

This programme uses cognitive behavioural methods of intervention.

UK research studies have shown these to be the most effective in achieving significant impact with sex offenders in both the reduction of risk of harm and of reoffending.

The Thames Valley Programme is one of three accredited sex offender programmes piloted and developed by the National Probation Service.

It is available in all Probation Areas in East Anglia.

The Thames Valley Programme

Community Sex Offender
Groupwork Programme

A National Probation Service
Accredited Programme

Information for Sentencers



NATIONAL PROBATION SERVICE

for England and Wales

Enforcement, rehabilitation and public protection

The Programme

Aims

The Probation Service has three principle aims in its work with Sex Offenders:

- To protect the public, particularly potential victims, through the effective supervision of sex offenders.
- The reduction of the risk of harm.
- The reduction of the risk of offending.

Target group and minimum period

This programme is intended for adult male offenders who present a risk of sexual harm to the public. The suitability and maturity of those offenders aged between 18-21 will be determined by the Treatment Manager. The programme is intended for those on either a Community Order or Prison Licence. A treatment period in the community of three years is advisable.

Accreditation

The programme has been extensively developed by internationally recognised experts in the field of Sex Offender research and practice to achieve the exacting requirements of accreditation by the Joint National Accreditation Panel.

Key elements

- Risk assessment and management.
- Making sex offenders aware of the damage caused to their victims.
- Challenging denial by encouraging offenders to take full and active responsibility for their sexual offending behaviour.
- Increasing the level of social competence frequently lacking in sex offenders.
- Development of effective Relapse Prevention strategies.

An agreement outlining conditions of attendance and behaviour has to be signed by the offender prior to inclusion in the programme. Non-attendance is dealt with rigorously.

Where the sentence permits, the court may wish to consider imposing a condition of Extended Licence supervision.

As part of the full range of sentencing options, including the possible use of a Restraining Order, an Extended Licence allows the programme to secure the necessary involvement in all its elements and to address the issues of risk to the public.

The timetable

- Pre-Programme work and assessment, which determines the treatment pathway to be followed with the offender.
- Psychometric testing before and after the treatment phases.
- An initial intensive two-week full-time period of groupwork.
- A semi-intensive period of groupwork twice a week (fourteen weeks).
- Relapse Prevention groupwork undertaken once a week for six months.
- Continuous assessment to evaluate individual risk and change.

An offender will be expected to repeat elements of the programme deemed necessary for his progress.

Work in this programme is linked to the regular assessment and management of risk carried out by the Multi-Agency Public Protection Panels (MAPPPs), formal members of which include the Police, Social Services Departments and the Prisons.