

Protecting Essex

MAPPA:
Multi-Agency Public Protection
Essex 2008-09



*The stories
behind the success*

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CAUGHT OUT BY HIS MOBILE PHONE

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CONSISTENT HARD WORK PROTECTS PUBLIC

Over **8** years,
nearly **4000** referrals,
2 serious re-offences

Agencies' work to protect the public continues in Essex: 'pride but no complacency'

Criminal Justice Chiefs are looking back at a year of protecting the public across Essex. They know they have done a good job for the county. They also know how much work that has gone into the cases that have come their way.

MAPPA

Above all, they know that without the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) their efforts to provide protection would have been less successful. The system which brings together the people who know each case, who know what work

is needed to reduce their risk, and then who plan together to make sure it happens, is simple, and effective. Three agencies: Probation, Police and the Prisons, take the lead as Responsible Authorities for MAPPA, working alongside many other agencies. "We're proud of our achievements," said Mary Archer, Chief Officer of Probation. "There are no guarantees in this work and we are not complacent. There will be some people who do reoffend. But the way we manage dangerous offenders makes total common sense, both to the professionals, and to the public."

From the Responsible Authority

Probation, Police and the Prisons jointly share the responsibility for the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements in Essex.

2008/9 was another positive year in which the Responsible Authorities for MAPPA and those agencies with a duty to co-operate with MAPPA worked effectively together to manage the risks to the public posed by offenders convicted of violent and/or sexual offences.

We were encouraged that there were no serious further offences committed by those offenders subject to MAPPA risk management plans during the year. There is, however, no scope for complacency and the MAPPA Strategic Management Board remains committed to continuous improvement in the systems and practices that support effective risk management for this comparatively small group of offenders.

April 2009 saw that publication of the 2009 MAPPA Guidance. Attention was paid during the 2008/9 financial year to ensure that the Essex SMB was able to respond to the developments in the guidance with immediate effect. In particular, systems were put in place to enable reporting on the key performance targets set for the future within that guidance as well as the volumes of offenders managed at the different MAPPA levels as recorded in this report.

One of the highlights of the year was the successful regional conference on the theme of MAPPA and MARACs working together to protect the public. MARACs (multi-agency risk assessment conferences) undertake risk management planning focusing on the victims of domestic violence

and, where the perpetrator falls within the MAPPA categories, it is important that both groups collaborate in information sharing and strategies to reduce risk. We were delighted to make a significant contribution to the conference and to reinforce our impression that Essex is well placed in this regard.

One other development during the year was to continue our review of operating practice for information exchange and multi-agency risk management meetings to ensure that the greatest efforts are targeted at the highest risk cases. The results of this work are set to bear fruit in the next financial year where we aim to ensure that once information exchange pathways are established for level one cases, those arrangements do not need

to be revisited by MAPPA unless risk changes. We will continue to facilitate the joint efforts of those most closely involved with the offender in the most expeditious manner possible.

This annual report takes the opportunity to increase the understanding of our work in this area by providing some examples of the cases with which we have worked over the year and the steps taken to reduce risk to the public. We would also like to thank the staff involved both directly in the MAPPA management team and all of the agencies who co-operate in this activity.

“

We were encouraged that there were no serious further offences committed by those offenders subject to MAPPA...

”




Mary Archer
Chief Officer
of Probation




Jim Barker-McCardle
Chief
Constable




Rob Davis
Governor
HMP & YOI
Chelmsford

The work done in Essex this year

Number of MAPPA eligible offenders:

Registered Sexual Offenders living in Essex on 31 March 2008	742
Violent offenders	238
Other dangerous offenders	19
Total	999

Offenders managed via MAPPA meetings: Level 2

Registered Sexual Offenders	72
Violent Offenders	26
Other Dangerous Offenders	19
Total	117

Offenders managed via MAPPA meetings: Level 3

Registered Sexual Offenders	7
Violent Offenders	3
Other Dangerous Offenders	0
Total	10

Enforcement for MAPPA offenders

Returned to custody for breach of licence

Level 2	RSO 22	Violent 9	Other 0
Level 3	RSO 3	Violent 2	Other 0
Total	25	11	0

Sent to custody for breach of Sexual Offences Prevention Order (SOPO)

Level 2	RSO 3	Violent 0	Other 0
Level 3	RSO 0	Violent 0	Other 0
Total	3	0	0

Serious Further Offences by MAPPA offenders

Level 2, Level 3	Total	0
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Registered Sex Offenders in

South Eastern Police Division:	172
South Western Police Division:	177
Central Police Division:	159
Eastern Police Division:	147
Western Police Division:	87

Total number of registered sexual offenders in Essex per 100,000 head of population	46
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Registered Sexual Offenders cautioned or convicted for breach of Requirements	71
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Sexual Offences Prevention Orders

Applied for	36
Interim Order issued	0
Full Order issued	18

Notification Orders

Applied for	2
Interim Order issued	0
Full Order issued	2

Foreign Travel Orders

Applied for	0
Interim Order issued	0
Full Order issued	0

The data for Registered Sexual Offenders reflect the picture on 31 March 2009. The rest of the data covers the full year 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009



Photo: Colin Brown

Return to prison....

PUSHES THE BOUNDARIES, THEN CAUGHT OUT BY MOBILE

Three random indecent assaults, committed in public places, earned Jonah Davis seven years imprisonment, to be followed by a three-year Extended Licence in the community. None of the women suffered serious physical injuries, but the psychological impact on them was significant.

In addition, several years before, he had exposed himself to a 15-year-old girl.

Six months to plan: what concerns?

The case came up at a MAPPA meeting, six months before the offender's release. How to handle his release, and what requirements were needed in his Licence, were all on the agenda.

Victims need help

Two of the victims had responded to contact from Probation's Victim Contact Officers. They needed to be looked after: a non-contact requirement was written into the Licence, as were areas from which Jonah Davis would be excluded altogether.

Risk to children?

Did he pose a risk to children, given his previous offence? He planned to return to live with his wife and young children. Although divorced, Mr. and Mrs. Davis had become reconciled during his imprisonment. The MAPPA meeting decided that he would not return home until such times as an assessment of his risk to children had been completed. The first release address would be a Probation Approved Premises. However, the Essex Approved Premises was

too close to one of the proposed exclusion zones. He would have to go to another county.

Licence Conditions to help control

By the end of the six months, a number of Level 2 meetings had come up with a Risk Management Plan, and mapped out the added Licence Conditions that would help manage his risk. They were extensive, including where he would live; his contact with children; he must advise Probation of any developing relationship, and inform them of any vehicle he used; he must attend a sex offending programme – and keep to the exclusion zones.

Pushing boundaries?

On release, he went to Approved Premises in another county; he was seen regularly by Police Public Protection Monitoring Officers, and by Probation Officers in that Area. He had also to return regularly to see his Supervising Officer in Essex. For this, he could not travel the normal route across the county. He had to take a number of detours to avoid entering the exclusion zones. So it was not long before he requested to be allowed to travel through the areas so as to reduce his journey.

Application refused

Any easement in Licence conditions is down to the Probation Service, and it is not done without care. In this case, Probation discussed it at MAPPA, got the views of the Victim Liaison Officer – the voice of the victim – and refused the request. In addition, Probation reminded the offender

that any vehicle used by him had to be notified to his supervising officer, on pain of a return to prison for any failure. Probation shared his vehicle details with the police, so additional checks on his route could be made. He had definitely been testing the boundaries, but the offender otherwise appeared compliant and cooperative. The checks on his risk to children were also indicating that it would be safe for him to return to his wife and their children.

Alert!

However, police checks on his mobile phone showed calls to the same number, which proved to be that of a young woman. She knew nothing about his previous offending – he had told her his conviction was for robbery, and that he was homeless apart from the Approved Premises. The police made a full disclosure of the real offences, and she stopped seeing him.

Probation send him back to prison

Confronted by Probation about his failure to mention a developing relationship, he described her as a passing acquaintance. This was not the view taken by Essex Probation and he was recalled to prison.

A further effort

Three months later, the Parole Board allowed him out, for another trial at management in the community. Probation, and MAPPA, were in agreement. (Better to have Licence controls early on while they learn to avoid reoffending, than release offenders later with no remaining sanctions.) The child protection assessment had almost been

completed and it was felt that, provided adequate safeguards were agreed (not to be left alone with the children) he would be allowed to return to his family. In the meantime, he was to return to the same Approved Premises.

Victims have their say

Throughout all of this time, the Victim Contact Unit carried on discussing any concerns with the victims, keeping them informed, and asking if they wished to pass on any comments to MAPPA.

The current situation

- He has finally returned to the family home.
- He receives periodic unannounced visits from Probation and the Police.
- He will be subject to Licence Conditions until 2011.
- Any breach in these could mean another recall to prison.
- He will remain subject to Sexual Offender Registration and police monitoring for life.
- Any breach of the registration requirements makes him liable to arrest.
- He is attending the Sex Offender Treatment Programme and making progress.

Continued vigilance

The Risk Management Plan continues, with MAPPA agencies (in this case, Probation, Police and Children's Services) working together.

His risk has been reduced to Level 1. This is under constant review, and could revert to Level 2 if the risk increases, or if there are other concerns.



3**Level 3: Active Multi-Agency Management**

As with level 2 but these cases additionally require the involvement of senior officers to authorise the use of special resources, such as police surveillance or specialised accommodation, and/or to provide ongoing senior management oversight.

10 offenders**2****Level 2: Active Multi-Agency Management**

The risk management plans for these offenders require the active involvement of several agencies via regular multi-agency public protection (MAPP) meetings.

117 offenders

What Risk?

Assessing risk determines whether offenders are managed at level 1, 2 or 3

The few most dangerous offenders receive the greatest degree of scrutiny and oversight.

If any MAPPA offender's risk increases, they will be managed at a higher level. Reducing risk sees them at a lower level of management.

Such flexibility is possible with the continual oversight and discussion provided by the MAPPA process.

Level 1: Ordinary Management

These offenders are subject to the usual management arrangements applied by whichever agency is supervising them. Additionally, information-sharing between agencies, via ViSOR and other routes, as well as face-to-face meetings, will take place. Essex MAPPA holds at least 96 full-day meetings to share information every year.

686 offenders

Levels 1, 2 and 3 in Essex

The main thrust of Essex MAPPA is the use of the Level One Information Exchange meeting. It is a tried and tested method of managing the risk of a high volume of Essex offenders.

Of the 813 offenders referred to the MAPPA this year, every case was discussed at a Level One Information Exchange Meeting at least once, but the vast majority on many other occasions. These are managed by one agency.

After discussion, some will be designated as Level Two offenders, which will entail further planning between the agencies to manage the risk they pose, and regular reporting back on work completed, with exchanges of up-to-date information. 117 offenders were at this level during the year.

Ten other offenders – a tiny proportion – were at the highest risk, Level Three. Some were convicted of sexual offences, a few of other forms of violence.

...and preventing the killer offence...

Domestic Violence kills two women on average every week. A look at the table below will show a significant number of referrals to MAPPA under 'IDAP'. These are Domestic Violence perpetrators who are attending Probation's Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme.

By adding them to the Essex MAPPA process we ensure regular liaison between Probation case managers, Police Domestic Violence Liaison Officers and victim services. The potential risk of re-victimisation is under constant review, and measures set in place to prevent it.

Referrals in Essex: a breakdown

Referrals to MAPPA cover sex offending (RSO), domestic violence (IDAP), other violence (VO) and other dangerous offending (Other).

Town	RSO	IDAP	VO	Other	Total
Basildon	44	43	36	7	130
Chelmsford	38	51	36	8	133
Colchester	50	79	52	9	190
Grays	16	31	26	4	77
Harlow	31	37	34	11	113
Southend	56	48	56	10	170
Total	235	289	240	49	813
2007 - 08	207	298	210	56	771

What do we mean by.....

Breach of Licence

Offenders released into the community following a period of imprisonment of 12 months or more will be subject to a licence with conditions (under probation supervision). If these conditions are not complied with, breach action is taken and the offender may be recalled to prison.

Serious Further Offence (SFO)

Any sexual or violent offence which carries a maximum penalty of 14 years' imprisonment or more. All MAPPAs across the country are reporting not only the number of actively MAPPA managed offenders so charged, but also on the outcome of the case. In Essex there are none.

Sexual Offences**Prevention Order (SOPO)**

A court may make a SOPO at the time of dealing with certain sexual offenders or when the police make a special application on account of the offender's behaviour in the community, even though no offence has been proved. The full order lasts for a minimum of 5 years, and can last indefinitely. A SOPO will require the subject to register as a sexual offender and can include conditions, for example to prevent the offender loitering near schools or playgrounds. If the offender fails to comply with (i.e. breaches) the requirements of the order, he can be taken back to court and may be liable to up to 5 years' imprisonment.

Notification Order

Requires sexual offenders who have been convicted overseas to register with police, in order to protect the public in the UK from the risks that they pose. Police may apply to the court for the order in relation to offenders in or intending to come to the UK.

Foreign Travel Order

Prevents offenders with convictions for sexual offences against children from travelling abroad where it is necessary to do so to protect children from the risk of sexual harm.

For further information or explanation, or to relate any concerns, contact Essex MAPPA 01245 452767



How it all works

- MAPPA are a set of arrangements to manage the risk posed by certain sexual and violent offenders. They bring together the Police, Probation and Prison Services in Essex into what is known as the MAPPA Responsible Authority.

- A number of other agencies are under a duty to co-operate with the Responsible Authority. These include: Children's Services, Adult Social Services, Health Trusts and Authorities, Youth Offending Teams, local housing authorities and certain registered social landlords, Jobcentre Plus, and electronic monitoring providers.

The purposes of MAPPA are:

- to ensure more comprehensive risk assessments are completed, taking advantage of co-ordinated information sharing across the agencies; and
- to direct the available resources to best protect the public from serious harm.

The MAPP Arrangements manage the risk posed by certain sexual and violent offenders.

What happens?

Offenders eligible for MAPPA are identified and information is gathered/shared about them across relevant agencies. The nature and level of the risk of harm they pose is assessed and a risk management plan is implemented to protect the public.

In most cases, the offender will be managed under the ordinary arrangements applied by the agency or agencies with supervisory responsibility. A number of offenders, though, require active multi-agency management and their risk management plans will be formulated and monitored via MAPP meetings attended by various agencies.

Who are the MAPPA offenders?

Registered sexual offenders (Category 1) – sexual offenders who are required to notify the police of their name, address and other personal details and notify any changes subsequently

Violent offenders (Category 2) – offenders sentenced to imprisonment/detention for 12 months or more, or detained under hospital orders. This category also includes a small number of sexual offenders who do not qualify for registration and offenders disqualified from working with children;

Other Dangerous Offenders (Category 3) – offenders who do not qualify under categories 1 or 2 but who currently pose a risk of serious harm; there is a link between the offending and the risk posed, and they require active multi-agency management

An offender's risk is increasing. What can you do?

Police and Probation have ways of managing increasing risk. Which tool they use depends on whether the offender is still on Licence.

A serious sex offender (gross indecency with children) was released on Licence to be managed in the community.

It was not long before he was recalled to prison by the Probation Service. He had not committed any further offence. His behaviour, pushing for greater freedoms and testing the boundaries of his Licence conditions, was enough to indicate increasing risk.

Short time left on Licence

When he was released for the second time after seven out of eight years in custody, he had a very short licence period left. Not only was he re-referred to MAPPA, he went in at Level 3. This allowed the deployment of additional resources to manage his risk, including a police surveillance unit to monitor his behaviour. His Licence conditions were not only the usual child protection requirements, but also hourly reporting to the Approved Premises where he lived, along with attendance at the Programme for Sexual Offenders. He was excluded from certain areas where children would congregate, such as parks and leisure centres.

A watchful Probation Service

The Probation Service knew he needed a



lot of work, and had to be taught to manage his own risk. "He was very institutionalised," says his Offender Manager, "and wanted the rules and regulations defined in minutiae. We were also convinced that sexual offences were still very much on his mind."

What sanctions could be used?

The tools at Probation's disposal were important: both in regular work with him,

and also ensuring he realised there was still a threat to his freedom if he showed any signs of increasing risk. It would be Probation who recalled him to prison if their police colleagues or any other agency produced indications of changing behaviour.

Police and Probation combine

Police tactics and additional joint Probation and Police visits reminded him daily of the

routine he needed to keep. But continuing surveillance eventually revealed him hiding in bushes near a park – sufficient grounds for recall, which was effected immediately.

Prison, but what next?

He is still in prison, and will be finally released later this year. There will be no opportunity for Licence conditions this time: his full term will have been served.

Still the chance to control

However, another tool will be used to control his behaviour. The Police will be able to apply to the courts for a life-long Sexual Offender Prevention Order (SOPO). Should it be granted, it will contain similar conditions to those in his Licence, preventing any unsupervised contact with children, or from visiting parks, recreation areas, schools – or other designated areas where children could congregate.

Prison still possible

Any breaking of these conditions would result in his being prosecuted. He would be liable to a maximum prison term of five years.

The SOPO would still be current when he was eventually released.

The first interview with Probation should have been a routine task.

He was convicted of taking a motor vehicle, and the courts had made a Suspended Sentence Order with Community Supervision. But Probation staff thought there was something about Mr. N's attitude – towards women in general, and towards his partner, Denise, in particular.

Hunch

The Offender Manager made a call to the local police Domestic Violence Unit. They confirmed her hunch. Denise was viewed as a potentially high-risk victim: a large number of previous domestic violence incidents had come to police attention.

Intelligence makes the difference

Probation reassessed Mr N as a high-risk offender, based on the intelligence received during this one phone call. As he had a previous conviction of a serious violent offence, the Offender Manager could refer him to the MAPPa process.

Serious injury

At the initial Level 2 MAPPa meeting, the police disclosed the extent of the problem. Over the previous two years they had attended more than 10 domestic violence incidents between the couple, and Denise had sustained very serious injuries. Twice Mr N had been arrested for assaults, but on these and all other occasions Denise refused to support a prosecution.

Child's safety too

Other information was shared too: the police had made a Child Protection Referral to Social Services on the couple's 2-year-old child and she had been placed in foster care for her own safety. Action was needed. But those at the MAPPa meeting knew that without Denise's co-operation, and with no other supporting evidence, it would be virtually impossible to secure a conviction against Mr. N for the domestic violence incidents. The best plan would be to give support to Denise and enhance any safety plan that she might have.

Emergency bed?

A Police Domestic Violence Officer and a Probation Women's Safety Worker

arranged a joint visit to see her. Prior to the visit, they liaised with the Women's Refuge, to secure accommodation for her in case she wanted it.

Big risk

At the meeting they told Denise that, in their view, Mr. N posed a serious risk of harm to her and that they believed her life could be at risk should she choose to stay with him. They catalogued a whole series of domestic abuse incidents of which they were aware. Denise agreed that there had been many more that had not been reported. Nonetheless, she said she preferred to remain in the relationship.

Prison

In the months that followed, further attempts to provide support were rebuffed by Denise. Her partner then went on to commit other offences, including an assault of an adult male, so received a prison sentence which included the months previously suspended. She was safe – for a while.

Keep trying

On release he would remain subject to probation supervision for a further 12 months and again will be jointly managed under the MAPPa process. Attempts to engage with Denise continued, in the hope that she would agree to a safety plan in time for his release. The indications were that she would choose not to do anything.

What is the future?

The next time could be far more serious, but without her cooperation, there is a limit to what MAPPa or individual Agencies could do for her. The child would remain in the care of Social Services for her continued protection.

Watchful

However, but for MAPPa, and the sharing of information, the vigilance and oversight that makes the difference between life and death in these cases just would not be so systematic, or effective. In this case the MAPPa agencies were planning to watch, and wait.

We expected bad news... Denise had a lucky escape

Read our comments on an old case, reported in last year's MAPPa News. It looked bad for Denise.

Read the update. She had a lucky escape. And so did the child.

UPDATE 2009

Mr N should have been released in April 2009. All the arrangements had been made to protect Denise as much as possible, including accommodating Mr. N in Approved Premises away from his home area. He would also have been subject to curfews that would have prevented him having sufficient time to return to his home area and get back without breaking his licence conditions.

However, intelligence showed that on release he and Denise intended to meet up and abscond from the area, taking the

child with them. Moving the child to different foster carers was a strong probability.

But Mr. N unintentionally made Denise's life safer. Just a month before his release, he attacked a fellow prisoner, causing him very serious injuries. As a result, he was further remanded in custody. He has since appeared before the court. He received an Indeterminate Sentence for Public Protection (IPP). He now has a considerable wait, even to be able to request consideration for release. This will not happen until his risk has been drastically reduced.



THE VIOLENCE..... its results MAPPA planning the outcome .

Mr. D is unhappy about his partner having contact with anyone else. He is possessive and controlling ■■■

The relationship ends after two violent incidents which Alison would not take further with police ■■■

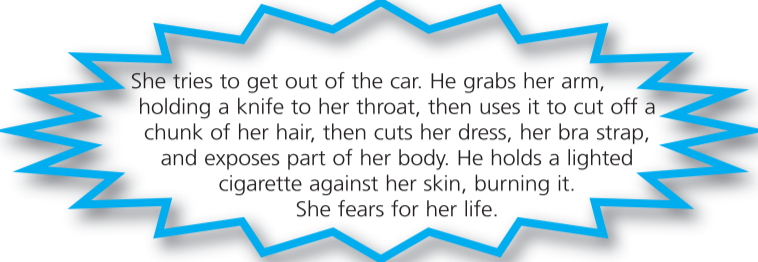
He moves out to his own flat ■■■

Mr.D takes an overdose – not his first – and is in hospital for two weeks ■■■

After discharge, he contacts Alison, invites her over for a drink. She agrees out of sympathy ■■■

After what she views as a normal evening of socialising, Mr. D offers her a lift home. She accepts ■■■

He drives to a secluded wooded area, claiming he wants to talk to her. Alison is concerned ■■■



She tries to get out of the car. He grabs her arm, holding a knife to her throat, then uses it to cut off a chunk of her hair, then cuts her dress, her bra strap, and exposes part of her body. He holds a lighted cigarette against her skin, burning it. She fears for her life.

He then expresses remorse. She gets him to drive her home. He leaves; she calls the police ■■■

He is arrested; remanded in custody for five months, then receives 2-years' imprisonment. He will do 6 months: remand time counts towards the total ■■■



MAPPA makes plans for his release. Personnel needed: Probation's Offender Managers; Victim Contact Officer and Approved Premises Manager; Police Domestic Violence Officer and Public Protection Officers; Criminal Justice Mental Health; Local Authority Housing; Essex Social Services; MAPPA Manager and Administrator. The decisions: ■■■

The Victim: She is recovering, but will need a Non-Contact condition and Exclusion Zone put in Mr. D's Licence. The police will install an alarm in her home ■■■

Accommodation: MAPPA turns down Mr. D's plans to live with daughter. This is in the exclusion zone. More control over him is needed at first: he will live short-term in Probation Approved Premises. He will need settling and checking in his own home before long, though: his Licence is only 12 months ■■■

Mental Health: MAPPA agrees Criminal Justice Mental Health Team will assess him in prison, and plan treatment on release ■■■

Keeping the checks going: As Mr. D will not be a registered sex offender on release, the mandatory visits from Police Protection Officers cannot happen. Instead, Probation will request another condition in his Licence, "to comply with Police monitoring visits." If he fails to comply, Probation will recall him to prison ■■■

Extra conditions include: to advise Probation of any developing relationships, and of any vehicle he owns ■■■

MAPPA working: Regular meetings receive reports on treatment for depression, offender management, his growing understanding of, and empathy for, Alison as a victim. He makes no attempt to contact her ■■■

Looking to the future: hostel curfew conditions are gradually relaxed, ready for move-on from the hostel. Probation help him find a warehouse job, and a flat to rent. He eventually moves in ■■■

Watchful work: including supervision both at the Probation Office and in his home; unannounced visits by Police Monitoring Officers; support from the Community Mental Health Team. The Victim Contact team still visit Alison ■■■

Never zero risk: This year, Mr. D disclosed to Probation and Police that he had started a relationship with a woman in her forties, and that she knew of his offending. He was asked to repeat his disclosure to her in front of Probation staff. Police Domestic Violence Officers later visited her alone at home, to check her safety. The Licence is now successfully completed. Mental Health support continues ■■■



' Prisons have an important role '

The Public Protection job done by Probation and the Police is often featured in case histories. Both are MAPPA 'Responsible Authorities'. The third Responsible Authority, the Prison Service, not only provides the custodial element, but also has an increasingly important role in helping to plan the safe management of an ex-prisoner in the community.

David O'Neill is the Head of the Public Protection Unit at HMP Chelmsford and Young Offender Institution. The Unit

works very closely with the Probation staff seconded to the prison, Prison Police Liaison Officers as well as with external agencies.

Public Protection in the prison

"The PPU plays an important role in identifying the potentially dangerous offenders under our roof, ensuring that we work to reduce their risk on release, and in sharing information gleaned in the prison with other agencies," says David.

Systematic

With a through-put of 4,500 new arrivals through the door every year, the prison requires well-oiled machinery to ensure that offenders who could pose a risk are dealt with properly. Communication across the prison of both intelligence and straight facts, as well as the vital communication with colleagues outside prison walls, needs systems that will withstand the pressures of volume and activity found in a prison like Chelmsford.

IDRMT at the centre of protection

At the hub of all this organisation is the Inter-Departmental Risk Management Team. It meets weekly to discuss the management of individual prisoners, including those posing a high risk of harm as sexual offenders and domestic violence perpetrators, or presenting a risk of harm to children. The core team

members: representatives from the Public Protection Unit, Probation (the Offender Management Unit) the Prison Police Liaison Officers and the Security Department, will share information for the sentence

A prison officer visited one of the wings to see a remand prisoner accused of sexual offences against his grand daughter and grand son. He was awaiting a lengthy trial. On being asked what he was in for, the prisoner mentioned the charges, denied that he had touched the girl, but admitted he had touched the boy. The prison officer checked this out with colleagues who noticed the man had told them the opposite story: the girl was the only victim, the prisoner had claimed. Presented with the two versions of his own story, the prisoner withdrew his 'not guilty' plea, saving the necessity for a Crown Court trial. He received a lengthy prison sentence.

and release of known individuals, which is then passed to the Offender Manager in the community. Other individual members of staff, prison officers or probation Offender Supervisors, will be included in the planning group as appropriate.

Intelligence is key

"We obtain as much information as possible from around the prison," says David O'Neill. "Those staff

who see the prisoner every day are in the best position to notice changes which we need to be aware of. Their appearance; demeanour; behaviour; who they are mixing with; what they are saying; in many of these cases this information is vital. (Quiet plans to set up in a flat with another like-minded sexual offender, for instance, will get noticed.) This is apart from the more obvious surveillance: monitoring phone calls, checking the post of those who are known risks. The gathered intelligence informs our plans and is passed on to those who need to know."

Working with MAPPAs everywhere

"Staff will attend any MAPPA meeting, whenever invited," says David. "We will work with MAPPA in every county to facilitate the important work that keeps the public safe."



David O'Neill in the Offender Management Unit with Probation's Kevin Ling (l) Luke Vale (r), and Officer Mark Chinery



MAPPA Strategic Management Board

The forward planning and governance of the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements in Essex rely on an active membership.

The three Responsible Authorities: Probation, Police and Prisons, with the MAPPA Manager, are joined by those agencies with a 'duty to co-operate' at Strategic Management Board meetings:

- Children Services: Essex, Southend, Thurrock
- Essex Housing Officers Group
- Job Centre Plus
- Mental Health Trusts
- Victim Support
- Youth Offending Services

The Lay Advisor will be there also. As well as attending many of the MAPPA meetings

throughout the county, it is part of John Downing's role to contribute to the planning and forward thinking at SMB level. This year the SMB looks back on the solid, continuing, unremitting hard work of the agencies concerned. Proud of MAPPA's record, the SMB insists nonetheless on a reality check. On MAPPA's watch, cases are managed well. There are

remarkable successes. But no matter how intense the supervision and surveillance, re-offending can happen in certain cases. The agencies concerned work extremely hard to avoid such an event. They aim for consistency in all they do: consistency of process, of management, of vigilance, of care, of oversight, to achieve a consistency of protection across Essex.



The importance of ViSOR

ViSOR is a database holding details of sexual and violent offenders, and other dangerous persons. The three MAPPA Responsible Authority agencies – police, prison and probation – are able to work on the same IT system enabling the sharing of risk assessments and risk management information on individual violent and sex offenders in a timely way to reduce re-offending.

Thanks to our long-serving Lay Advisor, John Downing

The Responsible Authority is required to appoint lay advisors to sit on the SMB. They act as independent yet informed observers; able to pose questions which the professionals closely involved in the work might not think of asking. They also bring to the SMB their understanding and perspective of the local community – where they must reside or have strong links. We are grateful to John, whose commitment to Essex MAPPA helps to ensure that its work protects the community he represents.



Public Protection: A Critical Success factor

The East of England's Director of Offender Management for Prisons and Probation, Trevor Williams, takes a view

I believe that MAPPA lies at the heart of what the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) does as public protection, reducing re-offending and effective partnership working are all key aims of this new agency. There can be no more critical success factor than protecting the public from serious harm and the joint working of the police, probation and prisons with their many local partners is an essential element of this. So often, good preventative work goes unnoticed while mistakes can have very serious consequences that are widely publicised. Therefore I am pleased to have the opportunity to contribute to this Annual Report.

The creation of the DOM role in April 2009 is an important step in the development of NOMS and means that we will increasingly have the opportunity to develop practice and allocate resources locally. This is particularly important at a time when resources are stretched and we have to demonstrate strong performance and excellent value for money. There are a number of key areas that I would like to see taken forward or continued within MAPPA in our region:

- Recognising the valuable contribution of Children's

Services, to ensure that we promote and give priority to safeguarding children and that MAPPA processes link effectively with safeguarding children procedures.

- Ensuring that Probation Areas and Prisons implement the recommendations from the external investigation into the

“So often, good preventative work goes unnoticed while mistakes can have very serious consequences that are widely publicised.”

case of Dano Sonnex, supervised by London Probation Area. There were a number of important recommendations on the assessment and supervision of offenders and the processes involved with managing risk between the two organisations.

- Further developing the victim focus of MAPPA work where necessary, capitalising on the active involvement of victim liaison staff in the MAPPA process.

- Greater prison involvement in MAPPA work, particularly for offenders held locally.

The whole public protection and MAPPA process has improved substantially since its inception. The new MAPPA guidance and the focus on public protection and safeguarding within the new HM Inspectorate of Probation offender management inspections provide much improved direction and scrutiny. Also the developments in joint working and in the reciprocal arrangements for serious case reviews are very welcome. I would like to congratulate all those involved in the successful MAPPA work of the last year, and would urge that constant vigilance and focus on this critical area of work be maintained.