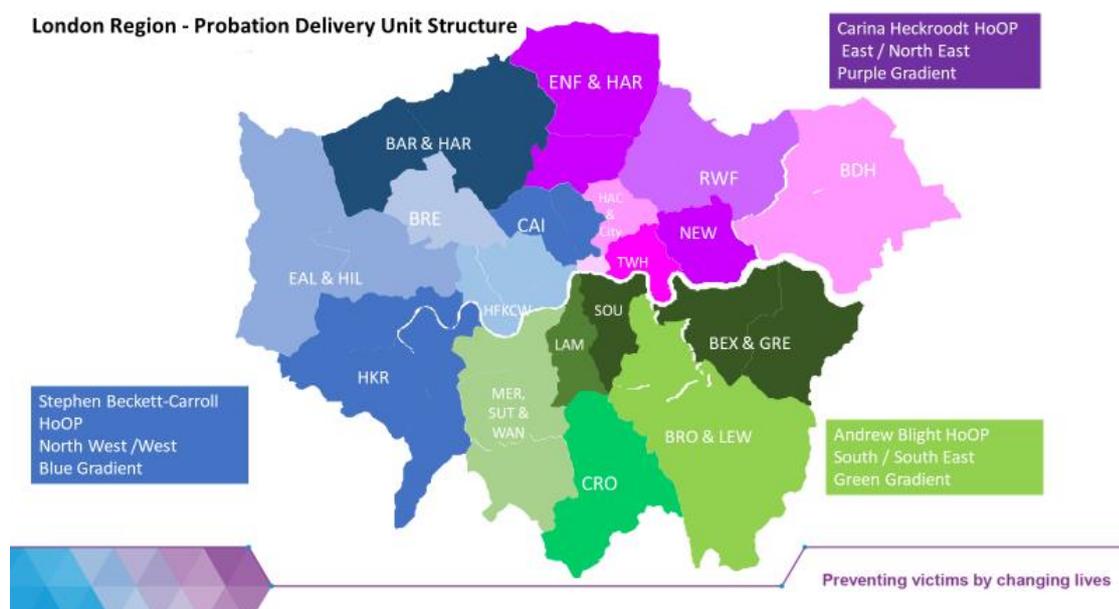


Lewisham Safer Stronger Select Committee Report

Bromley & Lewisham Probation Delivery Unit

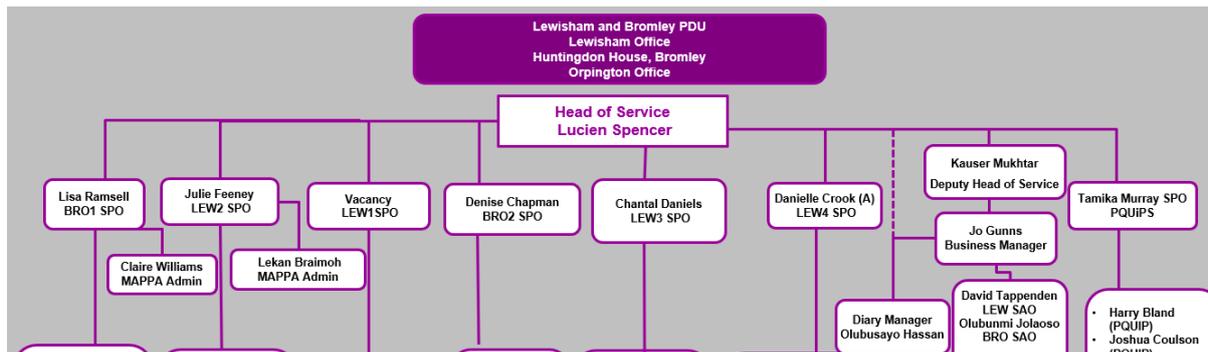
The Lewisham and Bromley (LAB) Probation Delivery Unit (PDU) is one of eighteen PDU's that sit across the Probation Service region of London. The PDU was established on 26 June 2021 following the unification of Probation Services. Prior to this date, Probation Service delivery had been split between a public sector provider (National Probation Service) and various Community Rehabilitation Services (CRC's).



PDU Structure

Service delivery within the PDU takes place across 3 operational sites, two in Bromley (central Bromley and Orpington) and one site in Lewisham.

Staff are configured across 6 operational teams (4 in Lewisham, 2 in Bromley), with an administrative function and an operational manager overseeing trainee Probation Officers.



In addition to the sentence management function, offices are also occupied by other departments covering responsibilities such as the oversight and management of Unpaid Work / Community Payback, Accredited Programmes, and the administrative Service Centre.

Caseload information

LAB is responsible for the management and oversight of approximately 2,400 people on Probation within its sentence management function. Approximately 65% of the people on Probation are managed within the 4 teams in the Lewisham office.

Alongside the Lewisham sentence management team, practitioners from the following areas are based or co-located within the office

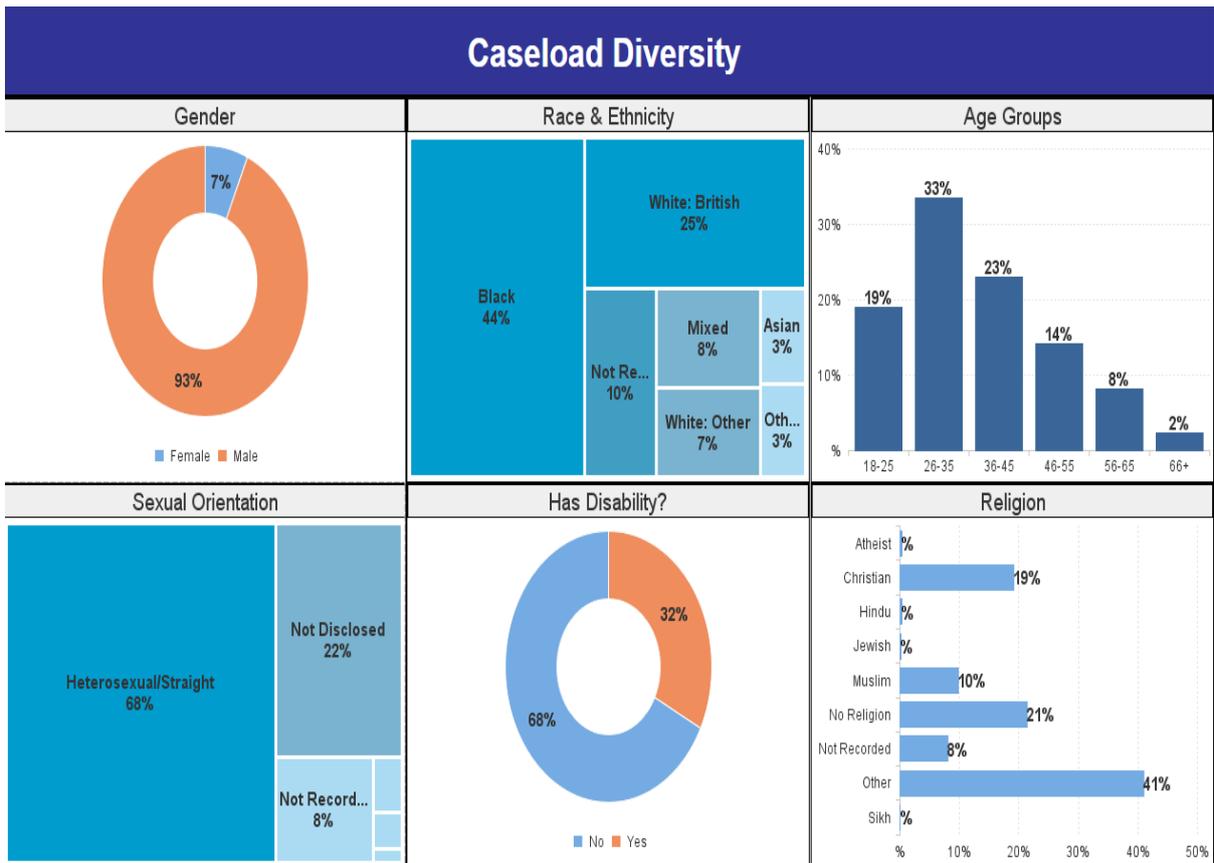
- Accredited Programmes – 2 group rooms are available to facilitate the management of service users subject to accredited programmes such as Building Better Relationship (BBR)
- Commissioned Rehabilitation Services (CRS) – colleagues from supply chain providers such as SHP/St Mungos; Maximus, Catch-22, Women in Prison / Advance Minerva, use or are co-located in the Lewisham office, supporting the delivery of interventions to people on Probation
- Offender Personality Disorder (OPD) Pathway – clinical colleagues from the Oxleas NHS foundation Trust are co-located in Lewisham to support the delivery of the OPD pathway programme

Caseload Diversity

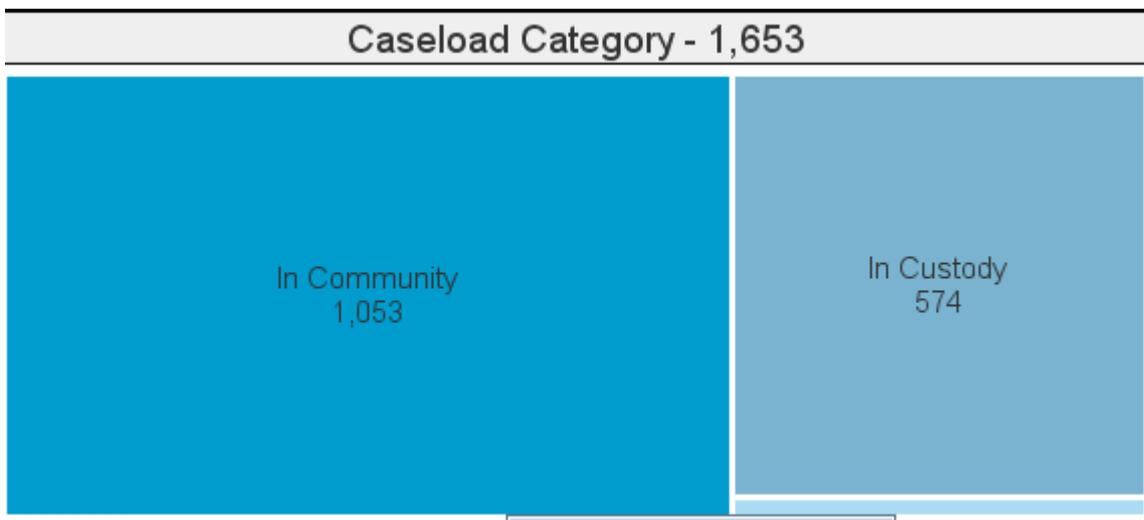
Lewisham's joint strategic needs assessment (2019) indicates that two out of every five residents in Lewisham are from a Black, Asian, or other minority ethnic group.

The current Probation caseload indicates that those from a Black African / Black Caribbean or dual heritage population account for approximately 52% of the caseload.

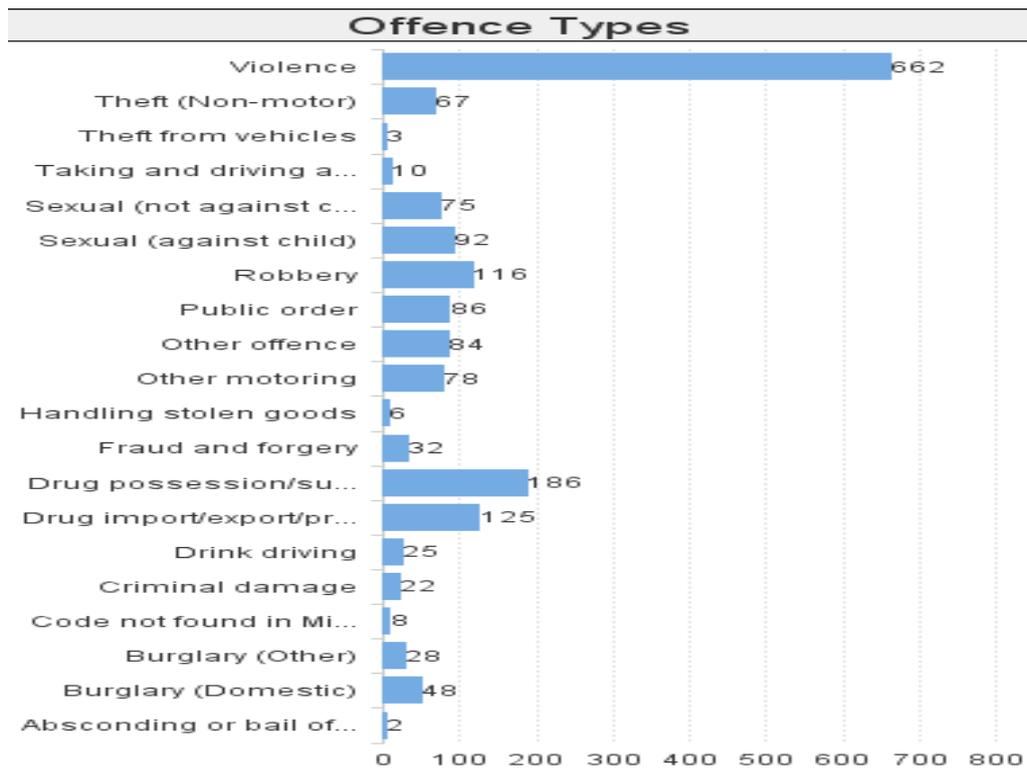
The following breakdown provides an overview of the caseload diversity of people on Probation in Lewisham. The caseload is predominately male, with the highest proportion being between the ages of 26-35.



The majority of service user managed in Lewisham are in the community, although this figure will not account for those sentenced to longer prison sentences, and those managed in the community solely on single requirements of unpaid work



In relation to offence type, violence is by far the principal offence theme. It should be understood that this category of offence is broad accounting for the full range of offences under the category of violence, including both domestic and non-domestic offences.



Staffing

The recruitment of staff presents a key operational challenge for the organisation. The lack of resources, especially across the case administrator and Probation Service Officer grade, are most acute.

Between June 2021 to October 2021 the PDU experienced attrition rates of above 20%. In accordance with our own Workload Management Tool this resulted to a workload in excess of 130% across the PDU, with some practitioners exceeding 180% of their capacity.

Since June 2022, workload is indicating signs of reduction, with currently capacity being on average 114% for the PDU. This reduction is a consequence of an approach to improve recruitment and retention, with the local picture being as follows:

Recruitment



As noted, there remains some critical challenge with staffing levels, with the PDU having approximately half the Probation Service Officers, and two-thirds of Probation Officers required.

In regard to operational service delivery, average caseload size in LAB equates to over 35 cases for a qualified Probation Officer and over 60 cases for a Probation Service Officer. These figures remain unvalidated and will depend on factors such as the inclusion of short/long term absences and the allocation of cases to practitioners in training.

Interventions

As part of the unification of Probation Services a range of commissioned rehabilitative services (CRS) were awarded. Over the next 6 months, further commissioned services will start to operate across London.

Criminogenic Needs or Assessed Specialist Support Requirement	Commission Service	Active
Employment, Education and Training	Maximus	Yes
Personal Well-being	Catch 22	Yes
Women (Female Service Users)	Women in Prison / Pecan	Yes
Housing	SHP / St Mungos	Yes
Dependency to Recovery	Forward Trust	Contract awarded, roll-out from September 2022
Finance, Benefit and Debt	Catch 22	Contract awarded, roll-out from September 2022

There is also a range of non-commissioned services, working around similar themes, such as Shaw Trust and the CFO activity hub. In addition, the Lewisham probation office provides a space for specialist services to address a range of acute needs, such as Hepatitis C testing (NHS) and drug and alcohol advice (CGL and HumanKind)

A new Regional Innovation Offender Fund (RIOF) will also provide opportunities for the Probation Service to co-commission work with local providers around acute areas of need. For the operational year 2022-23 this sum equates to a figure of over one million pounds for London as a whole.

In Lewisham, it is anticipated that approaches relating to the management of young people, up to the age of 25, could provide opportunities for co-commissioning in the future.

Probation Service London Region Background

There are approximately 2,400 staff in London, in a wide range of roles and locations across the London region. London Probation has the most diverse workforce with over 50% of colleagues from Black, Asian and Minority Communities representing the diversity of the London communities (this percentage is higher in Lewisham).

Following transition, the London region moved to 18 Probation Delivery Units (PDUs) working across 32 London Boroughs and the City of London with additional Public Protection and Stakeholder Engagement business units. We have specialist units that include Foreign

National Offenders (FNO), Victim Contact Scheme (VCS) and London Gangs and Organised Crime Unit.

The region encompasses 9 prison establishments and 13 Approved Premises (APs) plus 3 independent APs. London has 11 Magistrates and 10 Crown courts.

We work in partnership with the Metropolitan Police, London Council, NHS England, Mayoral Office of Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and our Criminal Justice partners, including CPS, HMCTS and Prisons. We are increasing our number of third sector services, including Catch 22, St Mungos/Single Homeless Projects in order to manage people on probation and prison licence in London and to deliver services to London Courts and victims of crime.

London Probation has a very positive relationship with MOPAC and lead a number of initiatives like Integrated Offender Management (IOM), Violence Reduction (using electronic monitoring for knife crime and domestic abuse) and Youth to Adulthood transition with a new initiative with MoJ in Newham developing a new way of working with 17–25-year-olds to improve compliance with young people.

Given the diversity of our staff and caseload in London, we are commissioning specialist services to work with both the staff and people on probation to reduce disproportionality in access to opportunities and services.

HMIP Inspection

LAB was recently subject to an inspection from HM Inspectorate of Probation. This inspection was announced in June 2022 with the fieldwork being completed during the week commencing 22 August 2022.

The ratings from the inspection are not expected prior to the end of September 2022. However, interim findings indicate that whilst there are many positives, relating to organisational delivery (domain one, encompassing leadership, staff, services and facilities), case assessment (domain two, encompassing assessment, planning, implementation and delivery, and reviewing) remains a critical area of challenge.

Given some of the challenges of mobilising and transitioning staff, as part of the unification programme, these areas are not altogether surprising and will provide an area of focus within any action plan for the year ahead.