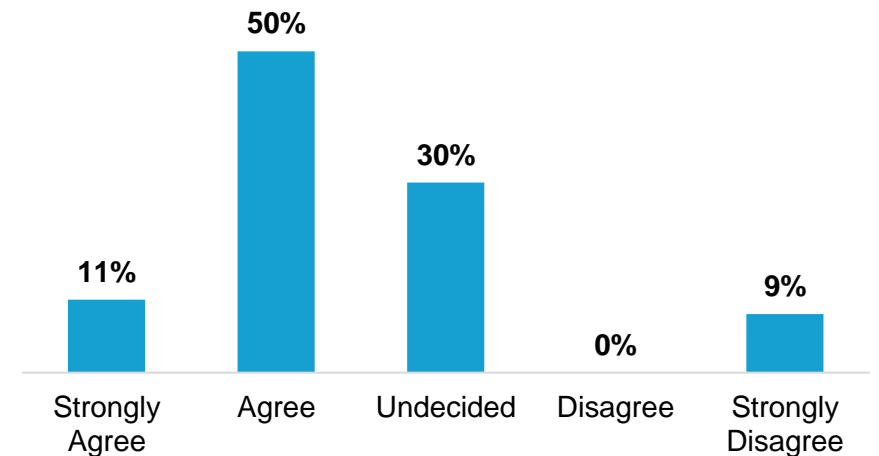
3 IN 5 NEED ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT IN SURREY

- Just under **half** (21/44) of participants surveyed stated the distance they have to travel to get to services and programmes is reasonable. **30%** (13/44) were undecided.
- **61%** (27/44) of people that need access to services responded that they have been able to access support services within a reasonable amount of time.
- 'Mental Health Support' was by far the most frequently cited service that people on probation in Surrey have a requirement for. **35%** (15/43) stated they have accessed the service and a further **26%** (11/43) stated that they still need access.
- Of the **3 in 5** people that need access to 'Mental Health Support' in Surrey, **58%** rated the access 'Good' or 'Very Good.'

Q13. The distance I have to travel to get to services and programmes is reasonable



Q14. I have been able to access support services within a reasonable amount of time



A BREAKDOWN OF WHAT SERVICES PEOPLE ON PROBATION NEED IN SURREY

Type of Service	15. Have you needed / do you still need access to any of the following services?						
	Resp.	Yes		No		I still need access	
Mental health support	43	15	35%	17	40%	11	26%
Finance, debt & benefits	43	10	23%	31	72%	2	5%
Education, training & employment	43	13	30%	30	70%	0	0%
Alcohol/substance misuse support	42	7	17%	34	81%	1	2%
Housing/accommodation	42	13	31%	23	55%	6	14%
Women specific services	40	1	3%	39	98%	0	0%
Children and childcare support	24	2	8%	22	92%	0	0%
Partner and families support	41	7	17%	34	83%	0	0%
Other important relationships support	41	6	15%	34	83%	1	2%

HOW PEOPLE ON PROBATION RATE THE ACCESSIBILITY OF SERVICES IN SURREY

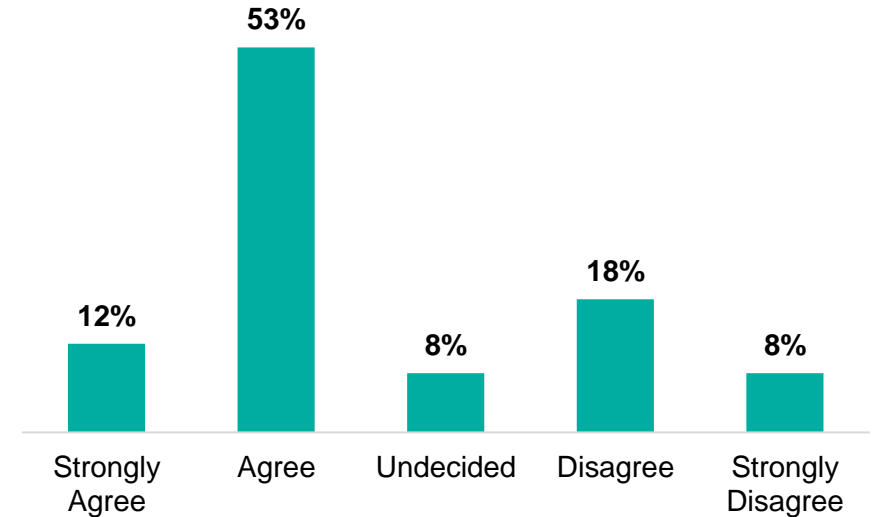
Type of Service	15. Have you needed / do you still need access to any of the following services?						
	Resp.	Very Good / Good		Neutral		Very Poor / Poor	
Mental health support	26	15	58%	5	19%	6	23%
Finance, debt & benefits	12	3	25%	1	8%	8	67%
Education, training & employment	13	8	62%	4	31%	1	8%
Alcohol/substance misuse support	8	5	63%	1	13%	2	25%
Housing/accommodation	19	6	32%	4	21%	9	47%
Women specific services	1	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%
Children and childcare support	2	1	50%	1	50%	0	0%
Partner and families support	7	5	71%	1	14%	1	14%
Other important relationships support	7	5	71%	0	0%	2	29%

PROCEDURAL JUSTICE AND BEING HEARD

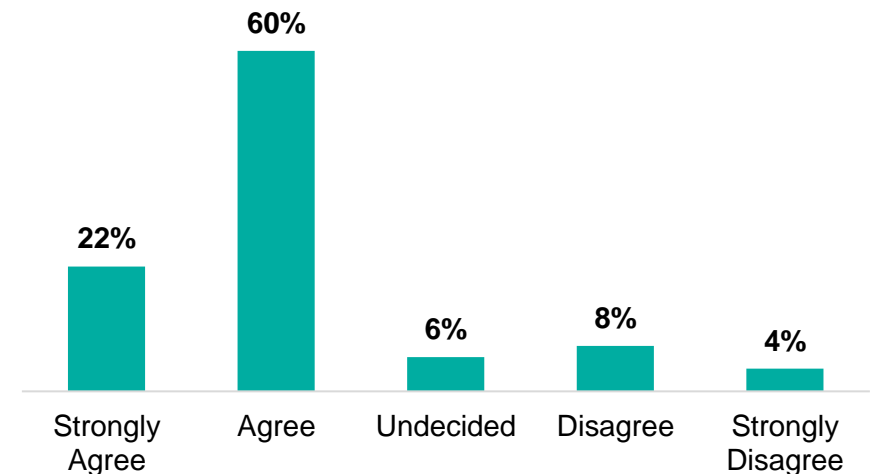
4 IN 5 FEEL LIKE THEY'RE TREATED FAIRLY BY PROBATION IN SURREY

- **2 in 3** (32/49) people in Surrey know how to raise complaints.
- However, some respondents stated that they would not complain out of fear of repercussions and “making things worse.”
- **4 in 5** (41/50) of survey participants stated that they feel like they have been treated fairly by probation staff.
- However, **12%** (6/50) stated that they either ‘Disagree’ or ‘Strongly Disagree’ that they have been treated fairly by probation staff.

Q16. I know how to raise complaints whilst on probation



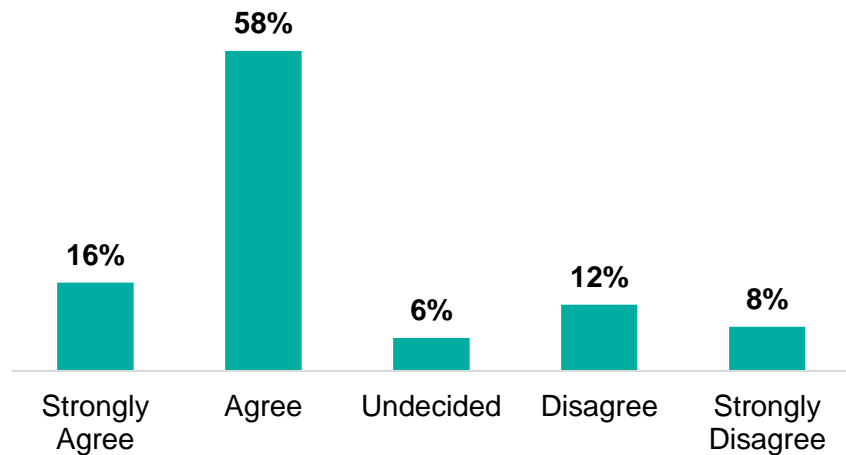
Q18. I have been treated fairly by probation staff



3 IN 4 PEOPLE FEEL LISTENED TO IN SURREY

- **74%** (37/50) of survey participants feel like probation services have asked their views about being on supervision and that they feel listened to.
- However, **all** interviewees stated that they don't feel like they have a say in how probation is run and feel like their voice can't greatly influence the service.
- People on probation recognise the benefit of incorporating lived experience in service delivery.

Q17. Probation services have asked for my views about being on supervision and I feel listened to



“Was aware of complaint system and the ombudsman but don't want to complain as to shake up the bee's nest in case makes it things worse. I want them to leave me alone to get on with my life.”

“No not really, I'm quite anxious to be honest with you about complaining in case it makes my situation worse and didn't know you could do it by email/phone/letter until this appointment today.”

“No, they're always threatening me with warnings and patronising, not understanding. I feel like they lie to me so I definitely don't feel like have a say in how they are run at all.”

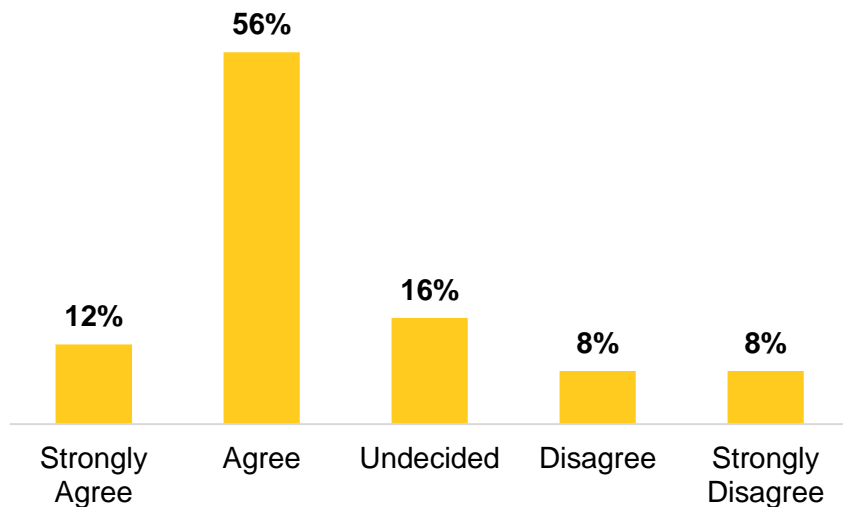
“Lived experience can benefit probation to show what needs to be a priority for service users instead of probation just being protecting public and risk based. Lived experience could really help people's lives which will then in turn reduce reoffending. Also lived experience can find themes within probation to see what really works.”

“No, I don't believe that service users have or would given the opportunity to be able to give an opinion on how the service is run.”

OVERALL EXPERIENCE

MORE THAN 2 IN 3 FEEL WELL SUPPORTED BY PROBATION IN SURREY

Q19. Overall, I feel well supported by probation in helping me and my rehabilitation



“My employment circumstances have change and they was really supported in helping me on what to do. There are also numbers which I can contact if I need more support..”

“Due to not been able to work, she reached out to the courts to confirm if I really need to work due to my mental health. Which I found really helpful.”

“Very understanding and encouraged me to build my confidence haven't forced me into anything don't want to do.”

“They are helping me with getting my feet back into society.”

“I've had so many probation officers over the years (approximately 30) and out of them only 2/3 would listen and have some understanding towards my situation.”

“Felt like they wanted me to fail. They tried stopping me working and when go for other jobs I had to lie and get people to lie for me just to do they job i wanted and enjoy.”

“There is a lot of talk and not much action, the time it takes to be address the situation, the situation will pass or no longer exist.”

PEER-LED SOLUTIONS



THE ISSUE:

Given the current financial climate, all people regardless of being employed, are struggling with travel costs.

SUGGESTED PEER-LED SOLUTION:

Make travel expenses more accessible to those struggling financially.

“Whether you’re working or not, I believe that they should reimburse travel cost either way.”



THE ISSUE:

Some people have to travel long distances for often short ‘tick-box’ appointments.

SUGGESTED PEER-LED SOLUTION:

Provide more flexibility with remote appointments in cases which it is appropriate.

“It would make sense to have a phone call conversation instead of always having me travel to come in for short check ins. .”



THE ISSUE:

Probation practitioners have too many people on their individual caseloads which leads to high staff turnover and therefore affects the rehabilitation of people on probation.

SUGGESTED PEER-LED SOLUTION:

Create a better environment for probation practitioners to make the role more attractive and increase staff retention.

“Too many people on probation for the amount of staff there is. Probation is understaffed, and with a high staff turn over. It has not been possible to maintain a probation throughout time using the service, which then makes it challenging as you have to keep on repeating yourself and hoping that the next one will show some empathy.”

USER VOICE

ONLY OFFENDERS CAN STOP RE-OFFENDING



HM Inspectorate
of Probation

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