



HM Prison &  
Probation Service

Probation  
Service



North West

To:

Nicholas Rheinberg,  
Assistant Coroner Liverpool & Wirral

Sent via email by GLD

Regional Probation Director  
Unit 6, Albert Edward House  
The Pavilions  
Port Way  
Preston  
PR2 2YB

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4<sup>th</sup> April 2025

Dear Mr. Rheinberg,

**Re: William Bissett (deceased) Regulation 28 Preventing Future Deaths Response**

Thank you for your Regulation 28 Report, issued following the Inquest into the death of Mr William Bissett.

I know that you will share a copy of this response with the family, and I would first like to express my sincere condolences for their loss.

You have raised concerns which you summarised as follows: -

*Where it becomes known that a prisoner is likely to be homeless on release, consideration be given to instituting a regime whereby a meeting takes place, not less than 56 days before the release date, such meeting to include the prisoner and representatives from the prison Offender Management Unit, Healthcare and the Local Authority Housing Department which will bear responsibility for discharging a duty to rehouse, in order to put in place arrangements to support the prisoner in the prisoner's transition from custody back to the community*

In response, a number of changes have taken place.

The OMiC (Offender Management in Custody) POM to COM Handover Guidance was amended and re-issued in March 2024. This provides clear instructions about the requirements for the handover process from a prison-based offender manager (POM) to a community based offender manager (COM). The Guidance sets out very clear instructions on the timing of this meeting, who should attend and record keeping so that what is discussed forms the basis of planning for release.

There has also been a review commissioned by the Area Executive Director to look at the quality of POM to COM handovers which proposes relevant recommendations to improve timeliness and quality in respect of the exchange and sharing of information with stakeholders both in the prison and the community.

Locally, anyone managed by the Blackpool Probation Office in custody who is without a release address is discussed at the local Prison Leavers Meetings which are attended by Probation, Prison, and the Local Authority. A list of cases for discussion at these meetings is generated from the Probation case management system – NDelius, using the “No Fixed Abode” recorded status. The Prison Leavers Meetings are chaired by the Probation Delivery Unit (PDU) Senior Probation Officer which ensures they have insight into the pre-release work required/being undertaken by their teams in a timely manner and have the links with the housing workers to facilitate assessments and discuss need, including duty to refer situations.

In the North West Probation Region, I have commissioned a resettlement review and the consistency of arrangements for multi-agency pre-release meetings will be considered as part of this review.

We also have a number of PDU’s where housing workers are co-located at our offices and early indications are that this improves working relationships and the sharing of information.

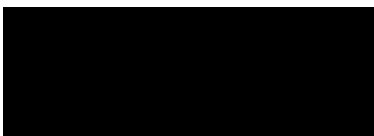
In other PDUs Local Authority housing workers regularly attend the Probation Offices to work with Probation Practitioners to support them with addressing prison leaver accommodation needs. These arrangements are demonstrating improved outcomes such as helping to understand when to make referrals under the Duty to Refer and referrals being assessed in a timely manner with each Service understanding need.

There is also a new policy statement for Practitioners in respect of safeguarding adults at risk - The Safeguarding Adults at Risk in the Community Probation Service Policy Statement and care and support needs should be discussed at the POM to COM handover meeting.

I can also confirm that there is an expectation that the case management system NDelius should be updated within twenty-four hours of all contacts taking place and recording of contact outcomes is currently being monitored at weekly performance meetings led by senior probation officers.

Thank you for bringing these matters of concern to my attention. Please be assured that learning from the circumstances of this tragic death will also be shared more widely with colleagues across the Probation Regions.

Yours sincerely,



**Andrea Bennett**  
Regional Probation Director, North West