



OFFENDER
MANAGEMENT
INSPECTION
INSPECTION

A report on Offender Management in
West Mercia

An inspection led by
HM Inspectorate of Probation

ISBN 978-1-84099-186-4 November 2008

FOREWORD

West Mercia is a Probation Trust which, though in its infancy, is showing clear signs of being the innovative body its new identity demanded. This major change had been accompanied by some frustrations as tensions related to its new status emerged and ran in parallel with significant challenges due to financial constraints. However, despite this activity, West Mercia had also embraced a new and improved electronic case recording system with considerable enthusiasm and was already realising early benefits from this. Managers and staff alike are to be congratulated on their accommodation of these major changes.

We saw some quality work being done by committed practitioners in relation to the monitoring of restrictive requirements, liaison with sentencers, attention to diversity and compliance issues in delivery of services. There were some very imaginative unpaid work projects. We were concerned as to whether Phase II of the offender management model had been successfully implemented, however, and assessments and plans generally needed to be more detailed and considered. A higher profile for sentence planning would promote a more sophisticated outcome focus and encourage better review and evaluation, including of the service user perspective.

ANDREW BRIDGES

HM Chief Inspector of Probation

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to express our thanks to the West Mercia Probation Trust Board, its managers and staff for the considerable assistance received in enabling the inspection to proceed smoothly. Without their help, most especially in arranging a complicated programme of interviews with offender managers, the work could not have been completed successfully.

The inspection also depended on the contribution made by local area assessors who assisted with the offender manager interviews. Their participation and commitment were greatly appreciated.

HM Assistant Chief Inspector: Kate White

HM Inspectors: Krystyna Findley, Helen Boocock, Yvonne McGuckian, Tony Rolley, Joseph Simpson, Les Smith

Practice Assessors: Sarah Ashworth, Stephen Hubbard

Ofsted Inspectors: Alastair Pearson, Alan Hatcher

Information Manager: Kevin Ball

Inspection Admin Officers: Pippa Bennett, Maura O'Brien

Publications Team: Jean Hartington, Alex Pentecost

Area Assessors: Louise Cotton, Andrew Denning, Catherine Fuller, Kate Parsons, Margaret Sinclair

CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS	4
SUMMARY	5
SUMMARY OF SCORES	6
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT	9
NEXT STEPS	9
SHARING GOOD PRACTICE	10
SERVICE USERS' PERSPECTIVE	12
1. ASSESSMENT AND SENTENCE PLANNING	15
1.1 General Criterion: PREPARING FOR SENTENCE	15
1.2 General Criterion: ASSESSMENT OF RISK OF HARM	16
1.3 General Criterion: ASSESSMENT OF LIKELIHOOD OF REOFFENDING	17
1.4 General Criterion: ASSESSMENT OF OFFENDER ENGAGEMENT	18
1.5 General Criterion: SENTENCE PLANNING	19
2. IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERVENTIONS	21
2.1 General Criterion: DELIVERING THE SENTENCE PLAN	21
2.2 General Criterion: PROTECTING THE PUBLIC BY MINIMISING RISK OF HARM	22
2.3 General Criterion: VICTIMS	23
2.4 General Criterion: ENSURING CONTAINMENT AND PROMOTING COMPLIANCE (Punish)	24
2.5 General Criterion: CONSTRUCTIVE INTERVENTIONS (Help and Change)	26
2.6 General Criterion: RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS (Control)	27
2.7 General Criterion: DIVERSITY ISSUES	27
3. ACHIEVEMENT AND MONITORING OF OUTCOMES	29
3.1 General Criterion: ACHIEVEMENT OF INITIAL OUTCOMES	29
3.2 General Criterion: SUSTAINABILITY OF PROGRESS	30
4. LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT	32
4.1 General Criterion: LEADERSHIP AND PLANNING	32
4.2 General Criterion: PERFORMANCE AGAINST NATIONAL AND REGIONAL TARGETS	35
4.3 General Criterion: RESOURCE DEPLOYMENT	37
4.4 General Criterion: WORKFORCE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT	38
4.5 General Criterion: REVIEW AND EVALUATION	40
4.6 General Criterion: COMMISSIONING OF SERVICES	41
APPENDIX 1 Integrated Probation Performance Framework	43
APPENDIX 2 Contextual information	44
APPENDIX 3 Inspection model, methodology and publication arrangements	47
APPENDIX 4 Scoring approach	48
APPENDIX 5 Role of HMI Probation	49

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

ACCLAIM	Partnership service to Prolific and other Priority Offenders
ACO	Assistant chief officer
CDRP	Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
CEO	Chief executive officer
CJSSS	Simple, speedy summary justice
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
CRE	Commission for Racial Equality
CSOG	Community Sex Offender Group
DAT	Drug Action Team
Delius	Electronic case record system
DRR	Drug rehabilitation requirement
ESF	European Social Fund
ETE	Employment, training and education
ETS	Enhanced Thinking Skills
FDR	Fast delivery report
FPP	Forensic Psychology Practice
HDC	Home Detention Curfew
HMIC	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
HMI Probation	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation
HQ	Headquarters
HR	Human resource
IDAP	Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme
IDM	Improvement and development manager
IPPF	Integrated Probation Performance Framework
LAA	Local area agreement
LCJB	Local Criminal Justice Board
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children Board
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
NIM	National Intelligence Model
NOMS	National Offender Management Service
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
OASys/eOASys	Offender Assessment System/electronic OASys
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
OGRS2	Offender Group Reconviction Score2
OLASS	Offender Learning and Skills Service
OMI	Offender Management Inspection
OMU	Offender Management Unit
PCT	Primary Care Trust
PMO	Performance monitoring officer
PO	Probation officer
PPO	Prolific and other Priority Offender
PSO	Probation service officer
PSR	Pre-sentence report
RoH	Risk of Harm
RoHAA	Risk of Harm Area Assessment
ROM	Regional offender manager
ROTL	Release on Temporary Licence
SDR	Standard delivery report
SFO	Serious further offence
SHIFT	Service to Prolific and other Priority Offenders
SMB	Strategic Management Board
STEPS	Steps into Employment Service
TPO	Trainee probation officer
VLO	Victim liaison officer
ViSOR	Violent and Sex Offender Register
YSS	Youth Support Services

SUMMARY

Assessment and Sentence Planning

Reports for court were generally of a good standard and made an effective contribution to the sentencing process, although we saw examples where fast delivery reports had been provided in circumstances that required a more comprehensive assessment. Most cases were allocated to the correct tier and planning reflected this. It was pleasing to see that in relevant cases offender managers had identified interventions aimed at addressing offending behaviour. Overall, sentence planning had been given insufficient priority. Elements of sentence planning were done well, for example planned contact levels and ensuring that offenders fully understood sentence requirements, but some plans were late and not enough gave a clear shape to supervision, focused on achievable change or set the right goals for offenders. Offender managers had not used information available to them from other sources to complete assessments or planning and this emerged as a general theme in the inspection.

Implementation of Interventions

Offender managers had prioritised elements of the sentence plan that addressed Risk of Harm issues and arrangements for preparing offenders for interventions. We saw high levels of commitment by them to the motivation and support of offenders. However, there was too little evidence of contact and liaison with offenders or prison staff throughout the custodial period and this was unlikely to promote effective offender management in the community. Central to the offender management model is the work of the offender manager in overseeing and coordinating the input of all other workers – this was not fully embedded in West Mercia. Given our view about initial sentence planning, it was unsurprising that most plans did not give a clear direction to the sentence nor did interventions flow routinely from them. The work of victim liaison officers met statutory requirements in most cases, although not always well recorded. There was good attention to victim safety issues including at the pre-release stage. Victims were consistently given the opportunity to express a view about conditions of release and information about release was given to them in a timely manner. We also saw examples of work done with offenders on victim awareness.

Work on compliance processes was comprehensive, with good induction, frequency of planned appointments and timely enforcement action in most cases. We saw evidence that in the majority of cases offenders had been challenged to accept responsibility for their offending behaviour. The Trust provided a wide range of training opportunities and community link workers provided personal and practical support to offenders. Approved premises had been used appropriately. We saw many examples of attention to diversity issues by case administrators, offender managers and programme tutors. The Trust had introduced a new electronic case recording tool – Delius – in March 2008. This was a far-reaching change that staff had embraced positively and which had the potential to support better the offender management model.

Achievement and Monitoring of Outcomes

Outcomes indicated that the public was being better protected as the result of the offender's sentence. A large majority of offenders had complied with the requirements of the sentence and we saw improvements in Offender Assessment System scores.

There was a good level of continuity of offender managers during the current sentence. However, sentence plans were not sufficiently prominent and we did not see enough attention to aspects of longer term community reintegration.

Leadership and Strategic Management

West Mercia had been successful in its bid for Trust status in 2007 and had supplemented a comprehensive annual plan with an outline three-year plan positioning the Trust for the medium term. However, there was an absence of diversity issues and the user perspective in the strategic planning process. We saw good links with the range of local authority structures, involvement in the crime and disorder agendas and some innovative partnership work. The Trust made an appropriate strategic contribution to public protection. Staff and partners had a very positive view of managers in West Mercia. During the year 2007/2008, the area had achieved a 'good performance' score against national targets. Since the introduction of Delius, the Trust had lost the capacity to provide a significant amount of management information. West Mercia had managed its budget well and had started work on rebalancing resources for the future. Working in partnership had attracted additional resources for offenders. The area was organised into offender management and interventions divisions. The staff profile and geography hampered full flexibility of staff deployment. Recruitment of probation officers had proved to be difficult and there had been a significant turnover of staff. Training and development had been prioritised and the management of staff sickness absence had been given a high priority. Information on outcomes was not at the heart of the Trust's activity; there were no routine processes for the collection, analysis and dissemination of information of this kind. Commissioning, contracting and best value were seen as key issues for the Trust and development work was taking place. The full application of the offender management model for custody cases had yet to be delivered, but West Mercia was in a good position to push forward through established structures.

Risk of Harm

Screening for Risk of Harm was generally accurate, completed at the start of sentence and led to accurate classification. However, a large number of full analyses were not completed at all or to a sufficient standard. Referrals to approved premises were appropriate. Information held by other agencies was not fully used and the interests of victims were not sufficiently promoted. Across all case types, risk management plans were mainly unsatisfactory. Effective management oversight of high/very high Risk of Harm cases and child safeguarding issues was insufficient. Reviews were usually timely and offender managers saw Risk of Harm work as dynamic, completing reviews following a significant change. However, they were passive in anticipating or identifying changes in risk factors. Significant numbers of cases were left without ongoing plans to manage identified risks. We saw good communication about cases being managed within the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements, although effective contribution to, and use of these required attention.

SUMMARY OF SCORES

Outlined overleaf in Chart 1 are percentage scores for each Offender Management Inspection Criterion and for each of the sections 1-3.

Chart 1: Scoring of sections 1-3:

Offender Management Inspection: West Mercia (September 2008)

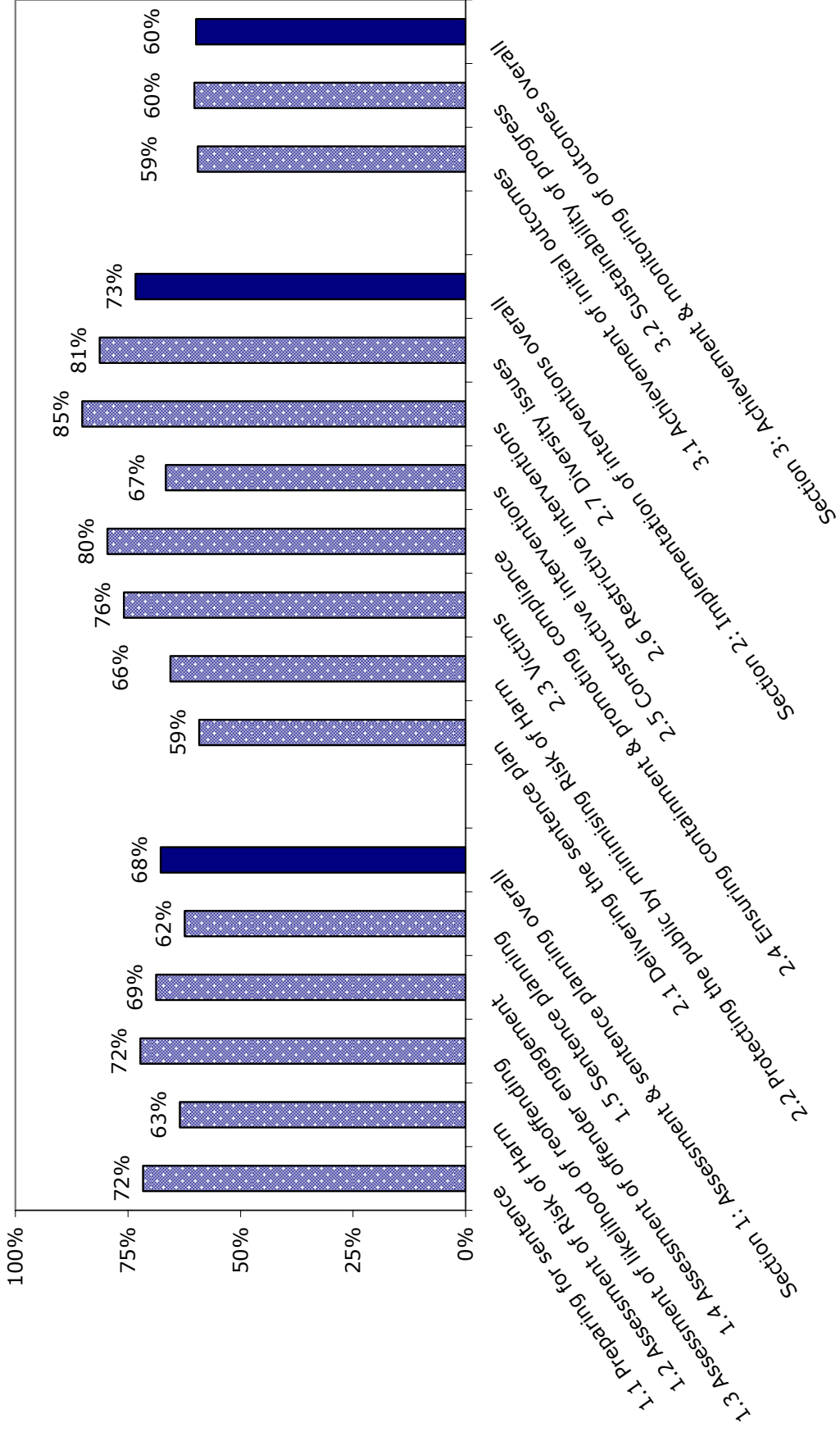


Table 1: Scoring of section 4:

Each of the criteria in the Leadership & Strategic Management section has been graded below, according to the four-point scale described in Appendix 4.

4.1	General Criterion: LEADERSHIP AND PLANNING	Satisfactorily met
4.2	General Criterion: PERFORMANCE AGAINST NATIONAL AND REGIONAL TARGETS	Satisfactorily met
4.3	General Criterion: RESOURCE DEPLOYMENT	Partly met
4.4	General Criterion: WORKFORCE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT	Satisfactorily met
4.5	General Criterion: REVIEW AND EVALUATION	Not met
4.6	General Criterion: COMMISSIONING OF SERVICES	Partly met

Table 2: Risk of Harm Thread

Table 2 indicates a score drawn from a range of indicators in the *Assessment and Sentence Planning* and *Implementation of Interventions* sections about Risk of Harm work. This score is significant in determining whether a further focused inspection will be carried out.

Score for Risk of Harm Thread	70%
-------------------------------	------------

Full details of our *Scoring approach* are contained in Appendix 4.

We advise readers of reports against attempting to compare scores area by area. Such comparisons are not entirely valid as the sizes of samples vary slightly, as does the profile of cases included in each area's sample. We believe the scoring is best seen as a simple summary of what we have found in an individual probation area and needs to be seen alongside the full findings and recommendations of any particular report.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Improvements are necessary as follows:

1. Risk of Harm assessments and subsequent management plans are completed comprehensively and accurately and meet the standard of quality required nationally
2. there is evidence of improved effective management oversight of high/very high Risk of Harm and child safeguarding cases
3. sentence plans and reviews are completed to a high standard, focused on outcomes and used to drive supervision
4. Offender Assessment System data are used to improve outcomes and in the commissioning and decommissioning of services
5. the diversity equality scheme action plans are updated and used to inform the business plan
6. full implementation of the offender management model is applied to custody cases within its scope
7. the views of service users and stakeholders are routinely collated, evaluated and used to improve strategic planning and service delivery.

NEXT STEPS

An improvement plan addressing the recommendations above is needed four weeks after publication.

Further focused inspections will be carried out approximately 12 months after the original OMI when HMI Probation has a serious concern about an area's RoH work.

There will not be a further inspection in West Mercia.

SHARING GOOD PRACTICE

Below are examples of good practice we found in West Mercia.

Commitment to the offender:

OMI Criterion: 2.1

Delivering the sentence plan

An offender manager in unpaid work demonstrated the ability to motivate and support even the most reluctant offender through their order. In the case of Beryl, a professional woman convicted of a drink-driving offence who had genuine difficulty in coming to terms with a criminal record and the shame of the unpaid work order, the offender manager accurately assessed the situation, placed Beryl in a suitable setting and worked hard to motivate her. Without this Beryl would probably have found herself in breach of her order. As it was she actually enjoyed the work and formally thanked the offender manager for her support.

Active management of Risk of Harm:

OMI Criterion: 2.2

Protecting the public by minimising Risk of Harm

Evan had significant health issues which precluded his attendance at a group work programme for sexual offending. The offender manager delivered offending behaviour sessions on a one-to-one basis, taking account of Evan's diversity and health needs. There was evidence of very good liaison with the family who did not accept Evan's offending, but were made fully aware of the role of the probation service and the licence conditions. When Evan was due to be admitted to hospital for treatment, the offender manager shared with medical staff relevant information about the potential RoH to staff and other patients.

Management of Risk of Harm as a high priority:

OMI Criterion: 2.2

Protecting the public by minimising Risk of Harm

An offender on a community order, who was classified as high risk of serious harm, was remanded in custody in relation to new offences. The offender manager formally communicated with all relevant staff in unpaid work, programmes, court, team colleagues, risk manager and the police to inform them of the development and potential RoH issues relating to the new offences. The offender manager also made formal arrangements with non-probation court staff and the CPS, as well as probation court staff to be kept informed of the offender's ongoing remand status. This meant there was active management of RoH issues and that the offender manager and other staff could plan for any possible re-release.

<p>Comprehensive attention to victim issues:</p> <p>OMI Criterion: 2.3</p> <p>Victims</p>	<p>A case of a high RoH offender, who had seriously injured the victim, demonstrated good work by the VLO, offender manager and progress by the offender. Through the use of home visits the VLO had ensured that the victim was fully involved at all stages of the sentence and able to express his wishes in respect of release conditions. Victim safety issues were addressed at HDC, ROTL and post-release stages through the use of curfew and non-contact licence conditions. Following release, the offender completed work on victim awareness and this was evidenced on the case file.</p>
<p>Demanding placement of benefit to the community:</p> <p>OMI Criterion: 2.4</p> <p>Ensuring containment and promoting compliance</p>	<p>Given the size of the Trust and the distance between centres of population, it was important that the unpaid work team provided projects that did not require long travelling times to reach them. Severn Valley Country Park, a nature conservation site created out of an abandoned mine, had responded positively to an approach from staff and had accepted offenders in work groups and individual placements. The site was easily accessible by minibus from several districts. Under the supervision of probation staff and with country park staff teaching the necessary skills, offenders cleared overgrown areas then learned to lay paths, repair hedges and also ways to improve and conserve natural habitats and attract wildlife. The offenders spoken to during the inspection had found the work demanding and very rewarding and could see the clear benefit to the community and to the conservation of local nature.</p>
<p>Successful progression from numeracy and literacy classes to vocational training:</p> <p>OMI Criterion: 3.2</p> <p>Sustainability of progress</p>	<p>Sally had been on probation for over a year and was coming to the end of her order. As a teenager she had been addicted to class A drugs, started offending and had been excluded from school. Early in her order, at the suggestion of her PO, she joined a numeracy and literacy class provided by a local college on probation premises – this was not part of her order. Her studies were interrupted when she became pregnant, but soon after she had the baby she returned to the class. It became clear to her community link workers that Sally had much potential but was worried about the prospect of joining a vocational course at a local college. The workers responded by explaining carefully what it would involve and giving advice on childcare and references. Sally was accompanied to the college for admission tests and enrolment. Because the college hours clashed with her literacy and numeracy classes at probation, her workers arranged for Sally to attend a class in the community. She had ambitious but realistic plans for future study and employment and had nothing but praise for the support she had received from her link workers.</p>

SERVICE USERS' PERSPECTIVE

Offenders

We received 36 responses to the HMI Probation questionnaires sent to the 110 offenders in the sample, all of whom were undertaking community sentences or subject to post-release licence, or who were being managed through their custodial sentences. Nearly all said that the rules covering supervision by the probation area had been fully explained to them and all but one recalled a discussion about their sentence plan. Ten offenders had recently been released from prison; they reported few visits from their offender manager whilst in custody, but sentence plans had been discussed on visits in most cases.

The vast majority of responses noted that probation staff and workers from other agencies had worked well together in helping with a wide range of problems including attitudes to offending, thinking skills, ETE as well as substance misuse, housing and health issues. Positive comments included *"I think that probation is a good service as they can push you into the right direction to get help"*. With the exception of one offender they reported a good working relationship with their manager and, where it had been difficult for them to take part in supervision sessions, the difficulties stemming from work commitments, travel, childcare and health had been addressed in all cases.

Thirty-three offenders said that they thought more about their offending behaviour as the result of working with the probation area and 28 felt that they had increased awareness of victims' issues. Twenty-six out of 34 thought that they would be less likely to reoffend as a result. One offender commented *"Probation as a whole have made me alter my whole way of thinking"*.

Inspectors interviewed nine offenders attending two separate accredited programmes (ETS and CSOG). Only a minority of offenders could remember any involvement in sentence planning or having a clear plan with specific goals. Two had been involved in reviews and one was able to describe regular focused review meetings. Overall communication and working relationships with offender managers were good, although two offenders were disappointed with the discontinuity of service when there had been changes of offender manager. All offenders were happy with the information received at induction and were very clear on the rules in relation to absences and breach, although two believed that the rules for recall were unfair and that they might be recalled *"for the slightest thing"*. For some, communication was a big issue with four offenders reporting difficulties in getting messages through or speaking directly with their offender manager. Most recalled pre-programme preparation, found the courses helpful and could give examples of using newly-acquired problem solving skills, e.g. avoiding situations in which they might have previously offended, managing a house move and dealing with bullying. In one of the programmes, victim issues had yet to be covered explicitly, but two offenders had focused on how their behaviour affected other people and how to understand other people's views and opinions. Diversity issues were well managed and offenders had received leaflets, seen posters and made their own group rules which covered appropriate behaviour. One female offender described good individual support when she had been left as the only woman on a programme and childcare issues had been managed for several. However, concerns were expressed

about the timing of programmes which sometimes had an adverse impact on employment and cost of travel was also problematic for several people.

Neither of the two hostel residents felt that they had been fully involved in the sentence planning process or recalled receiving a copy of the plan. Planning for release to the hostel had happened at a very late stage and against a background of low levels of contact during the custodial period. Both offenders had received an induction covering hostel rules, appropriate behaviour and licence conditions, although one clearly felt that this was affected by his arrival on a Friday and did not cover all that he needed to know on the day. They reported a lack of constructive interventions at the hostel and would have welcomed continuing the work that they had started in prison on offending behaviour and criminogenic factors such as alcohol misuse. Preparation for independent living and moving on was seen as a high priority, but was not a feature of structured planning for them.

We visited three unpaid worksites and met with a total of ten offenders. Most could not recall having had a sentence plan prepared or being given a copy of it. Those on concurrent supervision (two) remembered being given a copy of the plan and believed they were working to the goals set in it. All had been involved in a discussion about their availability, but none could remember being asked about the best type of placement for them and only two had the opportunity to work using pre-existing skills. The offenders who had stand alone unpaid work requirements were not aware that they had an offender manager and thought that the unpaid work supervisor was responsible for managing the order. All had received an induction covering health and safety, rules governing attendance, behaviour and consequences of non-compliance. They thought these were fair and consistent – even the offender who had been breached. There were mixed opinions on how demanding the work was and, with the exception of work carried out for elderly people, few could see clear benefits to the community. However, they enjoyed the work and had learnt something. Offenders stated that their individual circumstances had been addressed and cited childcare arrangements and shift patterns as examples which had been taken into account in managing the order.

Victims

Five victims returned questionnaires and we interviewed a further six during inspection week – two by telephone. For almost all, initial contact from the VLO had been soon after sentence and was done by a combination of letter and personal visit which left them feeling well informed and able to decide if they wanted further contact. Victims also indicated that subsequent contact had tailed off in terms of frequency and quality of information given. Most received an explanation about the services that would be provided, although half said that they had not been given enough general information about custodial sentences.

In some cases VLO work had helped victims feel safer particularly when information had been given immediately after sentence and at points of liaison over possible licence conditions. However, following release anxiety had actually been raised in some cases where an offender had been released without the victim's knowledge or only partial information had been provided, leaving unanswered questions especially regarding recall issues. All of the victims knew how to contact their VLO. However, they were less clear who would be the best person to contact should they become aware a licence condition had been broken. Three of the victims commented that the service was only

available between 9am and 5pm and two had left messages outside these hours but had not received a response. This reduced their confidence in the VLO service. None of the victims knew about MAPPA.

Generally, victims felt that they had received a good service and very positive comments were made about individual workers. However, all had suggestions for improvement which consistently related to the quality, frequency and nature of communication. None of the victims that we spoke to had previously been asked to give their views on the service they were receiving.

Courts

Twenty sentencers responded to our survey. With one exception, they were clear about the type of report which should be requested and all were satisfied with their quality. Not all reports had been made available in the required timescale and magistrates were aware that pressure on resources in specific offices was generally the reason for any delay. A high proportion were confident about arrangements for enforcement, although only a few knew about fast track processes for priority cases. Liaison arrangements were seen as effective and all responses were positive about leadership within the area. Staff working in courts were viewed as knowledgeable and generally courts were covered sufficiently. Not all sentencers had received information about the use of approved premises in relevant cases or current probation policy and most were not aware whether successful outcomes were monitored.

1. ASSESSMENT AND SENTENCE PLANNING

1.1 General Criterion: PREPARING FOR SENTENCE

Activity in the phase leading up to sentence is timely, purposeful and effective.

72%

Strengths:

- (a) PSRs were responsive to the seriousness level indicated by the court (93%). A high proportion (80%) contained a clear proposal for a community sentence which was taken up by the court in 77% of cases.
- (b) Most reports were of the appropriate type (81%) and had been prepared within the timescale set by the court. 73% were judged as objective, impartial and free from discriminatory language or stereotype.
- (c) All reports prepared on PPOs clearly outlined the seriousness of the offence and four out of five outlined the likelihood of reoffending and avoided labelling them as a PPO. The majority contained a clear and proportionate proposal.
- (d) Risk of self-harm was clearly recorded in 21 out of 24 relevant cases.

Areas for Improvement:

- (a) The Trust had worked to promote greater use of FDRs in order to promote best use of resources. However, we saw five FDRs where an adjournment for an SDR should have been requested. These included cases where there were concerns about domestic abuse, child safeguarding, possible offender learning disabilities or where a full RoH analysis was indicated.
- (b) The template used for SDRs did not lead to high quality reports. Sections of eOASys and subheadings were pulled through without sufficient editing or analysis resulting in reports that were not concise (44%) and which sometimes contained information not relevant to sentencing for the current offence.
- (c) Around a third of reports seen were not based on an appropriate risk/need assessment and only half were balanced, verified and factually accurate. A similar proportion failed to include appropriate information about the victim and only 42% contained an appropriate outline plan.

Conclusion:

Performance against this criterion was good.

1.2 General Criterion: ASSESSMENT OF RISK OF HARM
RoH is comprehensively and accurately assessed using OASys in each case and additional specialist assessment tools where relevant.

63%

Strengths:

- (a) RoH classification was correct in 90% of the sample; we saw a number of cases where this was either too high or too low.
- (b) Screening had been completed in 94% of relevant cases and was done on time in 94% of community order and 88% of licence commencements. Accuracy of the content was high at 84%.
- (c) Generally, the analysis accurately reflected the RoH to children, the public, known adult, staff and prisoners; the area scored over 80% on these factors.
- (d) There was good communication about MAPPA levels to all staff involved in the case, although there were five cases where the level of management was not made clear. Keyworkers confirmed that they had access to the electronic case record or that other systems were in place to share this information.
- (e) All referrals to approved premises in our sample of cases were appropriate and seven out of nine were accepted.

Areas for Improvement:

- (a) A full RoH analysis was not completed in 21 relevant cases and an acceptable explanation for this was recorded only on three occasions.
- (b) 41% of full analyses were not completed to a sufficient standard. Assessments did not cover victim issues thoroughly often enough (44%).
- (c) The assessments made by other agencies were not sufficiently well integrated into OASys or other specialist assessments in around a third of cases.
- (d) Although we saw some examples of good practice and most were structured in the right format, risk management plans were generally unsatisfactory. In the community order sample, only 26% of plans were judged to be comprehensive and only half of high/very high RoH cases met the standard for completion in five working days. Plans did not always actively address identified risks, they lacked detail about timescales for actions to be taken and responsibilities were not always clearly assigned. We found similar practice at start of licences and custody cases. It was especially concerning that nine risk management plans had not been completed at the start of a community order and three on release from custody.
- (e) Effective management oversight of high/very high RoH cases and child safeguarding issues was insufficient. A number of eOASys documents did not contain even the basic details about children who were at risk and, although there was a system in place for routine

checks with social care, these were not robustly followed up in all cases. The role of risk manager which operated in the area was well understood by managers but less so by staff who reported some confusion about where to take case discussions or look for supervision and support.

Conclusion: This criterion represents a priority for improvement.

1.3 General Criterion: ASSESSMENT OF LIKELIHOOD OF REOFFENDING
Likelihood of reoffending is comprehensively and accurately assessed using OASys as applicable.

72%

Strengths:

- (a) Either an OASys or OGRS2 score was calculated, as appropriate, at the start of a community sentence or release from custody in all cases.
- (b) Positive influences on offenders such as supportive and pro-social factors were well identified, e.g. supportive family relationships or friendships.
- (c) Assessment of PPO cases was comprehensive in eight out of ten cases, although only half met the required timescale.

Areas for Improvement:

- (a) In around a third of relevant cases criminogenic factors had not been accurately or comprehensively assessed at the start of sentence or release on licence. Relevant information available to the offender manager had not been included and we found examples where OASys was insufficiently detailed. 24% of assessments were late.
- (b) Offender managers did not make full use of other assessments which were available to them, e.g. external keyworkers were not confident that their assessments had been incorporated into the planning cycle.

Conclusion: Performance against this criterion was good.

1.4 General Criterion: ASSESSMENT OF OFFENDER ENGAGEMENT
Potential obstacles or challenges to positive engagement are identified and plans made to minimise their possible impact.

69%

Strengths:

- (a) Race and ethnic monitoring classification was recorded in almost all cases; this laid the ground for the assessment of individual needs which could be taken into account in managing the sentence and maximising engagement and compliance.
- (b) The area provided a screening tool for the assessment of diversity issues in every case. Most files included these documents and we found evidence that individual needs and broader diversity issues were actively assessed at the start of contact (73%), though this left 19 cases where these important issues had been missed.
- (c) In the vast majority of cases plans had been put in place to minimise discriminatory or disadvantaging factors which prevented offender access to services. A number of service users were able to give specific instances relating to their individual circumstances which had helped them.
- (d) For the highest risk offenders, the services of FPP had been made available to undertake specialist assessments to help identify learning style, capacity to change and intellectual ability, where this was needed.

Areas for Improvement:

- (a) Despite systems that had been put in place to include assessment materials on all case files, offender managers did not carry out an initial screening to identify levels of literacy and numeracy in a third of cases.
- (b) Referrals to the STEPS team were low (41%) and varied between offices. This represented an underuse of a well-trained and qualified community link worker resource and lack of access to internal and OLASS provision.
- (c) Practice in relation to assessing and planning for offender engagement was inconsistent, e.g. full attention to which methods might be most effective was evidenced in 61% of cases. The same proportion of cases showed that the offender's intellectual ability, learning style and motivation to change had not been taken into account at the earliest opportunity.

Conclusion:

This criterion represents a priority for improvement.

1.5 General Criterion: SENTENCE PLANNING

The offender manager plans interventions in custody and the community with a view to addressing criminogenic factors and managing any RoH to others. The initial sentence plan or unpaid work assessment is designed to describe a structured and coherent plan of work for each offender.

62%

Strengths:

- (a) Most cases were allocated to the correct tier and planning reflected the stated tier in 85% of cases. 87% were allocated to an offender manager within the required time limits.
- (b) Planned contact levels for sentence requirements were high (82%), although fewer appointments (70%) were seen as enforceable.
- (c) It was pleasing to see that 85% of identified interventions were aimed at addressing offending behaviour in Tier 3 and Tier 4 cases.
- (d) Offenders told us that they had a good understanding of the requirements in their sentences and of breach proceedings. This was confirmed by evidence in over 90% of cases inspected.

Areas for Improvement:

- (a) Sentence planning had been given insufficient priority. Almost three-quarters of sentence plans reflected the purpose of sentencing; however, just over half gave a clear shape to supervision (56%), focused on achievable change (56%) and set relevant goals for the offender (53%). Twenty-four plans in the sample contained none of these elements. Our discussion with offenders mostly mirrored these findings.
- (b) Roles and responsibilities of all workers had been clearly defined in 56% of cases. We commonly saw the names and contact details of other staff involved in the case, but no information about who was required to do what and when.
- (c) Restrictive conditions/requirements aimed at minimising RoH were underused as they were not considered in 37% of relevant cases.
- (d) Five initial plans did not cover the basic requirements of the national standard and a large proportion (43%) were late. Not enough attention had been given to the sequencing and timing of objectives and it was not always clear who was to deliver an intervention. Some practitioners had cross-referenced the initial sentence plan to the risk management plan but this was only achieved in 40% of relevant cases.
- (e) In common with other aspects of assessment and planning referred to above, offender managers in their sentence planning had not used available information from other assessments.
- (f) In the custody sample, it was not clear which elements of the plan were to be delivered in custody or the community in six out of nine cases.

- (g) Relevant interventions for promoting community reintegration and for reducing or containing the RoH were not identified in a significant number of cases – almost a third.
- (h) Less than half of offenders had had the opportunity to participate in the planning process (43%) and we saw a high proportion of sentence plans which were not sensitive to diversity issues.

Conclusion:

This criterion represents a priority for improvement.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERVENTIONS

2.1 General Criterion: DELIVERING THE SENTENCE PLAN

The offender manager facilitates the structured delivery of all relevant elements of the sentence.

59%

Strengths:

- (a) Offender managers had prioritised elements of the sentence plan that addressed RoH issues over likelihood of reoffending across all case types.
- (b) Arrangements to prepare offenders thoroughly for interventions were in place in 78% of cases. We saw evidence of three-way meetings in advance of accredited programmes and pre-placement preparation for unpaid work requirements.
- (c) It was good to see high levels of commitment by offender managers who had worked positively to raise offender motivation and offer support.
- (d) Two custody reports were in the sample and both were clear, thorough and contributed to the decision-making processes within required timescales.
- (e) Three-quarters of sentence requirements had been fully implemented, but we were made aware of local delays to the start of accredited programmes, particularly IDAP.
- (f) There were only three cases in the sample which had been transferred between areas. On receipt of the case in West Mercia, appointments had been offered in a timely way in two cases and in one case all the relevant documentation had been provided. One case remained in the area for only four days and little work had been possible.
- (g) Prison staff informed offender managers about the movement of prisoners to another establishment in the four cases where this had happened. Movements had been mainly for operational reasons rather than specifically for supporting the delivery of the sentence plan.

Areas for Improvement:

- (a) During the post-release phase, work in the community did not build sufficiently well on the activity during the custodial period. For example, substance misuse was not addressed in ten out of 13 cases, and interventions in relation to identified education needs had not been followed through.
- (b) Evidence of the offender manager working to oversee and coordinate the input of all workers involved in the case was variable. Keyworkers consistently told us that communication and liaison depended on individual offender managers. Some did this aspect of

the role well but generally this element of the offender management model fell short of being well embedded. Interventions delivered by other workers were not fully reported to the offender manager, e.g. work on drug/alcohol issues which impeded a full understanding and management of the issues at hand.

- (c) Six cases had no sentence plan review and two-thirds were reviewed on time. Given our observation about initial sentence planning, it was unsurprising that most plans (65%) did not give a clear direction to the sentence nor did interventions flow routinely from them. In addition, insufficient effort had been made to achieve continuing ownership by the offender. Thirty-one plans did none of the above.
- (d) At review points, we did not see a high level of integration with other ongoing plans, for example MAPPA action plans, risk management plans, child protection or individual learning plans.
- (e) There were low levels of proactive, timely and positive work between prison staff and offender managers in the custodial phase of a sentence. We saw this in both licences and custody cases that had been released.

Conclusion:

This criterion represents an urgent priority for improvement.

2.2 General Criterion: PROTECTING THE PUBLIC BY MINIMISING RISK OF HARM
All reasonable actions have been taken to protect the public by keeping to a minimum the offender's RoH to others.

66%

Strengths:

- (a) RoH was reviewed within 16 weeks of the start of sentence in 75% of cases and this rose to 79% for subsequent reviews. All five cases in the custody sample had been reviewed within 16 weeks of release.
- (b) Offender managers saw RoH work as dynamic and undertook reviews following a significant change in three out of four community cases where this was indicated.
- (c) 78% of RoH reviews in custody cases were done within required timescales and in both cases this followed a significant change. Seven out of nine cases demonstrated that the offender manager and offender supervisor had engaged in internal risk processes at the prison establishment.
- (d) Recall had been used to manage RoH in four of five cases and all recalls had been properly conducted. However, there was no evidence in two cases that prisoners had received a clear explanation about reasons for recall or that efforts were made to re-engage them at an early stage.

- (e) We saw evidence of the timely use of purposeful home visits as an aid to managing the RoH to others, although there was some variation across the area.

Areas for Improvement:

- (a) In two out of six cases, RoH was not reviewed in preparation for release from custody.
- (b) In over 70% of cases we found evidence that there was ongoing planning to address RoH to children, the public, staff and known adults. However, this left a significant minority of cases where ongoing plans were not in place – 11 featuring children’s safeguarding issues, 16 where there was specific risk to the public, 11 known adults and three with identified risks to staff.
- (c) Effective use of MAPPA (57%) and effective contribution to MAPPA by offender managers (65%) both required improvement. We saw delays in arranging panels, a case where MAPPA had not been effective in arranging appropriate accommodation for a predatory sex offender or arranging for psychological assessments to be done. There were cases that had not been managed at the right level; the Trust had started work on checking the number of MAPPA cases and to ensure the correct level of management. Our discussions with staff indicated that good knowledge of MAPPA categories and levels of management was not universal and not all offender managers were clear about thresholds for referral. This was sometimes compounded by the confusion about the role of risk manager.
- (d) Although offender managers responded by reviewing RoH when a significant change had taken place, they were generally too passive in anticipating risk, identifying it swiftly and did not always take the right action in relation to specific changes in risk factors (63%).
- (e) In 11 out of 23 relevant cases offender managers did not use home visits effectively to monitor children’s safeguarding concerns. Although monitoring of such concerns is not the sole purpose of home visits, it is nevertheless an important element.

Conclusion:

This criterion represents a priority for improvement.

2.3 General Criterion: VICTIMS
Consistent attention is given to issues concerning victims.

76%

Strengths:

- (a) Victim safety issues were properly addressed in three-quarters of relevant cases. Our interviews with victims provided some examples where victims had not felt safe, but also others where contact with the VLO had made a big difference to their feelings of well being.

- (b) Offender supervisors in custody promoted victim safety from a prison setting (four out of five cases), including providing information to MAPPA meetings in the community and monitoring of unwanted contact from prisoners to victims.
- (c) Statutory victim contact was offered or took place within 40 days in 71% of cases. This finding was inconsistent with the Trust's performance figures and may be the result of inadequate recording by staff.
- (d) All 11 victims in relevant cases were given the opportunity to express a view about conditions of release, although only five out of eight had had the chance to see the relevant section of the parole report. Information about release conditions was given to all relevant victims in a timely manner.

Area for Improvement:

- (a) We found evidence that a degree of victim awareness work had been done in two-thirds of applicable cases, sometimes through the use of structured exercises. Several offenders interviewed as part of the inspection reported that they had focused on victim awareness during supervision sessions. However, practitioners did not routinely use this type of work as a tool for enhancing RoH assessments.

Conclusion:

Performance against this criterion was good.

2.4 General Criterion: ENSURING CONTAINMENT AND PROMOTING COMPLIANCE (Punish)
Contact with the offender and enforcement of the sentence is planned and implemented to meet the requirements of national standards and to encourage engagement with the sentence process.

80%

Strengths:

- (a) Satisfactory arrangements to restrict the offender's liberty during the custodial period had been put in place in relevant cases.
- (b) A full and timely induction into community and custodial sentences took place in the vast majority of cases. Overall, offenders confirmed that they had received a satisfactory induction and that this had covered the issues about which they needed to know.
- (c) Frequency of appointments conformed to national standards in almost all cases and this had facilitated the requirements of the sentence, met RoH considerations and supported the achievement of sentence plan objectives. Practice in unpaid work cases was broadly similar.

- (d) 81% of unpaid work was judged as being of benefit to the community. This was consistent with the Trust's community payback approach.
- (e) The multi-agency management of PPOs was supported by a range of provision delivered in partnership with YSS and supported by the ACCLAIM scheme and the SHIFT programme. There were enhanced levels of contact for PPOs and reporting patterns supported the delivery of all elements of the sentence in eight out of nine cases.
- (f) We saw strong performance from offender managers who had taken effective action to ensure compliance using text messages in some cases, had made consistent and appropriate judgements about acceptable/unacceptable absences and taken breach action within the required timescales in 85% of cases. Resolution of breach proceedings was timely in 71%.
- (g) Case recording had improved since the introduction of Delius, the new electronic case record, in January 2008. This was a far-reaching change which staff had embraced positively. They could see the benefits of an accessible, shared system which had the potential to support better the offender management model. Although the system was not fully embedded, we found good recording of race and ethnicity and that of contacts was largely sufficient, timely and clear.

Areas for Improvement:

- (a) In over half of cases released from prison there had been insufficient contact and liaison with the offender prior to release and this was unlikely to promote effective offender management in the community post-release. We saw little evidence of correspondence with prisoners and prison visits were limited for both custody and licence cases in our sample.
- (b) Unpaid work was not always demanding and placements were not well matched to offenders. Those interviewed told us that some of the tasks were repetitive and that they were simply allocated work that was available on the day.
- (c) Effective liaison with the electronic monitoring provider had not taken place in four out of 11 cases; there was over- reliance on the provider alerting the offender manager to alleged breaches rather than the offender manager taking the initiative.

Conclusion:

Performance against this criterion was good.

**2.5 General Criterion: CONSTRUCTIVE INTERVENTIONS
(Help and Change)**

Interventions are delivered to identified ends and to meet the requirements of the sentence: help and change.

67%

Strengths:

- (a) In over 70% of cases, constructive interventions challenged the offender to accept responsibility for their behaviour and its consequences. In addition to attendance at accredited programmes, we saw materials on case files which had been used with offenders for this purpose. Structured one-to-one offending behaviour work was available in some locations and was working at full capacity.
- (b) Sufficient work and resources were directed at community reintegration issues in almost three-quarters of the cases that needed it. The Trust provided a wide range of training opportunities for offenders and selected vocational opportunities carefully for their relevance to local labour markets, e.g. construction skills, garden maintenance, agricultural labouring and welding. It also made available some very specific and often expensive training for individuals where the benefits were clear, e.g. an offender with a job offer dependent on being skilled in lambing and care of sheep received the necessary training. Community link workers gave offenders good personal and practical support and offered a range of job search activities for those seeking work. Referrals to an extensive range of external agencies specialising in areas such as housing or debt advice were offered.
- (c) There were nine DRR cases in the sample. In eight of these, the offender manager prepared reports and/or attended DRR hearings in accordance with national standards and court requirements.
- (d) Provision and timing of accredited programmes was consistent with the sentence plan in three-quarters of cases. Of the six cases where this had not happened, reasons were not recorded in four instances.
- (e) Seven offenders in the case sample were resident in approved premises. All of them received constructive interventions, some of which had been identified in the initial sentence plan. We heard evidence from staff and residents that developmental work on creating an enhanced regime had been initiated and there was a broad range of supportive interventions available directly from keyworkers or through referral on.

Areas for Improvement:

- (a) Where skills for life needs had been identified arrangements to deliver an appropriate intervention were not in place in around half of cases.
- (b) The introduction of qualifications for offenders doing unpaid work was slow. The Trust had identified the potential that unpaid work offered for offenders to receive accredited awards. It had introduced open college awards for offenders on some unpaid work projects and included development in this area in its current business plan,

but extending the scope of awards was subject to significant delay. Literacy and numeracy learning was not sufficiently integrated with vocational and other programmes or the unpaid work the Trust provided.

- (c) In three out of six cases, following reception into custody, we did not see evidence that immediate action had been taken to preserve employment, accommodation and family ties.

Conclusion: This criterion represents a priority for improvement.

2.6 General Criterion: RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS (Control)
Interventions are delivered to identified ends and to meet the requirements of the sentence: control.

85%

Strengths:

- (a) Offender managers monitored restrictive interventions fully in 78% of cases. This left a small number of cases (ten) where more could have been done e.g. regular liaison with the electronic monitoring provider and checks with police Domestic Violence Unit.
- (b) All reasonable actions had been taken to minimise RoH in a large majority of cases (84%).
- (c) We saw effective use of approved premises in six out of seven cases in the sample.
- (d) There was good use of licence requirements and we assessed them as comprehensive in 81% of relevant cases, necessary (95%) and proportionate to the RoH, and likelihood of reoffending in 86%. The figure was lower in respect of protection of victims (at 70%).
- (e) In all cases (seven), licence conditions in respect of drug misuse had been made for PPOs with such issues.

Conclusion: Performance against this criterion was good.

2.7 General Criterion: DIVERSITY ISSUES
Full and proper attention is paid to diversity issues.

81%

Strengths:

- (a) Arrangements for interventions had taken account of offenders' diversity needs in 77% of cases. We saw numerous examples of attention to diversity issues, including the actions of administrative staff in responding to an offender with special needs at the PSR stage, assisting them to attend the interview. Programme tutors identified potential singleton placements at the pre-programme meeting and options were discussed with the offender at that stage.

All four offenders interviewed were consulted about possible adverse effects of singleton placements and for the only offender who found themselves in a singleton setting, attention had been paid to both staff composition and to their support. Tutors worked imaginatively to support individuals on accredited programmes and improved engagement by responding to offender feedback. Support in respect of childcare issues, health needs and flexibility of reporting times were examples given by offenders that helped them attend and engage with the service.

- (b) In all six cases diversity needs were met for residents in approved premises.
- (c) Offenders told us that they were informed about discriminatory behaviour at the induction stage and were very clear that such behaviour would not be tolerated. 93% of the cases inspected showed evidence that this information had been given.

Areas for Improvement:

- (a) Literacy and dyslexia issues were not addressed in half of relevant cases; this represented 21 offenders where this had been missed.
- (b) Disability issues were recorded in 22 cases, needs were not met for six people and there was a specific problem of access at the Redditch office. Responsibility for premises was not held by the Trust. Issues relating to the Redditch office had been raised with the national contractors on a number of occasions without a positive outcome to date.

Conclusion:

Performance against this criterion was good.

3. ACHIEVEMENT AND MONITORING OF OUTCOMES

3.1 General Criterion: ACHIEVEMENT OF INITIAL OUTCOMES *Planned objectives are efficiently achieved.*

59%

Strengths:

- (a) Across a range of measures, the outcomes indicated the public was being better protected as the result of the offender's sentence. In 16 cases, the offender's behaviour had given rise to an increase in restrictive interventions and in eight cases a decrease had taken place. Offenders had also moved between tiering approaches, eight cases up and nine down, as the result of interventions. Although no child had been taken off the child protection register, three children's names had been added as a result of an offender's behaviour. There was also movement between levels of MAPPA management in response to the behaviour of the offender. This suggested a thoughtful approach and a dynamic view of RoH issues.
- (b) 86% of offenders had not been cautioned or convicted of an offence during the currency of the orders inspected.
- (c) Work on compliance throughout the order and attention to engagement resulted in 71% of cases demonstrating that they had complied with the requirements of the sentence.
- (d) OASys had been re-scored in three-quarters of the cases seen, with 49% showing an improvement over the original score. 47% had shown some level of progress in relation to the most important factor linked to their offending; thinking and behaviour and then drug misuse had been the most common of these. Progress was also evident in 45% of second priority factors (thinking and behaviour) and 39% of third priorities (lifestyle/associates).
- (e) The punish objective of the sentence had been achieved in 85%, and the control objective in 79% of cases.
- (f) The resources allocated were consistent with the offender's RoH to others in 82% of cases, with the likelihood of reoffending in 86% and in 90% of PPO cases. However, in 13 cases, the allocated resources were not consistent with either the RoH of the likelihood of reoffending. Resources were found to be used efficiently in achieving planned objectives in 77% of cases.

Areas for Improvement:

- (a) We were concerned about the inadequate level of contact with police Domestic Violence Units. There were 33 cases which had a previous history or current offending of this type in the sample and offender managers were unaware of information held by the police in ten of these.

- (b) Despite evidence of interventions, offenders had not demonstrated improved victim awareness in 69% of relevant cases.
- (c) There were benefits to the community as a result of some of the sentences served: beneficial outcomes to unpaid work, 13% of cases demonstrated a reduced seriousness of offending and 22% a reduced frequency. A higher number (28%) showed reduced threat to victims or potential victims.
- (d) There was evidence that learning outcomes or skills had been applied in 42% of cases. For example, the number of offenders who progressed into sustainable employment was low; in the first quarter of 2008/2009 the Trust recorded 26 gaining jobs, significantly lower than its target for the period of 62. The Trust had experienced significant difficulty in tracking employment starts and in establishing realistic expectations for progression into work. Inspectors were unable to make a judgement on success rates in most provision as the Trust was unable to provide data in a format which allowed systematic analysis of achievement and retention rates across learning and skills.
- (e) Changes in offending-related attitude (28%) and behaviour (38%) were limited. And in 64 cases there was evidence of neither.
- (f) It was disappointing to note that the *help* aspect of sentencing was being achieved in 65% of cases and the *change* objective relating to Tier 3 and 4 cases in only 28%.

Conclusion:

This criterion represents an urgent priority for improvement.

3.2 General Criterion: SUSTAINABILITY OF PROGRESS

Results are capable of being sustained between different phases of a sentence and beyond the end of supervision.

60%

Strength:

- (a) There was a good level of continuity of offender management during the current sentence. In half of the 19 cases where there had been three or more offender managers, these changes had not adversely impacted on sustaining progress.

Areas for Improvement:

- (a) Structured sentence planning had not been given sufficient priority throughout the sentence in 53% of cases. The sustainability of progress at different phases of the sentence and beyond the end of supervision also linked to a low level of performance in sentence planning and subsequent delivery of plans.
- (b) Offender managers did not do enough to consolidate offender learning or reinforce new skills to help them sustain progress in the

long term. Within the offender management model this critical aspect of the role was demonstrated in 59% of cases.

- (c) Long-term community reintegration issues were not sufficiently considered in two-thirds of cases. We saw workers concentrating on short-term objectives rather than planning for medium- or long-term gains.

Conclusion:

This criterion represents a priority for improvement.

4. LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

4.1 General Criterion: LEADERSHIP AND PLANNING

There is active leadership in the implementation of national policies via local policies and procedures which are regularly monitored and reviewed, through proactive planning with other key agencies, and by promoting the diversity agenda.

Satisfactorily met

Strengths:

- (a) West Mercia had been successful in its bid for Trust status in 2007 and at the time of the inspection were in the first year which had been designated nationally as the 'learning year'. The bid had been supported and developed through consultation with key stakeholders and communicated to staff through a series of staff events. A comprehensive annual plan was in place which incorporated the targets agreed with the ROM, a core MoJ expectation, and focused explicitly on RoH, OASys and offender management. In addition, the annual plan set out the hierarchy of plans within the organisation and the control mechanisms inherent in that hierarchy. Proactive, forward thinking about the future positioning of the Trust was described in a three-year outline plan which was being supplemented in-year by the development of other plans, e.g. sub-regional support services and commissioning. The Trust Board received regular progress reports which had first been scrutinised by the planning and resources committee of the Board.
- (b) Staff informed us that policies and procedures were available in electronic format and mainly communicated by email or through team meetings. 82% felt well informed about them, but this left a sizeable minority who did not.
- (c) Liaison with sentencers across such a large geographical area was managed through an area-wide steering group, covering all six benches, which met three times a year. A senior manager took part in a monthly legal forum when relevant items were on the agenda. Local sentencer forums took place in each of five locations three times a year. In addition, the area ran an annual training event for new magistrates and offered them the opportunity for site visits and meetings with staff and offenders. Magistrates' courts had valued West Mercia's support for the implementation of CJSSS and welcomed the change of emphasis in making staff available in court to provide FDRs and oral reports. There were regular meetings between the CEO and the resident judge. Operational items such as Crown Court cover were examples of problems that had been resolved. However judges would have welcomed more succinct reports which recognised the powers of the court and feedback about success stories and performance information. The 'Improving Sentencers' Confidence' plan focused on the reduction of short

custodial sentences by building confidence in community sentences, improved compliance and offender engagement. Overall court representatives recognised the commitment at senior level to work with courts to resolve problems and to deliver a joint agenda.

- (d) Local authority structures differed across the three constituent counties and the Trust made contributions at varying levels, aiming to maximise West Mercia's involvement in LAAs, in turn leading into a regional approach. The strategic community safety manager in Telford and Wrekin had been seconded from the Trust, creating a strong and embedded link to that authority. Local managers or Trust Board members were linked to CDRP work in the five partnerships and the Board was very keen for this contribution to be developed further. Strategic partners told us that area managers were engaged in agreeing and delivering the LAA, e.g. helping to define housing needs and health improvement programmes for PPOs, and involved in a range of developments in the work to tackle domestic abuse.
- (e) The Trust had developed strong links with other key organisations and partnerships, e.g. the LCJB, Supporting People bodies, DATs. Work was under way to coordinate and rationalise these activities to more closely match new business needs. The Trust was responsible for some innovative developments that had benefited offenders including the Step into Employment project which had provided a good foundation for its current ETE provision. Other examples included collaborative work with HMP Hewell Grange, offering specialist vocational training for prisoners and offenders in the community. The multi-agency management of PPOs was supported by a range of provision delivered in partnership with YSS and supported by the ACCLAIM scheme and the pioneering SHIFT programme, in which PPOs worked intensively on a farm to learn rural skills. At the regional level West Mercia had worked jointly with other probation areas and the prison service to oversee and facilitate the implementation of the national offender management model across community and custody. The Board Chair, CEO and senior managers had taken part in joint strategic planning and delivery of Phases II and III of the roll-out. Partners held the Trust in high regard and valued the 'can do' approach commitment to partnership working, including with the voluntary sector, and leaders who were open to new ideas.
- (f) The Trust made an appropriate strategic contribution to public protection generally through work on the LSCBs, the Youth Offending Service Management Board and until 2007 the MAPPAs SMB had been chaired by the ACO with lead responsibility for RoH. The Trust's involvement in MAPPAs remained high both at strategic level and through the professional development of the two MAPPAs coordinators and administrative staff and the routine involvement of an area manager. Following an audit of MAPPAs activity and an HMIC inspection, additional resources had been provided for the appointment of a second coordinator and the respective responsibilities of coordinators and risk managers had been restructured. The Trust had started a piece of work to ensure that

cases were being managed at the appropriate level and there was evidence that the number of cases was reducing at each level. At the time of the inspection, ViSOR was in the early stages of implementation.

- (g) The Diversity Strategy Group was led by the CEO and there was a clear structure in place to manage its work on diversity issues. A diversity manager had been in post for 18 months and new staff support groups for lesbian and gay staff, minority ethnic staff and those with a disability had recently been established. Staff had the opportunity to undertake an NVQ Level 3 on diversity and equalities which the CEO and Board Chair had taken up. A self-assessment in line with the CRE requirement on race equality had been conducted.
- (h) Whilst the Trust was clearly held to account for its leadership and performance through the agreement and delivery of contracted services, relationships with the ROM were still being negotiated in the light of a range of uncertainties at national level. The challenges and tensions around Trust status were very noticeable in the thinking of the Board and senior managers and also within the West Mercia staff group.
- (i) Individual staff had a very positive view of the management group in West Mercia. 82% said that managers demonstrated professional management approaches and positive leadership behaviour. Strategic partners all had a positive view about the managers that they had worked with.
- (j) Examples of responses to the findings of regulatory bodies included the positive use of internal audit reports, the response to this Inspectorate's RoHAA which had been completed in February 2008 and re-recognition under the Investors in People award.

Areas for Improvement:

- (a) We saw examples of important gaps between policy development and understanding at an operational level. Despite the efforts that had gone into communicating this initiative, the recently introduced transport policy for offenders and staff had raised anxieties in some managers and staff about compliance and equitable access to interventions. At practitioner level we saw varying degrees of knowledge about the role of risk manager and there was some confusion and inconsistent practice evident within the middle manager group.
- (b) We found little evidence that diversity issues were an integral part of strategic planning and implementation processes based on established and routine monitoring of services. The Trust was aware of specific needs across West Mercia but had yet to respond comprehensively to local issues.
- (c) Service user exit questionnaires for offenders had routinely been completed until 12 months ago but had been discontinued as there was insufficient resource for the feedback to be analysed and then used in the planning process. West Mercia had begun to survey the

views of victims, but data from this source were not yet useable for planning purposes.

4.2 General Criterion: PERFORMANCE AGAINST NATIONAL AND REGIONAL TARGETS <i>Key performance targets are consistently met, with careful attention to diversity issues throughout.</i>	Satisfactorily met
--	---------------------------

Summary of results for West Mercia from the NOMS IPPF: April 2007-March 2008	
IPPF domain	
Public Protection	Good performance
Offender Management	Good performance
Interventions	Passable performance
Operational Capability, Resource Use and Strategy	Good performance

Area score	Good performance
-------------------	-------------------------

Detailed results for each metric making up the above domains are at Appendix 1.

Strengths:	<p>(a) The performance and resources committee had been established during the transition to Trust status and had been deliberately combined so as to create the opportunity for them to be managed together. Initial scrutiny of key performance data and information using a 'dashboard' document took place in committee and was followed by discussion at full Board meetings. Senior managers regularly reviewed operational performance and concerns and strategies for improvement went through the line management structure to team briefings. Middle managers played an active role in dealing with underperformance at local level. Teams had been provided with a PMO resource who were members of the district management team. They had the authority to direct staff and to suggest and take remedial action if required. Occasionally, difficulties had been escalated to the line manager. PMOs also had a vital data quality role – especially since the implementation of Delius – with the purpose of ensuring that missing or incorrect data were dealt with.</p> <p>(b) For the year ended March 2008, the IPPF showed outstanding performance against some targets including one in the public protection domain and several in offender management, interventions and resource use and strategy. Overall, the area achieved a 'good performance' score. The ROM's report for the same</p>
-------------------	---

period showed that West Mercia had met or exceeded targets in the majority of items in the service level agreement. Other notable achievements were 'Planet Payback' launched in June 2007 as part of the Community Payback pathfinder project. This was a new sporting activities scheme aimed at offenders with a history of drug misuse, which promoted a healthy and sustainable lifestyle and PPO projects which emphasised working on the land.

- (c) At regional level there were a number of examples of collaboration to improve performance, e.g. on the quality of parole assessment reports. An exercise was coordinated by the IDM in 2007 with participation by ACOs from each area and HMI Probation to assess the quality of reports against an agreed checklist. Work on standards in approved premises was also well developed regionally, with an emphasis on the provision of an enhanced regime and of managing RoH. OASys quality assurance exercises had also been undertaken in the region, as well as the benchmarking associated with the implementation of offender management model through joint regional arrangements.
- (d) Individual underperformance was managed through the PMO initially, then through line management arrangements. There were several examples of capability proceedings where this had become the remaining option. Performance gaps against targets were subject to improvement plans which were monitored by the Board, for example absence management had been a key area for attention during the months leading up to our inspection.

Areas for Improvement:

- (a) With the implementation of Delius, the Trust had lost the capacity to provide a significant amount of management information as Delius's capability did not include an appropriate reporting solution. This was clear when the decision to implement Delius had been taken, but what had not become clear until May 2008 was that there would be no national reporting tool or funding to develop it. At the time of the inspection, West Mercia had completed all the necessary work up to draft contract stage and anticipated having access to a reporting solution in November 2008. This had been a source of frustration at team level, with PMOs underused for creating customised reports and where the capacity for providing them from the Trust's central resource was limited. While understandable, the outcome of the Delius development was a lack of easily accessible, local reports to enhance performance – a gap which would last for most of 2008.
- (b) We did not see evidence that West Mercia was paying due regard to diversity issues by using such data routinely in its work to achieve targets.

4.3 General Criterion: RESOURCE DEPLOYMENT

There is a strategic approach to deploying resources to deliver effective performance and support diversity initiatives and there are positive indications in relation to value for money.

Partly met

Strengths:

- (a) Nationally, West Mercia had achieved an 'outstanding' score for expenditure against budget for the year 2007/2008. A significant shortfall in funds was anticipated over the forthcoming three-year period and the Trust had addressed this in a number of ways. Work had started on activity costing to replace a more informal historical approach and to prepare for a full 'Best Value' assessment. Central to future thinking was the need to deploy resources appropriately between the offender management function and the delivery of interventions. Some detailed work had already been concluded in the unpaid work service area and a consultant's report, which had looked at resource levels in accredited programmes, was due.
- (b) A locally developed resource distribution model was used to determine the initial allocation of resources between teams. Detailed discussions about movement between teams for operational reasons took place regularly as senior managers worked to keep a balanced workload across the Trust.
- (c) At the time of the inspection, we found that priority had been given to PPO and RoH work and that 88% of cases had been correctly tiered which indicated that resources generally followed risk as required. As highlighted elsewhere in this report, services to PPOs were well supported through partnership working and an additional level of resource was available for the risk manager role as the result of new staffing arrangements in MAPPA.
- (d) Court staffing levels were appropriate and, at times of staffing difficulties, West Mercia had had full discussions with courts about the management of gaps.
- (e) Working in partnership had attracted additional resources for offenders, e.g. Step into Employment programme and Supporting People provision for PPOs, as had collaborative work with charitable trusts that had an affinity with offenders. Historically West Mercia had been successful at securing significant funding, e.g. ESF monies for the Connect project, but the Trust was in transition to a different way of working, having taken the view that its core functions were not dependent on income generation and for the future it needed to be involved in generating funds in the sector not just for the probation service. This fresh approach had yet to bring concrete results.

Areas for Improvement:

- (a) Staff and managers said that resource levels were very stretched and planned or unexpected absences often created a localised crisis, this was despite use of the workload allocation tool.

- (b) Decisions about workload priorities were made by local managers. A West Mercia priorities document had been developed in 2007, but district and area managers we spoke to were not aware of the Trust's formal position.
- (c) The additional resource released through the appointment of a second MAPPA coordinator had not yet resulted in effective use of the risk manager role in all locations.
- (d) Although there had been discussions with the court about levels of service at periods of staff shortages, West Mercia had, at times, not been able to meet the required standards of service, e.g. in Worcester during 2007 a shortage of staff had negatively impacted on PSR timeliness and the HMI Probation sentencer survey highlighted a level of dissatisfaction about late reports from the Redditch office.
- (e) We did not see the impact of resources that had been dedicated to the support of diversity initiatives.

4.4 General Criterion: WORKFORCE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
Workforce planning and development leads to a good match between staff profile and service delivery requirements. Relevant diversity legislation is observed in staff recruitment and deployment.

Satisfactorily met

Strengths:

- (a) The senior management team had recently been supplemented by the appointment of an HR manager (jointly with Staffordshire Probation Area) in recognition of the need for a specialist additional resource. West Mercia was organised into offender management and interventions divisions and had developed the cluster model of staffing where size of office allowed for this in order to support service delivery. The staff profile included a high proportion of women likely to take maternity leave and the geography of the area hampered full flexibility in terms of deployment of individuals. Recruitment of POs had proved to be difficult and there had been a significant turnover of staff in specific locations. PSOs held Tier 3 and medium RoH cases and some sessional staff had been used for report writing and in unpaid work. All staffing decisions were made by managers together on a weekly basis using the resource management tool. Staff had been informed of the need to cut 30 posts over a three-year period and the imperative to rebalance resources based on accurate costing information.
- (b) A costed staff training and development plan was in place which clearly prioritised the training required to deliver the annual business plan and emphasised an increased investment in the middle manager group. Support staff too had an increased profile in the plans. Specific support was in place for black and minority ethnic staff and the area subscribed to the NOMS Accelerate scheme to

develop potential managers from minority groups. 82% of staff interviewed as part of the inspection said that their training and development needs were being met. A recent staff survey showed overall gains in staff satisfaction over the levels attained in 2004.

- (c) All four TPOs interviewed stated that they were satisfied with the learning opportunities available to them.
- (d) Almost all staff (95%) we spoke to during the inspection were clear about their role in the offender management model.
- (e) The Trust reported that working relationships with recognised unions were positive; they had been included in the work on restructuring at an early stage and were members of the Diversity Strategy Group. Examples of agreements recently reached included a redundancy policy and there was cooperation within formal capability proceedings. When invited to take part in the implementation of Delius, the unions had not identified any issues and therefore no consequent need to take part in the initiative.
- (f) In the preceding nine months there had been a heavy emphasis on sickness absence management which included short-term active monitoring. Some improvement had been noted but long-term absence remained an issue especially where linked with capability proceedings. Middle managers welcomed the change in culture and clarity that new procedures had brought in. A longer term 'wellness' strategy was under development. 98% of staff interviewed said that they knew about the sickness absence procedures.
- (g) Where it had taken place the quality of supervision was judged as excellent by 16% (nine) of staff and 67% thought it to be sufficient. Ten people rated it as insufficient or poor.
- (h) Appraisals, linked to the business plan, in the last 12 months had been put in place for 93% of staff. The area had introduced a tracking system for appraisals, although we did not see evidence of outcomes.

Areas for Improvement:

- (a) Two-thirds of staff reported that they had received formal supervision on a monthly or more frequent basis over the last 12 months, for the remainder this was quarterly or less. The area had recognised that supervision was not operating according to policy and had put in place a sampling regime for supervision events.
- (b) 30% of staff interviewed did not recall completing an ethnic monitoring questionnaire in the last 12 months. A possible explanation for this was that the area collected ethnicity data on appointment or where the job role had changed. As such, staff would have had data on ethnicity collected at an early stage but not necessarily reviewed on an annual basis.

4.5 General Criterion: REVIEW AND EVALUATION
Outcomes of interventions are assessed and reviewed using available data.

Not met

Strengths:

- (a) A process for the management of, and learning from SFOs was owned by an ACO. The system included the dissemination of findings in divisional meetings twice a year and an opportunity to identify any emerging themes. Feedback to individual staff was through the line manager. Reviews were shared with teams or relevant groups of managers as appropriate.
- (b) We saw good examples of evaluation reports, e.g. STEPS into Employment and the project evaluation report for Care Farming – an evaluation of a PPO project. These reports related to services delivered in partnership.

Areas for Improvement:

- (a) There were no routine processes in place to collate, evaluate and use the perspective of service users and stakeholders to improve service delivery. The area had recently started to survey victims' views but this had not yet been integrated into the planning cycle. It was good to see new developments in relation to the user perspective through the appointment of a user voice advisor to the Board and involvement in the Offender Compact, although it was too early to see the impact of these on services.
- (b) Sentencing proposal/disposal and release data had not been compared with completion data and monitored for successful outcomes. This type of information had been used in a targeted way with sentencers and staff but fell short of being at the heart of understanding practice.
- (c) We did not see evidence that monitoring and evaluation information was regularly used by relevant staff groups and that practice had been modified in response to this. The availability and use of data for improvement were insufficient and the Delius system was not yet producing the reports or aggregated data that the area needed. For example, some data were collected on individual offenders' success in achieving qualifications, but were not routinely collating this in a format that allowed the Trust to assess success rates, establish trends or identify areas of strength or concern.

4.6 General Criterion: COMMISSIONING OF SERVICES
There is efficient provision of effective services to support offender management outcomes and to ensure equal access to provision for offenders.


Partly met

Strengths:

- (a) A commissioning plan for West Mercia had been developed to cover the period 2006-2008. This set out the vision, principles, development of a mixed economy and a commitment to engaging with the local communities in the provision of services. There were four second tier local authorities and 11 district councils in West Mercia and very few area-wide partners so that provision was variable. Area managers were responsible for securing services for offenders by working collaboratively with commissioning bodies, e.g. DATs, PCTs and the Supporting People programme. We heard evidence that engagement by managers at different levels had established West Mercia as a partner able to secure proportionate services for offenders where resources were available. In addition, the timely delivery of sex offender programmes had been enhanced through the commissioning of this service from the Regional Sex Offender Unit and mentoring services for PPOs were provided through partnership arrangements.
- (b) The case sample indicated that accessible services had been provided efficiently to support offender management outcomes in 78% of cases. The services used attracted very favourable comments – alcohol services (87%), education and training (79%), employment services (79% – 14 cases) and psychology services (73% – 11 cases).

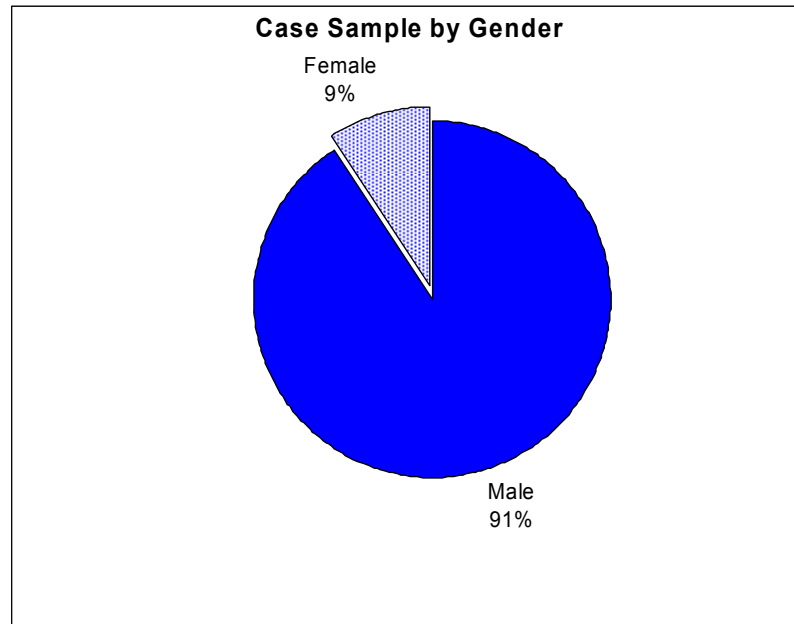
Areas for Improvement:

- (a) Whilst there were good examples of service delivery through partnership across the area, there were also gaps. The Trust had prioritised the provision of alcohol treatment services for requirements in community orders and licences and this service was very well regarded. However, staff often told us that access to alcohol services for offenders without requirements was extremely limited and represented a serious gap in their ability to address a common criminogenic need. Other significant areas for development were housing for offenders and access to mental health services. The Trust had already identified these gaps and actions to address them were contained in the annual business plan. We also heard from offender managers about lack of specific services for women – for example, accommodation and anger management programmes.
- (b) A report prepared by internal auditors had identified shortcomings in the contracting and commissioning arrangements. West Mercia had responded with an action plan and this linked to the area's development agenda in assessing value for money and preparatory work on best value.

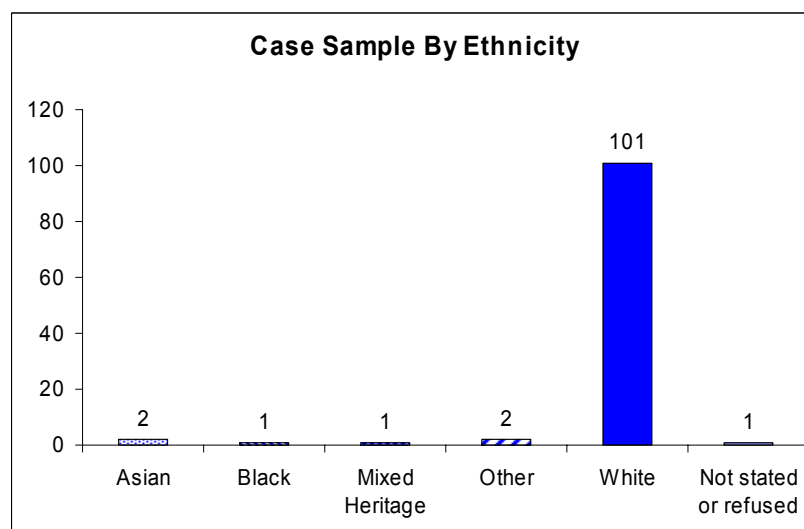
- 
- (c) The work through regional structures had helped to lay the foundation for positive working relationships with prisons in the region. However, at operational level we saw examples of limited communication between offender managers and a disjuncture between the custodial and community elements of the sentence. Important information was sometimes not transmitted and at the start of sentence there was inconsistent attendance at sentence planning boards with more intense contact taking place in the period just prior to release. The full application of the offender management model, especially in custody cases, had yet to be delivered but West Mercia was in a good position to push forward through established structures.
 - (d) The lack of evidence of the user perspective had also had an impact on the Trust's ability to ensure that services commissioned took their views into account.
 - (e) There were gaps in the development of services to meet the needs of minority groups such as those of female offenders outlined earlier in the report.

APPENDIX 2 Contextual information

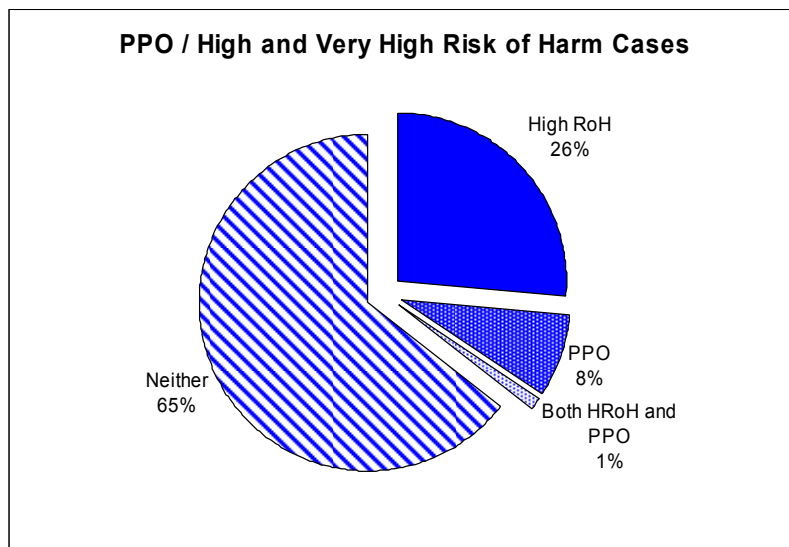
The chosen sample takes into consideration the number of female offenders in the area. A representative number is then included in the sample of cases.



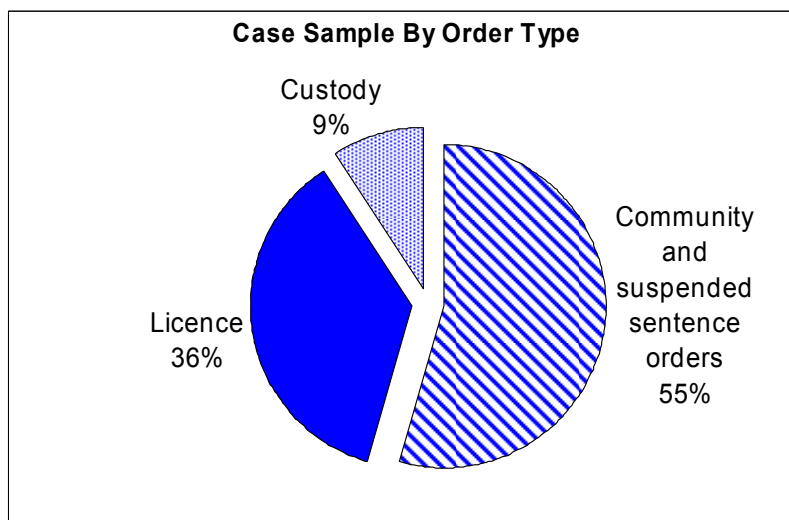
The chosen sample takes into consideration the number of black and minority ethnic offenders in the area. A representative number is then included in the sample of cases.



Each case sample contains a representative number of high risk and PPO cases.



Each sample is made up of 40 licence cases, 60 community order cases and ten custody cases.



Caseload at end of March 2008

Total caseload	4,393
% <i>White</i>	93%
% <i>Minority ethnic*</i>	5%
% <i>Male</i>	89%
% <i>Female</i>	11%
Number of cases subject to MAPPA:	1,032
Level 1	784
Level 2	178
Level 3	70
Number of PPO cases	96
* Excluding cases for which ethnicity information is not available.	

The local definition of a PPO case – on which the above figure is based – is ‘Any suspected offender targeted as the result of the NIM through police tasking and co-ordination and target package processes as utilised by West Mercia Constabulary. In addition, where a police officer of at least chief inspector rank, applying the same NIM principles, designates an arrested person as an identified PPO.’

Total revenue budget in 2007/2008: £13,788 million

Total revenue budget in 2008/2009: £15,340 million

Approved premises: Braley House – capacity 18

APPENDIX 3

Inspection model, methodology and publication arrangements

Model

- The OMI programme started in May 2006. All NOMS areas and trusts in England and Wales are being inspected over a three year cycle, region by region. We hope to identify and promote effective work with offenders and disseminate information about good practice.
- Probation areas and trusts are being assessed on how well they have met defined inspection criteria focusing on:
 - Assessment and sentence planning carried out on offenders
 - Implementation of interventions delivered to offenders
 - Achievement and monitoring of outcomes
 - Leadership and strategic management.Particular attention will be given to RoH issues – it is performance against these measures which will determine whether a re-inspection is carried out.
- The inspection takes account of the regular NOMS performance data. These are produced by NOMS which is responsible for their collection and quality assurance.
- Each inspection takes place over one week. The area/trust is asked to identify a random sample of 110-120 offenders (more in the largest areas) who have been managed by a probation offender manager for approximately six months. We then ensure that there is a minimum number of the following types of cases: high/very high RoH; PPOs; approved premises residents; statutory victim contact; black and minority ethnic offenders. The cases are drawn from community orders, licences, and those in custody.

Methodology

- During the inspection we examine the probation case file and carry out an in-depth interview with the offender manager. We also interview offenders, victims, keyworkers and case administrators. We send questionnaires to offenders and victims whose cases arise in the sample and to a selection of magistrates, judges, and legal advisers involved in sentencing. Colleague inspectors from Ofsted work alongside us, examining offender learning.
- We interview senior and middle managers, Board members of the probation area/trust, and partners.
- Inspection of about a third of the cases in the sample is carried out by area assessors, experienced staff/managers of the probation area being inspected. We think this provides a positive experience both for the area and the staff directly involved and that it increases ownership of the findings.

Publication arrangements

- Summary verbal feedback is given to the area/trust at the end of the inspection week.
- A draft report is sent to the area/trust for comment four to six weeks later. Publication follows approximately 12 weeks after inspection. A copy is sent to NOMS HQ and copies are also made available to the press and placed on our website.
- Reports on offender management in Wales are published in both Welsh and English.

APPENDIX 4

Scoring approach

This describes the methodology for assigning the scores to each of the general criteria, to sections 1 to 3 and to the *RoH Thread*. A fuller detailed description is on HMI Probation's website at:

<http://www.inspectorates.justice.gov.uk/hmiprobation>

For each of the **general criteria in sections 1 to 3** – i.e. those sections based on the scrutiny of the case sample – that is:

Section 1: Assessment and sentence planning

- 1.1 Preparing for sentence
- 1.2 Assessment of Risk of Harm
- 1.3 Assessment of likelihood of reoffending
- 1.4 Assessment of offender engagement
- 1.5 Sentence planning

Section 2: Implementation of interventions

- 2.1 Delivering the sentence plan
- 2.2 Protecting the public by minimising Risk of Harm
- 2.3 Victims
- 2.4 Ensuring containment and promoting compliance (Punish)
- 2.5 Constructive interventions (Help and Change)
- 2.6 Restrictive interventions (Control)
- 2.7 Diversity issues

Section 3: Achievement and monitoring of outcomes

- 3.1 Achievement of initial outcomes
- 3.2 Sustainability of progress

The score is based on an average, across each of the questions in the Offender Management Tool for that criterion, of the proportion of relevant cases in the sample where the work assessed by that question was judged sufficient ('above the line'). (In the calculation, the results for the individual questions and for the summary question are weighted 80/20. Further details are given in the description on the website.)

The **score for each of sections 1 to 3** is then calculated as the average of the scores for the component general criteria.

The **score for the RoH Thread** is calculated as an average, over all the questions in the Offender Management Tool in sections 1 and 2 relating to RoH, of the proportion of relevant cases where work was judged 'above the line'.

For **each of the general criteria in section 4**, that is:

Section 4: Leadership and strategic management

- 4.1 Leadership and planning
- 4.2 Performance against national and regional targets
- 4.3 Resource deployment
- 4.4 Workforce planning and development
- 4.5 Review and evaluation
- 4.6 Commissioning of services

A score of either **well met**, **satisfactorily met**, **partly met** or **not met** is assigned on the basis of the performance across the specific criteria which make up that criterion. (Details are given in the description on the website.)

APPENDIX 5

Role of HMI Probation

Statement of Purpose

HMI Probation is an independent Inspectorate, funded by the Ministry of Justice and reporting directly to the Secretary of State. Our purpose is to:

- report to the Secretary of State on the effectiveness of work with individual offenders, children and young people aimed at reducing reoffending and protecting the public, whoever undertakes this work under the auspices of the National Offender Management Service or the Youth Justice Board
- report on the effectiveness of the arrangements for this work, working with other Inspectorates as necessary
- contribute to improved performance by the organisations whose work we inspect
- contribute to sound policy and effective service delivery, especially in public protection, by providing advice and disseminating good practice, based on inspection findings, to Ministers, officials, managers and practitioners
- promote actively race equality and wider diversity issues, especially in the organisations whose work we inspect
- contribute to the overall effectiveness of the criminal justice system, particularly through joint work with other inspectorates.

Code of Practice

HMI Probation aims to achieve its purpose and to meet the Government's principles for inspection in the public sector by:

- working in an honest, professional, fair and polite way
- reporting and publishing inspection findings and recommendations for improvement in good time and to a good standard
- promoting race equality and wider attention to diversity in all aspects of our work, including within our own employment practices and organisational processes
- for the organisations whose work we are inspecting, keeping to a minimum the amount of extra work arising as a result of the inspection process.

The Inspectorate is a public body. Anyone who wishes to comment on an inspection, a report or any other matter falling within its remit should write to:

*HM Chief Inspector of Probation
2nd Floor, Ashley House
2 Monck Street
London SW1P 2BQ*