



**YOUTH  
OFFENDING  
TEAM**  
Inspection

# Press Notice

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## Independent inspection of probation and youth offending work

### **EMBARGOED UNTIL 13/08/08 PUBLICATION OF INSPECTION REPORT CORNWALL & ISLES of SCILLY YOUTH OFFENDING TEAM**

The latest report from the fourth phase of inspections of Youth Offending Teams/Services (YOT/S) in England and Wales was published today. A multi-agency inspection team carried out Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Youth Offending Team inspection.

Andrew Bridges, HM Chief Inspector of Probation, said:

“The YOT Management Board, known locally as the Youth Justice Board was made up of appropriate representation from key partner agencies and there was a clear commitment from partners to resource and fund the YOT. At an operational level management arrangements and quality assurance processes required developing to ensure consistency in effective practice. Staff were committed and passionate about their work with children and young people and through a variety of methods actively encouraged engagement. However, the education provision, particularly post 16, and the health provision, in particular Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services needed to improve.

Overall we judged that Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Youth Offending Team was in a good position to improve performance and deliver a sustained level of service over the forthcoming years. This report contains a number of recommendations that we believe will assist the team in its further development”.

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

##### ***Management***

Cornwall & Isles of Scilly YOT sat within the Secondary, Post 16 & Youth Services Division of the Services for Children Young People & Families Directorate. The strategic management of the YOT was provided by the Management Board known locally as the YJB (Youth Justice Board). The YJB provided the YOT with leadership and governance, however the performance information provided to the board lacked specific focus and detail. The CAMHS provision available to the YOT was inconsistent and not fully effective. The impact was such that not all children and young people requiring such specialist health intervention received this service. The YOT manager and the three operational managers were active members of a wide range of groups and boards which resulted in the needs of children and young people who had offended, or were at risk of offending, being integrated into local planning and delivery of services.

##### ***Work in the courts***

Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Youth Courts were satisfied with the service provided by the YOT. We found evidence of bail support packages and supervision services being offered to the court as an alternative to the likelihood of secure or custodial remand. However data available at the time of the inspection showed that the proportion of remand episodes for children and young people remained high at 19% against the revised YJB target of 9%. There was an arrangement between the YOT, the two youth courts and Crown Court, however there were no signatories or dates to confirm this was a joint protocol.

### ***Work with children and young people in the community***

The YOT was well placed and actively engaged with partner agencies to deliver preventative and diversionary services. We found a clear referral process linked to the criteria of the scheme having been verified through locally agreed processes. However although the YOT had the 'White Gold' project there was a lack of prevention interventions for those children and young people aged 13-17. For those children and young people who had offended the induction provided to them at the time of commencing their order was found to be timely and comprehensive. The YOT had a risk management policy and most staff had recently undergone RoH training. However there was a lack of understanding amongst staff as to the rationale to managing risk and a general consensus that it was process driven. A range of interventions were available to address the offending behaviour and criminogenic needs of children and young people who had offended.

### ***Work with children and young people subject to Detention and Training Orders***

The frequency of appointments during the custodial phase supported the achievement of the training plan objectives in more than two thirds of the inspected cases. Full attention was paid to the methods likely to be most effective with the child or young person whilst in custody in the great majority of cases. However, Individual learning plans had not been continued following release and literacy and numeracy skills had not been routinely reassessed. The YOT worker ensured that the child or young person's accommodation needs were assessed and monitored, actively working with others to secure appropriate provision. From the period April 2007 to December 2007 Cornwall & Isles of Scilly YOT achieved a positive target of 4.2% towards the YJB 'use of custody' target of less than 5%.

### ***Victims and restorative justice***

All victims' details were held separately and securely in both a manual and electronic form. During the inspection there were very few examples of good victim awareness work being undertaken with children and young people and only a few cases revealed that the victim's needs had been consistently met in timely manner. The victim officer had delivered restorative justice training to almost all YOT staff and other victim training to key partner agencies. Although the YOT had a limited number of reparation projects it was pleasing that almost all children and young people had commenced their reparation within the first three months of the order.

## **NOTES FOR EDITORS**

1. The inspection of Cornwall & Isles of Scilly YOT took place in April and May 2008.
2. Cornwall & Isles of Scilly had a total population of 501,267 measured in the Census 2001. Of this population, 10% were aged 10-17 years at the time of the census. This figure was slightly lower than the average for England, which was 10.4%.
3. Nine Inspectorates conduct the Youth Offending Team/Services Inspections. They are Commission for Social Care Inspection, Estyn (HM Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales), Healthcare Inspectorate Wales, Healthcare Commission, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, HM Inspectorate of Prisons, HM Inspectorate of Probation, Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales.
4. The YOT/S inspection programme started in June 2003. All 157 YOT/Ss within England and Wales are being inspected over a five to six year cycle.
5. Comprehensive inspection criteria have been developed to cover the third phase of the inspection programme, focusing on:
  - management
  - work in the courts
  - work with children and young people in the community
  - work with children and young people subject to Detention and Training Orders
  - victims and restorative justice.