



HM Prison & Probation Service

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Martin Jones
HM Chief Inspector of Probation
1st Floor, Manchester Civil Justice Centre,
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10 July 2025

Dear Martin,

HMIP reports on the inspection of Gateshead and South Tyneside PDU, North East Region - May 2025

Thank you for your inspection reports for **Gateshead and South Tyneside PDU**, where you made a total of 6 recommendations.

In respect of the recommendations, I can confirm that all have been carefully considered and the Head 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:

- A meeting will be scheduled with the Police, PDU Head and Head of Operations by the end of September 2025 to explore how we can enhance the quality of information sharing between our organisations in relation to domestic abuse enquiries.
- The PDU Business Plan will be reviewed to ensure that sufficient attention is given to objectives and activities to protect the public and safeguard victims.
- The Regional Change and Quality Improvement Plan will be reviewed in line with the findings to ensure that all learning is captured and being appropriately addressed. This includes plans to develop an enhanced regional approach to training and delivery, with an emphasis on risk management, reviewing and sentence delivery.
- The Regional Probation Director holds the lead for area improvement in sentence planning. Work will include sharing good practice and ensuring our approach to PDU Quality Improvement Plans will be reviewed to ensure that all have specific, measurable and evidence-based areas of focus.
- All Probation Practitioners in region will undertake Core Skills training including Motivational Interviewing, Engagement skills and Toolkit awareness.

Whilst I acknowledge that there is still much work to be carried out at Gateshead and South Tyneside PDU, I am encouraged that positive outcomes were reported and note the following.

- Engaging People on Probation (EPoP) was a strength. There was a strong, embedded culture of seeking out, listening and responding to the views of people on probation. Forums for people on probation had been established, and feedback had led to change.
- Practitioners were consistently focusing on developing and maintaining an effective working relationship with people on probation. In 94 per cent of cases practitioners worked flexibly with people on probation, taking account of their personal circumstances. For example, utilising telephone appointments and home visits in response to employment, mental health crisis and childcare.
- At the assessment and planning stages of sentence management, PDU staff generally understood the offending related needs of the individuals they were supervising and what work needed to be completed with the person. This was supported by strong working relationships with services to help people to change.
- People on probation were meaningfully involved in reviewing their progress and engagement in nearly two-thirds (14 out of 23) of the relevant cases we inspected. This included collaborative discussions about the individual's progress and issues of non-compliance.

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.

Kind Regards

Helen Judge
Area Executive Director - Northeast, Yorkshire and the Humber

CC: Private Office
Kim Thornden-Edwards, HMPPS Chief Probation Officer
Bronwen Elphick, Regional Probation Director, North East