



HM Prison &
Probation Service

Action Plan Submitted: 12th July 2023

12 Month update Action Plan submitted: 22nd July 2024

A response to: A thematic inspection of work undertaken, and progress made by the Probation Service to reduce the incidence of domestic abuse and protect victims

Report Published: 4th July 2023

INTRODUCTION

HM Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) and HM Inspectorate of Probation for England and Wales are independent inspectorates which provide scrutiny of the conditions for, and treatment of prisoners and offenders. They report their findings for prisons, Young Offender Institutions, and effectiveness of the work of probation, and youth offending services across England and Wales to Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS). In response to the report HMPPS / MoJ are required to draft a robust and timely action plan to address the recommendations. The action plan confirms whether recommendations are agreed, partly agreed, or not agreed (see categorisations below). Where a recommendation is agreed or partly agreed, the action plans provide specific steps and actions to address these. Actions are clear, measurable, achievable, and relevant with the owner and timescale of each step clearly identified. Action plans are sent to HMIP and published on the GOV.UK website. Progress against the implementation and delivery of the action plans will also be monitored and reported on.

Term	Definition	Additional comment
Agreed	All of the recommendation is agreed with, can be achieved and is affordable.	The response should clearly explain how the recommendation will be achieved along with timescales. Actions should be as SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound) as possible. Actions should be specific enough to be tracked for progress.
Partly Agreed	Only part of the recommendation is agreed with, is achievable, affordable and will be implemented. This might be because we cannot implement the whole recommendation because of commissioning, policy, operational or affordability reasons.	The response must state clearly which part of the recommendation will be implemented along with SMART actions and tracked for progress. There must be an explanation of why we cannot fully agree the recommendation - this must state clearly whether this is due to commissioning, policy, operational or affordability reasons.
Not Agreed	The recommendation is not agreed and will not be implemented. This might be because of commissioning, policy, operational or affordability reasons.	The response must clearly state the reasons why we have chosen this option. There must be an explanation of why we cannot agree the recommendation - this must state clearly whether this is due to commissioning, policy, operational or affordability reasons.



ACTION PLAN: A thematic inspection of work undertaken, and progress made by the Probation Service to reduce the incidence of domestic abuse and protect victims

1. Rec No	2. Recommendation	3. Agreed/ Partly Agreed/ Not Agreed	4. Response Action Taken/Planned	5. Responsible Owner	6. Target Date
His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service should:					
1	Publish a domestic abuse strategy for the Probation Service and review progress against it regularly	Partly agreed	<p>This recommendation is partly agreed as HMPPS do not intend to have separate strategies for different offence types.</p> <p>HMPPS set out the overarching strategic direction to rehabilitation in the HMPPS Rehabilitation Strategy which is due to be published internally shortly. This strategy sets out a commitment across prisons, probation, and the youth custody estate to create the best conditions for successful rehabilitation, to reduce reoffending and protect the public.</p> <p>How this applies to different cohorts, including the domestic abuse (DA) cohort will be set out as part of the ongoing work to ensure HMPPS invest in the right provision of services, adjusting the service approach to groups where the evidence tells us there are differing offending-related needs and risks.</p> <p>HMPPS will review progress of our work to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are equipped to work with DA perpetrators • The right interventions are available and being used • Risk is accurately assessed based on information from other agencies and • Plans include work with partner agencies to keep victims safe 	<p>Deputy Director, Reducing Reoffending, Interventions, Operations and Investment</p> <p>Domestic Abuse Lead</p>	<p>September 2023</p> <p>September 2023</p>
			Progress against commitments – Recommendation 1 (July 2024)		
			1.1 An HMPPS Rehabilitation Strategy was internally published in October 2023. The strategic approach for the organisation is now driving both long-term coordinated vision, and short-term solutions on immediate challenges.	Deputy Director, Reducing Reoffending, Interventions, Operations and Investment	Complete



			<p>domestic abuse enquiries more than doubled between April 2022 and March 2023 and recent data indicates further continuous improvement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed and updated the 'Domestic Abuse and Child Safeguarding Enquiries Practitioner Guidance' in July 2023. There was a significant increase in the number of people accessing the guidance on the intranet following a concentrated communication campaign promoting the updated guidance in August 2023. <p>1.5 To ensure that plans include work with partner agencies to keep victims safe, HMPPS has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensured the new suite of DA learning products have a greater focus on victim perspectives and victim safeguarding. 	Director of Public Protection	Complete
2	Ensure that all people on probation who require an intervention receive one; monitor the delivery of all interventions and analyse attrition rates and shortfalls against potential need	Agreed	<p>Targeting of interventions is based on an agreed evidence-informed methodology. The HMPPS strategic approach to rehabilitation will be focused on improving the approach, targeting appropriate services for the right people at the right time, based on latest available evidence of effectiveness. As part of this strategic approach, HMPPS is also working to improve overall data quality and partnering to prioritise appropriate interventions more consistently, including Accredited Programmes and Structured Interventions for relevant individuals based on their eligibility and the risks they pose.</p> <p>HMPPS will also produce performance information reports to support active monitoring and analysis of Accredited Programmes' attrition rates and effective targeting practices.</p> <p>As part of this long-term programme of work there is a data improvement plan for interventions in place led by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) which will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get data right by addressing data quality and data management issues 	<p>Deputy Director, Reducing Reoffending, Interventions, Operations and Investment</p> <p>Deputy Director, Effective Practice and Service Improvement Group (EPSIG)</p> <p>Deputy Director, Reducing Reoffending, Interventions, Operations and Investment</p>	<p>March 2024</p> <p>March 2024</p>



			<p>numbers and details of cases who have been offered the opportunity to start a programme but have not yet attended and those which are at risk of not completing a programme before the end of their sentence. A new dashboard is now being developed which will build on this functionality to further support monitoring.</p> <p>2.3 Long term data activity in MoJ: Data improvement plans have been created for the interventions and assessments space which includes detailed data user requirements. Delivery of data improvements is underway with a focus on assessments data and specifically the reporting capabilities of a new systems and working with new users to mitigate risks of data changes. A more comprehensive update about data improvement work in the MoJ can be found here.</p> <p>2.4 The Courts, Targeting and Sentence Management (CTSM) Team produces monthly reports on overall Effective Proposal Framework (EPF) data (to monitor usage, volumes of accredited programmes selected for eligible cases and reasons for not selecting an accredited programme in an eligible case where recorded). This is shared with regions who can develop and run their own bespoke and themed reports to identify practices in respect of particular cohorts such as domestic abuse cases</p>	<p>Deputy Director, Reducing Reoffending, Interventions, Operations and Investment</p> <p>Deputy Director, Effective Practice and Service Improvement Group (EPSIG)</p>	<p>2026</p> <p>Complete</p>
3	Ensure that all actual and potential victims of domestic abuse are identified accurately and that timely and effective actions are taken to protect them at each stage of the sentence management process	Agreed	<p>To support practitioners to identify those who pose a risk of domestic abuse and to work with partners to keep victims or potential victims safe, HMPPS have reviewed and improved relevant training on both domestic abuse and risk assessment and management.</p> <p>To ensure information from partner agencies can feed into the identification of domestic abuse risk and risk management action HMPPS have increased resource and strengthened process to improve information sharing.</p>	<p>Director of Public Protection</p> <p>Domestic Abuse Lead</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p>
			Progress against commitments – Recommendation 3 (July 2024)		
			3.1 Feedback on the Domestic Abuse Awareness e-learning has been positive with learners stating that they can apply what they have learnt to their role.	Director of Public Protection	Complete



			<p>3.2 HMPPS have developed Advanced Domestic Abuse continuous professional development training for Probation Practitioners which commenced in June 2024.</p> <p>3.3 HMPPS has commissioned Women's Aid to deliver a webinar on the value of multi-agency work in victim safeguarding and understanding the services available to domestic abuse victims in their local areas. This will be delivered in July 2024.</p> <p>3.4 HMPPS performance data indicates that probation staff are gathering information from police and children's services in significantly more instances than at the time of the HMIP inspection publication.</p> <p>3.5 HMPPS have continued to work with the police to improve access to domestic abuse information. This includes pursuing probation managed access to local police databases as well as a pilot to access the Police National Database (PND). PND enables information sharing at a national level as it holds intelligence and other information captured in local systems such as child abuse, domestic abuse, and custody data. Prior to piloting PND we will evaluate whether access to PND will provide similar or better information than local police systems and added value to information from children's services for child safeguarding.</p> <p>3.6 HMPPS published a succession of national communications on expectations, processes and available support in carrying out enquiries between September - November 2023 and delivered a national workshop in November 2023 (<i>see Action 10.3</i>).</p>	Domestic Abuse Lead	<p>Complete</p> <p>July 2024</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p>
4	Ensure that all probation practitioners and managers are familiar with and work in accordance with the domestic abuse policy framework	Agreed	<p>The 'virtual in person' Domestic Abuse training has references to the DA Policy Framework throughout. So that practitioners who have not yet experienced the new learning will find it easier to access a place quickly, HMPPS have outsourced its delivery. This will see an increased number of participants from May 2023 until December 2024.</p> <p>Probation regions will take additional steps to promote staff attendance on the training and will monitor the number of</p>	<p>Deputy Director, Probation Workforce Programme</p> <p>Domestic Abuse Lead</p>	December 2024



		<p>completions via monitoring information returns and through the management line.</p> <p>Public Protection Group will re-promote available products to support the use of the Domestic Abuse Policy Framework (DAPF) such as the trailer and the video walk through available on My learning.</p> <p>Each RPD will include a specific domestic abuse event as part of their programme of protected learning time. A senior lead from each region will provide updates to the National Domestic Abuse Reference Group.</p>	<p>Director of Public Protection</p> <p>Domestic Abuse Lead</p>	<p>August 2023 and bi-monthly thereafter</p> <p>September 2023</p> <p>December 2023</p>
Progress against commitments – Recommendation 4 (July 2024)				
		<p>4.1 Following its launch in May 2022, new entrant PSOs and PQIPs were prioritised for the Domestic Abuse Awareness learning. Delivery capacity was increased fourfold in May 2023 to provide this learning to all relevant staff. 40% of those practitioners have now completed it. Learner feedback details that 93% of learners either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that the learning would enhance their practice.</p> <p>4.2 Learning completion rates at a regional and local level have been shared with senior leaders from all regions at the National Domestic Abuse Reference Group for them to take action as necessary to ensure staff in their region are accessing the training.</p> <p>4.3 PPG have promoted the Domestic Abuse Policy Framework and the associated guidance video through a number of national channels.</p> <p>4.4 Nine out of twelve regions have delivered at least one specific domestic abuse event in protected learning time with one region adopting a different approach to promoting domestic abuse learning across the region. The remaining two regions will deliver the event by the end of 2024</p>	<p>Deputy Director, Probation Workforce Programme</p> <p>Domestic Abuse Lead</p> <p>Director of Public Protection</p> <p>Domestic Abuse Lead</p>	<p>March 2025</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>December 2024</p>



5	Ensure that decisions taken under the prioritisation framework for sentence management red-amber-green status, maintain partnership working and intervention delivery to protect domestic abuse victims	Agreed	A review and refresh of the Prioritisation Framework is planned to complete in November 2023. The recommendation will be incorporated into this review activity. In the interim, the current iteration of the framework remains in place.	Deputy Director, Probation Workforce Programme	November 2023
			Progress against commitments – Recommendation 5 (July 2024)		
			<p>5.1 A review and refresh of the Probation Service Prioritisation Framework has been undertaken to provide clarity on prioritisation of tasks, what can be reduced/paused when capacity issues begin to impact on operational delivery and to ensure effective application within regions. The revised Prioritisation Framework incorporates enhancements in monitoring and tracking the utilisation of the framework to ensure it remains focused on deployment of resource to high priority work, such as domestic abuse, support for victims and provision of effective interventions supported by partnership working.</p> <p>5.2 The revised Prioritisation Framework will be subject to ongoing monitoring and review through the National Operational Stability Panel (chaired by the Chief Probation Officer).</p>	Deputy Director, Probation Operations Directorate	Complete with ongoing monitoring and review
6	Develop a comprehensive system to manage requests for disclosures of past perpetrator behaviour to new partners in relation to domestic abuse, including decision making, delivery and recording, through a route which provides appropriate support and safeguarding for those receiving information	Agreed	HMPPS have issued comprehensive guidance, flow chart and recording instructions on how probation practitioners work with partner agencies to ensure that new partners are provided with the right information, primarily through the police led Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme. The guidance for the scheme has been placed on a statutory footing and is clear that all disclosures must be accompanied by a robust safety plan, tailored to the needs of the victim or potential victim and based on all relevant information.	Director of Public Protection	Complete
			Progress against commitments – Recommendation 6 (July 2024)		
			6.1 HMPPS has worked closely with the police to ensure the routes for disclosure are working as intended and address any issues raised.	Director of Public Protection	Complete



			6.2 PPG commissioned a specific event on the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS), promoted to all staff, held in November 2023. This national briefing aimed to develop staff's understanding of what the DVDS is, how it works and how to refer in as well as understanding the police approach to delivering it in one police area		
7	Review their national information-sharing agreement with the National Police Chief's Council, to ensure that it closes the current loophole that allows police forces to refuse probation enquiries about information on domestic abuse incidents (eg past call outs) involving a person under probation supervision	Agreed	The Information Sharing agreement has already been redrafted and the new version is currently being considered by the National Police Chief's Council (NPCC).	Director of Public Protection	Complete
Progress against commitments – Recommendation 7 (July 2024)					
			6.3 A new version of the Information Sharing Agreement has been issued.	Director of Public Protection	Complete
8	Ensure all DASOs are fully equipped for their role and trained to a high standard using the nationally recognised Independent Domestic Violence Advisor training.	Partly agreed	<p>This recommendation is partly agreed as there is a need to distinguish between the roles of Domestic Abuse Safety Officers (DASOs) and Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs).</p> <p>As part of the Domestic Abuse Safety Officer (DASO) Project Plan a National DASO Training package is being developed to ensure that DASOs are fully equipped for their role and trained to a high standard. HMPPS are commissioning a bespoke DASO training package in 2023 with the rollout of the training package to DASOs across the 12 regions in 2024.</p>	Deputy Director, Reducing Reoffending, Interventions, Operations and Investment	March 2024
Progress against commitments – Recommendation 8 (July 2024)					



			8.1 As a result of emerging training priorities, the design of the newly commissioned DASO learning package is now expected to start in late 2024 (pending agreement of the wider HMPPS departments and key stakeholders). Delivery of the package would therefore commence in 2025. In the interim, IDVA training has been offered to all DASOs and places were made available from 2023. The remainder will be provided in 2024 following a procurement process to commission a suitable provider.	Deputy Director, Reducing Reoffending, Interventions, Operations and Investment	December 2024
The probation service should:					
9	Develop local multi-agency training and awareness-raising events with partner agencies. This should support probation practitioners and managers to develop their understanding of the complexity of domestic abuse, the roles of other agencies that can offer support and information in managing domestic abuse cases and the changes introduced under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, which recognise children affected by domestic abuse as victims	Agreed	<p>The Probation Service will do more to support probation practitioners and managers to develop their understanding of the complexity of domestic abuse, the roles of other agencies and to recognise children affected by domestic abuse as victims. The Probation Service has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> revised domestic abuse training offer (e-learning, face to face (including virtual attendance), and local reflective practice approaches) to include a focus on multi-agency working and on children as victims as set out in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. <p>The Probation Service will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with a specialist domestic abuse agency to develop a product to provide additional focus on the role of other agencies, so as to work more effectively with those agencies in accordance with the local the multi-agency frameworks; continue to develop staff understanding of the complexity of domestic abuse through the ongoing delivery of annual campaigns e.g., 16 Days of action events which brings in expertise from partners, academics, and those with lived experience; and commission a more sophisticated intermediate/advanced learning package to form 	Director of Public Protection	<p>Complete</p> <p>March 2024</p> <p>Annually with next events November 2023</p> <p>March 2024</p>



			part of core expectations for Continuous Professional Development for all practitioners.		
Progress against commitments – Recommendation 9 (July 2024)					
			<p>9.1 Following its launch in May 2022, new entrant PSOs and PQIPs were prioritised for the Domestic Abuse Awareness learning. Delivery capacity was increased fourfold in May 2023 to provide this learning to all relevant staff. 40% of those practitioners have now completed it. Learner feedback details that 93% of learners either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that the learning would enhance their practice.</p>	Workforce and Capability - Transforming Delivery Directorate	March 2025
			<p>9.2 An Advanced Domestic Abuse CPD learning package was developed by the Learning Design Faculty and launched in April 2024. The learning comprises an e-learning component followed by a facilitated component for skills practice. The learning is aimed at experienced probation practitioners working in sentence management who complete this learning 3 years following completion of the domestic abuse awareness e-learning and the 1 day facilitated follow up course. This learning has a clear focus on the role of other agencies and the importance of multi-agency working. A review of this advanced learning package will be undertaken in October 2024, July 2025 and a final impact evaluation will be undertaken in July 2026. The agreed success measures will be evaluated against baseline data collected in April 2024 and will include learner feedback via survey on completion of learning and learner/manager feedback via surveys after 12 & 24-months. Focus Groups will be delivered as part of the impact evaluation to evidence transfer of learning to role.</p>	Workforce and Capability - Transforming Delivery Directorate	Complete
			<p>9.3 Public Protection Group has commissioned Women's Aid to prepare a national HMPPS webinar on the value of multi-agency working when working with domestic abuse / victim safeguarding. This will support practitioners understand</p>	Director Of Public Protection	July 2024



			<p>services available to DA victims within their local areas. This will be available to staff in July 2024.</p> <p>9.4 To improve staff understanding of the complexity of domestic abuse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HMPSS published a Controlling and Coercive Behaviour desk aide in April 2024. • Developed the Advanced Domestic Abuse e-learning and two day facilitated event (see recommendation 1). • Delivered a national domestic abuse awareness campaign in November 2023 (see action 3.1). 		Complete
10	Ensure that timely and accurate exchanges of information are supported through local agreements and active relationship management with the police, children's social care services, perpetrator services, specialist domestic abuse services, and other relevant organisations	Agreed	<p>The Chief Probation Officer (CPO) will hold a national conversation with relevant NPCC Police leads to establish support for ongoing negotiation between Probation and Police at local/regional level and continued effective partnership working.</p> <p>The probation service will support and monitor improvement of information sharing via:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating recording guidance • Sharing examples of success and good practice • Using nationally established data sets to track an improvement trajectory – driven by leads at National Domestic Abuse Reference Group, and by the Child Safeguarding Working Group. 	<p>Chief Probation Officer</p> <p>Domestic Abuse Lead and Children's Safeguarding Lead</p>	<p>October 2023</p> <p>Reviewed monthly</p>
			Progress against commitments – Recommendation 10 (July 2024)		
			<p>10.1 The Chief Probation Officer attended the National Police Stakeholder Group on Domestic Abuse and has secured regular attendance for the Regional Probation Director who leads on Domestic Abuse.</p>	Chief Probation Officer	Complete



			<p>10.2 HMPPS updated the Domestic Abuse and Child Safeguarding Enquiry Practitioner Guidance in July 2023. A succession of national communications promoting the guidance were published between September - November 2023.</p> <p>10.3 Members of the National Domestic Abuse Reference Group and the Child Safeguarding Reference Group have shared examples of good practice in police and local authority information sharing. HMPPS delivered a national workshop in November 2023 to ensure all staff understood the expectations for gathering police and local authority information and the value of this information for their risk assessments; the workshop shared good and successful practice in requesting information from the police. A recording of the workshop is available for all staff.</p> <p>10.4 Data is shared monthly via Performance & Quality leads and two monthly via National Domestic Abuse Reference Group, attended by senior leaders in all regions.</p>	<p>Director Of Public Protection</p> <p>Domestic Abuse Lead</p> <p>Domestic Abuse Lead</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p>
11	Ensure that all practitioners complete high-quality assessments and reviews in domestic abuse cases that fully analyse information from specialist assessment tools, such as the spousal assault risk assessment (SARA), and all available information from other agencies	Agreed	<p>The Probation Service is already taking action to improve risk assessment and management in response to HMIP inspections. This includes the recruitment of additional staff and updated training. Better quality assessment of domestic abuse perpetrators is a key element of this. Since the inspection the Probation Service have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launched an updated Spousal Assault Risk Assessment (SARA) learning product setting out what makes a good assessment. <p>The probation service will further support the quality of assessments by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring and driving up SARA completion rates via the DA dashboard at the National DA Reference Group. Including the guidance on using Offender Assessment System (OASys) to assess domestic abuse as a product to be promoted at DA protected learning time event (see action 4). 	<p>Director Public Protection</p> <p>Domestic Abuse Lead</p> <p>Director Public Protection</p> <p>Performance and Quality Lead</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>August 2023 and bi-monthly thereafter</p>



			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Performance and Quality teams will set targeted improvement activity based on Regional Case Audit Tool (RCAT) findings from DA cases. 		
			Progress against commitments – Recommendation 11 (July 2024)		
			<p>11.1 Since launching in May 2023, 2,554 learners have completed the SARA learning product (of a projected annual new learner pool of 2000). Feedback is very positive with participants stating this has improved their understanding of SARA and that they can apply what they have learnt to their role.</p> <p>11.2 Regional SARA completion rates have been shared with National Domestic Abuse Reference Group representatives from April 2024 and will continue to be provided monthly. The SARA e-learning has been promoted by national domestic abuse leads to drive up completion rates.</p> <p>11.3 The Assessing Domestic Abuse within OASys guidance has been promoted through national communications, including throughout the national domestic abuse awareness campaign (16 days of activism) in November 2023, reaching 5000 individuals, and promoted in the OASys bulletin for December 23. Operational leads have been instructed to promote the guidance in the National Domestic Abuse Reference Group.</p> <p>11.4 A National RCAT monitoring dashboard is in place. It allows region to interrogate their local audit data to identify themes like DA, safeguarding children, etc, and from which their improvement plan and activities can be targeted.</p>	<p>Director of Public Protection</p> <p>Domestic Abuse Lead</p> <p>Director of Public Protection</p> <p>Performance and Quality Lead</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p>
12	Ensure that the respective roles and responsibilities of sentence management and programme teams, including domestic abuse safety officers are clear. This should include the responsibility to prepare people on probation to attend programmes, to share information and to	Agreed	As part of the DASO Project Plan the DASO Practitioner Manual is being reviewed and updated. This will add clarity to the roles and responsibilities of DASOs to create a consistent service for DASO clients across the 12 regions.	Deputy Director, Reducing Reoffending, Interventions, Operations and Investment	December 2023



	support risk management throughout sentence delivery.		HMPPS will have first draft of the DASO Practitioner Manual available at the end of July 2023 and a final version will be available by the end of 2023.		
Progress against commitments – Recommendation 12 (July 2024)					
			The first draft of the DASO Practice Manual has been shared with the key stakeholders for informal feedback. Development of the practice manual will continue with input from key stakeholders to ensure national consistency in the DASO role pending HMPPS approval. It is anticipated that the final draft will be sent for internal agreement in June/July 2024.	Deputy Director, Reducing Reoffending, Interventions, Operations and Investment	August 2024

Recommendations	
Agreed	10
Partly Agreed	2
Not Agreed	0
Total	12

