HM Inspectorate of Probation

Offender Management in Custody – pre-release

A joint inspection by HM Inspectorate of Probation and HM Inspectorate of Prisons

November 2022

Acknowledgements

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Foreword

The Offender Management in Custody (OMiC) model was implemented from April 2018 to coordinate an individual's journey through custody and back into the community. The model was an ambitious attempt to put rehabilitation at the centre of custodial and post-release work to reduce reoffending and promote community integration. However, our joint inspection of 100 cases across eight prisons found that key components of the OMiC model are not working in practice and that delivery is falling well short of expectations.

The model is fixed, complex and little understood. The needs of individuals in different types of prison are not always catered for, and this causes problems on their release from prison.

We found a distinct culture of two organisations, one prison and one probation, and joint working at a strategic and operational level is hampered by prison groups and probation regions being based in different geographical areas. Successful implementation of OMiC requires a 'rehabilitative culture' in prisons, where there is space on prison wings for one-to-one interventions with prisoners to promote their rehabilitation, and this is not commonplace. Governors have new and competing priorities, which often means that OMiC does not get the attention that it requires.

Staff shortages are high in some prisons and probation regions, and this undermines the delivery of a high-quality service. Staff shortages in prisons mean that keywork meetings do not take place often enough, as staff are detailed to other duties. Staff shortages in the community cause delays in community offender managers (COMs) being able to meet individuals before they are released, to establish a constructive working relationship and provide enough support for release. Although the pre-release handover of case responsibility from the prison to the probation service in the community is a critical aspect of the OMiC model, handover had not been done well enough in 60 per cent of cases. We found shortfalls in public protection work, information sharing and relationship building between prison staff, probation workers and the prisoner.

We found a disconnect between keywork and offender management by prison offender managers (POMs) and COMs), and not enough communication between keyworkers and POMs. As a result, there is a lack of focus on the prisoner's progress throughout their sentence. Some keyworkers provided valuable support to individual prisoners, although there was too little connection between sentence planning and work with individual prisoners to help their resettlement back into the community.

There is too little in place to support an individual's progression through their custodial journey. Most prisoners were not completing any targeted work in custody to reduce their risk of reoffending, in part because of delays in being moved to the most appropriate prison at the right stage of their journey. For example, some individuals were being released directly from prisons without resettlement services in place. We found that the level and nature of pre-release contact with prisoners were sufficient to reduce reoffending in only just over a third of the cases we inspected.

Resettlement activity is not coordinated effectively between prison and probation practitioners and pre-release teams. There is confusion around responsibilities and role boundaries, leaving some prisoners anxious about their release. This has been exacerbated by the impact of probation unification on the delivery of resettlement services. Continued recovery from Covid-19 restrictions provides an opportunity to reset expectations and strengthen how prisons and probation services work together to help individuals to transform their lives and to protect the public better. In the light of our findings, we have made several recommendations, including a fundamental review of the role of POMs, which, if followed, we hope will help both prisons and probation services to achieve this aim better.

Justin Russell
HM Chief Inspector of Probation
November 2022

Charlie Taylor
HM Chief Inspector of Prisons
November 2022

Contextual facts

79,773	Prisoners in England and Wales, as of 31 March 2022.[1] This represents a rise of two per cent compared with the same period in the previous year.
240,922	People on probation, as of 31 March 2022.[2] This number increased by seven per cent compared with the same period in the previous year.
117	Offender Management in Custody (OMiC) is operational in all 117 prisons in England and Wales.
8,137	Prisoners eligible for OMiC handover during August 2021 – May 2022.[3]

Full-time-equivalent staffing position by grade[2]

66%	The percentage of head of offender management delivery/senior probation officers in post (135.8) against the OMiC staffing target (206).
79%	The percentage of probation officers in post in prisons (625.8) against the OMiC staffing target (797).
82%	The percentage of prison officer offender managers in post (820.9) against the OMiC staffing target (1,001).

Keywork delivery[2]

58%	The percentage of prisoners seen for a keywork session in May 2022.
25%	The percentage of keywork sessions delivered against the prescribed model in May 2022.

[2] *Offender Management Statistics Quarterly*: *January to March 2022*. GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

[3] OMiC dashboard, HM Prison and Probation Service, unpublished – June 2022

Executive summary

Introduction

The Offender Management in Custody (OMiC) model was implemented from April 2018, starting in the male closed prison estate, as a framework to coordinate and sequence an individual's journey through custody and after release. The model seeks to put prisoners and a rehabilitative culture in prisons at the heart of offender management work, to reduce reoffending and help former prisoners to reintegrate into the community.

For those in custody, the model transfers responsibility for offender management from the community into prisons. Probation staff now work in the prison alongside prison offender managers, led by a senior probation officer. Each prisoner is allocated a keyworker (prison officer) to guide, support and coach them through their custodial sentence.

OMiC is now in place across the prison estate, and this joint inspection of the model by the prison and probation inspectorates identifies the progress made to date, and areas for improvement. The thematic inspection has taken full account of the operational restrictions and exceptional delivery model arrangements that have been put in place throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

This inspection will be completed in two parts. Here, we report on phase one: work undertaken pre-release in custody. Phase two: work undertaken in the community will be completed in October and November 2022. At that point, we will inspect the work of probation services in the community and review initial and intermediate outcomes for the cases we inspected in custody.

Methodology

Our pre-release fieldwork was completed in eight prisons in April and May 2022. These included a privately run adult male prison; a prison and young offender institution (YOI) which included young men serving long-term sentences; a high-security prison; and a prison and YOI for women aged 18 and over. We included reception prisons that house prisoners who are taken directly from court in the local area (sentenced or on remand), and training prisons holding long-term and high-security prisoners. Inspection sites included the three main prison functions: reception, training and resettlement.

We jointly inspected 100 cases, including adult male prisoners, adult female prisoners and young offenders. We interviewed the community offender managers (COMs), keyworkers and prison offender managers (POMs) responsible for the cases in our sample. In each prison, we held meetings and focus groups, including with a prison director, prison governors, heads of offender management units, heads of offender management services, heads of offender management delivery, probation senior leaders, interventions leads, POMs, COMs and keyworkers. Following our prison visits, we held a week of meetings with senior leaders from prisons and probation services with responsibility for OMiC.

We commissioned the organisation Doing What Really Matters (DWRM) to interview individuals who fall under OMiC management. Consultants with lived experience of the criminal justice system interviewed 72 individuals, to gather their views and experiences of OMiC.

The views of those interviewed made clear that people in prison have a voice and want it to be listened to throughout their sentence, and incorporated into sentence planning, risk reduction strategy and post-release arrangements. Most people said that they did not want to be stuck in a cycle of offending. They wanted help and support to emerge from prison with the ability to take an active part in society and enjoy a range of identities of which they can be proud. As one participant said:

> *"I would just like not to be forgotten".*

A copy of the full Doing What Really Matters report can be found here. A detailed breakdown of our methodology can be found in Annexe 2.

Leadership, implementation of the model, and staffing

Most prison and probation leaders, at all levels of responsibility, are committed to implementing the OMiC model. Overall, there are good relationships between prison directors and governors and probation senior leaders, who are now working more closely together because of the OMiC model.

However, governance arrangements are complex, given that probation regions and prison groups are not coterminous, and this led to some gaps in direct ownership of policy and in translating strategy into practice.

Organisational culture is distinct between prisons and probation services at all levels and at different sites. We found an overriding emphasis in prisons on security and the maintenance of basic regime delivery, sometimes at the expense of prioritising keywork and a rehabilitative approach. Relationships between prison POMs and probation POMs varied. In some prisons, probation and prison staff worked closely together, supporting each other to manage high caseloads, while in others there were tensions between the two staff groups.

Implementation of OMiC has been hampered by Covid-19 restrictions, staff shortages and practitioners' lack of understanding of the model. Inspectors found serious flaws in the current model, including a lack of time for COMs to establish effective working relationships with individual prisoners before their release. It was also difficult to see how a fixed model can be applied equally well to different types of prison. The existing model did not fit well with reception prisons, given the high number of releases and competition for prison places, or with training prisons, where individuals were released directly back into the community without sufficient resettlement support.

Staffing levels are at crisis point in some prisons and probation regions. Shortages of prison staff left little capacity for keywork, as maintaining security and basic regime delivery were given the highest priority. Staff shortages in the community are leading to high workloads and community cases being prioritised over individuals still in custody. As a result, pre-release resettlement work often begins late and insufficient time is available to secure settled accommodation on release.

Information and communications technology (ICT) has developed under OMiC, with the introduction of systems to enable POM and keyworker records to be visible to COMs on probation systems, and this is welcomed. However, there remain barriers to information sharing, including keyworkers not having access to sentence plans and not all prison POMs having access to probation systems. This led to gaps in information sharing between practitioners, and work to keep other people safe not being fully informed. There was a lack of space on prison wings for one-to-one work with prisoners, which limited the opportunity to engage in focused work and address any concerns.

Offender management in custody – delivery

Overall, keywork in the male estate was not connected to offender management and was experienced by some keyworkers and prisoners as little more than a basic welfare check. Insufficient attention was paid to the quality of keywork in relation to helping prisoners to make constructive use of their time in prison and to make progress throughout their sentence. By contrast, keywork worked well in the inspected women's prison, building on existing good relationships and staff expertise.

The probation POM role in prisons did not always add value as intended under the model and we found significant difficulties with the handover process. POMs and managers were not always clear about pre-handover assessment requirements, and POMs did not always fully prepare individual prisoners to work with COMs. Despite transfer of almost 800 probation officers to POM roles in prisons, we found very little added value from these posts. They had little direct contact with prisoners and were not clear about their roles and responsibilities under the OMiC model. Handovers to COMs were often of poor quality and little work was completed to prepare prisoners

to work with COMs for their resettlement. We found little contact by POMs with prisoners, to work with and complete sentence planning with them.

COMs were hard pressed because of staff shortages and high workloads, and this impacted on their capacity to prioritise pre-release work. As a result, there was insufficient contact with prisoners. The model, as currently delivered, does not allow sufficient time for COMs to establish constructive working relationships with individual prisoners and to make the necessary referrals for accommodation and support on release. Effective handover from POM to COM took place in less than half of the cases inspected (40 per cent). Individual prisoners told us that they felt *"in the dark"* about who their offender managers were, and about the OMiC process. They felt some resentment over their *"outside probation officer"* only appearing toward the very end of their prison sentence. The level and nature of pre-release contact were sufficient to reduce reoffending and to support desistance in only just over a third of cases.

A team-around-the-person approach works well to support individuals' desistance. This requires coordinated offender management, involving POMs, keyworkers, COMs and relevant agencies. We saw very few examples of this whole-system approach. Work to promote desistance was hampered by insufficient identification of, and planning for, offending-related needs, and a lack of service delivery in critical areas such as housing, and education, training and employment (ETE).

Work to manage the potential risks to the public posed by people released from prison requires significant improvement. There was insufficient information sharing with the police about domestic abuse perpetrators, and with social services regarding child safeguarding. Domestic abuse enquiries with the police were undertaken in only 35 per cent of cases where they were required. More use could have been made of the offender personality disorder (OPD) pathway to inform service delivery for those posing a high risk of harm to others.

Management oversight was effective in less than a quarter of cases, meaning that gaps in delivery were not being addressed.

Interventions and planning for release

We found no national strategy for delivering accredited programmes in prisons. Segmentation data on the characteristics of people in prison is relied on to inform the targeting of interventions in prisons, but this does not provide an up-to-date picture of offending-related needs. Programmes are allocated to prisons based on previous take-up. As a result, prisoners do not always have access to the right interventions at the right time in their custodial journey.

There are not enough accredited programmes running in prisons to change the attitudes, thinking and behaviour that may lead individuals to reoffend. Programme delivery has been hampered by Covid-19 restrictions, a shortage of programme staff and a lack of capacity to provide programmes at an earlier stage in custodial sentences. In many cases, programmes had not been delivered to individuals or had been completed too late to consolidate learning before the prisoner's release.

Some developing services were in place to support prisoners. These included employment hubs, mentoring, counselling and specialist services for young adult offenders and care leavers. However, there were significant gaps in service delivery around ETE and mental health. This led to a lack of opportunity for prisoners to make constructive use of their time in custody. Sufficient services to meet prisoner needs in relation to drugs, mental health, ETE, and finance, benefits and debt were delivered against the identified needs in less than half of the cases we inspected.

Resettlement planning was fragmented. There was confusion about the roles and responsibilities of POMs, keyworkers, COMs and pre-release teams, which led to some tensions between practitioners. Not enough plans were made to support resettlement, as a result of the late start of much pre-release work and a lack of coordinated service delivery. This left many individual prisoners feeling anxious about their release.

Securing settled accommodation on release was a significant challenge. We found that sufficient services were delivered to address accommodation needs in fewer than two-thirds of cases.

Provision of housing varied across probation regions and local areas, and good use was made of supported housing provision where this was available. Some individuals were due to leave prison without secure accommodation on the first night of release, and without proof of identification or access to financial support. Without these basics being in place, it is difficult to see how desistance from further offending will be achieved.

Recommendations

HM Prison and Probation Service should:

1. review the OMiC model to ensure that:
    a. there is an element of flexibility in how it is deployed in different establishments (for example, reception, resettlement and training prisons), as in the high-security and women's estate
    b. responsibility and accountability for delivery clearly sits with the head of offender management delivery
    c. handover from POM to COM takes place at the same point before release, removing the distinction between National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Company legacy cases
    d. COMs have sufficient time to build effective working relationships with individuals, to inform parole reports and to allow sufficient time for referrals before release
    e. keyworkers are directly involved in sentence planning, and support prisoners and POMs to achieve their targets
    f. resettlement activity is coordinated and fully integrated with OMiC
2. undertake a fundamental review of the probation POM role, to ensure a clear focus on the prisoner's progress in custody and preparation for release
3. ensure that prison and probation service leaders at all levels work together to facilitate the successful transition of prisoners to the community
4. ensure that prison and probation ICT systems are further aligned, to support full information sharing between keyworkers, POMs and COMs
5. provide each prison with a directory of interventions, to help staff and prisoners to identify progression routes
6. carry out a strategic prisoner needs analysis, to set a baseline against which to commission and deliver services
7. establish a strategic forum for resettlement and a regional performance system to monitor progress.

Prison directors/governors should:

8. ensure that the prison regime provides the protected time needed for prison officers to undertake the keyworker role
9. ensure that offender management staff in every prison have private spaces for personalised one-to-one meetings between prisoners and their POM and keyworker
10. co-locate offender management units and psychology and resettlement services where possible
11. ensure that there is a strong link between keywork, offender management and resettlement work.

Regional probation directors should:

12. ensure that there are sufficient staffing levels for senior probation officers in prison, probation POMs and COMs
13. ensure that COMs understand their role in relation to prison-based pre-release teams, and that this may vary between prisons

14. ensure that probation services work with training and resettlement prisons, to address fully the resettlement needs of those who are due for release
15. ensure that Professional Qualification in Probation training equips new learners to deliver OMiC
16. ensure that all required OMiC tasks are completed in a timely way.

1. Introduction

1.1. Why this thematic?

Offender management is central to HM Prison and Probation Service's (HMPPS) aim to reduce reoffending and protect the public. The Offender Management in Custody (OMiC) model brings together the skills of prison and probation staff to help achieve this aim. Previous joint inspections of the work undertaken to prepare prisoners for release and resettle them in the community identified significant shortfalls and poor outcomes, including reoffending and return to prison (HM Inspectorate of Probation 2016, 2017).

Four years on from implementation, OMiC is largely in place across the prison estate. This inspection provides an opportunity to consider the impact of OMiC, pre-release outcomes and any developing effective practice. The joint inspection of OMiC also helps to inform HM Inspectorate of Probation's and HM Inspectorate of Prisons' approach to inspecting rehabilitation and release planning.

1.2. Background

Work began on the OMiC model in November 2016, when significant investment was secured to make transformational improvements to the way that prisoners are supported through their sentence. HMPPS received £100 million to recruit 2,500 new prison officers to improve safety and deliver keywork. Training was provided to ensure that staff delivering offender management in custody were suitably skilled. In addition, the current OMiC staffing target places over 200 senior probation officers (SPOs), and almost 800 probation officers in prisons.

At that time, probation services were delivered by a National Probation Service (NPS) and 21 privately run Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs). However, on 26 June 2021, all NPS divisions and CRCs merged to become a new, unified public sector Probation Service, divided into 12 regions. It was the fourth major restructuring of probation services in 20 years. Prison resettlement services previously delivered by the CRCs in 86 resettlement prisons via embedded resettlement teams were discontinued. Responsibility for resettlement services transferred to regional probation directors, with key interventions delivered by commissioned rehabilitative service providers.

What is OMiC?

The OMiC model has a vision that everyone in prison should have the opportunity to transform their lives by using their time in custody constructively, to reduce their risk of harm and reoffending, plan their resettlement and improve their prospects of becoming a safe, law-abiding and valuable member of society. OMiC intends to put rehabilitation at the centre of custodial and post-release work to reduce reoffending and promote community reintegration.

Key aspects of the model include the following.

Keywork

Keywork is a core part of prison officers' work. The role of the keyworker is to develop constructive, motivational relationships with prisoners, supporting them to make appropriate choices and giving them hope and responsibility for their own development through one-to-one keywork sessions. Keyworkers are trained to coach and support approximately six prisoners through their custodial sentence and link in with other key stakeholders where necessary. The expectation is that most prisoners receive 45 minutes of keywork per week, which includes an individual session and the writing-up of comprehensive notes on the prison national offender management information system (P-NOMIS).

Case management

Case management relates to offender management activities undertaken in both custody and the community for people who are serving a custodial sentence. A distinguishing feature of the model is the responsibility for offender management moving from the Probation Service community team into custody for individuals serving a longer term. The model introduced a dedicated role of prison offender manager (POM). The POM, who can be either a probation officer (for higher-risk cases) or a band 4 prison officer (for low- and medium-risk cases), undertakes all relevant offender management activities, including sentence planning and progression, categorisation, public protection screening, risk assessment, screening for interventions, release on temporary licence assessments, applications for home detention curfew (HDC), and handover to the community offender manager (COM). Case management went live in October 2019, which is when staff were moved into post. The target staffing model is for 797 probation POMs, alongside 1,001 prison POMs. Vacant POM posts will be filled via recruitment campaigns.

Handover from prison to the community

Responsibility for offender management is handed over to a Probation Service COM during the pre-release or first parole phase. Handover should take place at 7.5 months from the earliest release date for legacy NPS cases and at 12 weeks from the earliest release date for legacy CRC cases. The intention of the handover period is to allow relationships to develop between the COM, POM and prisoner, with support from the keyworker. It is expected that public protection tasks are completed and that prisoners are prepared for release by addressing their resettlement needs.

Senior management responsibility

An SPO from the Probation Service is deployed in the role of head of offender management delivery. This new role provides professional oversight of the quality of offender management delivery in the prison and is responsible for the line management of POMs. It is managed by the prison governor, allowing accountability for offender management to lie with him or her.

The head of offender management services is a prison governor grade responsible for the integration of offender management across the prison. They ensure that keywork is delivered and are responsible for offender management processes, including release on temporary licence and HDC arrangements.

Performance management

Performance is monitored through the national OMiC dashboard, and monthly reports are provided to the OMiC senior leadership forum (SLF). Measures include Excellence and Quality in Processes (EQuiP) use (frequency of staff accessing OMiC guidance), training completion rates, staffing levels, keywork delivery, redeployment of prison POMs, timeliness of handover meetings to the COM and the offender assessment system (OASys) assessment backlog. Case management performance and quality measures for both keywork and case management are in development.

OMiC implementation

The model was first rolled out in the male closed prison estate, starting with keywork, in 2018. Case management followed in October 2019 but was paused in March 2020 because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Services have since resumed.

The model has further been rolled out, as described below.

The male open prison estate

OMiC was implemented across the male open estate in March 2021. Key differences in implementation in the male open estate, compared with the closed estate, include a greater focus on resettlement and reintegration into the community, the absence of keywork and continuation of

the personal office scheme or other support where this is already in place. The male open estate was not within the scope of this thematic inspection.

The women's prison estate

A bespoke integrated offender management model has been introduced for the women's estate. Delivery began on 30 April 2021.

The model builds on the following:

- the relationships already in place between women and staff
- the different needs of women and the different challenges and opportunities in the female estate, where self-harm and the complexity of some needs is of significant concern
- keywork and case management time being allocated to women based on their level of need, as well as on their risk of harm
- women who are assessed as having the greatest need receiving an enhanced case management service, which includes an additional 45 minutes a week with their POM; they do not receive keywork
- all other women receiving 45 minutes with their keyworker each week.

Information and communications technology (ICT)

A digital prison system (DPS) has been introduced to develop information sharing. Keyworkers and POMs are allocated to prisoners on the system and key milestones are highlighted, including completion of handover. DPS OMiC case notes are used to record offender management activity. OMiC keyworker and POM case notes are visible to COMs in nDelius, the community case management system. However, prison staff are not able to access COM records.

Other resettlement support services

In addition to OMiC, a number of other staff in prison and in the community provide pre-release advice and support to prisoners – which has created a complicated landscape of different services, with blurred boundaries between some of them and confusion on behalf of some of the prisoners and staff we spoke to as to who was doing what.

Following the unification of probation services, for example, the majority of former Through the Gate staff have been transferred into probation regions, to be deployed at the discretion of the regional probation director, and in some regions they have remained in prison undertaking similar tasks as previously. Under the new resettlement approach, all resettlement prisons will have an embedded resettlement provision – working with both longer- and shorter-sentence prisoners, including those not covered by OMiC arrangements – unless agreed regionally by prison and probation service senior managers.

Pre-release teams provide services to all prisoners, including unconvicted and out-of-area prisoners. This includes services that are not available via commissioned rehabilitative services, such as finance, benefits and debt services and accommodation for unconvicted people in prison.

Non-resettlement prisons will have a regular and consistent in-reach service. Short-term sentence teams have also been established in the community to work with prisoners serving less than 10 months at the point of sentence, and these are now in place in the Wales region, partially in place in the Yorkshire and the Humber, and Greater Manchester regions and will be fully implemented in eight more regions by summer 2023. They will be implemented in the final region (London) later, when the required staffing levels are achieved. The role of these teams is to work with those serving shorter sentences, to ensure that services are provided, relationships are built and transitions are supported.

Externally commissioned rehabilitative services, delivered by a range of voluntary and private sector providers in prison, include accommodation; education, training and employment; finance, benefits and debt; dependency and recovery; personal wellbeing; women's services and services for young adults. The intention is that, for those on licence, the appropriate interventions are available to support prisoners' transition back into the community.

We found in our inspection visits that some COMs had not fully recognised the impact of the loss of Through the Gate services and did not pick up resettlement work in a timely way, often because of workload pressures. This meant that, in the period leading up to their release, prisoners were left anxious and uncertain about their future. Practitioners did not understand the relationship between OMiC and resettlement well, particularly the respective roles and responsibilities for delivering resettlement work.

The roles of the new resettlement teams have caused some tensions. Some POMs feel that resettlement staff overstep the boundaries of their role when they get involved in managing risk, which is seen as POMs' work. There was limited evidence of joint working or effective working relationships between POMs, COMs and resettlement staff, with some staff feeling that there is duplication of work. Oversight of resettlement activity currently falls to resettlement managers, and strategic oversight by SPOs could assist with this.

Annexe 4 shows a prisoner's journey in the male closed estate, including prisoner eligibility for OMiC, sentence planning and pre-release processes.

Research and evaluation strategy

The HMPPS strategy and proposed research and evaluation approach have been designed to take account of the ongoing complexities and pressures in the system and the unpredictability of the pandemic and resourcing across the estate. The model is not currently being delivered as intended as the estate moves through the Covid-19 restriction and recovery stages, so there is huge variation in the delivery of the model. HMPPS is currently unable to evaluate the impact of the model robustly and meaningfully or to isolate any impact that OMiC may have had on a range of outcomes. It will, however, use other methodologies that will further its understanding of the OMiC model and what has been working well and not so well.

Research and evaluation priorities include:

1. development and finalisation of performance measures
2. evidence review and academic input
3. implementation and delivery of OMiC in the male closed estate
4. review of the OMiC model in the women's estate.

Previous inspections

Three aggregate prison offender management inspection (POMI) reports were published jointly by HM Inspectorate of Probation and HM Inspectorate of Prisons between 2010 and 2013 (Criminal Justice Joint Inspection (CJJI), 2011, 2012, 2013).

In the second aggregate report (CJJI, 2012), inspectors found a wide variation in the role, importance and effectiveness of offender management units (OMUs). They reported that, although many prisons paid good attention to 'resettlement' needs, such as personal and social circumstances, they did not pay sufficient attention to rehabilitation and public protection. Several recommendations were made to make the OMU the centre of activities to manage sentences.

The third aggregate report (CJJI, 2013) highlighted that little progress had been made in implementing the recommendations from the previous report, and that resettlement and rehabilitation outcomes for prisoners had not improved. Organisational changes to offender management arrangements had failed to address the culture of poor communication between prison departments, and this undermined the potential of offender management.

The report also noted that prison officer offender supervisors continued to lack guidance and supervision about what their role should entail. Community-based offender managers were not able to drive sentence planning, as they lacked personal involvement with prisoners and knowledge about prisons. It was also found that there were too few structured programmes available to challenge offending behaviour and promote rehabilitation.

As such, the inspectorates stated that they had come to the 'reluctant conclusion' (POMI, 2013: p.4) that the offender management model was not working in prisons, and that the current position was no longer sustainable and should be subject to fundamental review. It noted that most prison staff did not understand it, and that the community-based offender managers, who largely did, had neither involvement in the process nor the internal knowledge of the institutions to make it work.

More recently, Through the Gate inspections (HM Inspectorate of Probation, 2016, 2017), conducted jointly with HM Inspectorate of Prisons, provided an early indication that pre-release work by CRCs was not meeting the immediate resettlement needs of prisoners. A further inspection of post-release supervision for short-term prisoners found no material change in reoffending, and that almost one in four were recalled to prison (HM Inspectorate of Probation, 2018). By 2020/2021, there were some welcome early signs of improvement – albeit from a low baseline; the government had invested an additional £150 million in probation services and we found that the extra £22 million per year for CRCs had made a real difference to Through the Gate services for released prisoners.

Two-thirds of prison inspection reports published between May 2021 and January 2022 identified either a loss of resettlement service provision or a lack of clarity in the delivery of resettlement services since the unification of probation services. This particularly impacted prisoners who were remanded awaiting trial or sentencing, as resettlement partners no longer provided them with support or advice.

1.3. Aims and objectives

The inspection sought to answer the following questions:

- Do leadership and facilities management support the effective delivery of OMiC?
- Are staff within OMiC empowered to deliver a high-quality, personalised and responsive service to individuals?
- Is a comprehensive range of high-quality services in place, supporting a tailored and responsive service to individuals subject to OMiC?
- Does OMiC effectively support the individual's desistance?
- Does work done under OMiC effectively support the safety of other people?
- Is OMiC delivery personalised and coordinated, addressing an individual's resettlement needs?

The scope of this thematic inspection included individuals who are subject to OMiC in the male closed estate and women's estate who have over 10 months to serve at the point of sentence, have been assigned to a POM and have progressed to handover to a COM.

1.4. Report outline

Chapter	Content
2. Leadership, implementing the model and staffing	This chapter considers leadership at a national, regional and local level. It reflects on organisational culture in prison and probation, and the implementation of OMiC. It examines the prisons and probation staffing resource available to deliver OMiC. It examines ICT and the facilities available to support delivery of the model.
3. Offender management in custody – delivery	This chapter considers how OMiC is put into practice at an operational level by POMs, keyworkers and COMs. It examines the impact of frontline delivery on desistance and keeping other people safe.
4. Interventions and planning for release	This chapter considers needs analysis and delivery of accredited programmes and services to individual prisoners. It examines resettlement planning and release arrangements.

2. Leadership, implementing the model and staffing

This chapter considers leadership at a national, regional and local level. It reflects on organisational culture in prison and probation services, and the impact of this on the implementation of OMiC. It examines the prison and probation staffing resource available to enable delivery. It reviews ICT and the facilities available to support delivery of the model.

2.1. Leadership

OMiC is overseen at a national HMPPS level by the OMiC programme board, which comprises senior leaders with responsibility for prisons and probation services across England and Wales. The OMiC national team in the transforming delivery in prisons directorate in HMPPS provides monthly reports to the programme board on keywork, case management, the women's estate, performance (OMiC dashboard) and evaluation. The dashboard was limited as it did not report on the quality of keywork or case management, or on outcomes for individuals subject to OMiC.

Most senior prison and probation service leaders are committed to making OMiC work, in the belief that it could be a game changer for offender management. The model is seen as potentially transformational, provided that it is implemented correctly. Getting it right is contingent on OMiC being at the heart of work in prisons and, as one senior leader told us, *"being at the front and centre of the management of offenders and the management of prisons"*. Many of the national leaders we spoke to remained hopeful and expectant about the potential of OMiC to reduce reoffending and promote community integration.

Some national leaders were conscious that OMiC has been in use for many years, during which time not all of its core elements have been embedded. The model remained fixed during the time in which the probation service was being transformed and unified. Full implementation of the model has been hindered by the Covid-19 pandemic and the need to implement exceptional delivery models (EDMs) in prisons and probation services, to keep staff and prisoners as safe as possible. EDMs have included the temporary suspension of keywork and temporary withdrawal of probation POMs from prisons.

At a regional level, implementation is overseen by SLFs, joint governance bodies led by regional probation directors and prison group directors. Some prison governors attend SLFs, and these forums have been instrumental in bringing together regional prison and probation leaders and establishing positive working relationships. We found that most prison governors and probation senior leaders have commitment and an enthusiastic attitude towards the OMiC model and its implementation.

It was less clear how SLFs can translate the OMiC vision and strategy into practice. There was a gap in carrying out some of the SLFs' decisions in practice, exacerbated by the make-up of SLFs, which caused challenges around implementing changes quickly enough and being clear where responsibilities lie. Governance arrangements for OMiC are complex because prisons and probation services cover different geographical areas at a local and regional level. For example, prison governors may be represented by prison group directors on SLFs and therefore cannot always engage directly in regional strategic arrangements.

The Greater Manchester probation region has recognised the gap between strategic direction and local implementation, and is developing an executive board to bridge the divide. In a similar vein, the South West probation region has helpfully established a diversity and inclusion subgroup within the SLF, to provide a clearer link between strategy and practice. The integrated structure of prisons and probation in Wales (HMPPS in Wales) provided clearer governance arrangements and leadership at a regional level, and promoted close strategic working relationships.

2.2. Organisational culture

We found a culture of two organisations at all levels, one prison and one probation, and OMiC was seen in some prisons as a probation objective. Prison regimes' main focus was on maintaining security, and in some prisons this meant that they did not prioritise keywork. Keywork was initially promoted to governors as providing an increase in staff numbers and a vehicle for upskilling prison officer grades to focus on changing people's lives. However, we saw that this is difficult to implement in understaffed establishments and where some staff did not see their role extending beyond security requirements. Some newer staff, in particular, have become disillusioned with the lack of opportunity to offer direct support to people in prison.

At a local level, communication from leaders is mixed. Probation POMs in some prisons were unclear about whether they were allowed to go onto the wing, whether they needed to be escorted by prison officers and whether they were permitted to take laptop computers onto wings. We found some tensions between prison POMs and probation POMs, including some resentment that probation POMs had been allowed to work from home during EDM arrangements.

Some senior leaders recognised that a different culture and mindset is required to make OMiC work. We found that SPOs had a positive influence on work in prisons as heads of offender management delivery, and as valued members of prison senior management teams. However, SPOs and OMUs are not in a position to influence prison culture fully by themselves. Putting offender management at the heart of prisons requires consistent messaging from national leaders that keywork and offender management are integral to prison security, and that the two objectives are not mutually exclusive.

The rationale for introducing OMiC included improving safety and security in prison. In practice, the connection between prison safety and offender management has not been fully realised, and the two objectives have not always been intrinsically linked. One prison, for example, has taken a pragmatic decision to prioritise unlocking prisoners from cells rather than delivering keywork. Keywork is delivered only when there are sufficient staff, as Covid-19 has significantly reduced the number of staff available. A strategic decision has been taken *"not to disguise what we can and cannot do"*.

HMPPS does not operate as one organisation, in practice. Although OMiC has provided a positive means of bringing together prisons and probation services, it has also highlighted some of the differences in culture and priorities. The HMPPS structure has two separate lines of management accountability for prisons and probation services. Potential solutions put forward by senior leaders included putting overarching directors of offender management in place at a regional level, which they felt could drive a more cohesive culture through a more regionalised HMPPS, with a single director for prisons and probation services in each region and a single senior management team focused on reducing reoffending and public protection, potentially leading to a more integrated whole-system approach. Responsibility and accountability between heads of offender management service and heads of offender management delivery for OMiC delivery in prisons were not clear.

The level of confidence in prison and probation service senior leadership teams is mixed. At HMP Aylesbury, we heard of their strategic probation service link, and felt confident that they had access to the appropriate support to deliver OMiC. By contrast, in another prison, relationships appeared fragmented, with the governor reporting no input from probation service senior leadership, and probation service senior leaders disagreeing with this. We still heard examples of tensions between prison and probation staff in some prisons.

Probation service senior leaders (everyone above SPO level) were not visible in custody and it would be beneficial to staff at all levels for this to change. We heard that some probation POMs and prison-based SPOs felt isolated from their probation service colleagues in the community. Culture change has been further hampered by the delay in transferring line management of heads of offender management delivery to prison governors. This has meant that governors rely on heads of offender management delivery to report to them rather than having direct line management.

2.3. Implementing OMiC

OMiC has not been fully implemented as intended, for a variety of reasons, including the impact of Covid-19 and lack of staff in both prisons and probation services. There is a need for ongoing strategic oversight of OMiC implementation, particularly to consolidate relationships between prisons and probation services, and to continue to embed OMiC within men's and women's prisons. However, OMiC implementation leads in both the community and custody have been removed, which in our view is premature.

Risks to OMiC delivery are appropriately identified at a regional and local level in SLF risk registers. These include Covid-19, staffing, keywork and effective case management, although it was not always clear how local delivery plans would address these risks. The lack of staff continues to limit what can be delivered, and this deficit is likely to remain for at least the next two years.

Keyworkers are the linchpin of OMiC, and senior leaders in HMPPS fully recognise the centrality and potential value of keyworking. However, without the full support of both prison and probation services, the value of keyworking has not been realised. It was introduced at an early stage in the implementation of OMiC, in isolation from other components of the model, and this may have contributed to the disconnect that we found between keywork and offender management.

At the prisons we visited, keyworkers were not integrated into offender management and were often unable to get prompt answers from OMUs to questions that they posed on behalf of prisoners. This situation led to inefficiency and tensions, with prisoners asking several members of staff the same question. Delivery of keywork sessions was also affected by keyworkers being deployed to operational duties. For example, as Covid-19 restrictions have been lifted, staff have been required to carry out other tasks, such as moving prisoners to reopened education and employment workshops.

We found that there was more of an emphasis on meeting targets (quantity) than on the quality of services being delivered. This was particularly the case in keywork, OASys assessments and completion of POM to COM handovers. Many staff we spoke to reported feeling disappointed and frustrated by this, and felt that it was not representative of the job they had signed up to do. POMs, in particular, spoke of their role increasingly being a 'desk job'.

We saw some evidence of heads of offender management services and custody managers quality-assuring keywork sessions. In HMP Cardiff, a custody manager supported keywork on one wing, including through monitoring keywork case note entries and providing feedback through supervision. We also saw evidence of useful feedback being given to keyworkers from a custody manager in HMP Lancaster Farms. However, these were the exception rather than the rule.

A difficulty with implementing the model is the shortage of probation staff in the community. High workloads lead to late engagement by COMs, leaving little time to establish constructive working relationships with people in prison or to make timely referrals for accommodation and post-release support. Some POMs are becoming exasperated at frequently having to chase COMs. Hard-pressed COMs told us that they had to prioritise addressing the immediate needs of community cases, at the expense of focusing on individuals in custody.

Some prison governors struggled to implement OMiC fully, as a result of the specific needs of different types of prison. We found that the model did not fit well into local prisons because of the incompatibility between OMiC and offender flows (the transfer of prisoners to the appropriate stage of their custodial journey). The POMs' responsibilities were often not clear between transferring prisons. There were also difficulties in implementing OMiC in training prisons, which were releasing individuals directly to the community without sufficient resettlement provision in place.

The OMiC model in women's prisons results in a different service for prisoners, depending on the level of complexity. Women prisoners designated as of low and medium complexity had keywork delivered by a prison officer, and women assessed as highly complex received additional time each week with their prison or probation POM, depending on the tier of the individual. This is decided by

a complexity tool, which was described to us by practitioners and managers as difficult to use and which did not always allocate women to the correct complexity level.

Despite such problems, in our view the adaptation of the OMiC model to tailor it to different types of prison, such as high security, the women's estate and the male open estate, has been appropriate, and this approach should be extended further. A greater degree of flexibility would better serve the needs of differing establishments and prisoners.

2.4. Staffing

Significant gaps in staffing meant that prisons were not yet able to accommodate keyworking as it was intended. This undermined the OMiC model, as it meant that POMs were not supported in their work by keyworkers. At a national level, there is a need to recruit 6,000 prison officers, 1,500 operational support grades (prisons) and 1,500 probation officers to meet future staffing requirements. It has been especially challenging to compete with other employers in a buoyant marketplace and to retain staff.

All prisons included in the inspection fieldwork were staffed in accordance with their target staffing model for SPOs, except for one prison, which was a third under-resourced. Only three of the eight OMUs were fully staffed with probation POMs; vacancy rates were 56 per cent in HMP Aylesbury, 55 per cent in HMP Highpoint, 33 per cent in HMP Manchester, 20 per cent in HMP Cardiff and 17 per cent in HMP Brixton.

Prison officer POM staffing levels varied, with HMP Aylesbury, HMP Highpoint, HMP Cardiff and HMP Ashfield operating at above their target staffing models to counteract the shortage of probation POMs. HMP Manchester and HMP Brixton were operating at their target staffing level, while HMP/YOI Low Newton had an 18 per cent vacancy rate and HMP Lancaster Farms operated at a 15 per cent vacancy rate. Prisons are striving to staff OMUs with dedicated POMs and are moving towards prison officers in these roles being non-operational.

Over half of the COMs, and half of the POMs, we interviewed thought that their workload was 'not so manageable' or 'not at all manageable'. Over a third of COMs and almost two-thirds of POMs held responsibility for 41 cases or more. Over half of COMs and less than three-quarters of POMs felt that they had received enough input or training to feel sufficiently knowledgeable about the OMiC model.

Working relationships between prison and probation POMs were mixed. There were good working relationships in some prisons, with probation and prison POMs supporting each other with high workloads. However, in other prisons there were ongoing tensions between the two groups because probation POMs had been allowed to work remotely under EDMs. This had led to some feelings of resentment.

Workloads, across the board, were too high for staff to deliver a high-quality service. We saw examples of POMs who held more than 100 cases and were understandably overwhelmed by this workload. There was some evidence of pre-release OASys assessments being completed by COMs, but these varied in quality and were generally insufficient, with fewer than one in three focused on engaging the individual and keeping other people safe. POMs appeared to spend a large amount of time at their desks, and this was echoed by people in prison, who reported that OMU staff were not visible on the wings.

Keyworkers

Almost half of keyworkers felt that their workload was 'not so manageable' or 'not at all manageable'. More than two-thirds held responsibility for up to six cases, in line with the OMiC model. More than two-thirds felt that they were 'not so knowledgeable' or 'not at all knowledgeable' about OMiC, having not received sufficient input or training to understand the model. Less than three-quarters felt that they had the necessary skills, experience and knowledge to support the inspected cases always or most of the time. Wider training in recognising diversity needs and

developing appropriate communication techniques would be valuable – in particular, in working with prisoners with neurodivergent needs.

A significant proportion of prison officers had less than two years' experience. Prison officer entry-level training did not sufficiently equip them to understand OMiC, keyworking or other aspects of the model, such as sentence planning.

We found little understanding of the OMiC model in prisons and in the community, or of the respective roles and responsibilities for implementing it. While the quality of keywork varied, it tended to focus on welfare checks. We saw some good examples of keyworkers supporting individual prisoners with day-to-day life, giving them both positive and negative feedback about their behaviour and helping them to prepare for release.

However, we rarely saw keywork based on sentence plan objectives, and there were few links with the work of POMs. The delivery of keywork had been affected by the pandemic, and the prison estate had adapted the model under the EDM framework. This meant that keywork, particularly during the early part of the pandemic, was suspended, delivered as a welfare session or delivered only to those most in need.

In some prisons, keywork was not being fully delivered because of a shortfall in staffing, while HMP/YOI Low Newton had fully implemented keywork. Generally, keyworkers, who are predominantly residential officers, reported that they were regularly cross-deployed to cover operational shortfalls within the prison. In most prisons, staff were allocated time away from their main role to complete keyworking duties. However, this was not the case in some prisons, where staff were expected to fulfil keyworking duties concurrently with existing roles, adding additional pressures.

The organisation of keywork meant that prisoners were to be seen weekly, except for those in the high-security estate. Allocation of weekly keywork sessions for every individual did not always fulfil a clear purpose, as sometimes very little had changed for the individual from week to week. In our view, there should be scope for heads, offender managers and keyworkers to use professional judgement to decide on whether weekly or fortnightly keywork would best serve the individual's needs. Staff delivering keywork, and some prisoners described keywork as a tick-box exercise, as staff felt they had to cover certain topics or points for it to be an accepted keyworker entry.

This was particularly evident in one prison, where staff not only had to deliver their own keywork sessions for prisoners on their caseload, but also had to complete this work for other prisoners, whose keyworker was not available, which put them under additional pressure and had little value for the individuals concerned. We judged management oversight, including of the quality of keywork, to be effective in less than a quarter of cases.

2.5. ICT and facilities

Meetings with prisoners were held on the wings, and there was a lack of dedicated space to ensure that personal conversations could take place with due regard to keeping prisoners safe. Most meetings were unplanned, and more purposeful and planned contact by POMs would give prisoners a greater sense of the value of these meetings, particularly if they could be arranged to take place in a dedicated space.

The design and layout of most prisons made it difficult to provide a suitable space, both for POMs and keyworkers, to have meetings with prisoners. In this regard, there were some clear parallels between the male and female estate: the prison infrastructure limited the ability to hold personalised meetings, and as establishments were recovering from Covid-19, finding time and space with prisoners was difficult for keyworkers, POMs and other agencies.

Throughout the pandemic, women in HMP/YOI Low Newton had mainly been on their residential unit, which meant that facilitating keywork and POM meetings had been easier. However, we understand that HMP/YOI Low Newton is in a better position potentially than other women's

prisons, as it is appropriately staffed, and staff retention is good. Therefore, this might not be a true representation of the implementation of OMiC in the female estate.

Face-to-face meetings with COMs were infrequent and had largely been replaced by video conferences, even though in-person meetings are the most effective way to build relationships and support desistance. There was a lack of facilities to deliver OMiC effectively – namely, a lack of dedicated interview rooms, telephones and video-link slots. Workload pressures also limited COMs' ability to visit prisons to carry out three-way handover meetings with POMs and prisoners, as encouraged by the model.

Developments in ICT under OMiC have been helpful, including the facility for COMs to view keyworker and POM prison entries on probation computer systems. Use of ICT to share information between POMs and keyworkers is inconsistent. Not all OMiC entries on the DPS transfer to P-NOMIS, and keyworkers are not able to see sentence plans (nDelius and OASys). Some POMs were putting the sentence plan objectives onto DPS, but these should be added as an open entry, and this process was not understood by all POMs and keyworkers.

There is a lack of clarity regarding how OMiC contacts should be recorded in DPS. For example, some staff did not use the correct contact type to ensure that the entry was transferred to nDelius and/or they used a contact type that requires duplication of the entry across different platforms. The handover date was recorded in 'Offender View' in DPS; however, this tab was used infrequently by POMs, and there were times when they did not routinely see it in their daily use of DPS. Having the date in a more prominent position would help to eliminate this problem. The operational guidance on recording OMiC contacts, available on EQuiP, was not well understood by staff.

The advent of new technology has the capacity to improve the level of contact between COMs and prisoners, and with POMs, who are now able to use laptop computers and Microsoft Teams meetings within the prison. We would encourage prison governors and HMPPS to exploit the potential of the new technology further, to improve delivery. The ICT issues found in the male estate were also prevalent in women's prisons, where information was not easily shared, depending on the way it was entered onto the system.

We understand that the Ministry of Justice's (MoJ) digital programme will help to overcome some of the current ICT barriers, including prison and probation staff having separate systems. The MoJ digital strategy 2025 aims to deliver faster services for probation practitioners and to replace legacy digital prison service ICT systems to support rehabilitation (MoJ, 2022). Since April 2022, probation POMs in OMUs have been able to bring their laptop computers into prisons. This is long overdue and has the potential to help with handovers to COMs, and attendance at key external meetings, including Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) meetings. In some prisons, prison POMs did not have access to nDelius because of a lack of available licences. This means that key information could be missed when working with individual prisoners, and the risk of harm posed was not consistently understood by COMs, POMs and keyworkers working with the same prisoner .

2.6. Conclusions and implications

The OMiC model is yet to be implemented as intended across prison and probation services. While the Covid-19 pandemic has undoubtedly had an impact on this, the situation has been compounded by a number of structural barriers. Regional responsibility for delivering OMiC successfully is complicated by the different geographical footprints of prison groups and probation regions, and as a result, strategy has not been consistently translated into practice . We found distinctly different cultures within prisons and probation services, and this has led to some tensions at both management and operational levels. HMPPS is giving consideration to integrating lines of accountability in prisons and probation services, and in our view, this would strengthen the model and offender management.

There are chronic staff shortages in some prisons and probation regions, and this significantly impedes the quality of OMiC delivery. Understaffing in prisons leads to keywork being deprioritised because it is perceived as competing with regime delivery. Understaffing in the community leads to

cases being picked up late, leaving COMs insufficient time to form constructive working relationships with prisoners.

ICT and facilities in prisons also hinder the delivery of OMiC. Keyworkers do not have access to key offender management documents, such as sentence plans, and prison POMs do not have sufficient access to nDelius because they do not have licences to view it on probation systems. As a result, practitioners have difficulty in accessing shared information and are unaware of key risk management information when working with prisoners.

3. Offender management in custody – delivery

This chapter considers how OMiC is put into practice at an operational level by keyworkers, POMs and COMs. It examines the impact of frontline delivery on desistance and keeping other people safe.

3.1. Key workers

Most prisoners had a named keyworker, as prescribed by the OMiC model. The staff delivering keywork were passionate about working with individuals but did not necessarily see the wider vision of the keyworker role within the OMiC model. We found that prisoners were sufficiently helped to feel settled, safe and calm in almost two-thirds of cases. Positive elements of keywork included sessions exploring changes in mood, on promoting better attitudes to staff and on the prisoner's safety in the custodial setting.

Prisoners' issues and concerns were identified and resolved in more than half of cases. Positive examples included building relationships and checking on the progress of referrals. When consistent keywork took place, we saw good relationships developing between the prisoner and keyworkers, leading to conversations about life in prison and progression. In other cases, we saw prisoners raising concerns – for example, about their health or contact with their family; while these were acknowledged, no formal support other than 'monitoring' was offered.

In HMP/YOI Low Newton, the quality of the keywork was high, particularly with highly complex individuals. There was evidence that the POM and keyworker role was helping to motivate and set goals with prisoners to help women progress. We found cases where the keyworker knew the individual from a previous sentence and was able immediately to help her to feel settled and secure. Although keywork was good, staff and managers did not attribute this to the OMiC model, but rather to additional training. The prison had a keyworker from a psychologically informed planned environment (PIPE), where staff have additional training to develop a better psychological understanding of their work. Keywork took place regularly and focused well on release planning and encouraging positive behaviour. While communication between the POM and COM was limited, keywork entries were recorded clearly.

Overall, sessions with keyworkers were not formally structured or planned. We found insufficient evidence that they challenged prisoners' behaviour and attitudes where this was required. We did not see many examples of reviewing any in-cell worksheets or educational materials used by prisoners. Keywork sessions were often presented as a listening exercise by the keyworker, and keywork entries often contained limited information.

Keyworkers made sufficient efforts to encourage positive behaviour and to address negative behaviour. We saw an example of good behaviour management by a keyworker in HMP Lancaster Farms. The keyworker knew that the prisoner wanted to progress to the enhanced privilege level, and gave him both positive and negative feedback about his behaviour, and appropriate encouragement. They monitored his behaviour and liaised with the POM to chase up his progress towards enhanced status. When the prisoner achieved this status, the keyworker reminded him that it is easy to lose it and encouraged him to continue with his positive behaviour.

Under the OMiC model, keyworkers and prisoners are meant to use a voluntary tool called a 'progression plan'. This is designed to complement the sentence plan, rather than replace it. It aims to support keyworkers and prisoners in building a relationship, while helping them to feel safe and secure in custody and set targets. However, we found that this is not being used. We found one progression plan in the 100 cases we inspected, and many keyworkers we spoke to were not aware of its existence. This tool could be particularly useful for prisoners on remand or unsentenced.

Not enough keywork sessions took place with the named keyworker at prescribed or regular intervals. For some prisoners, keywork was characterised by sporadic or ad hoc contact with their named keyworker. This was because of staff shortages, keyworkers being deployed to other duties,

shift patterns or the keyworker working on a different wing to the prisoner concerned. Prison management and movement of prisoners were often barriers to regular keywork.

Although keyworker contact was in many cases frequent, it often lacked depth and meaning, and was more akin to a welfare check than a purposeful interaction. Keywork did not sufficiently feed into offender management or any work undertaken by POMs. Limited contact with POMs meant that keyworkers made little reference to risk or resettlement plans, and therefore inspectors did not consider keywork to be making a meaningful contribution to case management.

We found enough reflection on progress throughout the sentence in a quarter of cases. Keyworkers were not aware of sentence plan targets, as these were not accessible to them through OASys. Some keyworkers that we spoke to did not want to know about details of the offence, as they did not see this information as relevant to their role. This created a risk of keyworkers not being able to identify any offence paralleling behaviour or, as in one poor practice example, encouraging contact with a partner who was a victim of domestic abuse.

Keywork is process driven, and some prisoners did not see the value of weekly conversations. A triaged approach, within specified parameters, in terms of needs, could be more beneficial. Other enablers would include keyworkers being given access to OASys to allow them to understand sentence plans.

Integrating keyworkers within OMUs enables them to build relationships in which roles and responsibilities are well understood. We found that custodial managers in HMP Cardiff and HMP Lancaster Farms had fully embraced the purpose of keywork and monitored its quality by providing supervision focused on case management. Overall, however, keyworkers have not received sufficient training; too many of the prisoners interviewed by DWRM said that they did not know their keyworker or understand their role. For example, one said:

> *"My keyworker - I don't really know who she is now, the ones before, cos they are officers they would rather sit in the office drinking coffee and vaping than do something that benefits you".*

Poor practice example

Leo was sentenced to custody for offences of sexual assault and controlling and coercive behaviour.

Leo had two different keyworkers at the prison. From February 2022, his behaviour deteriorated markedly, and this appeared to be linked to mental health (which was a risk factor for him). This was not discussed with him nor were the subsequent negative behaviour entries sufficiently explored with him by the keyworkers. There was a discussion regarding his release, and he was advised to contact resettlement workers, but no support was offered with this. He had a learning disability and needed more support with this. Contact did not meet the prescribed frequency and was not regular, with a three-month period where there was no contact at all.

3.2. Prison offender managers

Very few individuals in the case sample had had regular visits from their allocated POMs. This was not helped by the number of POMs working from home, at the time of the inspection. Facilities were lacking and interview space was not always available for POMs to work with individuals. In some prisons, it was not clear when POMs were able to go on the wing, and this resulted in them going into cells to have private conversations because there were no other suitable alternatives. Therefore, some prisoners had a negative perception of offender management, as they did not value meetings on landings, however justifiable.

Some POMs were genuinely interested in carrying out structured work with individuals but did not have the capacity. Some described contact with prisoners as being reactive and focused on specific time-bound tasks. This meant that they could not carry out proactive work to identify and address offending-related needs through regular contact, completion of offence-focused work or referral to

interventions. In some prisons, prison POMs were moved to operational duties to cover shortfalls in other departments. Once handover to COMs had taken place, some took the view that 'this is not my responsibility any longer'. This is not in keeping with the OMiC model, and the level of support provided for COMs varied between establishments.

We found very little contact between POMs and keyworkers, and one POM told us: *"It's not something we do"*. The disconnect between keywork and OMUs meant that POMs were mostly not supported by keyworkers when completing offender management tasks.

Much of the work we saw being undertaken by POMs was on time-bound targets such as reports and assessments, and limited time was spent in conducting meaningful supervision. Many of the practitioners we spoke to said that caseloads were high, and that new processes, such as digital categorisation, took more time to complete. The prison POM role was not seen as a stepping stone for cross-sector promotion opportunities; it was described as: *"a place to go when you've reached burnout"*. We found some good work in HMP Lancaster Farms, where prisoners were given in-cell workbooks to address a range of areas, including victim awareness.

Covid-19 restrictions and high POM caseloads have resulted in some individuals not progressing to an open prison in a timely manner. There were no programmes in some prisons because of staffing issues, which also added to this delay. As a result, some of the sentence plans were not achievable.

However, we found that POMs were committed to doing a good job. In some of the cases we saw, they were going over and above their remit because of gaps in work completed in the community, caused by staffing and workload pressures. The co-location of POMs and the wider OMU made for improved working relationships and enabled staff to transfer skills and cope better with workload pressures, although there were some exceptions. In one prison, more established prison POMs were less committed to working collaboratively with probation POMs. Newer POMs were much more engaged.

POMs understood the central importance of the relationship with the prisoner. Being responsive and reliable, and communicating well, appeared to make a big difference to prisoners' wellbeing. Prisoners responded well to staff doing what they said they would do, or to getting back to them to explain any delays.

The following examples show that good practice is possible.

Good practice example – HMP Lancaster Farms

Theo was serving a custodial sentence for assault and had a history of violent offending related to alcohol misuse.

At their first meeting, the POM apologised for not going to see him because of Covid-19 restrictions. The POM asked Theo to think about sentence plan objectives, followed this up and supported his self-referral to Kainos, an offending behaviour programme designed to develop pro-social thinking and behaviour. In their meetings the POM regularly discussed how he was feeling and discussed referral to the mental health in-reach team. The POM contacted the COM and kept him informed. There were good links between all parties.

On one occasion, shortly before Christmas, the POM missed Theo when she was on the wing. She followed this up with an email to say that she would see him in the New Year, and explained how to get in touch with the OMU over Christmas. When she gave him some wrong information about the COM, she wrote to him to correct this and to apologise, evidencing a respectful relationship.

The POM attended a post-programme review and praised Theo for finishing the Kainos course, even when he had thought about quitting. She gave practical advice about keeping a routine of getting up early in the morning after he finished the course, as good preparation for release. When he missed a Strength Inside session, the POM contacted the keyworker to find out why. This provided evidence of good working relationships between all concerned, and good communication with Theo .

Good practice example – HMP Ashfield

Tom was serving a custodial sentence for a sexual offence.

The POM made clear referrals for interventions and helped him to complete learning logs linked to his offending, such as sexual interests and consent. Sessions with the POM focused on offending and parole, and the POM encouraged contact with the COM. The POM then completed post-programme consolidation work before Tom was released, and briefed the COM so that the work could continue on release.

POMs reported feeling well supported by their direct line managers, although they were not receiving case-focused supervision for the most part (except at HMP/YOI Low Newton), because of their own, and SPOs', workloads. There were varying degrees of administrative support, which resulted in some staff being better supported than others to carry out the work required.

Handover

In 60 per cent of cases, the handover from POM to COM was not sufficiently timely or effective. Some POMs and managers did not understand the requirement for a pre-handover OASys assessment. Some thought that this task was more suitable for the COM to complete, as the COM would manage the pre-release assessment and licence period in the community. In Wales, a shadow measure has been developed to track whether the pre-handover OASys has been completed. This acts as a helpful prompt to embed understanding of this requirement and to encourage staff to complete the assessment on time.

The COM begins pre-release work during the resettlement or parole phase (7.5 months before release or leading up to a parole hearing). COMs are expected to liaise with the POM during this time, to ensure that information is shared and to gain a good understanding of the prisoner.

We found little information in assessments to help the individual for release. In many cases, assessments were either not completed or did not include significant changes that had occurred during the individual's time in prison. There was little sense that offender management was a continuous process for the prisoner. As one prisoner told us:

> *"When you don't have communications between two parties, there is no understanding, there is no planning, it's all been one-sided with no reply…"*

We found that many handovers were initiated by COMs, with one experienced POM telling us that they had *"not really got to grips with OMiC"*. Conversely, some POMs found it difficult to identify the COM responsible and described having to *"constantly chase"* to secure a response. We also found examples of POM to COM handovers taking place by telephone or email, with no engagement with the prisoner. This was usually a resource issue and was of limited value to the prisoner. We found that some handover emails were triggered by the inspection review of the case.

Prisoners reported feeling *"in the dark"* about who their POM and COM were and knew very little about their sentence plans. In one prison, for example, there was no contact between prisoners and their POMs; this was significant, given that the prison was a designated resettlement prison and that prisoners were soon due to be released. One prisoner told us:

> *"I was allocated someone, but I've never met him, never had a meeting with him at all and I've been here a year".*

More positively, we found evidence of the COMs and POMs taking a linked-up approach to parole, both supporting and challenging prisoners' positive and negative behaviour. Overall, however,

handover to the COM at 7.5 months (for NPS legacy cases) and 12 weeks (for legacy CRC cases) before release did not allow sufficient time for the COM to build an effective working relationship with the individual and to make necessary referrals to support release. Some prisoners told us that they resented the "*last-minute sudden appearance*" of their "*outside officer*" so late in their sentence. This provided a negative starting point from which COMs had to communicate difficult messages about any controls that would be put in place, and any restrictive licence conditions.

3.3. Community offender managers

Many COMs that we spoke to were unclear about post-handover expectations and the requirement to complete OASys assessments. Some thought that they had to carry out an assessment after handover, and some that it had to be carried out just before or after release. This was compounded by staff shortages in the community; many COMs described pre-release work as being *"at the bottom of the priority list"*.

Some practitioners and managers were confused about the different levels of service provided to legacy CRC and NPS cases. COM work begins 12 weeks before release for the former, and 7.5 months before release for the latter. This is unlikely to equalised in the short term. Furthermore, the criteria for early allocation at 15 months for high-profile cases are complex, and little understood.

Allocation of the case to the COM was timely in most cases. In many cases, however, the COM only actually became engaged with the case much later, although we found that COMs often did their best to make up for lost ground once they became involved. Timely engagement is important as it allows for key tasks to be completed, such as referral to MAPPA and to approved premises, and setting licence conditions.

Effective relationships were developed between the COM, POM and prisoner, with support from the keyworker where relevant, in less than half of cases. We found cases where COMs were allocated late and little pre-release work was started, despite the prison chasing community involvement. The level and nature of pre-release contact were sufficient to support desistance in only 37 per cent of cases. We also saw cases where the COM contacted the POM promptly to try to arrange contact, but this did not happen because the POM was unavailable and, as a result, the handover did not take place. Many previous assessments were used without adequate review, and this was not sufficient to support release.

It is important for COMs to go into prisons, so that they can develop effective working relationships and ensure the shared management of cases. In-person meetings were more beneficial than those held by video-link or than telephone contact. In most cases, however, face-to-face handover meetings did not take place, as neither community nor custody staff took the initiative to arrange them, and the cases were allowed to drift. In some cases, pre-release video-link appointments took place, although the POM did not always attend these. COMs worked relatively more effectively in Wales, where cases were allocated by an SPO, with a task list, which reinforced COMs' understanding of what was required.

COMs' contributions to pre-release procedures were sometimes hampered by regular changes of probation officer, as a result of adjustments in workload. Late pre-release assessments caused delays in prisoners being referred for an approved premises place. In some probation regions, referrals were required 12 months before release.

3.4. Desistance

Some prisoners, practitioners and managers raised concerns about the terminology of the model, and we considered the term 'offender management' to be outdated and at odds with desistance theory. Research carried out by HM Inspectorate of Probation emphasises the need to adopt an individualised approach, develop positive relationships and recognise and build on people's strengths, rather than focusing solely on an individual's deficits (HMI Probation, 2020). How and

why people stop offending has been articulated further by McNeill and Maruna (2007): '…the language of practice should strive to more clearly recognise positive potential and development and should seek to avoid identifying people with the behaviour we want them to leave behind'.

Desistance was not sufficiently supported by keywork or by planned activity throughout the custodial journey. Staffing pressures made it difficult to focus consistently on desistance, and some prison staff felt that prisoners were there to keep their heads down and see out their sentence. Only on rare occasions did keyworkers see the need to liaise with POMs.

OASys assessments had not always been updated by COMs after handover. Where this had been done well, COMs were actively involved in dynamic assessment and planning, and self-assessment questionnaires had been completed, which identified specific areas to be addressed.

The table below illustrates the inspector's judgement of the key factors linked to offending, pre-release.

In the opinion of the inspector, which factors are most important linked to offending?	%
Accommodation	59
ETE	35
Finance, benefits and debt	43
Family and relationships	67
Lifestyle (including friends and associates)	71
Alcohol misuse	29
Drug misuse	56
Thinking and behaviour	82
Attitudes to offending	73
None of the above	0

The factors most closely linked to offending were thinking and behaviour, attitudes to offending, lifestyle and accommodation.

Assessment had identified the individual's strengths and protective factors in less than half of cases. In too many cases, little work was done to explore desistance and build on potential strengths.

Keyworkers' notes were not used sufficiently to inform assessment, or to support risk management. In a poor practice example, a prisoner asked their keyworker about having telephone contact with his 'friend' and disclosed that this friend was a registered sexual offender. It was documented that he subsequently had daily contact with this 'friend', and this was not sufficiently reviewed by the COM. COMs did not often carry out formal reviews of assessments.

In better managed cases, work undertaken in custody formed part of the assessment and subsequent plans, and included input from the prisoner. Some plans focused on supporting desistance – for example, by identifying offending taking place in a specific area and considering accommodation in a different area. In other cases, mental health difficulties and risk to self were identified and suitable plans put in place, such as 24-hour staffed accommodation on release and Care Act assessments arranged to assess needs.

Planning built on the individual's strengths and protective factors, using potential sources of support, in just under half of cases. In many cases, there were insufficient plans to work with external agencies, either because the case had been allocated to the COM at a late stage or

because pre-release work had begun late in the sentence. Often, COMs did not carry out a formal review of plans, and this led to a lack of clarity about outstanding and future actions and objectives.

Deficits in assessment and planning meant that the pre-release services most likely to reduce reoffending and support desistance were set out in just under half of cases. Too often, formal plans did not sufficiently reflect the work undertaken in custody, and future objectives were not made clear.

The level and nature of pre-release contact were sufficient to reduce reoffending and to support desistance in only just over a third of cases. In some cases, the prisoner initiated contact with the COM, and this appeared to be because of their anxieties about their forthcoming release. Engagement with the prisoner did not always add value to release plans.

3.5. Keeping people safe

Some keyworkers were unsure where they should record public protection concerns, believing that if they recorded these on P-NOMIS, the prisoner could ask to see it, but if they correctly recorded it as an incident report, it would not be seen by the right people in offender management. POMs and COMs paid insufficient attention to keyworkers' entries on prison and probation recording systems, with one member of staff telling us*: "…the purpose of keywork is lost here"*.

Parole reports are allocated to COMs at the point of handover, eight months before potential release. This does not allow sufficient time for the COM to engage with the individual and establish a meaningful working relationship, in order to produce a fully informed parole report. Some COMs told us that the deadlines are not realistic, especially for prisoners serving life sentences. OMiC has time limited the relationship between the COM and the prisoner, and the change in case management responsibility happens too close to release. Some felt that this had impacted on probation service credibility with the parole board.

MAPPA processes were completed in an effective and timely manner in less than half of cases. In some cases, the MAPPA management level had not been reviewed a few weeks before release, and in some instances both prison and probation staff had assumed cases to be at level 1, without a full screening. In other cases, MAPPA was discussed, and it appeared that plans were in place to refer cases to level 2 meetings, but we did not always find evidence that this had been done.

Poor practice example

Jo was serving a custodial sentence for serious violence and acquisitive crime.

A decision was made to keep him as MAPPA level 1 because he was homeless and said to be less likely to engage with agencies in the community. Jo was involved with gangs and had mental health difficulties, and there were child safeguarding concerns, as his new partner had a child. A MAPPA level 2 referral was highlighted in management supervision although there was no evidence that this had taken place.

Our recent joint thematic inspection report on MAPPA (HM Inspectorate of Probation, 2022) found that aligning ROTL, MAPPA and OMiC processes presented difficulties in practice. ROTL can happen a long time before both the OMiC handover from the prison to the community and the MAPPA screening taking place. Violent and Sex Offender Register (ViSOR) records were in place as required in just under half of cases. Unlike nDelius, P-NOMIS does not link directly to ViSOR. Any prison intelligence received is passed to the Public Protection Unit clerk, who will enter it on ViSOR. Prison and probation POMs can access ViSOR through prison administrators, although we found no evidence of such requests being made.

Domestic abuse checks were carried out in only just over a third of cases (35 per cent). In many cases, a change of COM and late allocation meant that no formal assessment was carried out and there was no evidence that the prisoner had been assessed in preparation for release. It was apparent in some interviews that the COM was not fully on top of all the issues to be addressed to

keep people safe, including any current activity to ascertain the whereabouts and safety of the prisoner's former partners and children where they had been assessed as at risk because of a history of domestic abuse.

Child safeguarding information sharing took place in less than half of the cases where it was required. Safeguarding concerns, links to criminal associates and family relationships were sometimes missed because there had been no formal review. There was insufficient evidence about current relationships and proximity to children on release from custody.

The table below illustrates the inspector's judgement of the key factors linked to keeping other people safe.

In the opinion of the inspector, which factors are most important as related to risk of harm?	%
Accommodation	50
ETE	17
Finance, benefits and debt	38
Family and relationships	59
Lifestyle (including friends and associates)	63
Alcohol misuse	27
Drug misuse	48
Thinking and behaviour	77
Attitudes to offending	69
Current domestic abuse concerns	29
Current child safeguarding concerns	40
Hate-based behaviour	2
None of the above	1

The factors most closely linked to risk of harm were thinking and behaviour, attitudes to offending, lifestyle, and family and relationships.

Assessments did not draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including past behaviour and convictions, or involve other agencies where appropriate in 66 per cent of cases. The lack of formal assessments hindered safeguarding and information sharing with the police. We saw cases where the practitioner's focus was primarily on meeting needs, such as accommodation, and they did not sufficiently assess risk.

Assessments sufficiently identified and analysed any risk of harm to others in just over a third of cases. The reasons for some violent offending were not clear, including whether the victims had been targeted and were still at risk. Positive practice included assessments that described behaviour while in custody and how this related to the likelihood that other people would be safe on the individual's release.

In many cases, no formal assessment was completed within the pre-release period. Inspectors identified cases where there were concerns about risks to children, gang-related violence and sexual offences, in which no social care referral had been made, or assessment of risks on release. We would have expected to see COMs obtaining further information from the police and social care services, to ensure the safety of victims.

There had been effective contact with victim liaison officers (VLOs) to ensure that victims had an opportunity to contribute to licence conditions before the prisoner's release in two-thirds of cases. Contact with VLOs appropriately informed licence conditions, and we saw some cases where the

COM had actively participated in HDC applications, including address checks and home visits to determine the suitability of the proposed release address.

Necessary constructive and restrictive interventions were set out to keep other people safe in less than half of cases. In some cases, COMs were not aware of current restraining orders for previous victims, and this was not considered in planning for release or as part of the broader risk management. Less than half of the risk management plans in our sample had set out contingency arrangements. Shortfalls included missing licence conditions, and a lack of consideration of domestic abuse and safeguarding concerns. There was limited formal pre-release planning and it was not always clear that VLOs were involved. Without these some plans did not sufficiently set out how to keep the victim safe or include a review of family members and any requirement for safeguarding referrals, planning for accommodation or agreement of exclusion zones.

Where planning had been done well, restrictive measures were clearly laid out, such as sex offender registration, restraining orders and placement in an approved premises. In an example of positive practice, the COM had appropriately identified a potential victim and had made contact to ensure that she had full disclosure of previous sexual offending and domestic violence. Some COMs kept individual prisoners well informed of licence conditions, the expectations of the approved premises and the work that still needed to be done. We sometimes found a lack of evidence of a response from the police, and whether further exploration of networks (such as the immediate and wider family) was needed before release.

The involvement of other agencies in keeping other people safe was well coordinated in just under half of cases. While there were positive features of this work, such as COMs discussing cases in supervision, and MAPPA discussions taking place, there were insufficient formal plans in place to consult the VLO or contact children's services and the police. Too few home visits were undertaken to assess the suitability of the individual's proposed address. In cases where the individual's release was imminent, there was little time left for an alternative address to be found should the proposed address be deemed unsuitable.

Appropriate referrals were made to help keep other people safe in a little over half of cases (57 per cent). Factors linked to the risk of serious harm were often not sufficiently reviewed, and therefore insufficient referrals were made – for example, for OPD pathway screening. In a poor practice case, current restraining orders were not considered in the risk of serious harm analysis.

In other cases, social care assessments, mental health issues and attitudes towards domestic abuse were not sufficiently reviewed and acted on. There was insufficient access to programmes to change attitudes, thinking and behaviour that may lead individuals to reoffend and pose a risk of harm to others. Work done by POMs did not sufficiently support prisoners' desistance or keep other people safe.

It was good to see individuals being managed under integrated offender management (IOM) when appropriate. However, we found limited detail about what that would entail, or any other work in preparation for release, such as recorded contacts with the police, IOM or intelligence sharing.

3.6. Conclusions and implications

In general, keywork was not connected to offender management, and in some cases provided little more than a welfare check.

POMs tried hard to keep up with the work required of them to complete relevant offender management processes. Their work was often reactive and there was not enough capacity for them to work more proactively with prisoners – for example, through regular supervision to address offending behaviour or close working with COMs, including for preparation for handover. As a result, prisoners often felt underprepared for the work that COMs would complete with them.

COMs were often hard pressed in terms of community caseloads, and this led to pre-release work beginning late in the sentence, leaving little time to establish an effective working relationship with

the prisoner, or to make the necessary referrals to support successful release. Initial contact at 7.5 months before release is too late for an individual serving a long prison sentence.

The quality of assessment, planning and risk management needs to improve significantly. Work to keep other people safe was not carried out well enough, as information was not always shared within OMUs, or with keyworkers, the police and social services. This led to work being completed that could heighten, rather than reduce, the risk of harm to others.

In summary, there was insufficient coordination between prison and probation services to prepare individuals for release and we found no evidence that sufficient value was added by the probation POM role.

4. Interventions and planning for release

This chapter considers prisoner needs analysis and delivery of accredited programmes and services to prisoners. It examines resettlement planning and release arrangements.

4.1. Needs analysis

There is no strategy for delivering programmes in prisons. Probation leaders acknowledged that available data on the needs of prisoners across England and Wales is not up to date. With offending behaviour programmes, there is no central coordination, and demand is managed locally between prisons. Since Covid-19, HMPPS has developed a standardised way of looking at the demand for interventions based on segmentation data, experience of prison delivery and local waiting lists.

On an individual level, sentence plans were used to identify the need for programmes, but this was not working well in practice. Not all of the prisoners identified were suitable for specific programmes, and some prisoners had already completed them. Sentence plans were sometimes contingent on COMs' knowledge of the interventions and programmes available in specific prisons, and this was not always accurate.

Prisons are expected to analyse prisoners' individual needs, but we found little evidence that this had been done. Some of the prisons we visited provided very few interventions and had been badly hit by Covid-19. Interventions staff contributed to annual regional plans, although more local analysis of needs was required. Prisons had not explored opportunities to draw on analysis of OASys data held by the probation service.

Interventions are currently made available according to a strict prioritisation protocol. Relevant dates (release or parole) are prioritised and this has an impact on individuals who would have previously been prioritised earlier. Provision is being realigned based on whether a prison has a resettlement or training function. While there is an acknowledgement by HMPPS that individuals need to access interventions at the right time for them, current provision and gaps in needs analyses make this unachievable.

There was limited provision of one-to-one work to meet the needs of complex individuals and those with learning difficulties, who were unable to participate in mainstream programme work. In such cases, delivery of interventions was prioritised as directed by the parole board, rather than as a proactive response to meeting the individuals' identified diversity needs.

OPD pathway services were underused because of a lack of referrals from COMs. In some cases, POMs were completing referrals into the pathway, even when this was not their responsibility. COMs sometimes did not know which OPD services were available in their area. We found potential for greater use of the OPD pathway to provide psychologically informed services to better meet the needs of the sometimes complex and challenging OMiC offender group.

One prison told us that it was difficult to find out which interventions were available at which prisons, and this hampered their attempts to develop appropriate progression routes for prisoners. They noted that a previous directory of interventions had not been kept up to date and had been retired in 2019. A stark example of this was an individual being transferred to a prison to undertake a programme that was not available in that prison, and subsequently being returned to the transferring prison.

4.2. Accredited programmes

Not enough programmes were available, and the lack of programmes and interventions prevented individuals from progressing to lower-security categories within the prison estate. In our sample, the delivery of services and interventions had led to improvements in only half of the cases. We found that, because programmes had been suspended as a result of Covid-19, much of the work

needed to support desistance had not started before release. When programmes had started just before release, there was not enough time to embed learning from the course.

Many programmes staff were leaving. Some new staff were coming in, but it would take time for them to complete the required training. Some programme facilitators had been lost to other posts, leaving a shortage of staff to run programmes. During Covid-19, prisons were running some programmes on a one-to-one basis. Capacity was limited and the resource was focused on those prisoners who were due for a parole hearing. Not enough interventions were available for high-risk individuals, which meant that some left prison untreated. In the absence of programmes, individual supervision to address offending behaviour was too limited.

There were no male probation officers in one prison, which meant that gender-paired joint work could not be carried out with men who may have benefited from that approach. Staff in prisons were mainly white women, and some probation leaders described diversity as *"a work in progress, as 80 per cent of the probation workforce is female".* We met some outstanding female POMs, working in challenging adult male prisons.

In most cases, prisoners had served several years before they were referred to the programme planned, and then had only a short time left to fit it in before their release. This gave the impression that the programme was 'done to' the individual and that, having completed it, their treatment needs would have been met. It would be more effective to deliver the programme at an earlier point in the sentence, to allow time for consolidation and testing of the learning.

A range of programmes was available in the prisons we visited, although Covid-19 restrictions had severely curtailed delivery. Programmes included Kaizen (for high-risk men who have been convicted of a sexual, intimate partner or general violence offence), Horizon (for adult men of medium risk and above who have been convicted of a sexual offence), Becoming New Me + (for high- or very high-risk men who have learning disabilities and have been convicted of a sexual, intimate partner or general violence offence), Identity Matters (a one-to-one programme for men whose offending is motivated by their identification with a gang) and Resolve (designed for adult men with convictions for violent offending who have a medium to high risk of reoffending).

In one prison, the Thinking Skills Programme (TSP) was available, although a condensed version was required to meet the needs of the population. Maps for Change (a toolkit of exercises that practitioners can use to structure their supervision with adult men who have committed a sexual offence) was also available. However, the pressures on time and resources meant that there was little to no delivery of such interventions.

Psychology departments offered clinical support to practitioners, and psychology leads were involved in discussions about programme provision as part of senior management teams. In one example, Kaizen Interpersonal Violence was running alongside TSP, but a need had been identified for a Kaizen General Violence programme. As a result of staffing shortages, a TSP group would have to be cut to run this.

Given the impact of pandemic lockdowns and EDMs, we would like to have seen greater use of in-cell packs to fill those gaps, and more offence- and risk-focused supervision being undertaken by the relevant practitioner. Education provision was yet to restart fully in some prisons, and the focus was more on maintaining a good relationship with prisoners, as one staff member said *"to keep the lid on frustrations in prison"*, rather than on taking a more structured approach.

In some cases, late allocation to COMs meant that the individual's needs were not assessed quickly enough and it then became too late to refer them to programmes before release. The lack of programme delivery meant that risk factors had not been properly addressed, including sexual harm, domestic abuse, safeguarding concerns and victim safety. Where programmes had been delivered, inspectors found that practitioners had not sufficiently explored the impact of the interventions on keeping other people safe.

4.3. Services and interventions

Some specialised services and interventions were available in each prison. These included an employment hub in HMP Cardiff; the Duke of Edinburgh's Award for young adults in HMP Lancaster Farms; Trailblazers, to mentor young offenders in HMP/YOI Aylesbury; drug and alcohol recovery services in HMP Manchester; and a mental health social worker and Novus service, to provide employment on release, in HMP/YOI Low Newton.

As shown in the example below, a range of interventions was available at HMP Lancaster Farms.

Good practice example – HMP Lancaster Farms

HMP Lancaster Farms delivered a broad range of programmes:

- DIVERT, a programme aimed at reducing violence
- Strength Inside, a programme for domestic abuse perpetrators who are fathers
- Kainos, a cognitive skills and personal development programme, which works closely with the OMU, drawing on information from OASys
- Project 180, in collaboration with a social enterprise company – for men who have lived in Blackburn or Darwin. The project involves a CrossFit course in the prison gym, which helps to build morale and self-esteem. The individual is then linked with a CrossFit course in the community and supported with accommodation and employment.

Education departments had a good understanding of the extent of learning difficulties among prisoners, although information on individual needs was not easily accessible to different departments in prisons. Interventions staff were missing information on learning difficulties, and they needed this to better plan learning and development activities. Similarly, communication difficulties for prisoners with neurodivergent needs were not always well understood by prison staff.

OMUs valued contact with psychology teams, and this worked best where they were co-located. For example, in HMP/YOI Low Newton and HMP Highpoint, the psychology team is based within the OMU, which is having a clear benefit for staff who work with complex cases.

There were strong and well-established working relationships in HMP/YOI Low Newton, which helped staff to provide excellent services to the women. These services included the OPD pathway, a psychologically informed planned environment, accredited programmes and substance misuse treatment.

Despite some plans to provide offending behaviour work one to one in custody, little of note was delivered. We found records of booklets and worksheets being given to prisoners, but we were not always clear how effective these were. Some prisons had prioritised ETE; HMP Ashfield took a structured pathway approach, which involved completing basic education courses that led to placements in vocational workshops.

The table below illustrates the inspector's judgement of the sufficiency of services delivered to address the factors leading to offending.

Were sufficient services delivered pre-release for the factors identified as linked to offending?	Number	%
Accommodation	39	67
ETE	13	37
Finance, benefits and debt	08	19
Family and relationships	20	30
Lifestyle (including friends and associates)	16	23
Alcohol misuse	12	41

Drug misuse	22	39
Thinking and behaviour	30	37
Attitudes to offending	19	26

Our findings are concerning. Services had been delivered in around two-thirds of cases where accommodation was identified as a priority need relating to reoffending and risk of harm (see table below).

Services and interventions were delivered to address the identified priority areas of thinking and behaviour in only 37 per cent, attitudes to offending in 26 per cent and lifestyle in only 23 per cent of the cases where this was needed.

The involvement of other organisations in delivering services was sufficiently well coordinated before release in less than half of cases. On some occasions, the commissioned rehabilitation services (CRS) referral guidelines made it difficult to plan for future accommodation needs. Examples included when a referral for accommodation was planned in cases where the individual was being released to a different probation region, and when resettlement services were not available in a training prison.

The table below illustrates the inspector's judgement of the sufficiency of services delivered to keep other people safe.

Were sufficient services delivered for the factors you identified as related to the risk of harm?	Number	%
Accommodation	31	62
ETE	3	18
Finance, benefits and debt	7	18
Family and relationships	21	36
Lifestyle (including friends and associates)	18	29
Alcohol misuse	09	33
Drug misuse	17	35
Thinking and behaviour	23	30
Attitudes to offending	17	25
Current domestic abuse concerns	12	41
Current child safeguarding concerns	19	48
Hate-based behaviour	0	0

Similarly, where risk of serious harm was an issue, services and interventions to address thinking and behaviour were delivered in 30 per cent, to address attitudes towards offending in 25 per cent and to address lifestyle in 29 per cent of cases where this was needed.

4.4. Resettlement and release planning

The table below illustrates the inspector's judgement of services delivered to address resettlement needs pre-release.

Sufficient services were delivered to address the individual's resettlement needs:	Yes (%)
Accommodation needs	64
ETE needs	36
Personal, relationships and community needs	31
Finance, benefits and debt needs	35
As a victim of domestic abuse	19
As a previous sex worker	0
Alcohol misuse needs	31
Drug misuse needs	47
Mental health needs	42
Complex needs	35

Pre-release resettlement services were not in place in all prisons, and, except for accommodation, sufficient services had been delivered in less than 50 per cent of cases. While services were largely available to address accommodation needs, inspectors found that these services were sufficient to meet actual resettlement needs in less than two-thirds of cases.

Having access to stable accommodation on release is central to reducing reoffending and protecting the public. Prisoners were engaged by pre-release teams, and in many cases these were purposeful, with a focus on accommodation. Some individuals were released to appropriate Bail Accommodation and Support Service and approved premises; however, some placements were a considerable distance from the prisoner's home.

In cases where an individual was in uncertain accommodation at the point of their arrest, it was assumed that they would return to the area of the address that they gave to the police. Where there were no links to the area identified for release, this created uncertainty between probation regions about where responsibility lay for supervision or to deal with potential homelessness.

Inspectors found some variation between areas, ranging from no housing and a shortage of approved premises spaces to local areas with better housing provision, where it was rare not to get accommodation. Homelessness on release was widely reported to us as an issue that can often lead the individual returning to substance misuse.

Individuals' ETE needs were sufficiently addressed by pre-release resettlement services in just over a third of cases. ETE activity to support desistance had started in some cases, but it was not always clear to prisoners what was in place to support access to benefits and ETE on release, particularly where pre-release teams had advised that they were no longer able to support prisoners who presented a high risk of serious harm.

In just under a third of cases, needs related to alcohol misuse were met well enough through the delivery of pre-release resettlement services. We found work which had addressed attitudes, thinking and behaviour – for example, through Kainos. Use of alcohol was sometimes linked to violent behaviour, although often not enough work had been completed to address this link to keep other people safe.

Insufficient resettlement services were delivered to address individuals' drug misuse needs before release. Some prisons were doing the right things with regard to drugs and mental health, as far as

possible, but preparation for release was not always adequate to ensure that the work started was built on. Inspectors found positive work in HMP Cardiff, undertaken by Dyfodol (prison substance misuse services). Continuity of care is central to the Dyfodol model and ensures that ongoing support is provided for individual prisoners before and after release.

Individuals' mental health needs were sufficiently addressed through the delivery of pre-release resettlement services in 42 per cent of cases. Some COMs made referrals to CRS, and initial appointments had been made, with further appointments booked to consider the work that needed to be completed before release. We did not see practitioners liaising well enough with specialist units such as PIPEs (specifically designed environments where staff have additional training to develop an increased psychological understanding of their work, to explore prisoners' needs for release, especially around decision-making, trauma and mental health).

There were very few cases in which sufficient resettlement services were delivered before the individual was released, to address their needs as a victim of domestic abuse. There was limited contact with agencies that needed to be involved in managing individuals in the community. Further work was often required to consider the safety of the vulnerable person being discharged, and this needed to be completed before release. Individuals' needs as previous sex workers were not sufficiently met.

Some individuals were released directly from training prisons, which were not designed to provide resettlement services. Several individuals who had been recategorised as category C were not able to progress because of a lack of available places in receiving prisons. We found that 'offender flows' were sometimes incompatible with OMiC, which meant that prisoners were not in the right place at the right time to receive the necessary help with resettlement and release. Movements between establishments were highly disruptive to the OMiC model.

In almost two-thirds of cases, the individual did not receive sufficient resettlement services to address their finance, benefits and debt needs. Department for Work and Pensions services were beginning to be offered in some prisons, including the facility to apply for Universal Credit ahead of release. Some prisoners were unaware of this support, and too many were leaving prison without the basics of having proof of identification and access to financial support in place.

4.5. Conclusions and implications

Prisons relied on segmentation data to analyse needs, even though they knew that this was out of date. They carried out limited strategic needs analysis, and as a result there were not enough programmes to address individuals' needs in each establishment. Not enough programmes were available to promote desistance and to ensure that other people were kept safe. This was because of Covid-19 restrictions and recovery, a shortage of programmes staff and a lack of overall capacity to provide structured interventions throughout the custodial journey.

Some innovative services are being developed in some prisons, including mentoring, counselling and support for care leavers. Access to services is patchy and lacks coordination and planning at a regional and national level, which means that offending-related needs are not being sufficiently addressed. Resettlement planning is fragmented, with a lack of understanding of roles and responsibilities between POMs, COMs and pre-release teams. This often leaves prisoners feeling anxious about their release.

Good use is made of approved premises accommodation, where spaces are available. Accommodation provision varies across probation regions and local authority areas, and some individuals are released from prison without secure accommodation. Programmes of work to ensure that individual prisoners have proof of identification and access to benefits on release are still in development, leaving too many prisoners being released without the basic building blocks in place to support successful resettlement.

In part two of this inspection, we will consider how well individuals have been resettled in the community following release from custody.

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Annexe 1: Glossary

Accredited programmes	Offender behaviour programmes and interventions which aim to change the thinking, attitudes and behaviours which may lead people to offend.
Approved premises	Approved premises, formerly known as probation or bail hostels, are residential units that house ex-offenders in the community.
Child protection	Work to make sure that all reasonable action has been taken to keep to a minimum the risk of a child coming to harm
Community offender manager (COM)	Community offender managers are based in the community and are also known as probation officers.
CRC	Community Rehabilitation Company
Commissioned rehabilitative services (CRS)	Commissioned rehabilitative services are part of the Ministry of Justice's new probation system, procured by regional probation directors to provide flexible, responsive services to help break the cycle of reoffending.
Digital prison system (DPS)	Operational database used in prisons to manage offenders.
Exceptional delivery models (EDMs)	Prison and probation service delivery of local regimes to meet the available staffing resources as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.
Head of offender management delivery (HOMD)	A senior probation officer providing professional oversight of the quality of offender management delivery in prison.
Head of offender management services (HOMS)	A senior probation officer who is responsible for the integration of offender management across the prison and for managing the administration of the offender management unit.
Head of offender management unit (HOMU)	A senior prison officer who is responsible for managing the administrative processes within the offender management hub. In some prisons, this role is undertaken by the HOMS.
HMPPS	HM Prison and Probation Service: the single agency responsible for both prisons and probation services. See note below on NOMS.
Home detention curfew (HDC)	Home detention curfew is a scheme by which a prisoner can be released 'early', subject to an electronically monitored curfew.
Integrated offender management (IOM)	Integrated offender management brings a cross-agency response to the crime and reoffending threats faced by local communities. The most persistent and problematic offenders are identified and managed jointly by partner agencies working together.
Keyworker	Under the OMiC model, keyworkers are band 3 prison officers who are allocated to promote rehabilitative and constructive relationships between staff and prisoners in order to foster positive behaviour.
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements: where probation, police, prison and other agencies work together locally to manage offenders who pose a higher risk of harm to others. Level 1 is ordinary agency management, where the risks posed by the offender can be managed by the agency responsible for the

	supervision or case management of the offender. This compares with levels 2 and 3, which require active multi-agency management.
Maps for Change	Maps for Change is a toolkit for working with male sex offenders at low risk of reoffending, and those for whom an accredited programme is deemed inappropriate.
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
nDelius	National Delius: the approved case management system used by the NPS and CRCs in England and Wales.
NOMS	National Offender Management Service: until April 2017, the single agency responsible for both prisons and probation services, now known as HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS).
NPS	National Probation Service: a single national service that came into being in June 2014. Its role was to deliver services to courts and to manage specific groups of offenders, including those presenting a high or very high risk of serious harm and those subject to MAPPA. The NPS was replaced by the Probation Service in June 2021.
OASys	Offender assessment system currently used in England and Wales by the Probation Service to measure the risks and needs of offenders under supervision.
Offender personality disorder (OPD) pathway	The offender personality disorder pathway programme is a jointly commissioned initiative that aims to provide a pathway of psychologically informed services for a highly complex and challenging offender group who are likely to have a severe personality disorder and who pose a high risk of harm to others.
OMiC	Offender Management in Custody: the framework that coordinates and sequences an individual's journey through custody and post-release.
P-NOMIS	Prison national offender management information system: an operational database used in prisons to manage offenders.
Psychologically informed planned environments (PIPEs)	Psychologically informed planned environments are specifically designed environments where staff have additional training to develop an increased psychological understanding of their work.
Prison group directors (PGDs)	Prison group directors are responsible for the delivery and strategic development of the area in their command.
Prison offender manager (POM)	Prison offender managers are responsible for assessing the person with a conviction's risks and needs and planning how their sentence should run. They may be a prison officer or a probation officer.
Prison officer entry-level training (POELT)	A 12-week programme that aims to equip new officers with the skills and knowledge need to begin a career working in the prison service.
Regional probation directors (RPDs)	There are 12 probation regions in England and Wales, and 12 regional probation directors have been appointed to lead probation services in their region.

Release on temporary licence (ROTL)	Release on temporary licence means being able to leave the prison for a short time, and is an important process for the resettlement and rehabilitation of prisoners.
Resolve	A moderate-intensity cognitive-behavioural intervention that aims to reduce violence in medium-risk adult male offenders. The programme includes group and individual sessions and is suitable for offenders with a history of reactive or instrumental violence.
Thinking Skills Programme (TSP)	An accredited group programme designed to develop an offender's thinking skills to help them stay out of trouble.
Through the Gate	Through the Gate services were provided by Community Rehabilitation Companies in prisons to prepare prisoners for release and resettlement. Resettlement services are now provided in some prisons by commissioned rehabilitative services.
ViSOR	ViSOR is a national confidential database that supports MAPPA. It facilitates the effective sharing of information and intelligence on violent and sexual offenders between the three MAPPA-responsible authority agencies (police, probation services and prisons).
Young offender institution (YOI)	Young offender institutions are prisons for young people aged 15 to 21.

Annexe 2: Methodology

The inspection set out to answer the following questions.

Does leadership and facilities management support the delivery of a high-quality OMiC service?

- Are effective governance arrangements and delivery plans in place that translate the OMiC vision and strategy into practice?
- Does the Offender Management in Custody (OMiC) operating model encourage personalised approaches with individuals, taking account of diversity factors?
- Do the premises and offices enable staff to deliver a high-quality OMiC service, meeting the needs of individuals subject to OMiC?
- Do the information and communications technology (ICT) systems enable staff to deliver a high-quality OMiC service, meeting the needs of individuals subject to OMiC?

Are staff within OMiC enabled to deliver a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for individuals?

- Do staffing and workload levels support the delivery of a high-quality service for individuals subject to OMiC?
- Do the skills and profile of staff support the delivery of a high-quality service for individuals subject to OMiC?
- Does the oversight of work by prisons and probation services support high-quality OMiC delivery and professional development?
- Are arrangements for learning and development comprehensive and responsive?

Is a comprehensive range of high-quality services in place, supporting a tailored and responsive service to individuals subject to OMiC?

- Is there a sufficiently comprehensive and up-to-date analysis of the profile of individuals subject to OMiC, which is used to deliver well-targeted services?
- Are the right volume, range and quality of services in place to meet the needs of individuals subject to OMiC?
- Are relationships with providers and other agencies established, maintained and used effectively to deliver high-quality services to individuals subject to OMiC?
- Are services evidence led and evaluated, including reviewing the impact on diverse groups?

Does OMiC effectively support the individual's desistance?

- Does assessment and planning focus sufficiently on the factors linked to offending and desistance?
- Is keywork and case management sufficiently well-coordinated, with a focus on supporting the individual's desistance?
- Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively focus on the individual's desistance?
- Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the individual's desistance?
- Have there been improvements in those factors most closely linked to offending, both in developing strengths and addressing needs?

Does work done under OMiC effectively support the safety of other people?

- Does assessment focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?
- Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?
- Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?
- Does review focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?
- Has there been a reduction in factors most closely related to keeping other people safe?

Is OMiC delivery personalised and coordinated, addressing individuals' resettlement needs?

- Does resettlement planning focus sufficiently on the individual's resettlement needs and on factors linked to offending and desistance?
- Are individuals supported and challenged to make the most effective use of their time in prison to best prepare them for release?
- Is there effective coordination of resettlement activity, including ensuring that there is a timely and effective handover between prison offender managers (POMs) and community offender managers (COMs)?
- Does resettlement take sufficient account of factors related to keeping other people safe?
- Are initial outcomes, including being in settled accommodation and in education, training, and employment, achieved?

Fieldwork

Our pre-release fieldwork was completed in eight prisons. Inspectors from HM Inspectorate of Probation and HM Inspectorate of Prisons together visited HMP Ashfield, HMP/YOI Aylesbury, HMP Brixton, HMP Manchester, HMP Cardiff, HMP/YOI Low Newton, HMP Lancaster Farms and HMP Highpoint, and selected a sample of cases from each establishment.

Our fieldwork sites included a privately run adult male prison, a prison and young offender institution for male adults aged 21 to 27 and young men aged 18 to 20 serving long-term sentences, a high-security prison, and a prison and young offender institution for women aged 18 and over. Prisons included local prisons that house prisoners who are taken directly from court in the local area (sentenced or on remand), and training prisons holding long-term and high-security prisoners. Inspection sites included the three main prison functions – reception, training and resettlement.

We jointly inspected 100 cases, including male adult prisoners (categories A, B and C), female adult prisoners and young offenders. We interviewed 64 COMs, 22 keyworkers and 45 POMs responsible for the cases in our sample. In addition to our sample in each area, we considered evidence on caseloads, services and interventions for each prison establishment, caseload characteristics, strategic documents and delivery plans, and staffing levels and caseloads for each probation region. We also considered establishment exceptional delivery models (EDMs), completion of training modules and performance information on keywork delivery, the backlog to start an offender assessment system (OASys) assessment, handover from POM to COM, housed on release from custody and employed at six weeks after release from custody.

The selection criteria for the case sample were the following probation service OMiC cohorts:

- individuals with 10 months or more to serve at point of sentence (initially allocated to a POM and then assigned to a COM)
- determinate parole sentenced prisoners (initially allocated to a POM and then assigned to a COM)

- indeterminate sentenced prisoners (POM responsible at start of sentence, then assigned to a COM).

Out of scope (includes offender management processes where a POM-to-COM handover has not taken place):

- short-term sentenced prisoners (less than 10 months to serve at point of sentence)
- standard recall prisoners (not subject to COM allocation)
- determinate parole-eligible prisoners (not yet allocated to a COM)
- indeterminate sentenced prisoners (not yet allocated to a COM)
- unconvicted/unsentenced prisoners (although comment can be made on the gap in the OMiC model).

In each prison establishment, we held meetings and focus groups, including a prison director, prison governors, heads of offender management units, heads of offender management services, heads of offender management delivery, probation senior leaders, interventions leads, POMs, COMs and keyworkers. Following our prison visits, we held a week of meetings with senior leaders from prisons and probation services with responsibility for OMiC.

Characteristics of case sample

Sex	Number	%
Male	89	89%
Female	11	11%

Race and ethnic category	Number	%
White	73	73%
Black and minority ethnic	25	25%
Not clearly recorded	2	2%

Sentence	Number	%
Case with more than 10 months to serve at point of sentence	93	93%
Determinate parole case	6	6%
Indeterminate sentenced prisoner	1	1%

Grade of current or last prison offender manager	Number	%
Probation officer (member of staff with a recognised probation qualification)	42	42%
Prison officer	31	31%
Other or not clearly recorded	24	24%

Grade of current or last community offender manager	Number	%
Probation officer (member of staff with a recognised probation qualification)	78	78%
Trainee (member of staff currently on a formal training programme to achieve probation officer qualification)	6	6%
Probation service officer (member of staff working directly with service users, without a recognised probation officer qualification)	11	11%
Other or not clearly recorded	4	4%

Annexe 3: Data tables

Prison offender manager

Does work done by the POM effectively support the individual's desistance?	Number	%
Yes	39	39%
No	61	61%

Does work done by the POM effectively support the safety of other people?	Number	%
Yes	38	38%
No	62	62%

Keyworker

Is there a sufficient focus on supporting the individual's desistance and keeping other people safe?	Number	%
Yes	24	28%
No	63	72%

Community offender manager

Is there a clear coordination between custody and community to prepare the individual for release?	Number	%
Yes	37	37%
No	62	63%

Assessment

Does assessment focus sufficiently on engaging the individual?	Number	%
Yes	31	31%
No	69	69%

Does assessment focus sufficiently on the factors linked to offending and desistance?	Number	%
Yes	43	43%
No	56	57%

Does assessment focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	Number	%
Yes	31	31%
No	68	69%

Planning

Does planning focus sufficiently on engaging the individual?	Number	%
Yes	39	39%
No	61	61%

Does planning focus sufficiently on reducing reoffending and supporting the individual's desistance?	Number	%
Yes	44	44%
No	56	56%

Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	Number	%
Yes	42	42%
No	58	58%

Implementation and delivery

Is the pre-release period implemented effectively with a focus on engaging the individual?	Number	%
Yes	40	40%
No	60	60%

Does the implementation and delivery of services and interventions effectively support the individual's desistance?	Number	%
Yes	43	43%
No	56	57%

Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support keeping other people safe?	Number	%
Yes	39	39%
No	60	61%

Annexe 4: The OMiC journey in the male closed estate

"I'm Pete and I have just been sentenced at court. As I have more than 10 months left to serve, my time in custody will follow the OMiC model which sets out how I will be supported through my sentence."

Information taken from HMPPS Offender Management in Custody 'your journey in the closed male estate' document.

1

Sentencing

Your offence and length of sentence will guide decisions about which prison(s) you may go to and what you cannot work towards over the next four years.

2

Arrive into a prison directly from court

You will be given information by prison staff who will help you to address any immediate needs you have.

3

Sentence calculation and prison allocation within your first two weeks

Staff in the **Offender Management Unit (OMU)** will confirm your release date and the date your sentence will end, review any risk information and will talk to you about moving to a new prison.

4

Move to another prison approximately 10 working days after being sentenced.

5

Allocated key worked within first two weeks

Your **key Worker (KW)** is a prison officer who will meet with you regularly to talk about how your life is in prison ensuring you feel settled, safe and supported.

6

OASys and sentence planning undertaken within 10 weeks (or within 16 weeks if you have an indeterminate sentence)

Your **Prison Offender Manager (POM)** will work with you to carry out a risk assessment and explore the factors linked to your offending ahead of your initial sentence planning meeting.

7

Initial sentence plan meeting

You will meet with you **POM** and **KW** to discuss and agree your sentence plan. This could also include other departments for example, education, psychology and/or drug and alcohol services.

8

Supervision and sentence plan meeting

You will continue to have supervision with your POM. You will work together to complete your sentence plan.

Supervision is planned with you to help you address factors linked to your offending. Your **KW** will support you and your **POM**. You may be required to complete a programme(s), and together you and your POM will assess your progress and whether you may be suitable for Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL).

9

Bumps in the road… day to day prison life

There may be bumps in the road from time to time or challenges that can temporarily set you on a different path.

Your **KW** and **POM** will support you with any wellbeing concerns.

10

You may move to another prison

You will meet with your current **POM**, **KW** and new **POM** as part of a handover meeting to consider the next steps of your sentence plan. This is a chance for you to review your progress and discuss what has been challenging.

11

You may move to open conditions where there are no key workers but you will be allocated a new POM

Pre-release work begins 7.5 months before release (or 8 months before parole eligibility/tariff expiry date)

12 You will meet your **Community Offender Manager (COM)** for the first time and they will work with you and your **POM** to help you prepare for release. This might include applying for ROTL or release on Home Detention Curfew, identify any licence conditions and address any needs you might have on release, for example with accommodation, financial matters or substance issues.

13 **Release**

Your **COM** will work with you when you are released on licence from prison.