



HM Prison &
Probation Service

North West

Reducing Reoffending Plan
2022-25

Annual
Update
2023



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Foreword

Last year we launched our three-year plan detailing how we will work with our partners to reduce reoffending across the region. Our plan concentrates on those issues that we know help people lead law-abiding lives: having stable accommodation, a job on release, access to health care and substance misuse treatment, and a supportive connection with family and community. Our key achievements this year include:

- providing access to temporary accommodation for people who would otherwise have been homeless on release, supported by newly appointed prison Strategic Housing Specialists working in collaboration with the North West (NW) Probation Homeless Prevention Team
- recruiting a team of Prison Employment Leads across the estate who have worked with the New Futures Network to create jobs for people on release
- our new team of community-based Health and Justice Partnership staff who have worked alongside Prison Drug Strategy leads to begin to address barriers to effective continuity of care pathways
- the introduction of the Neurodiversity Support Managers within the NW prisons, and the commissioning of a neurodiverse support service in the community, which are improving pathways and services for neurodiverse people

We recognise that we will not achieve our objectives in isolation, but by further strengthening our partnerships across the region and utilising our contracted and commissioned services to support service delivery. We have ambitious targets to meet in the coming year and know that, to succeed more often, we need to adapt our approaches. We are committed to listening and learning from experts across the region and are confident that, through working together, we will continue to reduce reoffending across the North West region.

Andrea Bennett, Regional Probation Director
North West Probation Service,

Susan Howard, Prison Group Director Cumbria and Lancashire, and
Paul Holland, Prison Group Director Cheshire, Merseyside and Greater Manchester

“Reducing reoffending remains a critical priority if we are to reduce the effects of crime on communities and keep our citizens safe. These annual updates demonstrate our continuing work to tackle the drivers for reoffending and help people live decent, law-abiding lives by improving access to employment, accommodation, substance misuse treatment, and tackling anti-social behaviour. We could not do this without our partners across and outside of government, and we will strive for a joined-up, cohesive system to achieve excellence in rehabilitation.”

Amy Rees

Director General Chief Executive Officer, HMPPS

“Police and Crime Commissioners in England and Wales are dedicated to collaborating with HMPPS and our various local, regional, and national partners to reduce reoffending rates and maintain community safety. The updated regional Reducing Reoffending Plans highlight the importance of partnership collaboration, and all Commissioners have been involved in shaping these plans to align with local Police and Crime Plan priorities. It is only through collective efforts that we can bring about positive changes for the public, such as reducing crime, protecting victims, and keeping communities safe. We will closely cooperate with each Regional Probation Director to implement their plans, which will include the exploration of new and innovative approaches to community payback and rehabilitation through co-commissioning opportunities.”

Emily Spurrell (Deputy Criminal Justice System Lead) and
David Lloyd (Criminal Justice System Lead), Police and
Crime Commission



Delivering HMPPS and MOJ priorities

We continue to reduce reoffending by providing high quality interventions, and targeted support for those under our supervision, including our prison leavers and women, who have unique needs, to make a success of their lives. Arrangements for children and young people are not currently reflected in these plans.

We know that people who leave prison with a strong foundation in place are less likely to reoffend. Regional Reducing Reoffending Plans support improving outcomes across a range of areas including **accommodation**, **education**, **employment** and **health**, and address the **thinking**, **attitudes** and **behaviours** that lead to reoffending.

This government has committed significant funding to support this work. We continue to work collaboratively with our partners targeting delivery of services, maximising co-commissioning opportunities and achieving the priorities outlined in the Regional Reducing Reoffending Plans.

Over the past year, we have navigated a period of significant challenge, including increased demands on services and workforce pressures. Throughout, our focus has remained on maintaining agreed service delivery to the best of our abilities.

Over the past year, achievements include:

- launch of the Community Accommodation Service Tier 3, increasing available bedspaces to 650 and housing over 1,300 individuals who would otherwise be held in prison
- publication of the HMPPS approach to the management and rehabilitation of people convicted of sexual offences
- strategic review of all HMPPS designed accredited programmes

- new Employment Hubs and Employment Boards rolled out in 92 prisons. Since April 2022, the proportion of prison leavers finding work within six weeks of release increased from 15% to 19%, with a further 30% in work after 6 months, up from 23%
- hired over 100 Heads of Education, Skills and Work to lead and improve the curriculum for education and employment in prison
- investment in over 50 Health & Justice Coordinator posts nationwide to support our substance misuse strategy

Looking ahead, we remain dedicated to delivering on the priorities outlined in these plans and recognise the importance of opportunities for collaboration across organisations to better use our collective resources and expertise.

Over the coming year, the OneHMPPS programme will create opportunities to further join up efforts across prisons and probation in our local partnership engagement, supporting HMPPS and our stakeholders to work more holistically to reduce reoffending.

We will continue to collaborate with statutory partners, private and voluntary-sector organisations, breaking down barriers to desistance from crime and work closely with Police and Crime Commissioners supporting our shared rehabilitation priorities.

Training, skills and work progress

Employment and education provide opportunities for people in prison and on probation to gain independence and contribute to wider society. Prison leavers who get a job are up to nine percentage points less likely to reoffend, which cuts crime and helps to protect the public. We will continue to raise the skills and qualifications of women, so they are more likely to secure employment on release.

Regional targets

- By April 2024, North West will continue to maintain the proportion employed six weeks after release at 20%.
- By April 2024, North West will continue to maintain the proportion employed six months after release at 32%.



We said we would:

- Recommission Commissioned Rehabilitative Service contracts which support employment, including the holistic contracts that help women into employment.
- Develop, implement and embed a 'whole establishment' approach to the promotion of education, skills and work to improve prisoner engagement and success.
- Further develop and implement an innovative curriculum across education, skills and work, designed in partnership with employers to ensure prisoners develop industry-standard, job-relevant skills.
- Recruit and train Prison Employment Leads to provide strategic guidance and support.
- Recruit and train ID and Banking Administrators to ensure prison leavers have access to banking and financial support on release.
- Identify Employment Advisory Chairs from the commercial sector to support governors on the employment market and the transition of prison leavers into the employment sector.

Training, skills and work progress



What we have done so far – Outcome Progress:

- Market engagement for the next generation of Commissioned Rehabilitative Services is underway and revised specifications are being developed.
- An Employment Strategy is in place in every NW prison and activity is focused on developing a “whole establishment” approach to Employment.
- Heads of Education, Skills and Work are being recruited to work with education providers on the design and delivery of a quality education curriculum.
- Prison Employment Leads are in place in every NW Prison.
- Banking and ID Administrators are in post in every NW Prison.
- The Chairs of Employment Advisory Boards in NW prisons are drawn from the commercial sector, including organisations such as Booths Supermarkets and Recycling Lives.

Drugs and alcohol addiction progress

People with substance misuse issues must experience continuity of care when they leave prison to ensure **access to the right treatment**. Community-based drug or alcohol treatment can cut crime by increasing the number of people who do not reoffend in the two years after treatment to 44% (Public Health England and MoJ, 2017).

Regional targets

- Community Sentence Treatment Requirements (CSTRs) include Drug Rehabilitation Requirements (DRRs), Alcohol Treatment Requirements (ATRs) and primary/secondary care Mental Health Treatment Requirements (MHTRs). These requirements seek to provide people in our care with the treatment they need to address the underlying causes of their offending behaviour, in the community.
- We are driving up use of treatment requirements for those that are eligible through new investment working in collaboration with the Courts, NHS, and Treatment providers.



We said we would:

- Develop a bespoke drugs strategy for each prison, which is specific to the population and works to reduce demand and maintain abstinence.
- Develop processes to support information sharing, early warning and intelligence exchange to reduce the risk of drug-related harm among the prison population.
- Obtain additional funding streams to support the delivery of addiction services in custody.
- Employ a team of health and justice partnership co-ordinators to support co-commissioning activity.
- Work with sentencers to promote drug rehabilitation requirements, alcohol treatment requirements and community sentence treatment requirements as a sentencing option.
- Engage with Integrated Care Systems across the region to expand services for drug and alcohol addiction.

Drugs and alcohol addiction progress



What we have done so far – Outcome Progress:

- Progress is being made towards developing a drugs strategy in each establishment and Incentivised Substance Free Living wings are being mobilised in Preston and Lancaster Farms.
- Prison Drug Leads are now embedded in community partnerships and processes are being developed with Combating Drugs Partnerships to support information sharing, early warning and intelligence exchange.
- Funding has been made available to support an increase in those accessing services and discussions are underway with NHS commissioners.
- NW Probation have employed a team of six Health and Justice Partnership staff.
- Probation are working with partners to roll out Mental Health Treatment Requirements and have developed a Court guide to provide clarity on the Drug Rehabilitation Requirement offer in each region.

Family, accommodation and readjustment to society progress

Risk of reoffending is reduced if people can rebuild **community and family connections** and access safe, stable accommodation. Prison leavers without stable **accommodation** are almost 50% more likely to break the law again. HMPPS supports people to maintain positive relationships while in custody and on release, including partnership working with Contracted Family Service providers, the Prisoners' Families Helpline and faith-based organisations.

Regional targets

- By April 2024, North West will increase the proportion housed on the night after release by 1 percentage point from 89% in March 2023.
- By April 2024, North West will increase the proportion in settled accommodation three months after leaving prison by 4 percentage points from 76% in March 2023.



We said we would:

- Review and recommission accommodation contracts.
- Ensure all resettlement prisons have the support of a housing specialist, who will work in partnership with Homeless Prevention Teams to improve accommodation outcomes for prison leavers.
- Deliver targeted interventions supporting the needs of women in the criminal justice system.
- Commission and embed a new service for families and significant others in prisons, with a focus on reconnecting families.
- Introduce a trauma-informed custody offer for prisons and local authorities to ensure that prisoners who have experienced the care system receive the best service to support rehabilitative outcomes and prevent further reoffending.
- Commission and embed a new finance, benefit and debt service, working across custody and community provision.
- Commission a service supporting people on probation who live with neurodivergent conditions.

Family, accommodation and readjustment to society progress



What we have done so far – Outcome Progress:

- The accommodation specification is being reviewed and the recommissioning process has commenced.
- Strategic Housing Specialists are in place in all prisons and are working closely with Homelessness Prevention Team Leads in the community.
- Specialist services for women in Cumbria have been expanded.
- The Families and Significant Others contract is in place across all relevant prisons and is delivering good outcomes in re-connecting families.
- A programme of trauma informed training is now underway across the NW estate.
- The new Finance, Benefit and Debt service is working with those whose financial issues affect offending behaviour.
- The National Autistic Society are now delivering a service to people on probation who are neurodivergent.

Delivering the order of the court

HMPPS monitors the people under our supervision rigorously and ensures they understand the consequences of not complying with an Order of the Court. This is crucial to reducing reoffending, making communities safer and preventing people becoming victims of crime.

Regional targets

- By April 2024, North West will increase the proportion of sexual offence interventions completed by 5 percentage points from 65% in March 2023.



We said we would:

- Recruit 250 additional operational staff into the regional Probation Service.
- Improve performance on completion of interventions on community orders and licences through implementing the Regional Quality Improvement Plan.
- Improve public protection measures in Approved Premises through a range of IT upgrades, CCTV installation and biometric facial recognition technology. Training in the use of search wands and engagement with police colleagues in piloting the presence of drugs dogs will further enhance the purpose of Approved Premises placement through monitoring.
- Develop more detailed performance monitoring of people subject to Integrated Offender Management (IOM) within one year. These reports will analyse the cost of crime, reductions in offending and how far people subject to IOM are complying with conditions of their sentence, demonstrate the impact of IOM in reducing neighbourhood crime.
- Acquire three new probation buildings in Bootle, Preston and Blackburn.
- Increase the number of Probation Service staff in court and work together with HMCTS and sentencers to maximise the use of pre-sentence reports and improve sentencer confidence in community orders.

Delivering the order of the court



What we have done so far – Outcome Progress:

- Between April 2022 and March 2023, we recruited an extra 250 operational probation staff.
- We increased the percentage of orders and licences that terminated with requirements complete up to 83.7% in January to March 2023.
- We have successfully piloted deploying drug dogs in Approved Premises and have introduced CCTV systems with biometric capabilities.
- A national and regional IOM dashboard has been developed and compliance monitoring for IOM nominals is now underway.
- The Bootle acquisition has been delivered and the Preston acquisition is well advanced. Blackburn remains on the priority list and, in the meantime, has been subject to extensive refurbishment.
- We have recruited 10 additional staff into our Lancashire and Merseyside court teams and are reviewing our sentencer engagement activity.

Priorities for the next year

As we transition into a new phase of OneHMPPS, we continue to build on our partnership working approach, ensuring that we provide the best service to the people in prison or on probation and the wider communities that we serve. Reducing reoffending, public protection, safety and security are at the heart of our work. Decision making and our joint leadership forums in the NW focus on areas of commonality, including delivering the activities set out in the main body of this Reducing Reoffending Plan. Over the coming year, in partnership with Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC), we will focus on implementing the Serious Violence Duty and play an active role in the regional Combating Drugs Partnerships. We will also continue working with partners to expand Community Accommodation Service Tier 3 (CAS3) to provide temporary accommodation for people who would otherwise be homeless on release.

Opportunities for the next year

- We will work in partnership with PCC, Violence Reduction Units, local authorities and other statutory partners to play our part in implementing the new Serious Violence Duty. We will share information, collaborate and plan along with our partners, to prevent and reduce serious violence within our local communities.
- Addressing substance misuse and helping individuals to recover from addictions remains a key priority for all partners in the NW. Drug Strategy Leads in Prisons will work closely with the Probation Health and Justice teams to engage and support the work of local Combating Drugs Partnerships to improve continuity for those leaving prison.
- The newly appointed Heads of Education, Skills and Work in prisons, working alongside Employment Brokers from New Futures Network, will drive up the quality of education provision in prison and drive improvement in the breadth and range of training, skills and employment opportunities available to prison leavers.
- We will work with partners to develop our Departure Lounge concept across all our resettlement prisons, providing timely and appropriate support on the day of release and giving people the best possible chance of successfully resettling back into the community.
- We will further promote Unpaid Work opportunities with partners across the region to support community safety and provide meaningful work for those under our supervision.



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