

## **NORTH YORKSHIRE PROBATION AREA - PUBLICATION OF EFFECTIVE SUPERVISION INSPECTION REPORT**

A report published today by Her Majesty's Probation Inspectorate, describes very satisfactory levels of performance and good quality management in the North Yorkshire Probation Area.

Andrew Bridges, HM Chief Inspector of Probation , said:

" We find North Yorkshire to be a well-led and well-managed probation area that has successfully focused on meeting national targets. There is good leadership from the Chief Officer and other managers, and the Probation Board has taken on its responsibilities in an enthusiastic and businesslike manner.

"Offenders are receiving appropriate supervision, with regular contact arranged, the required interventions being delivered, and breach action taken where necessary. There is also evidence of good relationships with both statutory and voluntary sector partners to assist the probation area's effectiveness.

"The outcomes of the work are shown in most offenders not having been convicted of a further offence to date and examples of their risk of harm being reduced or contained in a number of cases."

### **The report's main findings are:**

\* North Yorkshire was a well led and well managed area that was focused on meeting national targets.

\* The Chief Officer led by example and there was significant similarity of approach between the senior and middle manager groups.

\* Appropriate provision had been made for implementing the new requirements of the Criminal Justice Act 2003, including setting up consistent channels of communication with sentencers.

\* There were good relationships with both statutory and voluntary sector partners which helped to ensure the effective supervision of offenders.

\* The content of offender assessments and their reviews was

satisfactory although their timeliness could be improved. This included cases assessed as posing a high risk of harm.

· The quality and degree of the supervision of offenders was commensurate with both their risk of harm and their criminogenic need. The latter included such issues as unemployment, lack of satisfactory accommodation, and drug and alcohol misuse.

\* Judgements about the acceptability of offender absence were considered to be largely correct. Breach action was taken appropriately in almost all relevant cases.

\* There was scope for improvement in work with offenders on the impact of their behaviour on victims.

\* Most offenders had not been reconvicted for a further offence committed since the start of their order or licence.

\* There was evidence of the risk of harm being reduced or contained in a good number of cases.

\* The area had a healthy culture of using research and other information to inform developments.

## **NOTES FOR EDITORS:**

1. The Effective Supervision Inspection of North Yorkshire took place during January and February 2005.

2. The Effective Supervision Inspection programme started in June 2003. All 42 probation areas comprising the National Probation Service for England and Wales are being inspected over a three year cycle, with areas of similar characteristics (in terms of size and population density) visited in the same year to facilitate comparisons in performance. This enables the Inspectorate to identify and promote effective work with offenders and disseminate information about good practice.

3. Probation areas are being assessed on how well they have met defined inspection criteria. These address the overall management of the area, the quality of the assessments and interventions carried out on offenders, and the initial results of the interventions, both in relation to criminogenic factors such as

employment, accommodation and substance misuse, and also whether there has been any reduction in the risk of harm and the risk of re-offending.

4. A key focus of the North Yorkshire inspection was the area's supervision of a representative sample of 100 cases from most categories of orders and licences, including high risk of harm offenders. There was also particular examination of work in relation to offender accommodation.

5. The three year period of the programme will involve inspection of the National Probation Service's work with about 4,500 cases. We have arranged with the Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate that cases in the sample will be followed through to the two year reconviction point. This will give a longer-term picture of the effectiveness of both individual areas and of the National Probation Service as a whole.