

Central Lancashire Online Knowledge (CLoK)

Title	Registered Sex Offenders' experiences of risk assessments and home visits in England & Wales - can we expect the police to integrate "risk" with "desistance" practices?
Type	Article
URL	https://clock.uclan.ac.uk/52508/
DOI	https://doi.org/10.1108/JCP-04-2024-0032
Date	2024
Citation	Mydlowski, Leona, Turner-moore, Rhys and Kewley, Stephanie (2024) Registered Sex Offenders' experiences of risk assessments and home visits in England & Wales - can we expect the police to integrate "risk" with "desistance" practices? <i>Journal of Criminal Psychology</i> . ISSN 2009-3829
Creators	Mydlowski, Leona, Turner-moore, Rhys and Kewley, Stephanie

It is advisable to refer to the publisher's version if you intend to cite from the work.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/JCP-04-2024-0032>

For information about Research at UCLan please go to <http://www.uclan.ac.uk/research/>

All outputs in CLoK are protected by Intellectual Property Rights law, including Copyright law. Copyright, IPR and Moral Rights for the works on this site are retained by the individual authors and/or other copyright owners. Terms and conditions for use of this material are defined in the <http://clock.uclan.ac.uk/policies/>

**Registered Sex Offenders' experiences of home visits in
England & Wales: Are the police expected to integrate "risk"
with "desistance"**

Journal:	<i>Journal of Criminal Psychology</i>
Manuscript ID	Draft
Manuscript Type:	Research Paper
Keywords:	Sex offenders, Home visits, MAPPA, Risk assessment, MOSOVO, Desistance

SCHOLARONE™
Manuscripts

MANUSCRIPT DETAILS

TITLE: Registered Sex Offenders' experiences of home visits in England & Wales: Are the police expected to integrate 'risk' with 'desistance'?

ABSTRACT:

In England and Wales, adult male registered sex offenders (RSOs) are risk assessed and managed using a tool known as Active Risk Management System (ARMS) and this risk assessment is carried out by a specialist group of police officers known as Management of Violent or Sexual Offenders (MOSOVO) at the RSO's home, known as 'the home visit'. The purpose of this paper is to understand RSOs views of the home visit and risk assessment and to make recommendations to MOSOVO as to improve future home visit and risk assessment practice.

This study aimed to examine a sample of RSOs' views of the risk assessment and home visit process. Three police forces in England and Wales agreed to facilitate sampling of 10 RSOs who varied in their level of risk - namely, low, medium, high and very high. Semi-structured interviews were undertaken and thematically analysed using Braune & Clarke (2006).

Three themes were developed from the analysis: Waiting for the first home visit provoked feelings of anxiety and heightened levels of shame; the first home visit was 'like a chat' but not for the higher risk RSOs; and the property search and observations were non-invasive, but RSOs were not fully informed of the home visit. We discuss these experiences in light of the growing call for MOSOVOS to both manage risk and assist desistance and present recommendations for improving both the home visit and risk assessment practice.

CUST_RESEARCH_LIMITATIONS/IMPLICATIONS_(LIMIT_100_WORDS) :No data available.

CUST_PRACTICAL_IMPLICATIONS_(LIMIT_100_WORDS) :No data available.

CUST_SOCIAL_IMPLICATIONS_(LIMIT_100_WORDS) :No data available.

To the authors knowledge, this is the first study to understand and explore RSOs views of the home visit and risk assessment process.

1
2
3 **Registered Sex Offenders' experiences of risk assessments and home visits in England &**
4 **Wales: Can we expect the police to integrate "risk" with "desistance" practices?**
5
6
7
8
9

10 Authors details have been removed for peer review
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

Journal of Criminal Psychology

Abstract

Purpose

In England and Wales, adult male registered sex offenders (RSOs) are risk assessed and managed using a tool known as Active Risk Management System (ARMS) and this risk assessment is carried out by a specialist group of police officers known as Management of Violent or Sexual Offenders (MOSOVO) at the RSO's home, known as 'the home visit'. The purpose of this paper is to understand RSOs views of the home visit and risk assessment and to make recommendations to MOSOVO as to improve future home visit and risk assessment practice.

Methodology

This study aimed to examine a sample of RSOs' views of the risk assessment and home visit process. Three police forces in England and Wales agreed to facilitate sampling of 10 RSOs who varied in their level of risk - namely, low, medium, high and very high. Semi-structured interviews were undertaken and thematically analysed using Braune & Clarke (2006).

Findings

Three themes were developed from the analysis: Waiting for the first home visit provoked feelings of anxiety and heightened levels of shame; the first home visit was 'like a chat' but not for the higher risk RSOs; and the property search and observations were non-invasive, but RSOs were not fully informed of the home visit. We discuss these experiences in light of the growing call for MOSOVOS to both manage risk and assist desistance and present recommendations for improving both the home visit and risk assessment practice.

Originality

To the authors knowledge, this is the first study to understand and explore RSOs views of the home visit and risk assessment process.

Key words

Sex Offenders, Home Visits; MOSOVO; Risk assessment; Desistance

Introduction

There are currently 68,357 persons that have been recorded as a registered sex offender (RSO) in England and Wales (Ministry of Justice, 2023). RSOs are placed within the constraints of the Sexual Offenders Act 1997, which provides a lawful obligation on certain RSOs post-conviction, with a specific type of sexual offence, to register with the police service in England and Wales, otherwise known as the 'Sex Offenders Register' (Thomas, 2008). Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA; Ministry of Justice, 2022a), established by the Criminal Justice Act 2003, places joint statutory duties on the Police, Probation and Prison Service, with a primary function of protecting the public through the management of RSOs. MAPPA deal with different categories of offenders: Registered Sexual Offenders (Category 1); Violent Offenders (Category 2); and Other Dangerous Offenders (Category 3), with MAPPA determining the level of management and resources required to safely manage people within each sub-population. Those contained at Level 1 are managed by a single lead agency, at Level 2 a multi-agency approach to support the risk management plan is required, and Level 3 requires senior management oversight to authorise additional resources when needed (Kewley & Brereton, 2022).

The majority, three quarters of MAPPA cases (68,357 as of March 2023), are grouped under Category 1 (Ministry of Justice, 2022a) - this being RSOs, with nearly all (99.2%) managed at the lowest level of risk (Ministry of Justice, 2022a). Allocating a case to the lowest level of risk management means that single agency management has been deemed sufficient to manage the identified risks and needs of the case; without the need for formal multi-agency intervention (HM Prison and Probation Service, 2023). Of course, information sharing, and multi-agency co-operation continues, particularly if risk or need changes, but even cases assessed as 'high risk' of re-offending can be managed by a single agency (Ministry of Justice, 2022a).

The management of RSOs is carried out by specialist teams of police officers and staff, also known as Offender Managers, generally located within Public Protection Units (although unit structures vary across each force); Offender Managers are tasked with the Management of Sexual or Violent Offenders (MOSOVO; College of Policing, 2020a). MOSOVO teams are a highly specialist and unique group within the police. They are trained, experienced police officers and staff, whose role it is to assess risk and manage MAPPA

1
2
3 cases. Despite the large number of people with a history of sexual offending being managed
4 by MOSOVO officers ('MOSOVOs') across the country, very little is known of this unique
5 group (Thomas & Marshall, 2021). This is perhaps surprising given their role is critical in both
6 public protection and helping support people convicted of sexual offending reduce and
7 manage their risk.
8
9

10
11
12 One of the key roles MOSOVOs undertake is the assessment of risk a person
13 convicted of a sexual offence may pose in relation to both the likelihood of future sexual re-
14 offending and the degree of harm future offending might cause (College of Policing, 2020a).
15 Assessing future risk of sexual re-offending is complex and a notoriously thorny problem for
16 criminal justice agents (Kewley *et al.*, 2020a). Thus, to assist MOSOVOs to reach conclusions
17 about potential future behaviours, they have at their disposal a variety of actuarial and
18 clinically informed tools (including the Active Risk Management System: ARMS, Spousal
19 Abuse Risk Assessment: SARA, Offender Assessment System: OASys and Risk Matrix 2000:
20 RM2000) the results of which inform a person's *Risk Management Plan*. We have previously
21 and extensively discussed the development of these risk tools (Kewley & Blandford, 2017)
22 and the subsequent quality of risk assessment and risk management plans (Kewley *et al.*,
23 2015, 2020b); MOSOVOs' views as to the effectiveness of ARMS (Kewley, 2017); as well as
24 the effectiveness of police training in relation to the risk management of this population and
25 the extent to which MOSOVOs implement this training in practice (Mydlowski & Turner-
26 Moore, 2023); thus, we do not intend to repeat those discussions here. Instead, we intend
27 to extend the dialogue around the voices of the RSOs and their experiences of the current
28 risk assessment and home visit practice.
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42

43 Before we consider this, we provide some context to the risk paradigm MOSOVOs
44 operate within. Risk assessment is not the same as risk prediction; no-one can guarantee
45 the future behaviours of others (Kewley *et al.*, 2020a); however, this is to some extent the
46 expectation placed on MOSOVOs. In response to a number of high-profile cases such as
47 Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman and subsequent media and public pressure, legislators
48 have sought to increase sentencing in ways that Thomas and Marshall (2021) have argued to
49 be punitive (e.g. longer prison sentences and rigid Sexual Harm Prevention Orders [SHPO]
50 for people with sexual convictions), rather than rehabilitative. Legitimising processes of
51 *pervasive or mass punishment* is not limited to people convicted of specific offences but is a
52 political approach and response to general *crime* and *the criminal*, evident across all facets
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 of Western criminal justice systems (McNeill, 2019). Yet, Thomas and Marshall (2021) have
4 argued that, for those with histories of sexual offending, strategies to punish and
5 perceptions of risk can be very harsh, or pervasive, so much so, that people with sexual
6 convictions often exist in a state of 'civic purgatory' (Henley, 2018), in which, arbitrary
7 timescales can be applied to legal sanctions, such as stringent registration and SHPO
8 requirements. The introduction of registration requirements in the 1997 Sex Offenders Act
9 required people convicted of a sexual offence to provide details, such as their name and
10 address, to the police at a specified point in time following conviction/release, now known
11 as the Sex Offenders Register. Initially intended as a register for the police to verify and
12 identify suspects after a sexual crime was committed, also it is increasingly claimed (usually
13 by politicians) to be a tool that protects the public and deters sexual violence (Levenson *et*
14 *al.*, 2016).

15
16 Pemberton *et al.*, (2023) further outline the challenges in which MOSOVs
17 themselves operate. On the one hand they work within cultures of containment (English,
18 1998) which require them to manage the RSOs' restrictions that are imposed by the court,
19 issued as a result of both retrospective (past behaviours) and prospective (future potential
20 behaviours) risk. While some containment policing techniques show promise, including
21 targeted management that prioritises the direction of resources to those deemed high risk,
22 and technology-assisted management (Christensen *et al.*, 2021); using these approaches
23 alone, might serve to inhibit the desistance process. Albeit unintentionally, such approaches
24 are potentially stigmatizing due to the restrictions placed on the RSO and limit opportunities
25 for people to access social and psychological capital (Mann *et al.*, 2019), which may inhibit
26 or facilitate desistance, respectively. Indeed, given the pervading perception by the media
27 and general public, who perceive the risk presented by those convicted of sexual offences as
28 fixed and unchangeable, it is unsurprising that professionals working in the field operate
29 with an overactive focus on risk and suppress opportunities or interactions to foster the
30 desistance process (Mullins & Kirkwood, 2022). Calls for practitioners to integrate both risk
31 and desistance practices into assessment and risk management approaches is now standard
32 across MAPPA agencies (Kemshall, 2021) because comprehensive approaches to risk
33 management are found to be more effective (*The HMPPS Approach to the Management and*
34 *Rehabilitation of People Convicted of Sexual Offending*, 2021; Maruna & Mann, 2019).

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

Despite limited empirical examination of the MOSOVO context, wider criminal justice literature indicates that when formal relationships between those sanctioned by the court and supervising officers are grounded in trust, respect, and a belief in change; desistance can be fostered (Villeneuve *et al.*, 2021). Indeed, the *Four Pillars of Risk Management*, central to the work of all MAPPA agents (HM Prison and Probation Service, 2023), requires risk management plans to detail how both the risk and needs of people subject to MAPPA sanctions will be met through a) Supervision, b) Monitoring and Controls, c) Interventions and Treatment, and d) Victim Safety plans. Comprehensive and detailed risk management plans ought to account for each of these four elements and be driven and justified by the risk and needs as assessed by the Offender Manager. Risk management plans must detail strategies to both mitigate potential future risk, as well as tactics that strengthen the capacity and capability of the RSO to successfully reintegrate into society and help identify and provide opportunities that encourage the desistance process (Kewley & Brereton, 2022).

However, MOSOVOS walk a thin line between protecting the public and helping support the rehabilitation process of those convicted of sexual offending, as one of the traditional roles of policing is to protect the public, yet the OM role has a focus on desistance and rehabilitation. This is perhaps most evident when we consider the pillars of 'supervision' and 'monitoring and control' in which MOSOVOS use (usually unannounced) home visits (Mydlowski & Turner-Moore, 2023) to: check compliance (notification or court conditions); confirm the person lives at the address; fulfil a duty of care to the public; monitor new/existing risk; gather information/intelligence; detect other offences; and fulfil a duty of care to the person convicted of sexual offending (College of Policing, 2020b). The frequency of home visits varies case to case but should be clearly determined by the MOSOVOS risk assessment and outlined and reviewed in the subsequent risk management plan (Mydlowski & Turner-Moore, 2023).

Given that the role of MOSOVO is crucial to public protection, it is surprising that there is little evaluative research in this area. To date, there has not been any study that has gathered the experiences of RSOs in the UK who have been subject to the risk assessment and home visit process. This paper addresses that gap in the literature. It is important to highlight and understand RSOs' views of both the risk assessment and home visit process to enable MOSOVO to further improve their practices to discourage RSOs from offending in

1
2
3 the future and to promote desistance, which ultimately, will further protect the public. This
4 paper therefore explores RSOs' experiences of risk assessments and home visits, and the
5 implications of these findings for assisting desistance.
6
7
8
9
10

11 12 **Method**

13 14 15 **Sample and Recruitment**

16
17 Three police forces in England and Wales (one urban, one rural and one semi-rural force)
18 agreed to participate in the research, and this agreement was confirmed with the College of
19 Policing. Each police force was asked to invite and recruit four male RSOs, one from each
20 level of risk (low, medium, high, and very high). Participants deemed by the police to be a
21 risk to staff/researcher were excluded. Although the aim was to recruit 12 RSOs in total,
22 only one force had a willing RSO at the 'very high' risk level, therefore, 10 RSOs agreed to
23 take part. Table 1 provides the demographic characteristics of the participants, their
24 convictions, and how many home visits they had been subject to.
25
26
27
28
29
30
31

32 [insert Table 1 here]

33
34 Prior to taking part in the study, the first author provided participants with a participant
35 information sheet and they were asked if they had read and understood the purpose of the
36 research. After being given the opportunity to ask questions, and on agreeing to participate,
37 participants signed a consent form, but were also advised they could withdraw at any time,
38 and their data be destroyed, without any cost to them. It was explained that the research
39 was independent to the police. Once participants agreed to take part, a date, time, and
40 location for the interviews was agreed.
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48

49 50 **Data Collection**

51 For privacy and security, the interviews were conducted in a private room within the police
52 headquarters for each force. Only the first author was in the interview room with the
53 participant, although participants were made aware that police staff were available should
54 assistance be required. Interviews were audio recorded. Participants were informed they
55 were not required to answer all questions, and to ensure anonymity, no names of
56 participants were recorded in the researcher's handwritten notes. If participants referred to
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 others by name, or provided a location, these were not added to the researcher's notes or
4 the transcript of the recording. The audio recording was destroyed once the study had been
5 written up.
6
7

8
9 An interview schedule consisting of three parts was used to structure the interviews.
10 Part one invited participants to share their views of the home visits, their expectations of
11 the home visit and their experiences of the first visit. Participants were asked to describe
12 whether subsequent visits were similar or different to the first, and whether their
13 expectations of the home visits had now changed. Participants were also asked how the
14 home visit process might be improved. Part two focused on whether the home visits were
15 unannounced or if participants were notified in advance of the home visit and participants'
16 views and experiences of these. Part three concerned questions around their understanding
17 of the risk assessment process. In particular, we asked if they understood terms like 'priority
18 rating' or if they were aware of their 'risk category' and how they felt about the police
19 monitoring them to conduct a risk assessment.
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

29 Upon completion of the interview, participants were debriefed, which further
30 explained the purpose of the research and contact details if they had any questions after the
31 interview or wished to withdraw their data. The debriefing also directed participants to
32 mental health and counselling services, should participants require these services post-
33 interview.
34
35
36
37
38
39

40 **Data Analysis**

41 All audio recordings were transcribed verbatim by the first author. The transcripts were
42 analysed using an inductive, semantic, realist thematic analysis, following the steps outlined
43 by Braun and Clarke (2006). The first author immersed themselves in the dataset to become
44 familiar with it and to record initial impressions and notes. Next, they coded the entire
45 dataset and then organised these codes into an initial set of candidate themes. These initial
46 themes were then discussed with the second author and refined further. Lastly, these
47 themes were then further refined by checking them back against the codes included in the
48 theme and then against the raw data (i.e., re-reading the dataset to check that the themes
49 were a good "fit" for the data) and through additional discussion with the second and third
50 authors.
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

Ethical Approval

The research adhered to the British Society of Criminology's (2015) Statement of Ethics and ethical approval for the study was granted by [REDACTED FOR PEER REVIEW].

Findings and Discussion

Through our analysis of the ten interviews, three themes were developed: *Waiting for that first home visit provoked anxiety and heightened shame; The first home visit 'was just like a chat really' but not for those deemed high-risk, and; Property search and observations were non-invasive, but, RSOs were not fully informed of the visit purpose.* We present a brief narrative of these themes here, followed by our observations of how these experiences might assist (or otherwise) the desistance process. Where participant extracts are used, we use pseudonyms (see Table 2) to protect identity.

[insert Table 2 approx. here]

Waiting for that first home visit provoked anxiety and heightened shame

Across the sample, participants were unclear and unsure of what to expect of their first home visit. To some degree they assumed MOSOVOs would want to ensure they were coping with everyday life, as stated by Arthur, *'[I] didn't know what to expect, I just thought it would be to see how I was getting on'*. It was interesting to note, participants who were assessed at a higher level of risk felt the purpose of the visit was to specifically discuss their sexual offence, as stated by Joshua, *'I thought they would want to talk about the offence'*, and Cameron, that it was to do *'some kind of checking up on me coz of what I had done'*. Thus, as participants were unsure what to expect of their first home visit, they recalled feeling elevated levels of anxiety and apprehension; as Arthur reports, it was *'the first time I had ever been in trouble with the police, so I was really nervous, especially because of what it was'*. Their anxiety appeared to be driven by fear of the MOSOVO officers judging them due to the nature of their offence, as reported by Ryan, who *'felt embarrassed more than anything about it all and thought they would judge me'*. This anticipation and internalised shame resulted in participants not being able to *'sleep for thinking about it coz they [the police officers doing the home visit] knew what I had done [...] the wait was awful'* (Jamie).

1
2
3 Anticipating a first home visit from the police, following release from prison or after
4 receiving a community sentence for a sexual conviction, would understandably induce levels
5 of anxiety, and for some, even fear. Particularly given that officers attending home visits
6 have powers to breach or take action that enforce court orders should they find a RSO has
7 not complied with the orders of the court (Criminal Justice Act, 2003; Police & Criminal
8 Evidence Act, 1984). In addition, RSOs will be acutely aware of the perception society and
9 others, including criminal justice practitioners, have of them. It is likely their experience of
10 the criminal justice system by that point has been hostile and combative (Tewksbury & Lees,
11 2006) with the public and criminal justice practitioners holding negative perceptions of
12 them. In an earlier study, we found MOSOVOS held unfavourable views of this group
13 (Mydlowski & Turner-Moore, 2023; Kewley, 2017), echoed by others in the field (Mann *et*
14 *al.*, 2019), and in their interviews with 84 men incarcerated for sexual offences, Levins and
15 Mjåland (2021) found the criminal justice system to be predominantly one that viewed this
16 group of people to be a risk to others.

17
18 While we found high levels of anticipation and anxiety prior to the home visit,
19 irrespective of the level of risk of the RSO, we were encouraged to hear that these feelings
20 soon dissipated, and participants (in the main) were made to feel at greater ease by the
21 MOSOVOS. Aiden recalled his *'first visit was really frightening'* but went onto describe
22 MOSOVO officers putting him at ease and engaging with him in a non-judgemental way: *'the*
23 *officers made me feel okay. They didn't judge me or anything, so it was okay in the end'*.

24
25 The participants did however continue to experience shame, as can be seen from this
26 extract from Nicholas: *'I felt really embarrassed though, it did make me feel quite bad after*
27 *they had gone'*, which is not unique to our sample. Stigmatisation and labelling (Lowe & Willis,
28 2020) is a social control mechanism by which one group of people deem the characteristics,
29 beliefs, or behaviours of another, as problematic and/or negative; this often results in feelings
30 of shame, and ought to play a role in deterring behaviours in the first place. When responding
31 to behaviours that are socially unacceptable and criminal, such as sexual abuse, the roles of
32 stigma and labelling (Snape & Fido, 2021) play an important part in the punishment and
33 rehabilitation of the person. When a message of condemnation regarding the behaviour is
34 delivered in a way that is respectful of the person, but disapproving of the behaviour, then
35 shaming is said to be reintegrative (Braithwaite, 1989), allowing the person to move on from
36 their transgression. But shame that causes the person or group to be outcast or demonized,
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 known as disintegrative shaming, has detrimental consequences for those RSOs who are
4 actively seeking to desist from future offending (Braithwaite, 1989). The consequences of
5 disintegrative shaming for people convicted of sexual offending, and those suspected of
6 sexual offending, range from “discrimination and exclusion from social participation to violent
7 victimization and murder” (Cubellis *et al.*, 2019. p.225). Indeed, secondary stigma is
8 experienced by those associated with the person convicted, and family members are often
9 equally penalised, experiencing serious physical, psycho-social and economic harms
10 (Armitage *et al.*, 2023; Evans *et al.*, 2023). Our participants did not report examples of actions
11 by MOSOVOS in which their behaviours could be deemed disintegrative, despite the
12 participants’ ongoing feelings of shame. This is encouraging, because working with shame in
13 a reintegrative manner can help promote the desistance process (Villeneuve *et al.*, 2020) and
14 as such, if MOSOVOS continue to work in this way, they will be well-placed to serve as formal
15 agents to change.
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

29 ***The first home visit ‘was just like a chat really’ but not for those deemed high-risk***

30 All participants that were new to the notion of notification requirements (the Sex Offenders
31 Register) or who were in a low or medium risk category described positive experiences of
32 home visits with MOSOVOS. Participants remembered the first home visit as one in which
33 MOSOVOS took time to explain the purpose of that home visit, outline the licence
34 conditions or notification requirements, and make observations of the property. Owen felt it
35 was ‘*just a general chat really...about what I had been doing with my time*’, and this was
36 further stated by Nicholas, that he didn’t ‘*mind the visits, they are always good with me, no I*
37 *think they [the visits] are okay*’. Lower risk participants felt MOSOVOS were trying to help
38 them and offer support during the visit, as stated by Arthur, ‘*they are always really good*
39 *when they come to visit me. They do try and help you with stuff if they can*’. Over time, a
40 positive relationship between MOSOVOS and participants developed. Participants reported
41 the building of good relationships and rapport during the home visits, as Jamie stated: ‘*it’s*
42 *not like when you get arrested, they are okay with you, nice and down to earth*’, and as visits
43 became more informal, Charles stated, ‘*I think I have quite a good relationship with them.*
44 *I’m on first names terms with them*’. This was repeated by Arthur, who stated, while the
45 unannounced nature of the visit ‘*keeps you on your toes, coz you never know when they*
46 *gonna turn up*’, this was not perceived negatively, with participants stating that the visits
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 help them focus on what they should and should not be doing, which was reinforced by
4 Jamie, *'without a doubt, it makes you think positively from when they have been to visit you*
5 *and you know what you should do and what not to do'*.
6
7

8
9 However, participants assessed as high or very high risk described a hostile
10 experience during MOSOVOS' visits to their home. They did not encounter casual or
11 informal interactions; instead, Joshua felt *'they spent a long time on the notification thing*
12 *and saying what I can and can't do'* and Aiden stated that *'all the questions they ask,*
13 *they[re] trying to trip you up to say summat [sic] so they can send you back to prison... I*
14 *hate it'*. Unlike Jamie, one low risk participant who reported how home visits left him
15 reflecting positively on his life, Aiden maintained a state of hostility and resistance to
16 change: *'Nothing the police will do will help me, I can't stand the police, they sent me to*
17 *prison. I'm not gonna change now anyway'*, although Aiden did concede the difference in
18 approaches between MOSOVOS and investigative police, in that MOSOVOS *'aren't like the*
19 *normal ones that arrest you, they made me feel comfortable and they didn't judge me'*.
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

29 The participants also varied in their experience of the types of questions posed to
30 them by MOSOVOS. For low and medium risk participants, these were not intrusive or
31 interrogatory, but appeared to be casual enquiries about their daily routine, as stated by
32 Jamie: *'they asked what I had been up to with my day, was I drinking or doing drugs, stuff*
33 *like that or was I looking for work, that kind of thing'*. This was not experienced as being part
34 of an assessment or investigation, but, instead, they described this more like 'a general
35 chat'. Charles recalls that MOSOVOS *'wanted to know who I was spending time with, if I had*
36 *a new girlfriend and who I was speaking to on the internet [...] like a chat really'*. These low
37 to medium risk participants appeared to have no concerns, or indeed knowledge, that in
38 providing answers to these questions a risk assessment was being developed, whereas, the
39 opposite was found for high risk participants, as can be seen by this quote from Cameron:
40 *'I'm not stupid...I know they think I'm a risk and that's why they keep coming and ask all*
41 *them questions'*.
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52

53 Despite low and medium risk RSOs viewing the home visits as a 'general chat', it is
54 surprising that *all* participants reported being asked questions at the first home visit and
55 each subsequent visit about what they were thinking at the time they committed their
56 sexual offence, as well as questions about their current offence-related attitudes and
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 behaviours. This line of questioning does not appear to fit with what one may expect from a
4 'general chat' and appears a more intrusive style of questioning.
5

6
7 It was evident that some participants, particularly, the medium to higher risk
8 participants, lacked trust in MOSOVOs or had a sense that MOSOVOs perceived it inevitable
9 that the RSO would commit a further offence, as Ryan stated, '*all the checks they do, it's*
10 *just to see what they can find, they think we are offending all the time innit [sic].'* This is
11 unsurprising, as in previous research, MOSOVOs appeared sceptical of RSOs' ability to live a
12 life free from crime (Mydlowski & Turner-Moore, 2023; Kewley 2017). Instead, MOSOVOs
13 often believe RSOs are deceitful, are playing other criminal justice agents off against each
14 other, and ultimately, if given the chance to sexually offend again, would do so (Kewley,
15 2017). This is a challenge, if we are to consider MOSOVOs as potential formal agents who
16 can promote desistance, as a greater level of trust, transparency and relationship building
17 would be required for RSOs at all levels of risk, but particularly high risk (Villeneuve et al.,
18 2020).
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

29 Building rapport and positive relationships is key to assisting the desistance process;
30 even within the confines of unannounced visits, these can provide valuable opportunities to
31 promote social and psychological change (King, 2014). Indeed, the length of time RSOs are
32 required to work with MOSOVOs, is not insignificant; many RSOs are subject to notification
33 requirements indefinitely (Sexual Offences Act, 2003), thus, we note the opportunity for
34 MOSOVOs to foster a meaningful social bond that has the potential to impact lifelong
35 change. The differing treatment experienced by those labelled as 'high risk' is interesting
36 and it may be that MOSOVOs' more challenging and accusatorial approach is less effective
37 than a 'general chat' approach when attempting to manage higher risk RSOs during the
38 home visit; further research is needed to determine this.
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48

49 ***Property search and observations were non-invasive, but RSOs were not fully informed of***
50 ***the visit purpose***
51

52 Participants described how MOSOVOs would conduct observations of their property by
53 having a general look in all rooms within their home. Participants described this as non-
54 invasive (in that it was a quick visual check throughout the house), as more time was spent
55 looking through the electronic devices that participants disclosed they had, as Cameron
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 stated: *'Yeah they had a look about, not a lot though, just put their head in each room, but*
4 *they spent a lot of time on my devices and checking my internet history'*.
5
6

7 All participants described that the specific time/day of the home visits were
8 generally unannounced; they did not receive any prior notice from the MOSOVO officers
9 that a visit would take place, as stated by Arthur: *'you don't get any notice, they just turn*
10 *up'*. If they were not at home when the police attended their property, the MOSOVO
11 officers would telephone the RSO to ascertain their whereabouts, asking them to return
12 home for the visit to take place, as Charles stated: *"Sometimes they will ring if I haven't been*
13 *in to tell me they need to see me and they always ring me to tell me about my yearly*
14 *registration'*. We acknowledge one purpose of the unannounced home visit is the element
15 of surprise. MOSOVOS are required to detect crime, thus, the strategy of attending
16 unannounced is to 'catch' the RSO off-guard, potentially engaging in offending behaviour or
17 to prevent them from disposing of evidence of offending behaviour. Yet, it is unclear how
18 effective this approach is and what rates of crime detection are actually made using this
19 strategy. Recidivism rates across RSO populations where unannounced home visits are not
20 undertaken remain low (Zgoba & Mitchell, 2023). While none of our participants considered
21 the unannounced home visit problematic, for those RSOs with family members in the
22 property, unannounced visits might create instability or have the potential to re-traumatise
23 non-offending citizens (Duncan *et al*, 2021).
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37

38 Subsequent home visits were similar to the first home visit, as Nicholas stated: *'they*
39 *asked the same stuff, what are you doing, has anything changed since last time. They check*
40 *your devices when they are there'*. This process appears to get easier in time, as Ryan stated,
41 *'it's easier each time, you know how they will start it and what questions they will ask, so it's*
42 *okay now'*. The more visits they receive, the more they become familiar with the types of
43 questions they will be asked, as Nicholas states: *'you know what they are going to ask and*
44 *what's going to happen'*.
45
46
47
48
49
50

51 While MOSOVOS reportedly attempted to put the participants at ease during the
52 home visits, meaning that they then felt reassured about what to expect for future home
53 visits - as stated by Owen: *'I felt a lot better after it as they were okay with me and made me*
54 *feel better about the whole thing'* - there was an inconsistency in terms of which MOSOVO
55 officers attended subsequent visits. This could result in a 'new' MOSOVO officer asking and
56 repeating questions that the participant had already answered at the first home visit
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 regarding their initial offence. This increased levels of anxiety as participants were required
4 to re-tell their experiences, as Nicholas stated, *'that is the bad bit of it coz the new one*
5 *wants to start from the beginning when I've done that already and I don't like that bit'*. The
6 re-telling of past offending behaviour meant that the participants felt they were still being
7 judged on their past behaviours, despite wanting to focus on the future and move on with
8 their life, as stated by Charles: *'They ask...if I'm still thinking of doing it but I'm not and I*
9 *won't do it again. That bit makes me feel awful and [as] if they are not letting me move on'*.

10
11
12
13
14
15
16 Apart from one high risk participant, participants were unaware that one of the
17 purposes of the home visit was to undertake a risk assessment which would place them into
18 a risk category and inform a management plan that could involve changes to the conditions
19 on civil orders, as Nicholas stated, *'they never told me it was a risk assessment, they just*
20 *asked lots of questions. This is the first I have heard of any kind of assessment'*. Arthur was
21 told *'it was coz I was on the register for 10 years, due to what I had done, so they will keep*
22 *coming and asking the questions until I am off the register'*. Of course, not all participants
23 were naïve; Ryan states he *'knew it was coz I was found guilty and because of the type of*
24 *offence it was. I thought they would be more checking up on me'* and that home visits would
25 be used as a form of monitoring *'to make sure I was keeping in line with my notification*
26 *requirements, and I was keeping away from schools'* - although it was his *'probation officer'*
27 who informed Ryan of the ramifications of the home visit for his risk assessment.
28
29 Participants did not recall being explicitly informed by the police of the risk assessment
30 process and the implications this might have.
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41

42 A lack of collaboration and shared goal development was noted, as the participants
43 reported that MOSOVOS did not appear to focus on the RSO's future behaviours or provide
44 any details or copies of action plans. Joshua described that he would have welcomed this,
45 particularly when not coping or needing extra help or support: *'they didn't say anything*
46 *about an action plan. That would have helped me though coz I had just got out prison and*
47 *was all over the place'*.

48
49
50
51
52 Ensuring home visits include a balance of surveillance as well as
53 supportive/reintegrative practice is without doubt a genuine tension for MOSOVOS
54 (Pemberton *et al.*, 2023). Christensen *et al.* (2021) found two key effective (or at least
55 promising) strategies to manage RSOs by the police which included a) a formalised and
56 targeted approach to those deemed 'high risk' through risk assessment and registration and
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 b) use of technology-assisted management, which included use of electronically monitored
4 bracelets; the polygraph; linguistic technologies; computer scans on site; and remote
5 monitoring software. But, with the additional obstacles and barriers for those attempting to
6 desist being so great, adopting these practices alone might prevent effective reintegration.
7 Thus, home visits ought to include more welfare-orientated activities as RSOs are reportedly
8 far more positive and foster authentic desistance when the police provide opportunities for
9 support and help (Creswell, 2020; Farmer *et al*, 2015). Once convicted of a sexual offence,
10 people are predominantly discounted from opportunities to genuinely re-enter society
11 (Levins & Mjåland, 2021); this is despite RSOs needing significant levels of practical help and
12 support for additional issues such as housing, welfare, and accessing healthcare (Mann *et*
13 *al.*, 2019). Thus, where there is a lack of transparency and collaboration with MOSOVOS, as
14 found with some of our participants, it is possible this approach might unintentionally serve
15 to inhibit the development of a relationship that would assist desistance, nor does it
16 promote the 'good lives model' for rehabilitation into society (Ward & Gannon, 2006).
17 Indeed, if MOSOVOS fail to provide a space in which RSOs can access support and feel able
18 to reach out and ask for help, the likelihood of lapse and re-lapse becomes greater (Halsey
19 *et al*, 2017).

20
21 We suggest that, for MOSOVOS to ensure each home visit provides an opportunity to
22 promote the desistance process, and serve as a formal agent of change, a focus *only* on
23 control and management should be avoided (Villeneuve *et al.*, 2021). Instead, a blend of
24 support, control and the promotion of a multi-agency approach ought to be applied, and the
25 purpose of home visits communicated with a greater degree of transparency. Also,
26 MOSOVOS ought to refrain from the view that RSOs are manipulative and pose a continuous
27 risk to society (Mydlowski & Turner-Moore, 2023) as this will simply allow for the RSO to
28 feel further levels of disintegrative shame. This can be achieved even with an aim of
29 detecting crime because, where the relationship between the person with sexual
30 convictions and correctional officers are perceived as positive, increased disclosures are
31 actually made (Kras, 2019) resulting in improved prevention and detection rates.
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

Strengths and limitations of the research

1
2
3
4
5 Firstly, a strength of this study is that this is the first study to gain an insight into a sample of
6 RSOs' views of the risk assessment and home visit process, which will undoubtedly assist
7 MOSOVO in improving their future home visit practices. However, each RSO was selected
8 by each police force that took part in this study and it may be that the RSOs that were
9 selected were classed as 'compliant' with MOSOVO; nevertheless, it would appear that the
10 police did not select RSOs that only had positive views or experiences, as demonstrated by
11 the findings we reported. Further, the RSOs were invited to attend each force
12 headquarters, where there was a police officer outside of the interview room and this
13 location may have hindered RSOs' responses. However, each RSO that participated in this
14 study was aware that this was a research study that was independent to the police and that
15 would share their voice, which potentially allowed participants to fully engage with the
16 researcher during the interviews. As this study provided a small sample of participants, a
17 further larger scale study with RSOs ought to be undertaken in the future, perhaps outside
18 of police headquarters.

Conclusion and recommendations

19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34 This study aimed to explore how RSOs experience risk assessments and home visits, and the
35 implications of these findings for assisting desistance. From the findings of this study, it is
36 evident that RSOs have a high level of anxiety prior to the first home visit and are not clear
37 about the purpose of the visit, which could be reduced by the RSO being advised as to the
38 purpose of the home visit in advance or being provided with a fact sheet as to what the
39 home visit by the police is for and what it will entail. It is also clear that MOSOVOS employ a
40 'general chat' approach during the home visit with low and medium risk RSOs, but a more
41 challenging approach with high risk RSOs, who are often hostile towards MOSOVOS. Whilst
42 it is understandable that MOSOVOS will need to challenge hostile behaviour during the
43 home visit, it is proposed that a more consistent approach is trialled for RSOs of all levels of
44 risk, and the effectiveness of a 'general chat' approach with high risk RSOs is explored. RSOs
45 also feel anxiety when discussing their previous offence(s), which can be difficult to re-tell
46 and reinforces the label of 'RSO' and a reduced propensity for change. Relatedly, MOSOVOS
47 did not appear to focus on the RSOs' future or support needs or provide details or copies of
48 action plans. We suggest that MOSOVOS should provide a blend of control and support and
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 apply a multi-agency approach. It is unclear whether MOSOVOs direct RSOs to organisations
4 such as the Lucy Faithfull Foundation or Safer Lives for further support. If not, we propose
5 that these sources of support should be discussed with the RSO either before or during the
6 home visit, particularly if the RSO is displaying high levels of anxiety.
7
8
9

10 Lastly, the priority of criminal justice practitioners remains one of public protection,
11 but the pressure to operate and adopt more desistance-focussed approaches appears to
12 detach from this priority. It would be useful for MOSOVO to be provided with desistance-
13 based approaches to utilise in their practice in order to assist in the role of public
14 protection, rather than detach from it. For example, the *HMPPS Approach to the*
15 *Management and Rehabilitation of People Convicted of Sexual Offending (2021)*, outlines a
16 summary of 11 desistance-focussed approaches (see Figure 1) deemed useful for
17 practitioners in prison and probation when working with people convicted of sexual
18 offending.
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

29 [insert Fig 1. Approx. here]
30
31

32 Indeed, in a recent independent review of police-led sex offender management (Creedon,
33 2023), amongst the many recommendations to improve police-led practice, there were calls
34 for further training of police officers to develop greater desistance-focussed practice. This
35 report highlights that in order for people with sexual offence histories to safely reintegrate
36 back into the community, an approach that helps them rehabilitate must be one that is
37 prioritised alongside more traditional policing approaches. Our study supports the
38 recommendations made by Creedon (2023) and provides examples as to how MOSOVO may
39 amend current practices to the risk assessment and home visit in order to promote
40 desistance focussed practice.
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

References

- Andrews, D. A., & Bonta, J. (2016). *The psychology of criminal conduct* (5th ed.). Routledge.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Christensen, L., Rayment-McHugh, S., McKillop, N., Cairns, N., & Webster, J. (2022). Understanding what works in the police management of child sex offenders in the community. *The Police Journal, 95*(3), 508-536. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0032258X211018791>
- College of Policing. (2020a). *Major investigation and public protection. Introduction to managing sexual offenders and violent offenders*. <https://www.college.police.uk/app/major-investigation-and-public-protection/managing-sexual-offenders-and-violent-offenders/introduction-managing-sexual-offenders-and-violent-offenders>
- College of Policing. (2020b, May 19). *Major investigation and public protection. Home visits*. <https://www.college.police.uk/app/major-investigation-and-public-protection/managing-sexual-offenders-and-violent-offenders/home-visits>
- Craig, L. A., Browne, K. D., & Beech, A. R. (2008). *Assessing risk in sex offenders: A practitioner's guide*. John Wiley & Sons Inc.
- Creedon, M. (2023). *Independent Review into the Police-led Management of Registered Sex Offenders in the Community: Executive Summary*. Home Office. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-review-of-police-led-sex-offender-management>
- Cresswell, C. (2020). 'Why Would You Choose to Study Sex Offenders?': Assisted Desistance and Reintegration of Perpetrators of Sexual Harm. *Irish Probation Journal, 17*. <https://www.pbni.org.uk/files/pbni/2022-06/Irish%20Probation%20Journal%20Volume%20seventeen%202020.pdf#page=65>
- Duncan, K., Wakeham, A., Winder, B., Blagden, N., & Armitage, R. (2022). "Grieving someone who's still alive, that's hard": The experiences of non-offending partners of individuals who have sexually offended – an IPA study. *Journal of Sexual Aggression, 28*(3), 281–295. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13552600.2021.2024611>
- English, K. (1998). The containment approach: An aggressive strategy for the community management of adult sex offenders. *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law, 4*(1–2), 218–235. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1076-8971.4.1-2.218>
- Farmer, M., McAlinden, A.-M., & Maruna, S. (2015). Understanding desistance from sexual offending A thematic review of research findings. *Probation Journal, 62*(4), 320–335. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0264550515600545>
- Halsey, M., Armstrong, R., & Wright, S. (2017). 'F*ck It!': Matza and the Mood of Fatalism in the Desistance Process. *The British Journal of Criminology, 57*(5), 1041–1060. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azw041>
- Heffernan, R., & Ward, T. (2020). *Dynamic risk factors for sexual offending: Causal considerations*. Springer.
- Henley, A. (2018). Mind the gap: Sentencing, rehabilitation and civic purgatory. *Probation Journal, 65*(3), 285–301. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0264550518776773>
- HM Prison and Probation Service. (2021). *The HMPPS approach to the management and rehabilitation of people convicted of sexual offending* <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-hmppps-approach-to-the-management-and-rehabilitation-of-people-convicted-of-sexual->

- offences#:~:text=The%20document%20sets%20out%20expectations,in%20both%20probation%20and%20prisons.
- HM Prison and Probation Service. (2023). *MAPPA Guidance (updated March 2023)*. National MAPPA Team HM Prison and Probation Services Public Protection Group. <https://mappa.justice.gov.uk/MAPPA/view?objectID=5682416>
- Kemshall, H. (2021). Risk and desistance: A blended approach to risk management. *HM Inspectorate of Probation Academic Insights*, 7. <https://golab.bsg.ox.ac.uk/documents/Academic-Insights-Kemshall.pdf>
- Kewley, S., Beech, A. R., Harkins, L., & Bonsall, H. (2015). Effective risk management planning for those convicted of sexual offending. *Journal of Aggression, Conflict and Peace Research*, 7(4), 237–257. <https://doi.org/10.1108/jacpr-05-2015-0171>
- Kewley, S., & Blandford, M. (2017). The development of the active risk management system. *Journal of Criminal Psychology*, 7(3), 155–167. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JCP-10-2016-0034>
- Kewley, S., & Brereton, S. (2022). Public Protection: Examining the impact of strengthened public protection policy on probation practice. In L. Burke, N. Carr, E. Cluley, S. Collett, & F. McNeill (Eds.), *Reimagining Probation Practice*. Routledge.
- Kewley, S., Osman, S., & McGuinness, Á. (2020b). How well do police specialists risk assess Registered Sexual Offenders? *Journal of Sexual Aggression*, 26(3), 302–315. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13552600.2019.1628315>
- Kewley, S., Pemberton, S., & Rahman, M. (2020a). *Preventing Sexual Harm: Positive Criminology and Sexual Abuse*. Routledge.
- King, S. (2014). *Desistance Transitions and the Impact of Probation*. Routledge.
- Kras, K. R. (2019). Can Social Support Overcome the Individual and Structural Challenges of Being a Sex Offender? Assessing the Social Support-Recidivism Link. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 63(1), 32–54. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306624x18784191>
- Levenson, J. S., Grady, M. D., & Leibowitz, G. (2016). Grand challenges: Social justice and the need for evidence-based sex offender registry reform. *J. Soc. & Soc. Welfare*, 43, 3.
- Levins, A., & Mjåland, K. (2021). Authoritarian exclusion and laissez-faire inclusion: Comparing the punishment of men convicted of sex offenses in England & Wales and Norway*. *Criminology*, 59(3), 454–479. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9125.12276>
- Lowe, G., & Willis, K. (2020). “Sex offender versus the person: the influence of labels on willingness to volunteer with people who sexually offend” *Journal of sexual abuse* 32(5):591-613. doi: 10.1177/1079063219841904.
- Mann, N., Devendran, P. N., & Lundrigan, S. (2021). ‘You’re never really free’: Understanding the barriers to desistance for registered sexual offenders in the community. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, 21(2), 206-223. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1748895819853861>
- Maruna, S., & Mann, R. (2019). Reconciling ‘Desistance’ and ‘What Works’. *HM Inspectorate of Probation Academic Insights 2019/1*.
- McNeill, F. (2019). *Pervasive punishment: Making sense of mass supervision*. Emerald Group Publishing.
- Ministry of Justice. (2022a). *Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements—Annual Report 2021/22*. [Statistics bulletin]. <https://mappa.justice.gov.uk/MAPPA/view?objectID=39108432>
- Ministry of Justice. (2022b). *Prison population 30 September 2022. Table 1.2a(i): Untried prison population by offence group, age group and sex*.

- 1
2
3 [https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/offender-management-statistics-](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/offender-management-statistics-quarterly-april-to-june-2022)
4 [quarterly-april-to-june-2022](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/offender-management-statistics-quarterly-april-to-june-2022)
5
6 Ministry of Justice. (2022c). *Prison population 30 September 2022. Table 1.2a(ii): Convicted*
7 *unsentenced prison population by offence group, age group and sex.*
8 [https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/offender-management-statistics-](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/offender-management-statistics-quarterly-april-to-june-2022)
9 [quarterly-april-to-june-2022](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/offender-management-statistics-quarterly-april-to-june-2022)
10
11 Ministry of Justice. (2022d). *Probation: April to June 2022. Table 4.7: Offenders supervised*
12 *by the Probation Service, at end of period, under community orders and suspended*
13 *sentence orders, by offence group and sex, June 2021 to June 2022, England and*
14 *Wales.* [https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/offender-management-statistics-](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/offender-management-statistics-quarterly-april-to-june-2022)
15 [quarterly-april-to-june-2022](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/offender-management-statistics-quarterly-april-to-june-2022)
16
17 Mullins, E., & Kirkwood, S. (2022). Co-authoring desistance narratives: Analysing interactions
18 in groupwork for addressing sexual offending. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*,
19 1748895819863101. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1748895819863101>
20
21 Mydlowski, L., & Turner-Moore, R. (2023). Tensions between police training and practice for
22 the risk assessment of registered sex offenders in England and Wales. *Journal of*
23 *Sexual Aggression*, 1–14.
24
25 Nash, M. R. (2016). ‘Scum Cuddlers’: Police offender managers and the sex offenders’
26 register in England and Wales. *Policing and Society*, 26(4), 411–427.
27 <https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2014.942855>
28
29 Padfield, N. (2017). Preventive sentencing. In McCartan K & Kemshall H (Eds.),
30 *Contemporary Sex Offender Risk Management, Volume I: Perceptions. Palgrave*
31 *Studies in Risk, Crime and Society.* (pp. 89–114). Palgrave Macmillan.
32
33 Pemberton, S., Kewley, S., & Mydlowski, L. (2023). The police as formal agents of change:
34 Assisting desistance in individuals convicted of sexual offences. *Journal of*
35 *Community Safety and Well-Being*, 8(4)
36
37 Snape, N. & Fido, D. (2021) Sex offender Vs people with sexual offences: putting the person before the
38 offence *Journal of concurrent disorders* [doi.org/0000-0001-8454-3042](https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2014.942855)
39
40 Thomas, T., & Marshall, D. J. (2021). *The Sex Offender Register: Politics, Policy and Public*
41 *Opinion.* Routledge.
42
43 Tewksbury, R. & Lees, M. (2006) ‘Perceptions of sex offender registration: Collateral
44 consequences & community experiences’ *The Journal of Sociological Spectrum* (26) (3) 309-
45 334
46
47 Villeneuve, M.-P., F. -Dufour, I., & Farrall, S. (2021). Assisted desistance in formal settings: A
48 scoping review. *The Howard Journal of Crime and Justice*, 60(1), 75–100.
49 <https://doi.org/10.1111/hojo.12396>
50
51 Ward, T. & Gannon, T. (2006) Rehabilitation, etiology, and self regulation: the comprehensive
52 good lives model of treatment for sexual offenders *Journal of Aggression & violent Behaviour*
53 11 77-94
54
55 Wilson, R. J., & Sandler, J. C. (2021). What Works (or Does Not) in Community Risk
56 Management for Persons Convicted of Sexual Offenses? A Contemporary
57 Perspective. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*,
58 65(12), 1282–1298. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306624x18754764>
59
60 Zgoba, K. M., & Mitchell, M. M. (2023). The effectiveness of sex offender registration and
notification: A meta-analysis of 25 years of findings. *Journal of Experimental*
Criminology, 19, 71–96. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11292-021-09480-z>

Table 1. Participant Demographics

	Force 1	Force 2	Force 3	Total
Gender				
Male	3	3	4	10
Female	-	-	-	0
Age				
18-25	1	-	-	1
26-35	1	2	1	4
36-45	1	-	1	2
46-55	-	-	1	1
55+	-	1	1	2
Ethnicity				
White British	3	1	3	7
Black	-	-	-	-
Asian	-	2	1	3
Other	-	-	-	-
Nationality				
English	3	-	2	5
Scottish	-	-	1	1
Irish	-	-	-	-
Welsh	-	1	1	2
Multi-Nationality	-	2	-	2
Total number of convictions for sexual offences:				
1 conviction	-	2	2	4
2-5 convictions	3	1	2	6
6+ convictions	-	-	-	-
Total number of home visits by police				
1 home visit	-	1	1	2
2-5 home visits	2	1	2	5
6+ home visits	1	1	1	3

Table 2. Participant pseudonym, force, and risk level

Participant pseudonym	Force	Risk Level
Arthur	1	Low Risk
Jamie	3	Low Risk
Charles	2	Low Risk
Ryan	3	Medium Risk
Nicholas	1	Medium Risk
Owen	2	Medium Risk
Joshua	2	High Risk
Luca	3	High Risk
Cameron	1	High Risk
Aidan	3	Very High Risk

Figure 1

11 practice factors to help promote desistance*

- Supervisors should perceive their role to be less “correctional” and one that assists desistance
- The RSO should be recognised as a member of society, with rights and responsibilities
- Agency and self-determination should be fostered
- Assessment should be a shared activity
- People have individual and diverse needs, supervisors should be responsive and sensitive to these
- Agencies should facilitate the development of a positive future self. Providing optimism and hope and supporting the development of life plans
- Accredited programmes should be contextualised and relevant to the individual, they must assist people’s motivation to live a life free from crime
- Desistance must focus on increasing social capital by improving and developing relationships with formal agents/agencies, family, friends and the wider community
- Person centred and de-stigmatising language should be promoted
- Desistance approaches should be applied across all risk levels
- Strengths to overcome risk should be a central focus of work

Psychology