

BEDFORDSHIRE MAPPA 2014-2015 Annual Report



Introduction

Multi Agency Public Protection Work in Bedfordshire

The current Government's Transforming Rehabilitation Strategy has resulted in significant changes to Probation Services over the past year and a half. Throughout this period the management of dangerous offenders in Bedfordshire via the Multi Agency Public Protection Panels has continued to focus on the core tasks of both ensuring that offenders are managed safely and are helped in being rehabilitated back into the community. So there has been continuity in how these offenders are managed during a period of organisational change.

Public Protection must focus on restrictive measures, that is ensuring that offenders who pose a high risk of harm to the public are monitored and controlled. However, at the same time, it is important that offenders are encouraged to address their behaviour and develop strategies that avoid further offending. This means fewer victims in the future. The agencies involved in the Multi Agency Protection Panels therefore work together to encourage offenders to cooperate with the plans that are put in place, and there is an increasing focus on ensuring that all agencies involved understand that they must present a united front to the offender and do everything in their power to encourage dangerous offenders to make a positive contribution to the management of their own risk.

The work of the MAPPA in Bedfordshire is overseen by a Strategic Management Board whose members are senior managers from all the agencies routinely involved in managing dangerous offenders across the county. The Board is fully committed to the principle that our agencies can protect the public more effectively if we work together.



Alison Harding
Head of Bedfordshire Local Delivery Unit
National Probation Service
Chair of Bedfordshire Strategic Management Board

What is MAPPA?

MAPPA background

- (a) MAPPA (Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements) are a set of arrangements to manage the risk posed by the most serious sexual and violent offenders (MAPPA-eligible offenders) under the provisions of sections 325 to 327B of the Criminal Justice Act 2003.
- (b) They bring together the Police, Probation and Prison Services in each of the 42 Areas in England and Wales into what is known as the MAPPA Responsible Authority.
- (c) A number of other agencies are under a Duty To Cooperate (DTC) with the Responsible Authority. These include Social Services, Health Trusts, Youth Offending Teams, Jobcentre Plus and Local Housing and Education Authorities.
- (d) The Responsible Authority is required to appoint two Lay Advisers to sit on each MAPPA area Strategic Management Board (SMB) alongside senior representatives from each of the Responsible Authority and duty to co-operate agencies.
- (e) Lay Advisers are members of the public with no links to the business of managing MAPPA offenders and 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 and have strong links).

How MAPPA works

- MAPPA-eligible offenders are identified and information about them is shared by the agencies in order to inform the risk assessments and risk management plans of those managing or supervising them.
- In the majority of cases that is as far as MAPPA extends but in some cases, it is determined that active multi-agency management is required. In such cases there will be regular MAPPA meetings attended by relevant agency practitioners.
- There are 3 categories of MAPPA-eligible offender: **Category 1** - registered sexual offenders; **Category 2** – (in the main) violent offenders sentenced to imprisonment for 12 months or more; and **Category 3** – offenders who do not qualify under categories 1 or 2 but who currently pose a risk of serious harm.
- There are three management levels intended to ensure that resources are focused upon the cases where they are most needed; generally those involving the higher risks of serious harm. **Level 1** involves ordinary agency management (i.e. no MAPPA meetings or resources); **Level 2** is where the active involvement of more than one agency is required to manage the offender but the risk management plans do not require the attendance and commitment of resources at a senior level. Where senior oversight is required the case would be managed at **Level 3**.
- MAPPA is supported by ViSOR. This is a national IT system for the management of people who pose a serious risk of harm to the public. The police have been using ViSOR since 2005 but, since June 2008, ViSOR has been fully operational allowing, for the first time, key staff from the Police, Probation and Prison Services to work on the same IT system, thus improving the quality and timeliness of risk assessments and of interventions to prevent offending. The combined use of ViSOR increases the ability to share intelligence across organisations and enable the safe transfer of key information when these high risk offenders move, enhancing public protection measures. All MAPPA reports from England and Wales are published online at: www.justice.gov.uk

MAPPA Statistics

MAPPA-eligible offenders on 31 March 2014				
	Category 1: Registered sex offenders	Category 2: Violent offenders	Category 3: Other dangerous offenders	Total
Level 1	595	198	0	793
Level 2	8	30	7	45
Level 3	1	3	3	7
Total	604	231	10	845

MAPPA-eligible offenders in Levels 2 and 3 by category (yearly total)				
	Category 1: Registered sex offenders	Category 2: Violent offenders	Category 3: Other dangerous offenders	Total
Level 2	19	68	17	104
Level 3	2	2	3	7
Total	21	70	20	111

RSOs cautioned or convicted for breach of notification requirements	14
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Restrictive orders for Category 1 offenders (see page 5 for definitions)	
SOPOs, NOs & FTOs imposed by the courts	
SOPOs	47
NOs	1
FTOs	1

Level 2 and 3 offenders returned to custody				
	Category 1: Registered sex offenders	Category 2: Violent offenders	Category 3: Other dangerous offenders	Total
Breach of licence				
Level 2	4	17	3	24
Level 3	2	0	0	2
Total	6	17	3	26
Breach of SOPO				
Level 2	0	0	0	0
Level 3	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0

Total number of Registered Sexual Offenders per 100,000 population	109
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Explanation commentary on statistical tables

MAPPA background

The totals of MAPPA-eligible offenders, broken down by category, reflect the picture on 31 March 2014 (i.e. they are a snapshot). The rest of the data covers the period 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014.

(a) MAPPA-eligible offenders – there are a number of offenders defined in law as eligible for MAPPA management, because they have committed specified sexual and violent offences or they currently pose a risk of serious harm, although the majority (94% this year) are actually managed under ordinary agency (Level 1) arrangements rather than via MAPP meetings.

(b) Registered Sexual Offenders (RSOs) – those who are required to notify the police of their name, address and other personal details and to notify any changes subsequently (this is known as the “notification requirement.”) Failure to comply with the notification requirement is a criminal offence which carries a maximum penalty of 5 years’ imprisonment.

(c) Violent Offenders – this category includes violent offenders sentenced to imprisonment or detention for 12 months or more, or detained under a hospital order. It also includes a small number of sexual offenders who do not qualify for registration.

(d) Other Dangerous Offenders – offenders who do not qualify under the other two MAPPA-eligible categories, but who currently pose a risk of serious harm which requires management via MAPP meetings.

(e) Breach of licence – offenders released into the community following a period of imprisonment will be subject to a licence with conditions (under probation supervision). If these conditions are not complied with, breach action will be taken and the offender may be recalled to prison.

(f) 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. The full order lasts for a minimum of five 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 five years’ imprisonment.

(g) Notification Order – this requires sexual offenders who have been convicted overseas to register with the police, in order to protect the public in the UK from the risks that they pose. The police may apply to the court for a notification order in relation to offenders who are already in the UK or are intending to come to the UK.

(h) Foreign Travel Orders – these prevent offenders with convictions for sexual offences against children from travelling abroad where this is necessary to protect children from the risk of sexual harm.

MAPPA in Bedfordshire

Bedfordshire MAPPA and the Prison Service

Most offenders managed by Bedfordshire MAPPA will be those leaving Prison after relatively long sentences, where there is still an assessment of High Risk of Harm and a need for the offender to be managed by a Panel. Panels will include some standing members who may not know the offender and representatives from agencies working directly with that offender. Information from the Prison in which the offender is serving their sentence is crucial to the risk assessment. Prisons either attend the MAPPA in person or provide a written report for the MAPPA meeting. There is an agreed national format for the reports prisons provide and this format covers all the information that MAPPA needs. Probation Officers liaise closely with the Prison and regularly share information in between meetings. There is also a greater focus at MAPPA on trying to ensure that offenders have had the opportunity to complete focused work on their offending behavior whilst serving their sentence.

The Bedfordshire Personality Disorder Project

Many offenders have a recognised Personality Disorder. Those managed by the MAPPA often have relatively severe Personality Disorders. Psychologists working on the Personality Disorder Project make assessments and give extensive advice to MAPPA where there is an identified PD. The expert view that Psychologists provide other agencies with an insight into the nature of any given diagnosed type of PD. This is extremely useful in that advice from Psychologists can both inform the understanding of risk and the way in which it might be possible to work with those who have a recognised PD. The Psychologists do not take over the work with the offender, they encourage the agencies working with a given case to work in a psychologically informed way.

Bedfordshire Police

Bedfordshire Police has a dedicated Police Officer within the Violent and Sex Offender Management Unit, whose primary role is to assist the MAPPA with the management of violent Level 2 and Level 3 offenders. The role consists of attending all MAPPA meetings on violent offenders and liaising on a daily basis with Probation, Social Services, Housing, Prison and Youth Offending Services.

This Police Officer is involved with Probation and all the agencies, from the start of the referral process until the MAPPA is no longer involved in the case. The Police Officer continues to monitor the cases that have been managed by the MAPPA until the sentence end date. The advantage of having a dedicated Police Officer involved in MAPPA is that this Officer has the chance to develop a better understanding of how the other agencies involved in MAPPA work. This can be particularly useful when there is a need to act speedily to avoid a situation where the public could be put at further risk of harm if action is not taken.

MAPPA in Bedfordshire

The views of professionals involved in Bedfordshire:

Below are the views of some staff who regularly contribute to the MAPPA process:

As a Victim Liaison Officer I will write reports on high risk cases and present them to the MAPPA. The information the victim brings often can be crucial to the risk assessments the MAPPA makes.

The Victim can also make requests for specific Licence Conditions to be made and MAPPA can add weight to these requests if it also recommends the same conditions.

With offences that are inter-family such as Domestic Violence or Sexual Abuse cases the victim will know crucial information and will often assist in drawing up family trees.

In my view, the multi-agency approach protects the victim, and my role is to bring the victims voice to the MAPPA and those professionals making decisions.

In my experience, MAPPPA offers re-assurance to victims and families that their concerns and fears are being taken seriously and that there will be protection offered.

Victim Liaison Officer, Bedfordshire

I have been attending MAPPA meetings in Luton as local Social Services representative for the last three years, and feel I have gained a clear understanding of the process with regard to the release and management of serious offenders. There are many points of crossover where it is important that information is shared between the agencies in order to protect children and adults, and that social care agencies are made aware of potential risk situations in advance when possible. This has enabled me to help and on occasion chase up social workers who may not have understood the way in which these processes work or the necessity of co- work with other agencies.

I have made useful working relationships with other attendees at MAPPA, including colleagues in different areas of my own organisation, such as the Housing Department, and with other agencies including Probation and Approved Premises, Police and Prison Service, and the Victim Liaison Service. On occasion I have been able to help these agencies understand the Social Care processes of intervention, especially with children and families.

I have been very Impressed with the thoroughness of the meetings and the way in which potential risks are explored and safeguards set in place, whilst also giving the offender the best chance of succeeding on release, and not being set up by circumstances to re-offend.

Luton Social Care

I am involved in the delivery of social care services for Care Leavers. This requires multi-agency working. Attending MAPPA enabled me to have a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of other professionals and organisations, and gain first hand experience of the processes of safeguarding children and young people who are likely to offend in the community. Of particular importance was the way risk management plans were implemented, following detailed risk assessments being jointly undertaken with other professionals. I felt supported through the whole process. The victims and offenders' views and wishes were also listened to, giving them a sense of support and belonging.

Bedford Borough Council, Leaving and After Care Team Social Worker

MAPPA in Bedfordshire

MAPPA successes:

- Serious further offences committed by offenders who are MAPPA managed are rare nationally. Bedfordshire has not had any serious further offences in this year. We are not complacent about this and understand that it is always possible that dangerous offenders will commit serious offences. We audit our cases at least twice a year to be sure that our Panel's decisions are scrutinised
- The Housing situation across the country is becoming increasingly difficult and it is often difficult to place MAPPA subjects. They may well need to be placed away from their home for a variety of reasons based on the risk of harm they present to the community. Bedfordshire MAPPA Strategic Board have anticipated that housing will become increasingly problematic and are working with local housing departments to come up with solutions. Although, to date it has been rare for MAPPA subjects to be homeless for even a short period of time.
- This year the MAPPA Coordinator delivered four training sessions to an audience made up of all the agencies involved in MAPPA. These sessions were well attended and form part of the MAPPA Strategic Board's commitment to ensuring that MAPPA is widely understood within all the agencies. The focus of these sessions is on the basic need for all the agencies to communicate effectively and understand each others work more thoroughly, so as to be able to develop effective joint plans to manage dangerous offenders.

successfully completed his license period without re-offending.

Case Study two:

Mr C is a 55 year old man who was convicted of a serious assault on his ex-partner. He was placed on MAPPA's recommendation in an out of area Approved Premise but was very upset with Bedfordshire Probation for preventing him from seeing his children, who continued to reside with their mother the victim of Mr C's offending . Mr C eventually returned to Bedfordshire having made no attempt to contact the victim or his children . He completed a domestic abuse course and gained some insight into his offending and resolved not to contact his ex partner and to seek access to his children via the courts. He completed his post custody licence without any breaches and was seeing his children at a contact centre and working towards having unsupervised contact with them. Whilst he remained critical of professionals who had stopped him having access to his children, he understood the reasons why they had asked him to prove that he could act responsibly and be safe to be with them .

Case Study three:

Mr M is a 21 year old man whose behaviour in custody had been extreme. He had been violent towards both staff and Prison Officers and was making threats that he would not comply with his post custody licence, and would seek out victims and take revenge against them for having reported his offences to the authorities. Mr M was refusing to see his Probation Officer and the MAPPA Panel believed that he was very capable of finding his victims and harming them. The MAPPA asked if the Police could escort him to an Approved Premises out of county on the day of his release. Police did escort him, but at the same time they put into place measures to protect the potential victims. The agencies attending the MAPPA were able to provide Police with addresses that Mr M might go to if he absconded from the Approved Premises. Mr M only remained at the Approved Premises for a day, but he was recalled to custody and was apprehended by the Police before he could find any of his victims. The MAPPA is now working with Mr M's victims to ensure they are relocated before Mr M's next release.

MAPPA in practice:

Case Study one:

Mr F had been turned down for Parole because he would not speak to his Probation Officer to plan his release. On approaching his next Parole hearing date his case was referred to MAPPA. MAPPA asked that he was assessed by Psychologists working in Prison. He did engage with Psychology and was able to build on this to begin to work with his Probation Officer. Although his risk remained high, MAPPA agreed with his Probation Officer that he should be released into the community rather than serve most of his custodial sentence in Prison. Much of his anger was linked to his learning difficulties. Psychologists assessed his learning needs and he was able to be supported on release by the Learning Disabilities Team, he

