



# Implementing Offender Management “Low Newton Project”

## *From Possibility...*

The implementation of the Offender Management Model across Probation and Prisons offers a unique opportunity to re-design and re-structure fundamentally, the management of offenders through the system.

Rather than simply waiting for the NOMS timetable to demand action, and then either changing a few job titles or creating a new function called “**Offender Management**”, Low Newton Womens’ Prison decided to take up this opportunity. HMP Low Newton are already defined as an excellent establishment, and their approach to this project certainly supported that rating! A project team was set up with staff and managers from all grades within the Prison. The whole purpose of Offender Management is to create a joined up end-to-end process, so the team included Probation staff and managers from Northumbria, Durham and Teesside Probation Areas.

## THE APPROACH

The key outcomes of the project were agreed with a Regional Steering Group and included:

- Developing an effective set of key process principles which is consistent with the Offender Management Model and could be replicated across the North East (all offenders) and the women’s estate
- Producing findings on a range of issues relating to diversity (CJ sentencing practice, interventions requirements) in respect of female offenders
- Defining information requirements and guidance for exchange of information between Probation and Prisons
- Developing a job description and identifying the tasks which would be fulfilled through the role of the offender supervisor in custody

*ad•esse*  
consulting

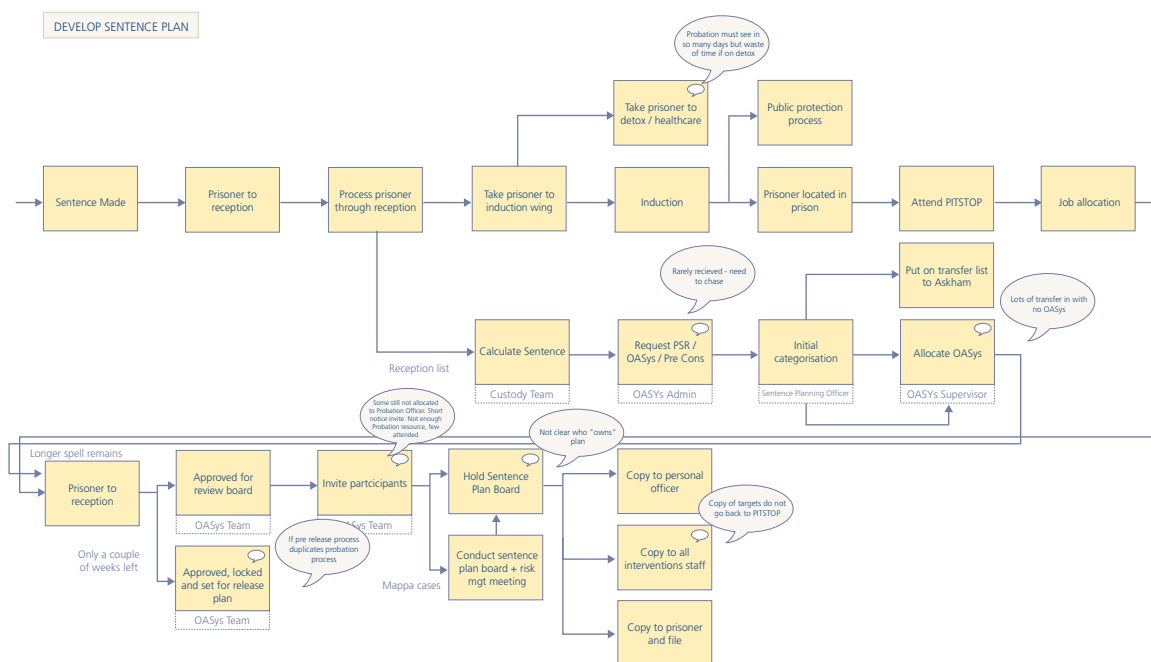
If the pathways an offender takes through the system are to be streamlined and improved, it is essential that the current process is mapped and understood, before re-designing the way this journey is made. This also offers the opportunity to examine current processes critically, many of which have simply evolved over a period of time. As it's estimated that between 25% and 40% of activity in any process adds no value, the scope for reducing waste and inefficiency is significant. Anyone can create a new offender management process, but how do you create a streamlined process which reduces waste and gives the best chance of facing the rigors of a contestable market?



The project team was therefore trained in process mapping, analysis and re-design and the identification of waste in processes. That training was then put into immediate effect as the team walked through the current process.

*"I found the training very useful in identifying areas where there is repetition of work, or where tasks are unnecessary...It seems to make sense to look at existing procedures in some detail in order to identify where improvements can be made".*

Project Team Member



Example of one of the process walkthroughs

## To Actuality...

The project team used this process walkthrough to identify sixteen separate recommendations for improvement and examine what tasks within the process the Offender Supervisor would perform.

The recommendations included:

- Clarifying the purpose of the Probation post-sentence interview and “where” in the process it is best conducted
- Removing the completion of HDC details at Court
- Developing a checklist of paperwork required to be transported by GSL and simple tick-box of assessment / report status of the prisoner
- Ensuring information on the 2050 is pulled through from Probation paperwork

- Streamlining assessments between professionals on induction
- Assigning ownership of the Offender Management plan to Offender Supervisors
- Piloting the defined role of Offender Supervisor in Low Newton and defining which tasks are better suited to an administrative role
- Ensuring the pre-release sentence plan is completed once and is done jointly by the Offender Manager and Offender Supervisor, as close to pre-release as possible
- Issuing the PD1 as late as possible in the process to allow the right checks to be made once and coordinated between the offender, Offender Supervisor and Offender Manager
- Developing a process to ensure that the Offender Supervisor is aware of any visits by the Offender Manager and other Key Workers

Several opportunities were identified to streamline the process and reduce duplication between Prisons and Probation. One major area of “waste” was identified which could be removed as a process completely. The example provided below is a great example of how relatively small tasks can take a lot of time but add no value. As “Time” = “Resource” in the Public Sector, just think what value other value adding activity could be delivered to offenders if all of this waste was removed!

### REDUCING WASTE, IMPROVING SERVICES...

On release, Prison staff complete a DFB1. This duplicates most of the information on other forms and is then passed to Probation, who also complete part of the form. This is then sent off to Croydon.

Checks made by the project team confirmed that this information is never used, and the purpose of this process is unclear.

It takes a minimum of 10 – 15 minutes of process time for each form in the Prison and around another 15 minutes within Probation. As this is completed for every release in the country, the wasted time and resource over a year would be significant for both services. The Area Manager is currently progressing the removal of this form.

### THE BENEFITS

Moving from the current way of operating to the new offender management model is like any journey, you have to understand where you are starting from!

**Taking a process approach enabled this project to:**

- Bring together staff and managers from Prisons and Probation to work on a structured project
- Transfer skills to that project team on process mapping and redesign. These skills can be used on all improvement and change projects
- Get an excellent understanding of how the current processes were working, and most critically, where problems and waste were occurring
- Gather ideas for improvement from the real experts, i.e. those people on the front-line doing the tasks day in, day out
- Identify what type of tasks the Offender Supervisor would perform, and critically how the role would fit within the end-to-end process
- Consider planning implication of related changes such as e-OASys
- Examine and improve the process “end-to-end”





# Implementing Offender Management “Low Newton Project”

Bronia Banecki, who led the Project for Low Newton commented:

*“It can be tempting when faced with a large project such as the NOMS pilot to jump to solutions, but involvement in the Low Newton project team was an opportunity for the individuals involved to reflect critically on a range of activities which we have come to accept, but which during the process we felt safe to challenge. In the developing world of NOMS, Offender Management and re-settlement where new initiatives and practices are being introduced, it is important that we do not just add initiatives onto accepted practice but do challenge and act innovatively to make NOMS and Offender Management a workable reality”.*

Ad Esse Consulting have supported the NOMS North West Pathfinder, Wales Pathfinder and the Yorkshire and Humberside OM Sentence Planning Project. We have also supported a significant number of process improvement and re-design projects across Probation, Prisons and the wider Criminal Justice System. For a full range of case studies visit our website.

Put simply, we work with people in the organisation to make change happen and move organisations

*ad•esse*  
consulting

## FURTHER INFORMATION

To receive regular case studies and articles like this one, you can subscribe to our newsletter ‘Actuality’. Contact us at Ad Esse Consulting Ltd.

PHONE: +44 (0) 870 458 6162 EMAIL: [seriousfun@ad-esse.com](mailto:seriousfun@ad-esse.com) WEBSITE: [www.ad-esse.com](http://www.ad-esse.com)