

BEDFORDSHIRE PROBATION BOARD



ANNUAL REPORT 2003-2004



NATIONAL PROBATION SERVICE
for England and Wales

Bedfordshire

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INTRODUCTION

AIMS OF THE NATIONAL PROBATION SERVICE

- **To protect the public**
- **To reduce re-offending**
- **To provide for the proper punishment of offenders**
- **To ensure that offenders are aware of the effects of their crimes on their victims and on the public**
- **To rehabilitate offenders**

FOREWORD

BY CHAIR AND CHIEF OFFICER

We are pleased to introduce the Annual Report for Bedfordshire Probation Area 2003-2004. This report is completed in accordance with the requirements of the National Probation Service, to be consolidated into the picture of performance across the whole service in England and Wales.

In addition to this formal document, we have produced a summary performance report which was presented at the Board's Annual General Meeting in April 2004 to which we were delighted to welcome the Acting Director General of the National Probation Service, Steve Murphy, as our keynote speaker. Referring to the forthcoming establishment of the National Offender Management Service, Steve Murphy hailed the achievements of the National Probation Service during its short lifetime, including a more consistent approach across probation areas, more innovative working, provision for basic skills, and work in public protection through multi-agency (MAPPA) arrangements, which had now resulted in American interest in the developments that had taken place. Commending Bedfordshire on its performance during the year he said the figures told a "very encouraging story", and showed that staff were dealing with offenders in a positive and constructive way.

In establishing a tradition of holding our annual meetings in public, we have demonstrated our commitment to opening up our work to public understanding, and have been delighted that these meetings have attracted a high attendance both from the local communities we serve, and from our own staff.

We take great pride this year in reporting that Bedfordshire remains one of the the probation Areas which achieved above 90% in the broad basket of key performance links. This tremendous achievement led to the Area being the recipient of a full bonus payment – the only Area in the region to achieve this accolade.

Highlights in our performance record were:


- *Accredited Programmes:* The Area performed significantly above target with 180 programme completions against a target of 147, representing a 122% performance.
- *Drug Treatment & Testing Orders:* The number of Orders commenced was 97, against a target of 86 (113%).
- *Basic Skills:* From a standing start the Area achieved 108 commencements and 22 nationally recognised awards for offenders, representing significant progress and improvement over the previous year. There were 12 literacy Level 1 awards, and four Level 2 awards, five Level 1 numeracy awards, and one Level 2 award.
- *Positive Proposals in Pre Sentence Reports on Minority Ethnic Offenders:* The NPD target is for a clear proposal in 95% of pre-sentence reports. In Bedfordshire 210 PSRs out of 211 prepared on minority ethnic offenders contained a positive proposal.
- *Victim Contact:* From April 2003 to March 2004 Bedfordshire made contact with 248 out of 270 victims - 92% against a target of 85%

The Area's performance on enforcement did not make the anticipated gains during the year, rising only 2% from 77% to 79%. Additional attention and impetus is required to regain our previous high position on this indicator. Timeliness of reports, although not a performance bonus-linked indicator, is another area where further improvement is needed.

Bedfordshire's strong performance in many areas of work reflects the quality and commitment of our staff at all levels, including a particularly strong contribution at middle manager level to provide leadership and support to staff doing a difficult job.



John Scott
Chief Officer



Robin Fletcher
Probation Board Chair

SECTION A: RESULTS

A report of what the area has achieved in 2003- 2004

Key Performance Results

The Home Secretary's Priorities 2003-2004

1. Protection of the public from serious harm

- **SPM 9: Timely risk management plans for high risk cases**

From July 2003 when monitoring commenced to March 2004, 10 of the 14 high risk cases were in place within the prescribed time – 71% of the total caseload sampled.

- **SPM 24: National Standards contact basket for high risk cases**

Current data collection and reporting arrangements do not provide reliable evidence in respect of this measure.

- **Area Plan Local Targets relating to this priority**

In order to better assess both the qualitative and quantitative aspects of risk management plan completion and implementation, Bedfordshire Area organised an inspection of both MAPPA (Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements) and non-MAPPA case to be undertaken in June 2004.

2. Reduce re-offending through the implementation of the What Works Strategy.

- **SDA 2: Basic skills starts and awards**

Basic skills starts target: 159 Basic skills starts achieved: 108
Awards target: 40 Achieved: 21

- **SDA 3: Accredited Programme Completions**

Accredited programme completion target: 147 Completions achieved: 180

3. Supervise all offenders in accordance with National Standards and take enforcement action against those who do not comply.

- **SDA 4: Enforcement**

Bedfordshire Probation Area enforcement performance improved from 77% to 79% in the course of the year, although our ranking worsened from 17th best performer to 30th out of the 42 Areas.

- **SPM 5: National Standards Contact Basket**

CROs	-	91%
CPROs	-	84%
CPOs	-	77%
Resettlement	-	83%
<i>Overall Total</i>	-	85%

4. Reduce drug related crime

- **SDA 6: DTTO commencements**

Target: 86 Achieved: 97 (113%)

- **Area Plan Local Targets relating to this priority**

The chart below indicates the number of DAOs and DARs achieved

Drug Abstinence Order	8
Comm. Rehab. Order + Drug Abstinence Requirement	46
Comm. Pun. Order + Drug Abstinence Requirement	1
Comm. Pun & Rehab. Order + Drug Abstinence Requirement	1
Licence + Drug Abstinence Requirement	26
TOTAL	82

Customer Results

5. Improve work with the victims of serious sexual and other violent crime.

- **SPM 1: Victim Contact**

Number of named victims: 270

Number offered face to face contact in eight weeks: 248 (92%)

6. IMPROVE THE SPEED OF JUSTICE

- **SDA 1(a) & (b): PSR timeliness and SSR proportions**

Magistrates Court Pre-Sentence Reports (PSR) timeliness: 62%

Proportion of court reports that are Specific Sentence Reports (SSRs): 12%

SSRs 2000/01: 2%

SSRs 2001/02: 4%

SSRs 2002/03: 5%

SSRs 2003/04: 12%

- **SPM 21: Sentencer satisfaction**

Magistrates in Bedfordshire were given the opportunity to express their views as part of a national survey conducted by MORI in arrangement with the NPD and the Magistrates' Association. The survey showed Bedfordshire consistently above the national average in terms of local magistrates' confidence in probation provision. A total of 74 local magistrates participated, and their responses to major findings of the survey are outlined below.

QUESTION	BEDS	NATIONAL
	(Yes)	(Yes)
Is the probation service effective in....		
Rehabilitating offenders?	80%	76%
Reducing re-offending?	68%	65%

Protecting the public?	39%	41%
Enforcing community sentences?	78%	81%
Punishment of offenders?	61%	58%
Working with offenders whose crime is drug-related?	85%	79%
Assessing risk of re-offending and harm to the public?	80%	75%
Do you agree that...		
The probation service provides a consistently good service?	66%	58%
You trust the probation service to deal effectively with offenders?	72%	64%
Relations between your court and probation are very positive?	84%	79%
The quality and detail in PSRs is usually good?	73%	66%
Sentencing options in PSRs are usually appropriate?	53%	55%
Analysis of offences is sometimes/always good?	62%	63%
Overall usefulness in reaching a sentencing decision is always/sometimes good?	80%	73%
Overall usefulness is poor?	1%	5%
Proposals for sentencing are always/sometimes realistic?	95%	89%
You know when to ask for an SSR?	92%	94%
SSRs requested have been helpful and met your expectations?	81%	82%
Community sentences ensure offenders consider the impact on victims?	51%	50%
Community sentences are soft options?	22%	31%
Community sentences have benefits over custodial sentences?	80%	64%

- **SPM 31: Customer/stakeholder satisfaction (where surveyed)**

A total of 109 exit interviews were conducted with offenders participating in Enhanced Community Punishment (ECP) October 2003 to March 2004. This data is currently being analysed and a report will be presented to the Bedfordshire Probation Board.

Hostels in Bedford and Luton have taken part in Pathfinder surveys. Bedford Hostel has made changes to the induction process as a result of internal satisfaction surveys conducted during the year.

- **SPM 22 Achievement of Charter Mark**

The Area is fully committed to the development of the European Foundation for Quality Management framework, and has invested time and energy in the development of the framework within Bedfordshire, and is developing a collaborative approach to this in the Eastern Region..

- **Complaints received and the number upheld**

The Area operates the National Probation Service's Complaints procedures. The processes are believed to be HR Act compliant.

Ongoing formal complaints carried forward into this period	1
New formal complaints received by the Chief Officer	6
Reports/Investigations completed in this period	6

Reports/Investigations in progress	1
Chief Officer Reviews in response to Appeals	0
Complaints Panel convened during this period	0
MPs letters on behalf of constituents seeking information	2

Seven complaints were investigated by senior managers – none had resulted in an appeal during 2003-2004. Bedfordshire Probation Board received a report on complaints at its meeting in June 2004, and noted the contents.

People Results

- **Staff in post figures (FTE) by grade, gender and race/ethnicity**

Ethnic Category`	No. of Employees*	% of total
Asian British: Bangladeshi		
Asian British: Indian	1	0.45
Asian British: Pakistani	3	1.36
Asian/Indian	1	0.45
Black British: African	5	2.27
Black British: Caribbean	17	7.73
Black/Black British: Other	2	0.91
Mixed		
Mixed: White & Black African		
Mixed: White & Black Caribbean	1	0.45
Refusal	6	2.73
White	2	0.91
White British	169	76.82
White Irish	2	0.91
White Other	2	0.91
Non-returns	9	4.09
Total	220	100%

*This represents the number of staff in post. The FTE is not recorded

Ethnic Category`	No. of Employees	Probation Trainees	Staff Grades	Middle Managers	Chief Officers
Asian British: Bangladeshi					
Asian British: Indian	1			1	
Asian British: Pakistani	3		3		
Asian/Indian	1		1		
Black British: African	5	1	4		
Black British:	17	1	14	2	

Caribbean					
Black/Black British: Other	2		2		
Mixed					
Mixed: White & Black African					
Mixed: White & Black Caribbean	1	1			
Refusal	6		6		
White	2		2		
White British	169	11	132	19	7
White Irish	2		2		
White Other	2		2		
Non-returns	9		9		
Total	220	14	177	22	7

The percentage of managers from minority ethnic groups within the workforce now totals 10.34 percent. There are 161 female members of staff, and 59 male personnel, including 15 female and seven male middle managers (of which four females and one male are seconded outside of the area), and two female and five male chief officers.

7. Promote and champion work on diversity as an employer, service provider, and within communities

- **SDA 7: Minority Ethnic Staff Employment Targets**

- **Representation:** Area contribution to regional target
Regional Target - 4.9%
Bedfordshire - 13.6%

The Bedfordshire 2001 Census shows the proportion of minority ethnic communities in the population as 13.7%. Because of the greater diversity of Bedfordshire's population, we are pleased to be able to make a significant contribution to the regional target.

- **Retention:** area contribution to national target
Target - None Set
Bedfordshire - 15.4%

The local aim was to produce a lower turnover for minority ethnic employees. Bedfordshire scored 15.4% (four out of 26 leavers were from ethnic minority communities), whereas for staff as a whole the turnover rate was 11.8%.

- **Progression:** area contribution to national target
Target - 2.5%
Bedfordshire - 26.3%

(five out of 19 promotions were of staff from ethnic minority communities)

- **Proportion of PSRs on minority ethnic offenders in which there is a clear proposal**

PSRs on ethnic minority offenders with a clear proposal: 98%

8. Demonstrate organisational excellence and achieve efficiency savings

SDA 8: Sickness absence: 11.9 days per staff member, above the NPD target of nine days

SPM20: Wastage of staff: Turnover of staff was 11.8%, above the NPD target of 5%.

SPM 22: Achievement of Investors in People Award: Not pursued by Bedfordshire, our emphasis has been on EFQM

- **Proportion of PSRs on minority ethnic offenders in which there is a clear Proposal:** PSRs on ethnic minority offenders with a clear proposal: 98%

SPM 18 approved premises occupancy:

Luton Hostel: 94% (same % as 2002/03)
Bedford Hostel: 81% (5% increase on 2002/03)
Average occupancy 2003-2004: 87.5%

Timeliness of information returns: 100%

Society Results

- Achievement against local objectives/targets (where applicable) from 2003-2004 Area

Area Plan 2.13: Policy has been developed to support staff involvement in community/charitable activities. This is now with the Regional Human Resources Group, prior to adoption.

Area Plan 2.14: Changes to the accounts coding system have frustrated the meeting of this target. A benchmark for expenditure will now be established at the end of 2004-2005.

Area Plan 2.15: Complaints are monitored and reported to the Board on a six monthly basis in accordance with NPS best practice.

SECTION B. ENABLERS

A report of the actions during 2002-2003 in respect of Leadership, Policy and Strategy, People Management, Partnerships and Resources and processes which enabled the aforementioned results to be achieved.

Leadership

Bedfordshire has taken part in regional collaboration to implement the Leadership Model. The Chair and Chief Officer developed action plans to ensure a range of leadership initiatives across the organisation.

Policy and Strategy

Policy Development: The Chief Officer has developed the Policy into Practice Strategy. The process is based on the EFQM Excellence Model, and Bedfordshire has created a RADAR (Results, Approaches, Deployment, Assessment, Review) template. This groundbreaking framework has been identified as a model of best practice by the EFQM consultants employed by the NPD.

Enhanced Community Punishment: Implemented to a satisfactory standard and "signed off" by the Regional What Works Manager in October 2003.

Narrowing the Justice Gap: An Assistant Chief Probation Officer attends monthly meetings of the Performance Sub Group of the Bedfordshire Criminal Justice Board, which focuses on ensuring that offenders are brought to justice as rapidly as possible

from the point of arrest to through to sentence. The group works together to identify possible solutions to delays in the process, and the Probation Service contribution is largely centred around the timeliness of pre-sentence reports which, for 2003-2004 was stable at the rate of 65%. The Area is hopeful that the increased take up of specific sentence reports will lead to a reduction in the numbers of PSRs requested.

People Management

Appointments: For 2003-2004 Bedfordshire had 54 starters and 37 transfers/promotions, three of which were secondments to the NPD. There were also 26 leavers during the year, however, data on reasons for leaving is not currently available. This data will be provided in the 2004/05 report using information gathered from the new process for conducting exit interviews which commenced in January 2004.

Staff care/staff rewards: August 2003 saw the launch of the Employee Assistance Programme, provided by WELL. The service offers a confidential 24 hour helpline for staff needing advice on anything from finding a plumber to seeking consumer law information. The service also provides the added benefit of counselling, both on the telephone and face to face. In response to the 2003 staff survey, the Board has allocated a sum of money specifically identified to support staff initiatives. The Chief Officer Group will seek to utilise these funds as a direct response to the staff survey 2004.

Sickness: In 2003-2004, Bedfordshire experienced a number of staff on long term sick leave, resulting in the annual average being above the NPD target.

Staff Survey: A group of staff and managers was formed to compile the survey and questionnaires were sent to all members of staff. Of the 186 people surveyed, 125 (67%) responded. These replies were analysed and the results fed through to the Chief Officer Group. They were then incorporated with European Excellence results to become Areas for Improvement (AFIs) in the Area Business Plan 2004-2005.

Training: The training budget was fully spent for the year, and largely focussed on spending to ensure that the Area's ability to deliver all aspects of accredited programmes was maintained. A whole-service training course on managing aggression was delivered by external trainers, but Bedfordshire continues to make a significant contribution to regional activity, both in terms of delivering and receiving training.

Partnerships and Resources

Partnerships: Partnership working has been central to managing risk, delivering programmes, promoting offenders' employability, and addressing substance misuse. Local Drug Action Teams, Crime and Disorder Reduction Panels, and Supporting People arrangements have all required probation input, and during the year preparation to establish a Prolific Offender Project in Bedfordshire was worked on in partnership with police.

Apex Trust, Alcohol Services for the Community, Citizens Advice Bureaux, CAN, Bedford John Howard Society and the Prince's Trust all assisted our work, as did several accommodation providers under the auspice of Supporting People arrangements in Luton and Bedfordshire.

Efficiency Savings 2003-2004:

	Savings £'000
Implementation of new financial system and restructuring of Finance staff	22.5
Travel Efficiency Review	2.5
Supplies and Services Efficiency Review	2.5
Reduction in PSRs and increase in SSRs	36.4
TOTAL	63.9

Processes

Process Design and Review: Bedfordshire Probation Area managers have received training in the TQMI approach to Process Design and Business Process Improvement. Full deployment has been hampered by changes in key personnel and the “distraction” of ICMS and the Technology Upgrade.

Workload Management: The Workload Prioritisation Framework was implemented and reviewed through the Area’s Joint Negotiation and Consultative Committee. Bedfordshire Probation Area continues to contribute significantly to the national Workload Management Tool project.

SECTION C: WORKLOAD AND ACTIVITY STATISTICS

- **Commencements by type of order/licence:**

Order/Licence	2003/2004	2002/2003	2001/02
Community Rehabilitation Order	566	573	536
Combi (CRO)	113	127	159

DTTO	96	68	57
Community Punishment Order	593	538	476
Combi (CPO)	115	132	179
Licences	479	510	760

- **Caseload at 31.3.02 compared to 31.3.01 by type of order/licence**

Order/Licence	Average 2003/2004	Average 2002/2003	Average 2001/02
Community Rehabilitation Order	617	561	545
Combi (CRO)	141	156	178
DTTO	70	43	31
Community Punishment Order	447	331	307
Combi (CPO)	99	96	128
Throughcare	954	883	767

- **Reports produced (PSR, SSR) by court type**

	2003/2004	2002/2003	2001/2002
Total Magistrates' Courts PSRs	1862	1693	1663
Total Crown Court PSRs	401	437	465
Total SSRs produced	223	143	95

- **Community Punishment hours ordered/worked (CPO and CPRO)**

	2002/2003	2001/2002
Hours ordered	67,207	65,815
Hours worked	43,509	51,697

- **Victims: the total number contacted within eight weeks of sentence:**
92% of contacts were made against an 85% target.

SECTION D: BEDFORDSHIRE PROBATION BOARD

Chair **Mr Robin Fletcher**

Members **Mr Michael Airs**
Mr Randolph Charles
Mrs Klazina Coleman
Mrs Alice Crampin JP
Mrs Maureen Purchase JP
Mr Godfrey Sackey-Clarke
Mr Stephen Singh
Dr Helen Sismey-Durrant JP

Mrs Sue Squire JP
Mr Keith White
Mr Raymond Whyte
Mr Mohamed Yasin

**Lord Chancellor's
Representative**

His Honour Judge Terence Maher

Chief Officer

Mr John Scott

Secretary

Mr John Atkinson

Treasurer

Julie Robertson

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PART 2:

At its June meeting the Board received a copy of the Draft Statement of Accounts for 2003-2004 and recommended their adoption. Board Members were advised that the elements of the accounts which are the responsibility of Bedfordshire Probation Board staff had all been completed, but the finalisation of the accounts would not be achieved until the completion of the Pension Fund audit by the Bedfordshire County Council external auditors. The Pension Fund audit is ongoing and until such time as this is completed our auditors cannot issue their audit opinion.

The Board is advised that no material changes have been made to the Draft Statement of Accounts since they were presented in June and reference should be made to those documents where required. Following completion of the accounts, the final version will be included in the published Annual Report.