



Thames Valley Area
Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
Annual Report 2007-8

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Abbreviations Checklist

CEOP	Child Exploitation and Online Protection centre
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
MAPPP	Multi-Agency Public Protection Panel (for Level 3 high, very high or complex cases)
MARAC	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (domestic violence)
MARMM	Multi-Agency Risk Management Meeting (Levels 1 and 2)
RSO	Registered Sex Offender
SMB	Strategic Management Board (MAPPA)
SOPO	Sexual Offences Prevention Order
TVP	Thames Valley Police
TVP	Thames Valley Probation
ViSOR	Violent and Sexual Offenders Register

1. Introduction

This report covers the seventh year of MAPPA - Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements - in the Thames Valley and we jointly commend it to you as an acknowledgement of the hard work and professionalism of everyone involved.

Protecting the public is one of the highest priorities of law enforcement agencies and this publication explains the way we do this across Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Berkshire.

It outlines the dedication of staff from a wide range of agencies who work together, on a daily basis, to safeguard our communities from known sexual or violent offenders.

In 2007-08, in Thames Valley, 1,751 offenders were managed by MAPPA and there were no serious further offences by those in the top two levels (485). This figure must be viewed in the context of the population of Thames Valley, which is approaching 2.2 million.

Our collective figure of 1,751 MAPPA offenders for Thames Valley includes 969 Registered Sex Offenders (RSOs), including those who have served prison or community sentences for their crimes. This represents just over half of all MAPPA cases.

Of these 969, just 15 were cautioned or convicted of breaching their registration requirement (such as failing to register a new address), which shows us - and you - that the system is working.

Of the 1,266 offenders managed at Level 1, 173 were Registered Sex Offenders. At Level 2, we managed 456 offenders, 173 of whom were RSOs and at Level 3, we managed 29 offenders, 10 of whom were RSOs.

In our view these figures paint a clear picture of MAPPA and the work that it does to protect the public from sex offenders but also from those others who pose a violent or other type of risk.

The very fact that we can illustrate these figures in this report tells you that we know where these offenders are and we are working to protect you from them.

We would also like to take this opportunity to allay the 'stranger danger' fear. We do not want the MAPPA figures to cause alarm or instil fear into the people of Thames Valley about unknown offenders. We appreciate people's concerns about the idea of potentially dangerous people living in local communities. It is important to note that most sex offenders are known to their victims and they are often related. We would ask everyone to be vigilant, act responsibly and report any suspicions.

We cannot completely eliminate the risk that certain individuals may pose but, as these figures demonstrate, we can reduce these risks through joint working, careful assessment, supervision and monitoring.

MAPPA is a set of arrangements to promote and ensure effective joint working within a statutory framework. What we have achieved in Thames Valley - and continuously strive to do better - is to ensure that everything that can be done, has been done. In doing this, we are contributing towards making Thames Valley a safer place to live.

Gerry Marshall,
Chief Probation Officer, Thames Valley Probation

Sara Thornton,
Chief Constable, Thames Valley Police

Bruce Davison,
Head of Reducing Re-offending HM Prison Service
(South Central Area)



2. What is MAPPA?

MAPPA are a set of arrangements to manage the risk posed by the most serious sexual and violent offenders. They bring together the Police, Probation and Prison Services in Thames Valley into what is known as the MAPPA responsible authority.

A number of 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, taking advantage of co-ordinated information sharing across the agencies; and
- to direct the available resources to best protect the public.

How does MAPPA work?

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 with considered and monitored via MAPPA meetings attended by various agencies.

In each divisional area within Thames Valley, there are multi-agency meetings, using MAPPA legislation, to ensure the proper and effective management of MAPPA offenders.

These five MAPPA areas match the Basic Command Unit (BCU) areas for both police and probation.

They are: Oxfordshire, West Berkshire, East Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.

Who are the MAPPA offenders?

There are 3 categories of offender eligible for MAPPA:

Category 1 - registered sexual offenders;

Category 2 - violent 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; and

Category 3 - offenders who do not qualify under categories 1 or 2 but who currently pose a risk of serious harm and there is a link between the offending and the risk posed.

How are they managed?

There are 3 levels of management which are based upon the level of multi-agency co-operation required to implement the risk management plan effectively. Higher risk cases tend to be managed at the higher levels and offenders will be moved up and down levels as appropriate:

Level 1: ordinary agency management arrangements are sufficient;

Level 2: regular multi-agency meetings are required;

Level 3: as level 2 but the case demands that multi-agency co-operation and oversight at a senior level is required, together with the authority to commit exceptional resources, perhaps at short notice, to strengthen the risk management plan.

What the police do

Detective Chief Inspector Tim Price is the Public Protection lead for Thames Valley Police and is a member of the Strategic Management Board.

“Registered Sex Offenders in the community are required to report to the police and our responsibility is to assess their risk and, with the help of MAPPAs, ensure we have an appropriate plan in place to manage the risk they pose.

“We work closely with the Probation Service and other partners to manage violent and other potentially dangerous offenders who are under supervision. This year the central MAPPA unit has been expanded to include police and probation staff working in the same office which has further improved information sharing, this includes dedicated staff

who work on the ViSOR computer system that is used to manage sex and violent offenders.

“Each of the five Base Command Units (BCUs) that make up Thames Valley Police has a dedicated Public Protection Unit containing Public Protection Officers whose role it is to monitor and manage offenders locally and form local partnerships to make sure we have the complete picture. While we can never eliminate the risk completely, we have a good track record in this Force of effectively managing offenders and I am very proud of the hard work undertaken by our staff and the contribution we make to the MAPPA process.”

What the probation service does

Paul Gillbard is the Director of Offender Management for Thames Valley Probation and is also the Chair of Thames Valley MAPPA's Strategic Management Board.

“Our main aim is summed up by our strapline: Less Re-offending, Fewer Victims. We work with more than 7,500 offenders in Thames Valley to change behaviour and thereby make the Thames Valley a safer place to live.

“Protecting the public from the risks posed by some offenders is the top priority for Thames Valley Probation. We are responsible for assessing and managing offenders who come under MAPPA. This year we have aligned our practice with the revised national MAPPA guidance and have implemented procedures which make our risk management processes even more robust and accountable.

“We take the lead in carrying out comprehensive risk assessments on offenders, providing reports for the courts to help with sentencing decisions.

We manage a range of offenders on community sentences, in custody and when released on Licence. The services we are responsible for include running programmes to prevent re-offending and providing information to victims via our specialist Victims Liaison Unit.

We also manage structured accommodation, to what has been recognised as a very high standard, for offenders mainly following release from prison. When offenders fail to comply with the requirements of their supervision or are identified as an imminent risk to the public we take swift enforcement action to return them back to court or to prison.”

What the Prison Service does

The Prison Service is a key agency to the MAPPA process, putting in place arrangements to assess and manage the risks posed by offenders subject to MAPPA within individual prisons.

Bruce Davison, Head of Reducing Re-offending for HM Prison Service's South Central Area, says:

“We ensure the classification and allocation system for prisoners operates effectively and that a prisoner's MAPPA level and risk of harm to the public is an integral part of deciding which prison he or she is sent to. We also provide timely, accurate and relevant information and recommendations for prisoners subject to parole reviews

and ensure that their risk assessments are up-to-date and realistic.

“We contribute information to MAPPA meetings and ensure prisoners are in the MAPPA process prior to release, so action and risk management plans are fully in place before the prisoner is released.

“As part of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) with the Probation Service, we are working together to provide end-to-end offender management. This includes the use of the OASys risk assessment tool which enables real time case management of offenders in prison and in the community.”



3. MAPPA Key Achievements within Thames Valley

What is the role of the Strategic Management Board

- > Senior representatives of each of the agencies involved in MAPPA form a strategic management board (SMB) which meets at least quarterly to monitor the arrangements and direct any necessary improvements.
- > The SMB measure effectiveness against new National MAPPA standards introduced in October 2007 in order to ensure a common standard of effective public protection arrangements and that each of the agencies is playing a full part in MAPPA.

Key achievements:

This year saw a number of changes at a national level. In particular the publication of the new national MAPPA Guidance. This provided an opportunity for Thames Valley MAPPA to gather "Duty to Co-operate" agencies under one roof. This was done at two seminars. Housing and Mental Health delegates were particularly positive about increased understanding of MAPPA processes.

This was followed up by a one day Responsible Authority Conference organised by our MAPPA Co-ordinator and his colleagues in the MAPPA Management Unit. Eighty key representatives at management and practitioner level attended and completed exercises to come to a common understanding of risk management within the context of the new MAPPA Guidance.

There are now seven staff within the Central MAPPA Management Unit, a combined police/probation resource, which co-ordinates MAPPA in Thames Valley.

Bob Stirling is Thames Valley's dedicated MAPPA Co-ordinator. Bob's main task is to ensure the effective management of risk within MAPPA. Essential to this is the engagement of probation, police and prisons in the process, plus those agencies with a "duty to co-operate" and those with a role in sharing information and managing offenders' risk.

The MAPPA Co-ordinator has a particular focus on Level 3 cases, with scheduled planning meetings twice a month. Controlling the risk these offenders represent has consistently enhanced public safety and there have been no serious further offences by this category of offender this year.

A great deal of time has been devoted to the possible release of serious offenders from secure and semi-secure mental hospitals, to ensure all appropriate steps have been taken.

Thames Valley has six approved premises - a high number nationally. Our MAPPA Co-ordinator now sits on the High Risk Panel for admissions to these premises, which improves the co-ordination of risk management across all relevant agencies.

Listed below are some of the key, practical things the SMB has overseen to make the MAPPA arrangements in Thames Valley better:

- > **Implemented new national guidance on reviews and disclosure**
- > **Trained all MAPPA chairs**
- > **Held a conference for Duty to Co-operate agencies**
- > **Held a conference for staff from the statutory MAPPA partners**
- > **Introduced new, streamlined and co-ordinated paperwork**
- > **Improving the Central MAPPA Management Unit**

Enhancing Public Protection

A new case audit process took place this year, chaired by the Prison Service. Results were fed back to MAPPA meeting chairs for lessons to be learnt. Feedback was very positive and these are now scheduled twice yearly.

Additional training events organised by Bob Stirling have been targeted toward specific audiences. These included Youth Offending Teams, Mental Health Assertive Outreach and Mental Health Forensic Teams. Bob was also invited to speak at a meeting of consultant psychiatrists. This all helps to improve knowledge of the issues around MAPPA and its key role in protecting the public.

Key Objectives for the year ahead (2008-09)

- > This coming year will also see the linking up of the ViSOR (Violent and Sex Offender Register) database to include data on all sexual and violent offenders, and other dangerous persons managed by Thames Valley Probation. The aim is to work on the same IT system to enhance information sharing between probation, police and prisons.
- > We plan to implement measures to improve the engagement of Duty to Co-operate agencies in MAPPA.
- > We will re-write and publish the Thames Valley MAPPA Guidance (called MAPPA Local Working Requirements)
- > We will continue to improve and develop quality assurance of auditing MAPPA-managed cases.
- > We will ensure any nationally-produced learning from reviews of further serious offending is incorporated into local plans and actions.
- > We will improve the co-ordination of MAPPA across Thames Valley by further developing the Central MAPPA Management Unit.

In a nutshell....

During 2007-08 the Thames Valley MAPPA managed 1,266 offenders at Level 1.

In 2006-07, this figure was 1,279.

During 2007-08 the Thames Valley MAPPA managed 456 offenders at Level 2.

In 2006-07, this figure was 641.

During 2007-08 the Thames Valley MAPPA managed 29 offenders at Level 3.

In 2006-07, this figure was 42.

Disclosure to the Public

Disclosure of the risk posed by offenders managed under MAPPA may be to an individual, an organisation or to the wider public. Each case is considered individually and the Home Office Guidelines are always followed. In addition, the Thames Valley Police Legal Department considers the

legality and proportionality of disclosure in each case.

A lot of attention, particularly in the media, is given to people's right to know where sex offenders are living in the community. Disclosing such details is handled on a case-by-case basis.

What our partners say about MAPPA:

Housing

In having a presence on the MAPPA Strategic Management Board, the representatives for Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire are clear that their role is to ensure that the significance of the housing dimension should not be undervalued. There are cases where issues of housing and the disparities between housing availability around the Thames Valley region will be of paramount concern - and this is where expert guidance may be needed.

Additionally, simply identifying housing providers throughout Thames Valley has proved a very difficult task for MAPPA, and the involvement of housing professionals has helped to guide that process. Should any concerned individual wish to know more about the MAPPA processes with regard to housing, please contact either Steve Kilsby (skilsby@oxford.gov.uk) or Zeldia Wolfle (Zeldia.wolfle@reading.gov.uk).

Children's services

In Wokingham, Children's Services (formed from the former Social Services Department and Local Education Authority) is a core member of the local MAPPA. We find the meetings extremely useful, not only to consider the impact of offenders on particular children in their families, but implications for children in schools and communities. Of course, sometimes the offenders discussed are young people themselves who may be well known to our schools and our Youth Offending Service.

The primary duty of Children's Services is to promote and safeguard the welfare of all children but we cannot do it alone and need to work closely with our partners in this key area, just as we support them in addressing protecting the public in general. MAPPA is an excellent example of how we can work together for the better protection of all of our communities.

John Terry, Head of Safeguarding Children's Services, Wokingham Borough Council

A representative from the Education Safeguarding Team attends monthly MAPPA meetings in each of the three areas in Oxfordshire, (North, City and South). As children of statutory school age spend the majority of their day within a school setting, it is imperative that we are part of the MAPPA process in order to share information to safeguard children

from predatory individuals, both in and out of school. Linking with partner agencies to manage offenders helps us support school staff and communities more effectively, as well as raising our awareness of other issues that may affect children, for example, cases where the parent or carer of a pupil becomes part of the MAPPA process, due to committing an offence.

Barry Armstrong, Head of Safeguarding Children's Services, Oxfordshire County Council

G4S

Electronic Monitoring is provided in the South East, including Thames Valley, by G4S Electronic Monitoring. We work in close partnership with MAPPA agencies within the Criminal Justice System to deliver a robust and effective monitoring service. Electronic Monitoring, or tagging as it is commonly known, is used to ensure compliance with curfews. As a Duty to Co-operate agency within the MAPPA framework, G4S provides an important service as part of high risk management plans with a focus on public protection.

Tristan Shaw, Senior Inter-agency Officer G4S

Circles of Support and Accountability

Hampshire and Thames Valley Circles (HTV Circles) recruits, screens and trains small groups of community volunteers to provide a support network around a released high risk sex offender.

Since its inception in April 2002, HTV Circles has worked in partnership with local Police and Probation. These agencies recognise the value of Circles to their work and acknowledge that Circles are the only agency in a position to continue long term monitoring after statutory involvement has ended. HTV Circles are a member of the Strategic MAPPA Management Board and the team attend regular MAPPA meetings and provide regular communication to the statutory agencies on offenders' progress.

Since 2002 HTV Circles has created 47 Circles and supported over 60 offenders living in the community. To date no offender involved in Circles has been convicted of a new sexual offence.

Rebekah Saunders, Chief Executive HTV Circles



4. Lay Advisers' view on MAPPA

What do the Lay advisers do?

➤ The responsible authority is required to appoint 2 lay advisers to sit on the SMB. The lay adviser acts as an independent yet informed observer; someone who is able pose questions which the professionals closely involved in the work might not necessarily 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. See what our Lay Advisers have to say about Thames Valley MAPPA here.

"I've been a Lay Adviser to the Strategic Management Board of MAPPA for just under a year now. During that year I've visited a prison and an approved premises, observed Level 2 and Level 3 meetings, undertaken a training weekend in York, done some Child Protection training and of course attended SMB meetings. It has been, and continues to be a steep learning curve, trying to gain an understanding of the different agencies involved and how they work together in the MAPPA process. I hope that as I continue I'll be increasingly able to contribute to the SMB as a critical friend, someone who's outside the professional framework, a member of the public who has an understanding of MAPPA.

As a mother of young children I've been very reassured to discover all that is going on behind the scenes to ensure that the public are protected when violent and sexual offenders are released from custody. At a Level 2 meeting that I attended a representative from housing was able to bring some information about a MAPPA offender that was then shared with the police, probation, children's services, the Youth Offending Team and health representatives. Without the framework of the MAPPA meetings this information sharing would be unlikely to happen.

Over the year that I've been attending SMB meetings, there's been a great deal of work put into the improvement in the recording of statistics to show what's happening in each local area. It's important to know if the right professionals are attending the right MAPP meetings; i.e. the ones with their clients on the agenda. We're working to get the statistics to reflect this and so give an accurate picture of what's happening and any gaps that need plugging. This, as I see it, is the main role of the SMB; to make sure that the best possible processes are in place to enable the professionals to do their job of protecting the public."

Hannah Cowan
Lay Adviser, Thames Valley MAPPA

"Since last July I have been exposed to training both on the national level and locally which has enabled me to participate more fully in all the SMB meetings and provide some help at the local MARMM meetings.

Visits have been made to Approved Premises and a local Prison. It has been interesting to see how the various agencies work together on ex offenders and encouraging to find the re-offending rates reduce as a result of the collaboration. Included in the training was a day spent on a course organised by Social Care Department of Bucks County Council on Child Protection with other participants from various homes and care organisations in the County. Apart from the training aspects in which the latest 'Children's Act 1989' and the publication 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006' was explained, sharing experiences with others working in this field was an eye opener as was the support given by so many voluntary workers, many of whom attended the course.

The progress on introducing ViSOR as a tool for monitoring people subject to MAPPA was interesting despite the delays in making it fully operational for all agencies involved. I am sure there will be long lasting benefits as experience is gained with the system.

My experience of MARMM meetings at various locations in the Thames Valley have shown that different areas have different ways of handling the meetings and that central management by the Co-ordinator is helping to improve the quality of the serious case reviews in line with new national guidelines. This was further enhanced by a conference in March for all relevant personnel of the 'Responsible Agencies' to explain Local Working Requirements 2008 which was very well attended.

One aspect of all the work being done was the concern for victims which has become a very important part of the case reviews. While the primary objective of MAPPA aims to protect the public, the most vulnerable have already been victims and their welfare and keeping them informed are of the major importance in the procedures that are in place."

John Jakobi
Lay Adviser, Thames Valley MAPPA

5. Statistical Information

The figures - an explanation

In 2004-05, Thames Valley MAPPA managed 1,382 offenders.

In 2005-06, this figure was 1,755.

In 2006-07, the figure was 1,962.

In 2007-08, this figure is 1,751

Number of MAPPA eligible offenders in 2007-08

969 Registered Sexual Offenders

657 Violent Offenders

125 Other Offenders

1,751 Total

Level of Management

Ordinary Management (Level 1)

786 Registered Sexual Offenders

480 Violent Offenders

0 Other Offenders

1,266 Total

Active MAPPA Management (Level 2)

173 Registered Sexual Offenders

164 Violent Offenders

119 Other Offenders

456 Total

Active MAPPA Management (Level 3)

10 Registered Sexual Offenders

13 Violent Offenders

6 Other Offenders

29 Total

Enforcement in actively MAPPA Managed Cases

Returned to custody for breach of licence

Level 2

11 Registered Sexual Offenders

28 Violent Offenders

9 Other Offenders

Level 3

1 Registered Sexual Offenders

1 Violent Offenders

0 Other Offenders

50 Total

Sent to custody for breach of Sexual Offences Prevention Order

0 Level 2

0 Level 3

0 Total

Serious Further Offences

Charged with a serious further offence

0 Level 2

0 Level 3

0 Total

Of those charged during the year (Level 2 and 3 combined):

0 Convicted of a serious further offence

0 Other outcome

0 Remain charged with serious further offence

Further data on Sexual Offenders

Registered Sexual Offenders in:

Oxfordshire **305**

Milton Keynes **135**

Buckinghamshire **155**

East Berkshire **141**

West Berkshire **233**

Total number of registered sexual offenders in Thames Valley per 100,000 head of population

46 (same as 2006-7, no increase)

Registered Sexual Offenders cautioned or convicted for breach

15

Sexual Offences Prevention Orders

8 Applied for

3 Interim Order issued

7 Full Order issued

Notification Orders

0 Applied for

0 Interim Order issued

0 Full Order issued

Foreign Travel Orders

0 Applied for

0 Interim Order issued

0 Full Order issued



Explanation/Commentary

The data on RSO numbers reflect the picture on 31 March 2008; i.e. a snapshot. The rest of the data covers the period 1 April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008.

MAPPA eligible offenders - there are a number of offenders defined in law as eligible for MAPPA management, because they have committed certain sexual and violent offences, although the majority (72% this year) are actually managed under ordinary agency (Level 1) arrangements rather than via MAPPA meetings.

Registered Sexual Offenders (RSOs) - those who are required to notify the police of their name, address and other personal details and notify any changes subsequently. Failure to comply with the notification requirements is a criminal offence which carries a maximum penalty of 5 years' imprisonment.

Violent offenders - this category includes violent offenders sentenced to imprisonment/detention for 12 months or more, or detained under hospital orders. It also includes a small number of sexual offenders who do not qualify for registration and offenders disqualified from working with children.

Other offenders - offenders who do not qualify under the other 2 MAPPA eligible categories but who currently pose a risk of serious harm which require active MAPPA management.

Ordinary Management (Level 1) - these offenders are subject to the usual (non-MAPPA) arrangements applied by whichever agency is supervising them. But this does not rule out information sharing, via ViSOR and other routes, and in some cases the ordinary arrangements involve joint agency supervision or co-operation.

Active MAPPA Management (Levels 2 and 3) - the risk management plans for these offenders require the ongoing involvement of several agencies via regular multi-agency public protection (MAPP) meetings. Most of these offenders can be managed at Level 2 but some cases will require the involvements of senior officers in the use of special resources, such as police surveillance or specialised accommodation, and/or the ongoing oversight of senior officers.

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 will be taken and the offender may be recalled to prison.

Serious Further Offence (SFO) - any sexual or violence offence which carries a maximum penalty of 14 years' imprisonment or more. For the first time this year we are reporting not only the number of actively MAPPA managed offenders so charged but also on the outcome of the case. Other outcome means that the case has been dealt with by 31 March 2008 but that the offender was not convicted of an SFO; eg the offender was acquitted or the case was not proceeded with, or s/he was convicted of a lesser offence.

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. 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 - require 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.

Foreign Travel Orders - prevent offenders with convictions for sexual offences against children from traveling abroad where it is necessary to do so to protect children from the risk of sexual harm.

The number of Registered Sex Offenders decreased from 982 in 2006-07 to 969 in 2007-08, a decrease of 13. This will be due to more people finishing their period of registration than new offenders coming on to the register. The minimum number of years an offender will stay on the register is five years and some will stay on it for life.

The overall number remains relatively static though and the figure should be viewed in relation to the population of Thames Valley, which is approaching 2.2 million.

The three categories (types) of offenders who come under MAPPA, as seen in the statistical information on these pages, were explained on Page 3 of this report. In the same section, an explanation was given on the three different levels of management under MAPPA. Knowing both the categories and the MAPPA levels makes the statistics on these pages easier to interpret.



Case study

Good risk management

Offender 'C', was being released from prison. He was assessed as very high risk of harm to his partner and had a history of domestic violence. He was under MAPPA as a Level 3 offender (the highest level). He'd previously been out of prison for 3 days before assaulting someone else. His victim lived in another part of the country and was extremely fearful for her safety. Working under MAPPA, Offender 'C's offender manager (probation officer) liaised with police in that area to coordinate the risk management plan - including the setting up of an operation name and response plan, adding his number plate to the police system and providing weekly progress updates to them.

The offender came out of prison to stay in a probation-run hostel, where he had to sign in every hour. He was very keen to find employment as part of his rehabilitation and his offender manager was supportive, but explained he'd have to disclose his criminal record. He found work and the offender manager checked with the employer that he'd been told of Offender 'C's past. He had. The hourly sign in was relaxed but the employer was asked to inform probation if he didn't turn up for work or if he was moved from job to job as a builder. The MAPPA was kept fully informed.

In supervision, the offender manager continued to address Offender 'C's attitudes and thinking and behaviour and made progress with him through the use of worksheets and discussions. His risk level was dropped from 3 to 1. Offender 'C' stayed at the hostel for six months and then moved on to live in another part of the country, with family, to start a business

Case study

Helping the whole family

Offender 'A' was a Registered Sex Offender on a Community Order for failure to register. He moved back into his home but with various school age children and a wife who was struggling to cope and was not too assertive with him. Through the MAPPA, close links were made with social services and education, there were frequent home visits by all agencies and Offender A was accepted by Circles of Support and Accountability to provide extra public protection. This multi-agency approach has helped the whole family. The children's school attendance vastly improved and the families team were satisfied with protective measures in place for the children. The MAPPA subsequently agreed that he could be managed at Level 1 and he continues to do well and has not re-offended.

Case study

Working together

Offender 'B' was a Registered Sex Offender on licence from prison. He was resident in one of probation's approved premises (hostel) but was recalled to prison after he was spotted following a young boy.

Before he was eligible for parole again, his case was discussed at a MAPPA meeting. A risk management plan was co-ordinated by his offender manager (probation officer) and actioned by members of the MAPPA, which included finding suitable accommodation, arranging anti-libidinal drugs with psychiatrist, liaising with Circles of Support and Accountability to get him into a circle (they also made a referral to forensic psychology services) and a hostel place until his accommodation was ready. He is now back in the community, under close supervision and is managing his behaviour very well.

6. Partnership agencies in the Thames Valley

Representative from the following organisations either regularly attend local MAPPA meetings or are members of the MAPPA Strategic Management Board and disseminate important information to colleagues across Thames Valley.

Thames Valley Police 0845 8 505 505
Thames Valley Probation 01869 255300

Prison Service:

Aylesbury YOI 01296 444000
HMP Bullingdon 01869 353100
HMP Grendon 01296 443000
Reading YOI 0118 9085000
HMP Springhill 01296 443000
HMP Woodhill 01908 722000

Local authorities, Children's Services and Housing:

Oxfordshire County Council 01865 792422
Milton Keynes Council 01908 691691
Buckinghamshire County Council 01296 395000
Slough Borough Council 01753 552288
Royal Borough Windsor & Maidenhead 01628 798888
Bracknell Forest Council 01344 424642
Wokingham District Unitary Authority 0118 974 6000
Reading Borough Council 0118 939 0900
West Berkshire Council 01635 42400

Youth Offending Teams:

Bracknell Forest YOT 01344 354300
Buckinghamshire YOT 01296 434624
Maidenhead YOT 01628 683280
Milton Keynes YOT 01908 391000
Oxfordshire YOT 01865 721212
Reading & Wokingham YOT 0118 9390420
Slough YOT 01753 522702
West Berkshire YOT 01635 264800

Primary Care Trusts and Mental Health:

Thames Valley Primary Care Agency 0118 9183333
www.tvpca.nhs.uk



7. MAPPA Q&A

We know that many people have concerns about sex offenders and other high risk offenders living in the community. While this annual report tells you what we've been doing to protect the people of Thames Valley over the past year, there are questions that we're asked frequently when we meet with

Why do dangerous offenders have to be released from prison at all?

We don't determine the law and there are set guidelines for judges and magistrates on the length of sentences they can impose. Depending on the seriousness of the crime, an offender can be given an indeterminate sentence, where they won't be released until it's considered safe to do so. These cases are, thankfully, quite rare. The prison and probation services, and the police, all work closely together while these offenders are still in prison, so they can be managed safely in the community, with appropriate restrictions on their movements and associations.

Why do you protect the offenders by not telling us who they are and where they live?

Public safety is our key concern. There are many reasons why we don't routinely release details about sex offenders. Sometimes we do disclose information, when it is necessary for public protection. When offenders are identified - in the media, for example - it isn't always helpful and can make the job of managing them much more difficult. Also, if an offender comes to the end of their licence and they're 'outed', it can drive them underground, which puts everyone at risk. We look at every case separately and make the decision on an individual basis. In the vast majority of cases, when we know where sex offenders are, it's easier to manage their risk and, if necessary, return them to prison for breaching any of the restrictions they're under, before they commit any further crimes.

Can you watch these people 24 hours a day?

An offender in the community is not in prison. We can't watch them continuously but agencies do work together on rigorous risk management plans. We meet regularly and share details and information, so we take collective responsibility for monitoring them effectively. This may mean regular visits by the police, or attending a special offending behaviour programme run by probation. The offender's probation officer (who's in charge of their licence in the community) will also be keeping a careful eye on them to monitor any change their behaviour. We can instruct people to live at a certain address too. For some, this will be accommodation vetted by probation as suitable, or for others it might mean staying in a probation approved premises (hostel) where they live in a supervised environment.

community groups. Here, we've taken those questions and given honest answers to them. We hope this goes some way towards reassuring you about the amount of work that goes on 'behind the scenes' to keep Thames Valley safer for everyone.

Isn't it dangerous to give a sex offender a community sentence?

No. Each offender is rigorously risk assessed by the probation service and that report will go to the court before sentence. There are some individuals who pose a substantial risk and it's entirely appropriate for them to go to prison or a secure unit. For others who don't fit this profile, a community sentence is often for longer than they'd otherwise get in prison. This gives us more time to work on them to change their behaviour. The specialist programmes we run for sex offenders are designed to reduce re-offending and the research shows they work. We also teach sex offenders how to monitor their own behaviour and to change thoughts and actions before this leads them back into re-offending.

What happens if a sex offender you're supposed to know about goes missing?

This is very rare. If a high risk sex offender goes missing, we'll almost always put out a public appeal to help find him. More often than not, it's a case of a registered sex offender who's moved without telling the police. They will work within Thames Valley and even nationally, sharing information about that offender on their ViSOR system and will exhaust every avenue of inquiry to find them. We can also use the Child Exploitation and Online Protection centre (CEOP) website (www.ceop.gov.uk), which gives details of missing sex offenders who've breached their orders or registration. We haven't had to do this over the past year in Thames Valley.

What else can be done?

The vast majority of sex offences against children are committed by people who are known to them and their family. Although great emphasis is placed on 'stranger danger' there is far more of a risk from people who are already within the family 'circle'.

There is a public information and awareness campaign called Stop it Now! which has a website and a helpline to take calls from concerned members of the public and from people who worry that they might commit sex offences themselves. The website is: www.stopitnow.org.uk and the helpline number is: 0808 1000 900.