



HM Prison & Probation Service

Sarah Chand
Area Executive Director, Midlands
HM Prison and Probation Service

David Argument
HM Chief Inspector of Probation
1st Floor, Manchester Civil Justice Centre,
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1 May 2025

Dear David,

HMIP reports on the inspections of Derby City and Derbyshire Probation Delivery Units (PDUs), East Midlands Region - May 2025

Thank you for your inspection reports for **Derby City and Derbyshire PDUs**, where you made a total of 11 recommendations.

In respect of the recommendations, I can confirm that all have been carefully considered and the Heads of PDU, with the support of the Regional Probation Director, will ensure steps will be taken to address them as appropriate. This will include the following:

- In accordance with national mandated changes, the region, including Derby and Derbyshire, will implement the new management oversight framework. This will seek to address the deficits identified in the management oversight of casework.
- Complete additional domestic abuse and safeguarding audits of Derbyshire caseload, with analysis of themes identified.
- A revised probation service East Midlands Quality Improvement Plan to include HMIP recommendations with particular emphasis on utilising domestic abuse and safeguarding enquiries to inform assessments and risk management plans. The Quality Improvement Plan will be revised at the Quality Forum and deliverable priorities reassessed and appropriate delivery dates assigned to continue the quality journey in the East Midlands region.
- A Senior Probation Officer (SPO) development day has been organised, with a focus on quality and management oversight and quality expectations. An inquiry style approach to audit activity incorporating Skills for Effective Engagement, Development and Supervision (SEEDs) and the Regional Case Audit Tool (R-CAT) will be introduced.
- Ensure that all staff, including managers, undertake the required training in line with their job role and also any additional training identified as part of the Quality Improvement Plan.
- Ensure that regionally developed tools supporting training needs analysis are consistently utilised to develop, shape and inform learning and development.
- The Head of Derby PDU will work with the Regional Equalities Manager and Head of Community Integration to utilise and embed the Equalities Monitoring Tool to

further inform, shape and drive actions in the identification of gaps in service provision and interventions for minority groups.

- East Midlands Region will utilise Commissioned Rehabilitative Services (CRS) to drive and increase referral rates.

Whilst I acknowledge that there is still much work to be carried out at both PDUs, I am encouraged that positive outcomes were reported. These will also inform our plans for improvement across the region, and I particularly note the following.

- The strong strategic and operational delivery relationships with partners and key stakeholders across Derby City which was led by a strong senior leadership team and the PDU priorities and ambitions had appropriate links with regional and Area Executive Director (AED) priorities.
- The culture in Derby City PDU was particularly warm and promoted openness. Staff across all grades were positive regarding their ability to feed ideas into managers and senior leaders about change and also provide constructive challenge when they didn't feel things were working well.
- In Derbyshire PDU PSO and case administrator posts were almost fully staffed Attrition rates were below the national average and most staff had at least five years of experience in post.
- Over half of the cases inspected in Derbyshire PDU had the same practitioner for the whole of their licence or order, which meant professional relationships between practitioners and people on probation were stable.
- The bespoke reflective supervision facilitated by the Offender Personality Disorder clinical lead was very well received by the small number of practitioners and middle managers who had the opportunity to access it at Derbyshire PDU.

I remain committed to ensuring progress against HMIP recommendations and I can assure you that through my operational assurance functions and the support of Performance and Risk Group (PAR) we continue to closely monitor progress in line with your findings.

Regards

Sarah Chand
Area Executive Director, Midlands

CC: Private Office