

West Mercia



Annual Report 2023/2024

Introduction

On behalf of the Strategic Management Board (SMB) for West Mercia Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) it is our pleasure to present the Annual Report for 2023/24.

MAPPA remains a statutory function, and its key aim is to ensure the protection of the public by ensuring robust assessment and management is in place for those individuals in our communities who have committed serious acts of violent or sexual offending and present the potential for future harm.

This cannot be delivered by one agency alone, hence the need for the co-operation of agencies across a full range of disciplines. MAPPA thus consists of those agencies known as Responsible Authorities (Police, Probation Services and Prison Service), and Duty to Co-operate agencies such as National Health Service, Local Authorities, Youth Justice and Housing Providers. All agencies have a crucial role to play in the identification of resources and options available to secure the best outcomes for the management, resettlement and rehabilitation of those individuals identified within the MAPPA cohort. It is only by working together that we can seek to reduce the risk of harm to the public and reduce the number of future victims.

The West Mercia SMB meets quarterly to oversee the delivery of MAPPA across the area and ensure compliance with the National MAPPA Guidance. Membership of the SMB consist of senior representatives of the Responsible Authorities and Duty to Cooperate agencies. The work of the SMB is once again supported by Lay Advisers who have a key role in representing the local public. This vital community support and oversight was missing during the last year, though thankfully is now back in place providing a critical friend level of governance to the MAPPA process.

This has been another busy year for all agencies involved in the MAPPA process and I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Strategic Management Board (SMB) to thanks all partner agencies for their contributions in addressing the complex

needs of MAPPA offenders. Last year saw an investment in lay advisors and administrative staff supporting the back-office functions of MAPPA ensuring that the arrangements remain fit for purpose and robust – these staff are now embedded into the MAPPA structure and are making real benefit to operation of MAPPA.

ViSOR: There is a national HMPPS Policy Framework to make ViSOR a business-as-Usual IT system for both Prison and Probation. ViSOR is a multi-agency IT system which allows for effective information sharing across Police, Probation and Prison service nationally. Use has increased significantly in this reporting period within the two Probation PDUs and continues to be driven by the national project. Preparations are underway to move to an improved operating system known as MAPPS. This system is designed to increase efficiency and more effectively monitor and track the Offenders within the structure. Multi-agency meetings and reviews are commonplace to ensure that, once ready for launch, MAPPS will seamlessly and effectively replace ViSOR.

Training & Development: The MAPPA Team designed and issued an online Basic Awareness presentation for use by duty to cooperate (DTC) partners to increase basic knowledge of MAPPA processes amongst partners. This has meant that Basic Awareness training can be delivered to a wider DTC audience in a timely manner. The MAPPA Team continue to deliver training to practitioners at both in person and remote training and awareness sessions. In early 2024, the MAPPA Team delivered the first round of managers training to ensure that decision making in panel is consistent and DTC managers are equipped with the knowledge and awareness of cases to make meaningful decisions.

This year changes to the Domestic Abuse Act of 2021 have brought Domestic Abuse related offences such as Stalking and Harassment and Strangulation into MAPPA eligibility criteria, which has meant that more perpetrators can now be managed under MAPPA. This has greatly helped with ensuring that Domestic Abuse perpetrators are not only brought to justice but are managed over a long term to greater reduce the risk of reoffending and harm caused.

This year has also seen the introduction of a new category of MAPPA nominals. Following a review into the Fishmonger Hall atrocity, the introduction of "Category 4" now means that any individual either convicted of, or suspected of, Terrorism or Counter Terrorism behaviours can now be managed within MAPPA and specialist resources utilised to manage the risks of harm posed.

West Mercia Police have worked hard in the last 12 months in ensuring that appropriate investigative skills training remains in place for our Police Staff Offender Managers to equip them effectively to robustly manage those subject to MAPPA. This training has extended to the continuation of recruitment and training of specialist Sex Offender managers to cater for the gradual annual increase of MAPPA nominals coming onto the cohort. Scrutiny has taken place this year to ensure that existing backlogs in determining the annual risk of offenders is reduced.

A serious case review in 2023/4 yet again highlighted the critical importance of MAPPA, and the need for our offender managers to think critically and beyond the obvious. It reinforced the need to ensure that information and intelligence is shared between agencies, and appropriate challenges are made within DTC members and agencies where appropriate.

This year has also seen Police MOSOVO Teams assuming ownership for Category 2 and 3 nominals to further enhance the robust management of those under the arrangements.

Year 2024/25 promises to be a year where we continue to learn and improve our offender management arrangement and build upon strong partnership relationships in existence.

West Mercia SMB is committed to the ongoing development of practice, sharing learning and developments from serious case reviews, serious further offences, and regional and national inspections, so that we do our utmost best to keep the communities of West Mercia safe.



George Branch
SMB Chair
Head of Service
Herefordshire, Shropshire, and Telford
Probation

DCI Edward Slough
DCI – Protecting Vulnerable People
West Mercia Police

What is MAPPA?

MAPPA background

MAPPA (Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements) are a set of arrangements to manage the risk posed by individuals who have committed the most serious sexual, violent and terrorist offences (MAPPA-eligible individuals) under the provisions of sections 325 to 327B of the Criminal Justice Act 2003.

They bring together the Police, Probation and Prison Services in each of the 42 Areas in England and Wales into what is known as the MAPPA Responsible Authority.

A number of other agencies are under a Duty to Co-operate (DTC) with the Responsible Authority. These include Social Services, Health Services, Youth Offending Teams, Department for Work and Pensions and Local Housing and Education Authorities.

Local Strategic Management Boards (SMB) comprising senior representatives from each of the Responsible Authority and DTC agencies are responsible for delivering MAPPA within their respective areas. The Responsible Authority is also required to appoint two Lay Advisers to sit on each MAPPA SMB.

Lay Advisers are members of the public appointed by the Minister with no links to the business of managing MAPPA-eligible individuals act as independent, yet informed, observers; able to pose questions which the professionals closely involved in the work might not think of asking. They also bring to the SMB their understanding and perspective of the local community (where they must reside and have strong links).

How MAPPA works

MAPPA-eligible individuals are identified and information about them is shared between agencies to inform the risk assessments and risk management plans of those managing or supervising them.

That is as far as MAPPA extend in the majority of cases, but some cases require more senior oversight and structured multiagency management. In such cases there will be regular MAPPA meetings attended by relevant agency practitioners.

There are 4 categories of MAPPA-eligible individual:

- Category 1 –subject to sex offender notification requirements;
- Category 2 mainly those convicted of violent offences and sentenced to 12 months or more imprisonment or a hospital order;
- Category 3 individuals who do not qualify under Categories 1, 2 or 4 but whose offences pose a risk of serious harm.
- Category 4 terrorism convicted and terrorism risk individuals

Data on Category 4 individuals is not included in this report due to data protection issues related to low numbers. This data will be aggregated and published nationally.

There are three levels of management to ensure that resources are focused where they are most needed; generally, those presenting the higher risks of serious harm.

- Level 1 is where the individual is managed by the lead agency with information exchange and multiagency support as required but without formal MAPPA meetings;
- Level 2 is where formal MAPPA meetings are required to manage the individual.
- Level 3 is where risk management plans require the attendance and commitment of resources at a senior level at MAPPA meetings.

MAPPA are supported by ViSOR. This is a national IT system to assist in the management of individuals who pose a serious risk of harm to the public. The use of ViSOR increases the ability to share intelligence across organisations and enables the safe transfer of key information when high risk individuals move between areas, enhancing public protection measures.

ViSOR allows staff from the Police, Probation and Prison Services to work on the same IT system, improving the quality and timeliness of risk assessments and interventions to prevent offending.

All MAPPA reports from England and Wales are published online at: www.gov.uk

MAPPA Statistics

MAPPA-eligible individuals on 31 March 2024

| | Category 1: Subject to sex offender notification requirements | Category 2: Violent offenders | Category 3: Other dangerous offenders | Total |
|---------|---|-------------------------------------|---|-------|
| Level 1 | 1537 | 253 | - | 1790 |
| Level 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 5 |
| Level 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Total | 1539 | 255 | 3 | 1797 |

MAPPA-eligible offenders in Levels 2 and 3 by category (yearly total)

| | Category 1: Subject to sex offender notification requirements | Category 2: Violent offenders | Category 3: Other dangerous offenders | Total |
|---------|---|-------------------------------------|---|-------|
| Level 2 | 26 | 19 | 24 | 69 |
| Level 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 6 |
| Total | 28 | 20 | 27 | 75 |

| Category 1 cautioned or convicted for breach of notification requirements | 15 |
|---|----|
|---|----|

| Category 1 who have had their life time notification revoked on application | 2 |
|---|---|
| Category who have had their life tillie hotilication revoked on application | |

Restrictive orders for Category 1 offenders

| Sexual Harm Prevention Order (SHPO) | 129 |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| SHPO with foreign travel restriction | 1 |
| Notification Order | 2 |

| Number of individuals who became subject to sex offender notification | 4 |
|---|---|
| requirements following a breach(es) of a Sexual Risk Order (SRO) | |

Level 2 and 3 individuals returned to custody

| Returned to custody for breach of licence | Category 1: Subject to notification requirements | Category 2: Violent offenders | Category 3: Other dangerous offenders | Total |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|-------|
| Level 2 | 7 | 14 | 8 | 29 |
| Level 3 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 4 |
| Total | 9 | 16 | 8 | 33 |

| Breach of SHPO | |
|----------------|---|
| Level 2 | 0 |
| Level 3 | 1 |
| Total | 1 |

| Total number of individuals subject to sex offender notification requirements | 130 |
|---|-----|
| per 100,000 population | |

This figure has been calculated using the mid-2022 estimated resident population, published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) on 21 December 2022, excluding those aged less than ten years of age.

Consistent with previous publications, this figure should be based on mid-2023 estimated resident population; however, the ONS has changed its publication schedule such that the mid-2023 estimates will be published later this year. As such, the current figure may differ from the corresponding figure based on the mid-2023 estimates.

Explanation commentary on statistical tables

MAPPA background

The totals of MAPPA-eligible individuals, broken down by category, reflect the picture on 31 March 2024 (i.e. they are a snapshot). The rest of the data covers the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

- (a) MAPPA-eligible individuals there are individuals defined in law as eligible for MAPPA management because they have committed specified sexual, violent or terrorist offences or they currently pose a risk of serious harm. The majority are managed at Level 1 without formal MAPPA meetings. These figures only include those MAPPA eligible individuals living in the community. They do not include those in prison or detained under the Mental Health Act.
- (b) Subject to Sex Offender Notification Requirements those who are required to notify the police of their name, address and other personal details and to notify of any subsequent changes (this is known as the "notification requirement.") These individuals are assessed and managed by the police. They may also be managed by probation or health services if they are subject to licence or a hospital order. Failure to comply with the notification requirement is a criminal offence that carries a maximum penalty of 5 years' imprisonment.
- (c) Violent Offenders individuals convicted of violent offences who were sentenced to imprisonment or detention for 12 months or more, or detained under a hospital order and a small number of individuals convicted of sexual offences who are not subject to notification requirements. These individuals are assessed and managed by the Probation

Service, Youth Offending Team or Mental Health Services.

- (d) Other Dangerous Offenders individuals who do not qualify under the other MAPPA-eligible categories but have committed an offence that indicates that they pose a risk of serious harm which requires management via MAPPA meetings. These individuals are assessed and managed by whichever agency has the primary responsibility for them.
- (e) Terrorism and Terrorism Risk
 Offenders individuals subject to terrorism
 offender notification requirements; individuals
 convicted of terrorism or terrorism related
 offences who were sentenced to
 imprisonment or detention for 12 months or
 more or detained under a hospital order; and
 those who have committed an offence and
 may be at risk of involvement in terrorismrelated activity. These individuals are
 assessed and managed by CounterTerrorism Police and the National Security
 Division of the Probation Service.
- (f) Breach of Licence individuals released into the community following a period of imprisonment will be subject to a licence with conditions (under probation supervision). If the individual does not comply with these conditions, the Probation Service will take breach action, and the individual may be recalled to prison.
- (g) Sexual Harm Prevention Order (SHPO) (including any additional foreign travel restriction). Sexual Harm Prevention Orders (SHPOs) and interim SHPOs replaced Sexual Offence Prevention Orders are intended to protect the public from individuals convicted of a sexual or violent offence who pose a risk

of sexual harm to the public by placing restrictions and/or positive obligations on their behaviour. They require the individual to notify their details to the police (as set out in Part 2 of the 2003 Act) for the duration of the order.

The court must be satisfied on the balance of probability that an order is necessary to protect the public (or any particular members of the public) in the UK, or children or vulnerable adults (or any particular children or vulnerable adults) abroad, from sexual harm from the individual. In the case of an order made on a free-standing application by a Chief Officer, the National Crime Agency (NCA), British Transport Police (BTP) or the Ministry of Defence Police (MODP), the chief officer/NCA/BTP/MODP must be able to show that the individual has acted in a way since their conviction that makes the order necessary.

The minimum duration for a full order is five years. The lower age limit is 10, which is the age of criminal responsibility, but where the defendant is under the age of 18 an application for an order should only be considered exceptionally.

- (h) Notification Order this requires individuals convicted of qualifying sexual offences overseas to register with the police, in order to protect the public in the UK from the risks that they pose. The police in England and Wales may issue a notification order directly to an offender who is already in the UK or who is intending to come to the UK who has to notify within three days of receipt. Individuals have a right of appeal against notification.
- (i) Sexual Risk Order (including any additional foreign travel restriction) –The Sexual Risk Order (SRO) replaced the Risk of Sexual Harm Order (RoSHO) and may be made in relation to a person without a conviction for a sexual or violent offence (or any other offence), but who poses a risk of sexual harm.

The SRO may be made at the magistrates' court on application by the police, NCA, BTP or MODP where an individual has committed an act of a sexual nature, and the court is satisfied that the person poses a risk of harm to the public in the UK or children or vulnerable adults overseas.

An SRO may prohibit the person from doing anything described in it, including travel overseas, or place positive obligations upon them. Any prohibition and/or obligation must be necessary to protect the public in the UK from sexual harm or, in relation to foreign travel, protecting children or vulnerable adults from sexual harm.

An individual subject to an SRO is required to notify the police of their name and home address within three days of the order being made and also to notify any changes to this information within three days.

An SRO can last for a minimum of two years and has no maximum duration, with the exception of any foreign travel restrictions which, if applicable, last for a maximum of five years (but may be renewed).

The criminal standard of proof continues to apply. The person concerned is able to appeal against the making of the order and the police or the person concerned are able to apply for the order to be varied, renewed or discharged.

A breach of an SRO is a criminal offence punishable by a maximum of five years' imprisonment. Where an individual breaches their SRO, they will become subject to full notification requirements.

Individuals made subject of an SRO are recorded on VISOR as a Potentially Dangerous Person (PDP).

(j) Lifetime notification requirements revoked on application – Qualifying individuals may submit an application to the police to review their indefinite notification requirements. The police review the application and decide whether to revoke the notification requirements. This decision is made at the rank of Superintendent. Those who continue to pose a significant risk will remain subject to notification requirements for life, if necessary.

Individuals will only become eligible to seek a review once they have been subject to indefinite notification requirements for a period of at least 15 years for adults and 8 years for juveniles.

Victim Liaison Unit

Victim Liaison Officers (VLOs) continue to offer a high level of service to victims in line with the Victims Code of Practice, despite the challenges around the new early release scheme and changes to IPP legislation, which has attracted media and MP attention in our cases. This has required VLOs to deliver at pace, navigating the huge emotional impact of early release of prisoners, whilst also managing victims' expectations in terms of their perceived rights for early release decision making.

We continue to be active in raising the profile of the work of the Victim Liaison Unit, emphasising the importance of good communication flow from Community Offender Managers (COMs), Prison Offender Managers (POMs) and other key agencies. We are doing this by attending Probation and Prison team meetings to refresh knowledge about what we do and why we do it and the impact of miscommunication and noncommunication, that can have on victims' emotional well-being and safeguarding. Unfortunately, we continue to experience issues with a lack of communication from some COMs and POMs (i.e. keeping us updated about key changes), therefore, we remain pro-active with seeking ways to improve this across the region, including raising the profile of the entire Public Protection Unit, led by our Head of Public Protection.

We have recruited more VLOs over the last 12 months, to ensure that resource is dedicated to the extension of the Victim Contact Scheme, namely the Victim Notification Scheme (VNS) for the stalking and harassment cases who are sentenced to less than 12 months custody. We have received feedback from victims about the positive impact of being kept updated.

VLOs / VLU SPOs maintain a presence in MAPPA meetings, sharing valuable information in terms of the dynamic risk towards victims, representing the victims voice in terms of the impact offending has had on victims, and explaining the risk evidenced rationale behind requested licence conditions, such as non-contact conditions and exclusion zones.

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West Midlands Region Victim Liaison Unit

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