



MAPPA
ANNUAL
REPORT

WEST
MERCIA

2004/05

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SECTION 1

Ministerial Foreword by Baroness Scotland

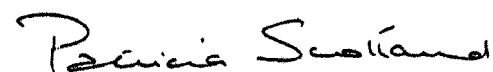
The work being undertaken to improve the safety of communities through the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) is vitally important and a priority for government. The annual reports for 2004/5 provide evidence of that active engagement. Violence and sexual abuse are unacceptable wherever they occur and it is evident that through MAPPA such offenders are identified and better managed than ever before. As the number of offenders within MAPPA continues to grow as expected there is clear evidence that the Responsible Authority, that is the local police, probation and the Prison Service, is addressing these additional demands by strengthening local partnerships, using new statutory powers to restrict the behaviour of offenders, returning offenders to custody where they breach their licence or order, and using the findings of research and inspection to strengthen national guidance and local practice.

Although it is never possible completely to eliminate the risk posed by dangerous offenders, MAPPA is helping to ensure that fewer people are re-victimised.

The active implementation of the Criminal Justice Act (2003) during the last year has clearly enhanced the ability of a number of agencies including health, social services and housing to work collaboratively with the Responsible Authority in assessing and managing those sexual and violent offenders in our communities who pose the highest risk of serious harm. For the continued success of MAPPA this collaboration together with the scrutiny of policy and practice must become the hallmark of these arrangements. Similarly MAPPA must integrate with other public protection mechanisms dealing with child abuse, domestic abuse and racial abuse.

For me one of the most exciting developments in this arena in the last 12 months has been the appointment of lay advisors to assist the Responsible Authority in the oversight of the arrangements. As ordinary members of the public these lay advisors represent a diverse, able and committed group of people who are now helping the statutory agencies to oversee the work being undertaken through MAPPA and communicate with the public more effectively. Without a growing sense of public knowledge and confidence about this work much of the benefits of the public protection arrangements will be lost.

I hope this annual report will be useful, informative and re-assuring to local communities. The agencies and individuals who have contributed to the achievement of MAPPA locally are to be commended.



Baroness Scotland
Minister of State for Criminal Justice and Offender Management

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SECTION 7

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SECTION 6

Strategic Management Board

The Strategic Management Board (SMB) is made up of senior management representatives of the key Criminal Justice Agencies and those partner organisations who have an active role in the safe management of high risk offenders, such as health and social services, in addition to the two newly appointed lay advisors. In an area as complex as West Mercia, maintaining a truly representative SMB is particularly problematic as whilst it is a single, discreet criminal justice area, within West Mercia there are seven primary care trusts, four social services departments and complex arrangements in respect of education, housing, employment and other agencies from whom we seek co-operation. Whilst the existing Board comprises committed representatives from a number of agencies, in the year ahead we will seek to engage more fully with those partners such as housing and education with whom we have found it difficult to establish consistent contact.

One of the primary tasks of the SMB is to ensure that effective MAPP arrangements are in place. Having, we believe, established robust mechanisms and procedures in the course of the last two years, we plan in the year ahead to put in place effective arrangements for monitoring and audit in order to make sure we are regularly able to review the quality, consistency and standard of work being undertaken, within MAPPA.

The SMB is fully committed to the safe management of high risk offenders in the community and we will continue to work both collectively and within our individual agencies, to promote, strengthen and give direction and resources to our operational colleagues who deal with cases on a day-to-day basis and who deserve the full support of their organisation in demanding and difficult roles.

For example, the SMB of the West Mercia MAPPA has taken the view that the National MAPPA Guidance, issued in 2003, amended in 2004, contains most of the guidance relevant for the successful achievement of public protection. However, there is one important respect in which some cases are considered that would not be included in the most recent guidance. There are a small but important number of cases where the subject is unconvicted, but in the opinion of the Responsible Authorities (prisons, probation, police) represents a high risk of causing serious harm to the public. The SMB have endorsed West Mercia MAPPA to include such cases under Category 3. Perhaps the most clear and convincing argument for this stance is provided by the case of the murders of two schoolgirls – extensively reported nationally, - where Responsible Authorities could have shared information formally (had MAPPA arrangements existed at that time) and implemented safeguards for likely future victims, but would be precluded from so-doing if a conviction for a serious offence is required to allow the process to take place.

SECTION 2

Introduction

In West Mercia (Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Shropshire) we continue to develop effective and co-operative working between all those agencies involved in the management of these few offenders who pose the greatest risk to our communities.

Building upon a tradition of joint working in the area we have in the last twelve months fully implemented the National Guidance for the establishment of Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) and responded to the changes identified in the 2003 Criminal Justice Act. This has included establishing prisons, in addition to police and probation, as the key responsible authorities for MAPPA. In addition, we have appointed two members of the local community, through a demanding and competitive process, as lay advisors to our MAPPA Strategic Management Board. Their initial impressions and experiences can be read on Page 3.

It is representative of the commitment to working together on public protection issues, that during the year we secured agreement to a further two year joint funding of our MAPPP Co-ordinator post with contributions from police, probation, prisons, health, social services and youth offending services. This secures future arrangements for ensuring a consistency of approach across the area and in the year ahead means we will have the capacity to continue to develop an understanding and awareness of the work of MAPPA, across West Mercia.

Whilst we acknowledge that it is impossible to guarantee that the multi-agency management of high risk offenders can totally eliminate risk to the community, we are confident in West Mercia that we have robust systems in place which mean we are able to minimise such risks through effective multi-agency assessment and planning, the ability to respond swiftly to changing circumstances and to best deploy available resources within our agencies to support such work and to help ensure we all live in a safer community.



Julie Masters
Assistant Chief Officer
West Mercia Probation Area



Ian Arundale
Assistant Chief Constable
West Mercia Constabulary



Lorraine Mosson-Jones
Regional Risk Manager
West of Midlands Prison Region

SECTION 3

Key Achievements

During this year the operation of the MAPPA has been further strengthened in a number of ways:

a) Lay Advisors Appointments

Lay Advisors have been appointed. They have attended Strategic Management Board Meetings and observed the operation of the MAPPA at meetings dealing with the most risky offenders.

The two Lay Advisors comment on their experience so far:-

"We are Deena Glazzard-Mahon and Beverley Winter, newly appointed lay advisors for West Mercia SMB (Strategic Management Board). We have been asked to contribute to this year's MAPPA annual report.

The initial challenge of the position was to define what was expected from us within this role and what we expected from the role.

The interview process was challenging and unexpected, as it involved psychometric testing, an IQ test and a gruelling Multi Agency interview panel, which left no stone unturned!

We both felt that this process was quite intense, for a voluntary position, but since attending our training weekend and the start of our induction programme, we now understand the need for such a structured interview process.

The training weekend was led by Professor Gill Mackenzie, adviser to the Home Office on dangerous and sex offenders: Donald Findlater from the Lucy Faithful foundation, a recognised national expert on sexual offending: DC Tim Bryan, Head of MAPPA policy development in the Home Office's Public Protection & Courts Unit and Neil Irving, Lay Advisor Project Manager.

It not only gave us the chance to meet other lay advisors, but also gave us an insight to how our role may evolve, although this perspective seemed to be different in each region.

Since the training weekend we have been allocated a mentor, and started our induction programme, and also attended our first SMB meeting.

On both points we seem to have been well received within the professional organisations that sit on the SMB, although we thought the SMB was going to be the most daunting, it actually wasn't that bad!

We felt that we were able to understand the contents of the SMB and didn't feel at all stupid asking questions that may have seemed obvious to the other members.



Beverley Winter
Lay Advisor



Deena Glazzard-Mahon
Lay Advisor

3. Category 3 MAPPA offenders: Other Offenders (OthO)

61

vii) The number of 'other offenders' (as defined by Section 325 (2)(b) of the Criminal Justice Act (2003)) between 1st April 2004 and 31st March 2005.

4. Offenders managed through Level 3 (MAPPP) & Level 2 (local inter-agency management)

(viii) Identify how many MAPPA offenders in each of the three Categories (i.e. (1)- RSOs, (2)- V&O and (3)- OthO above) have been managed through the MAPPP (level 3) and through local inter-agency risk management (level 2) between 1st April 2004 and 31st March 2005.

	Level 3	Level 2
RSO	24	30
V&O	32	37
OthO	25	36

(ix) Of the cases managed at levels 3 or 2 (i.e. (viii)) between 1st April 2004 and 31st March 2005 how many, whilst managed at that level:

- (a) Were returned to custody for a breach of licence?
- (b) Were returned to custody for a breach of a restraining order or sexual offences prevention order?
- (c) Were charged with a serious sexual or violent offence?

	Level 3	Level 2
a)	3	7
b)	1	0
c)	4	7

SECTION 5

MAPPA Annual Reports Statistical Information

Required for the reporting period 1st APRIL 2004 - 31st MARCH 2005

**1. Category 1 MAPPA offenders:
Registered Sex Offenders (RSO)**

i) The number of RSOs living in West Mercia on 31st March 2005.

689

ia) The number of RSOs per 100'000 head of population.

60

ii) The number of sex offenders having a registration requirement who were either cautioned or convicted for breaches of the requirement, between 1st April 2004 and 31st March 2005

16

iii) The number of (a) Sexual Offences Prevention Orders (SOPOs) applied for (b) interim SOPOs granted and (c) full SOPOs imposed by the courts in West Mercia between 1st May 2004 and 31st March 2005

a)	4
b)	2
c)	3

iv) The number of (a) Notification Orders applied for (b) interim Notification Orders granted and (c) full Notification Orders imposed by the courts in West Mercia between 1st May 2004 and 31st March 2005

a)	0
b)	0
c)	0

v) The number of Foreign Travel Orders (a) applied for and (b) imposed by the courts in West Mercia between 1st May 2004 and 31st March 2005

a)	0
b)	0

2. Category 2 MAPPA offenders: Violent offenders and Other Sexual offenders (V&OS)

284

vi) The number of violent and other sexual offenders (as defined by Section 327 (3), (4) and (5) of the Criminal Justice Act (2003)) living in West Mercia between 1st April 2004 and 31st March 2005

We now feel that our role is to question what may sometimes seem obvious to the professionals around the table, but are not so obvious to the layperson. It also involves getting professionals to think outside their own boxes. In addition we attend infrequent MAPPP (Level 3 Multi Agency Public Protection Panel) and MARC (Level 2 Multi Agency Risk Conference) meetings for quality assurance purposes and to feed back any issues to the SMB.

We both felt confident with the processes within the MAPPP agencies, which safeguard the public whilst dealing with serious sex and violent offenders are in place, and if mistakes are made, the agencies concerned are accountable."

b) Continued Funding for Co-ordinator Post and Provision of Administrative Support

The Co-ordinator post has been guaranteed further funding for another two years, and a part-time Administrator post has been devised, funded and implemented from July '04.

The Co-ordinator's role is better supported as a direct result. It is usually possible to get the notes of meetings distributed more quickly, and this helps staff in a variety of agencies to act in a timely manner to implement action points arising from the meetings.

c) Developing Liaison with Prisons

Following the implementation of the Criminal Justice Act 2003, the Prison Service role has been consolidated into the operation of the MAPPA locally. There is Prison Service representation at the Strategic Management Board. Increasingly, Prison Service representatives are being invited to attend those meetings about dangerous individuals where they can make a significant contribution – usually before release from custody into the community. This is reflected in the following contribution from the Prison Service:

Prison Service Work with MAPPA

One of the important ways in which the Criminal Justice Act (2003) strengthened the MAPPA was to make the Prison Service part of the Responsible Authority with police and probation in each of the 42 Areas in England and Wales. The Prison Service has been given this enhanced role in recognition of the important part it plays in protecting the public by keeping offenders in custody; helping them to address the causes of their offending behaviour; and by undertaking other work to assist their successful resettlement.

As part of the Responsible Authority the Prison Service is now represented on each of the Strategic Management Boards (SMBs) in the 42 Areas. The Prison estate is configured differently from police/probation areas in that its establishments are contained within only 12 geographical areas and two functional areas – the High Security estate, and Contracted Prisons.



Peter Clark
MAPPP Co-ordinator



Sarah Peters
MAPPP Administrator

For this reason arrangements for Prison Service representation on SMBs vary across the country, but each Prison Service Area Manager has entered into an agreement with the SMBs on how the Service will contribute both strategically and operationally to the MAPPA. The main focus of the Prison Service contribution is at an operational level. A number of measures have been put in place across the prison estate to ensure that this will be effective and result in:

- Prompt identification of MAPPA offenders so that their details can be used in sentence planning arrangements, including interventions to manage and reduce risk.
- Regular monitoring of the behaviour of those assessed as presenting the highest risk, and sharing information with police and probation colleagues.
- All relevant risk management information being provided to multi agency meetings which help plan an offender's release.
- At least three months notification to police and probation of the expected release dates of those offenders who have been referred to the multi-agency public protection panel (MAPPP), and at least six weeks notification of those being managed at Level 2 risk meetings.
- No changes to release dates or arrangements being made without prior consultation with police and probation.

Playing an effective role in the multi agency risk management of MAPPA offenders requires good communication between criminal justice partners. The Prison Service has taken steps to ensure that there are dedicated points of contact for public protection at both Area level and in every prison establishment, and that these are published together with police and probation contacts to ensure better communication across the Responsible Authority.

With the ever increasing MAPPA population, and proportion of those received into prison likely to grow with the introduction of the new public protection sentences, the inclusion of the Prison Service as part of the Responsible Authority will continue to be vital in protecting the public.

d) Formal Agreement to Co-operate between Key Agencies

A memo of understanding has been agreed with co-operating agencies that helps to guarantee their contributions; there should be no barriers to sharing appropriate information for public protection purposes, and this agreement helps to spell out the legal basis for this, and its practical application at all levels of the work.

The knowledge they bring to public protection work gives insight into the situation of victims and potential victims. This enables those responsible for public protection to know much more about who may be at risk and what might be done to help protect them. The involvement extends into helping plan and deliver safeguards for potential future victims.

An example of partnership working is described below:

West Road

Telford & Wrekin's Area Child Protection Committee (now the Local Safeguarding Children Board: LSCB) has worked together to re-locate the local vulnerable witness video suite and to incorporate this into the development of a multi agency funded Resource Centre known simply as 'West Rd'.

The Vulnerable Witness Suite – provides two purpose built vulnerable witness suite facilities within the grounds of the former Social Services Office. This was made possible by the identification of designated capital funding by West Mercia Constabulary to invest in a new building to enable the facility to be compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act and the partnership with the Local Authority to make the land available.

The Resource Centre – uses the existing building to provide office accommodation for the Safeguards Advisory & Support Service (For child protection and looked after children); the Adult Protection Team; the Lead Officer for Asylum Seekers; the named nurse for child protection; the LSCB training officer and the domestic violence co-ordinator.

It also includes a fully equipped training facility; venues for meetings regarding the protection of children, vulnerable adults or public protection; a library resource; a base for the NSPCC Project working with Sexually Harmful Behaviour; and a local 'home' for the West Mercia Multi Agency Public Protection Panel Co-ordinator.

It is hoped that the centre will develop still further in its multi agency approach to the protection of all vulnerable people within the Borough.

f) Victim Liaison work

An additional important contribution is made to all the West Mercia work on Public Protection by Probation Victim Liaison Officers (VLOs). Where the victims of sexual and violent offences wish to have contact, VLOs supply a link between those dealing with the offender and those who have been injured. Sometimes the information VLOs are able to contribute helps decide on appropriate licence conditions for those to be released from prison. Such conditions might include prohibitions on direct contact on named individuals, or exclusions from specified geographical areas. There is also an important contribution in making the Panel aware of the effects of the offence(s) on the victims.

Case T

T started last year in custody, was released subject to a period of licence, then was recalled to prison following further charges. Only 20 years old, T had already collected a lengthy record of serious violent offences. Whilst previously in custody he had attacked another inmate, with an accomplice, causing serious injury. He used threats against anyone with whom he disagreed and was assessed as very likely to re-offend and to cause serious harm.

During the period of recall the MAPPP considered ways of safeguarding the public. Most attention was paid to providing restraints and control because it was thought unlikely that T would change his behaviour.

During his time in prison, however, the prison reported that his behaviour changed. A voluntary agency that had worked with T in his home town before agreed to provide a link between T, who had earlier refused to work with probation, and the local probation office. Local housing services were invited to become involved. A plan was made to test the extent to which T would comply with supervision.

It became apparent that T was completely serious about wanting to avoid further offending and eager to get a job and a flat where he could avoid previous criminal associations.

T left prison and made a fresh start. Over the last year he has progressed to the point where his case has been taken off the Panel. He has his own accommodation and has complied with everything required of him. Crucially, given his notoriety locally, police would know if he had been involved in any violence, because he could never hide his involvement for long.

The period of supervision has ended. T continues his link with the voluntary agency. At the point that the Panel agreed to remove his name from the list of those who represent the greatest risk of causing serious harm, he was hoping to start training for a job in a trade.

Case T illustrates that although the emphasis is often on protecting the public through strict controls, at times it is appropriate to test out someone's willingness to make changes.

In this case appropriate support and opportunity for the offender were important elements in achieving a good result in public protection.

e) Protecting Vulnerable Children and Adults

We would all like to think that we live in a society which is safe. Inevitably, however, some people are more vulnerable than others. It follows that special attention must be paid to protecting those who are unable, for whatever reasons, to protect themselves adequately from abuse. Children and vulnerable adults (including some elderly people) are sometimes targeted for abuse by offenders. In West Mercia there is a close involvement in the MAPPA from specialists from the Social Services Department (SSD) in both child and adult protection, and mental health. They attend meetings as required at Level 2, and as standing members at the Level 3 Panel.

e) Ongoing Education and Training

A basic principle in public protection work is that it needs to be conducted multi-agency in the most serious cases. This is because the assessment and management of the most dangerous individuals is a complex task. It would rarely be adequate without using the information systems, resources and expertise – and often the legal powers - of a number of different agencies working within and alongside the criminal justice system.

For this reason there is a continued focus on briefing and training about MAPPA across those agencies that are most often involved in public protection work. Wherever possible in West Mercia the training is delivered to staff and managers from different agencies working together. Where this is not possible, there is still an attempt to get a cross-section (managers and front-line staff) into the same events. Whole organisations need to be aware of MAPPA. This helps Managers to support it at a policy level, and also helps practitioners to build MAPPA into their daily work.

f) YOS Developments

The Youth Offending Service comment about their work with MAPPA in 2004:

Youth Offending Service Work with MAPPA

During 2004 Worcestershire and Herefordshire Youth Offending Service introduced a revised Management of Risk Policy. The Policy is linked to the MAPPA process and ensures that those young offenders who are subject to the risk management routes under MAPPA are appropriately identified and risk management plans put into place. This policy ensures that all appropriate cases are dealt with at MAPPA Levels 2 and 3. There is a system of registering those subject to MAPPA arrangements centrally in the service. The process is quality assured with all cases being reviewed by a Senior Manager and an administrative process in place to progress chase reviews.

Training on MAPPA has been provided to all YOS staff during the past year.

The YOS is introducing a risk led framework to case planning and management. This process will ensure that those young people who pose the greatest risk to our communities will receive the most intensive and integrated YOS intervention plans.

SECTION 4

How the MAPPA Operate Locally

a) Assessing Risk

Police, Probation, Social Services Departments, Youth Offending Teams, and a range of other organisations regularly deal with offenders and ex-offenders. They have a responsibility to carry out their work, to the best of their ability, in a way that protects the public.

Most public protection work is carried out by these agencies, using their own organisation's risk assessment methods. In the majority of cases, whilst information and resources from other organisations may be used, the work is within the capability of the single organisation.

Police comment on the collaborative efforts over the year:

During 2004/2005 West Mercia Constabulary, West Mercia Probation Area and the Regional Prison Service in conjunction with other key partners, have continued to further develop and improve our collaborative working to better identify and manage risk in order to be more effective when dealing with the dangerous and protecting the vulnerable within our communities.

The past year has seen a closer coming together as we continue to integrate the MAPPA process across our respective agencies. This integration is further assisted by the utilisation of the ViSOR (Violent and Sexual Offenders Register) database. In time this will be supported by SENTINEL and IMPACT, two more national databases designed to facilitate public protection work.

In line with these developments is a degree of consolidation. The board is experiencing some consistency in terms of attendance, members and membership. Having firm foundations we will continue to build effective multi agency working and look forward to the challenges of the coming year.

b) Multi-Agency Work

"Victoria was known to four Social Services departments, three Housing Departments and two specialist Police Child Protection teams. In addition, she was admitted to two different hospitals because it was suspected she was being deliberately harmed and she was referred to a specialist centre managed by the NSPCC" (Lord Laming – inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié).

It is not easy to predict who will commit further offences, and what these will be; however, there are a number of ways of doing this based on factual evidence that can be used to assess probability, and current circumstances that make offending more or less likely. These techniques are shared in multi-agency work on public protection. Most resources are devoted to the most serious cases.

Sometimes MAPPP cases have a high public profile, or require resources to be dedicated that could not be made available by more junior members of the agency. Senior management representation is required for these reasons. It is also important that more senior managers play their part in taking responsibility in those cases that are likely to cause most concern. The planning sometimes needs to be long-term and strategic.

The 2004/5 workload was spread between the five police divisions as follows:

Hereford:	22 Cases
North Worcs:	15 Cases
Shrewsbury:	12 Cases
Telford and Wrekin:	14 Cases
Worcester:	18 Cases

In each panel case an Action Plan is agreed. In many cases further Panels – sometimes a series of monthly Panels – review progress on the case, bring up to date the assessment of risk and make any necessary amendments to the safeguards that have been agreed.

d) Managing Less Serious Cases

For a larger number of offenders (103 this year) who represent a lower, but still significant risk of causing serious harm, a similar system operates. This is locally called the Multi-Agency Risk Conference (MARC), also known as a Level 2 meeting.

The number of cases dealt with at Level 2 has decreased from the previous year (133). The staff attending MARC's are more usually at an operational level. These meetings can be called at (sometimes very) short notice. As with the MAPPP (Level 3), for each case an action plan is devised that is based on the best available risk assessment.

Cases may be dealt with at first in the MAPPP. Later, perhaps after a period of stability and monitoring, someone representing a high risk of re-offending and causing serious harm may be properly re-assessed as less likely to do so and review of the case will be transferred to the MARC or, in some circumstances, to a single agency to manage. Legal sanctions may expire or be lifted to enable the offender to be trusted to live without injuring others. The reverse, of course, may also be the case. The last case study illustrates how the risk can be managed, reduced and reasonable decisions taken to move an offender to a lower level of supervision.

Case A

A, aged 31, was subject to a Community Punishment Order (unpaid community work) for offences of driving whilst disqualified. Police, however, had a substantial amount of information that established a pattern of violence in the home. A's current partner, aged 16, had been subject to a number of violent assaults. Previous partners had experienced the same. There had been no successful prosecutions, however. This is because the control that A, together with other members of his family, exercised over the victims led to withdrawal of complaints and statements; victims were too scared to give evidence against A. It is likely that a baby was stillborn as a direct result of one assault but evidence was not available to link the two events sufficiently for prosecution.

There was no doubt in the minds of the police dealing with A and his victims that he might kill someone. His current partner was most at risk.

The Public Protection Panel has planned and implemented a new approach. Police are working closely with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and the Youth Offending Team (YOT) to protect the victim. Probation are conducting a new assessment on A, and he is now to be sentenced for offences involving harassment. Social Services are involved because the victim is again pregnant and there are fears for the safety of the unborn baby. It is likely that A will be required to complete a programme for perpetrators of domestic violence and following this it will be decided whether he is more, or less, likely to re-offend. This case will take time to resolve.

A further case example illustrates how prisons now contribute to the referral, assessment and management of a high risk offender:

Case D

D entered HMP Shrewsbury having been convicted for the rape of two women. The prison acted in a number of ways to manage D:

Monitoring and Assessment: On entering the prison, D displayed some highly worrying behaviour towards female members of staff. He showed a lack of appropriate boundaries in his behaviour. There were also developing concerns with regard to his mental health and the ability of the prison to care for him appropriately. D had been identified as someone who may be subject to public protection arrangements when prison staff accessed its database, which covers prisoners convicted of any of the 153 "MAPPA" offences.

Information-sharing: The prison communicated concerns about D's risk with outside agencies. Consultation with police officers suggested that there had been previous offences but that the cases had collapsed.

D was included for discussion at the prison's monthly risk management meeting involving prison, probation, police and Mentally Disordered Offending team staff. The decision was then taken to refer D to the MAPPP. A file was compiled by the prison containing all relevant information and sent with the referral to the West Mercia MAPPP Co-ordinator. The case was subsequently tracked through the prison system as the offender was moved between establishments eventually returning to HMP Shrewsbury having been sentenced. He has now moved to a different establishment and the appropriate information has been forwarded to their Public Protection Co-ordinator.

Effective management of this particular offender is supported by regular and positive communication between the prison and the agencies in the community.

In West Mercia we try to apply the lesson so clearly and forcefully flagged up by Lord Laming (above). The agencies he mentions failed to communicate effectively with each other, and nobody saw the whole picture. There was significance in all of the many strands of information that the agencies had in their grasp. What seems so painfully obvious after the tragic events unfolded is that because the information was not shared properly or assessed in its entirety, there could be no proper safeguards for the victim. When our work on public protection does not include all relevant agencies, it is weak, and likely to be ineffective. In the current year, of the most risky cases dealt with by the Panel, approximately 60% were referred by probation, about 25% by police and the remaining 15% by youth offending teams, mental health and social services departments.

Mental Health Partnership Trust Work with MAPPA

Over the last year the professional working relationship between Worcestershire Mental Health Partnership Trust and the local MAPPA has been strengthened and improved. Information sharing and collaboration has been enhanced to a significant degree which has been largely achieved by undertaking joint assessments with probation risk managers and training events for mental health professionals.

There has been a series of training events throughout the Trust for mental health professionals which have had two separate formats.

One format undertaken by the MAPPP Co-ordinator and the Clinical Manager for High Risk Services focused on an understanding of the Public Protection process. This involved the different levels of risk management, the roles and responsibilities of mental health professionals and issues of sharing confidential information within this process.

The second training events had a much wider remit and included professionals from West Mercia Police (public protection), Probation Service (risk manager), the lead Consultant Psychiatrist, Lead Psychologist and Clinical Manager High Risk Services (Mental Health Trust). This training event aimed to promote an understanding between professionals in mental health, police and probation of the available options and considerations when processing individuals through criminal justice and public protection systems.

The increased level of understanding by clinical staff of the public protection process and risk management levels can be seen in the increase of the number of MARC's (Level 2) meetings which are now taking place within mental health. Clinical risk management plans are now being seen to document MARC as part of the clinical risk management strategy. The MAPPA process has now been incorporated into the new Care Programme Approach policy document as part of the clinical risk management strategy. This policy identifies a clear procedure for clinicians to refer the identified and assessed risk for consideration at Level 2 or 3 of the MAPPA process.

Worcestershire Mental Health Partnership Trust aims to promote, maintain and develop the high level of Multi Agency working that already exists. This dynamic level of information sharing can not only underpin clinical decisions when formulating risk management strategies but also identify the most appropriate clinical resources to manage the assessed risk.

Having a Clinical Manager/Specialist Nurse from the Mental Health Trust as a permanent member of the panel ensures that there is a consistent approach to and from all professionals and departments from within the Mental Health Trust into the MAPPA process.

c) Managing the Most Dangerous

Locally, and in line with National MAPPA Guidance, the most serious offenders – those who are considered likely to cause serious harm (harm which is life-threatening and/or traumatic and from which recovery can be expected to be difficult or impossible) are dealt with by Multi-Agency Public Protection Panels (MAPPPs). These are also known as "Level 3" meetings. These meetings take place monthly in each police division, and additional ones can be convened if the case cannot wait until the next monthly meeting. The meetings are attended by senior managers of the key agencies, and seek to give proper focus to that small number of most risky cases known as the "critical few".

Over the last year the number of cases dealt with in this way has increased from 74 to 81. The increase may be because organisations are becoming more acquainted with the Public Protection arrangements, and staff are better advised about the way it works. There was also some carry-over of cases from the previous year.

Some case studies are included to give an idea of the work carried out by the Panels in West Mercia. In total, 689 registered sex offenders are supervised by the police in the community. In the following case some work was carried out prior to release, tight monitoring used after release, and a quick return to custody imposed when evidence was discovered confirming the risk assessment.

Case G

G was sentenced to 18 months prison for offences of making indecent images and photographs of children. A man over 40 years of age, he had a good work record and income, and no relevant previous convictions. Probation staff wrote a Pre Sentence Report for the court, and were then in contact with G in the early part of his time in prison. Probation staff in the prison helped assess G, and police also visited him. All those involved formed the view that G was likely to re-offend. He could see nothing wrong with those aspects of his behaviour that he was prepared to admit. He either denied or disputed the significance of other parts of his offending. The work was shared in the Public Protection Panel, and a plan was agreed for his release on licence conditions. This licence prohibited G from working with children or seeking to contact children through leisure activities. G was aware that he was to be closely monitored by all agencies working together.

About two months after release on licence, information was received from another police area connecting G to complaints from parents of teenage girls using the internet. A quick investigation confirmed that G had tried to contact the girls. He was returned to prison immediately.

Careful planning is again taking place to assess and manage the risks G represents in the community. He is now engaged with some work on his offending whilst he is in prison. It is not yet known whether this work will be likely to reduce the risk of re-offending. In any case, very tight supervision will be implemented on his release, and again all those agencies are co-operating to protect the public.

Not all registered sex offenders require such a high level of supervision, but where the high risk factors can be identified, as in the case of G, detailed attention is given to up-dating the assessment, working with the offender to minimise the risk, and monitoring his progress before considering what controls are necessary in future. In West Mercia over the year a total of 16 Registered Sex Offenders (RSO's) were either cautioned or convicted for breaching the requirements of their registration. This is a reduction of 8 from the previous year, suggesting that the level of compliance has improved.

Another key area of crime is domestic violence. The effects on the victims, and the children and families of victims is often devastating. A high proportion of murders are calculated to have been committed in the domestic setting. Many serious violent offenders repeatedly abuse partners and/or other family members, and so it is understood that the warning signs may exist in much lower level crime if we know what to look for. About 60% of the most serious violent cases in West Mercia have an element of domestic violence.