



# HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for England and Wales

Annual Report 2023–24



HC 218



# **HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for England and Wales**

## **Annual Report 2023–24**

For the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

Presented to Parliament pursuant to Section 5A of the  
Prison Act 1952

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# Introduction

by the Chief Inspector of Prisons



**The increase in the prison population by 3,497 in the year to 31 March 2024 - a rise of 4% on the previous year - and the lack of available space is the dominating backdrop to this report, publication of which was delayed from July to September due to the General Election. Despite projections as far back as 2018 predicting this rise, successive governments have failed to build enough capacity to keep pace. Population pressures have predominately been caused by a substantial increase in the number of remanded prisoners and the trend, that began back in the 1990s, to increase the length of prison sentences. The discovery of Radon gas in Dartmoor and RAAC (aerated concrete) in Northumberland show precisely why the prison service has to maintain a healthy buffer when capacity planning, yet this is proving impossible. The previous government's early release scheme lessened some pressures temporarily, but did not solve the problem.**

Increases in prisoner numbers affected every part of the estate. In reception jails, significant proportions of the population were on remand and, as soon as prisoners were sentenced, they were shipped out even if they had only a few weeks to serve. Greater churn in these fragile, overcrowded institutions, many of which are more than 100 years old, meant staff were under huge pressure to keep the regime running. Relationships between officers and prisoners as a result were often transactional and there remained the risk

that vulnerable prisoners were not noticed or given adequate support.

The combination of a growing population and staff shortages were at the heart of the three Urgent Notifications I issued this year for Woodhill, Bristol and Bedford in the adult estate. The last two had both been subject to this rarely used measure in the past, so it was enormously disappointing that the prison service had not done more to support these small, overcrowded, crumbling local prisons.

Recruitment continued to be a struggle in some parts of the country. Swaleside and Woodhill were reliant on officers being bussed in from the north of England to be able to run a regime. Even where there were enough officers, they were often very inexperienced and the number of staff who left within the first two years continued to be worryingly high.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the levels of overcrowding and shortage of experienced officers, key indicators of how safe our prisons are, such as the rates of assaults, self-harm and self-inflicted deaths, all remained high or increased over the past year. The ingress of drugs either over the wall or through the gate were a common cause of violence, bullying and debt. Prisons are a lucrative market for organised crime gangs and restricting the supply through rigorous security measures was still not good enough in many jails.



Controlling the demand is equally important and although we welcome the introduction of incentivised substance-free living (ISFL) wings, we rarely see the sorts of intensive, transformative group work that is required to help drug users to turn their lives around. For example, Narcotics Anonymous was running meetings in fewer prisons than it was before the pandemic.

Out of the 32 closed prisons we inspected this year only two scored good or reasonably good in our purposeful activity test. Our colleagues at Ofsted continued to report very poor provision of education and training in prisons in England with attendance at classes often astonishingly low. The prison service has failed to pay anything like enough attention to how prisoners spend their time, allowing this appalling situation to continue. Far too many prisoners continued to be locked in their cells with nothing productive to do and it was hardly surprising that this boredom often contributed to many taking drugs. Although we have seen the rollout of reading strategies into most prisons, there has been very little impact and education providers were still not doing enough for those prisoners who needed the most help. It is now eight years since Dame Sally Coates completed her review into prison education and it is depressing how little has changed.

In the women's estate, we carried out two very positive inspections of the two open prisons, Askham Grange and East Sutton Park, and another reasonably good inspection of Peterborough. Both open prisons were an effective bridge back into the community for women, some of whom were coming to the end of long sentences. The independent review of progress at Eastwood Park, where we returned after a worrying inspection in October 2022, showed some good progress, although levels of self-harm and violence there and elsewhere in the estate remained alarmingly high. There is more work to be done by the central team to consider how best to support those women with the most complex needs and there needs to be better training for staff.

Our Urgent Notification at Cookham Wood was a more extreme example of what we have seen in the three public sector young offender institutions (YOIs) that we inspected in the year. Levels of violence were high, there were complicated 'keep apart' lists to prevent groups of children from mixing which led to multiple regimes being run on the same wing, children faced long periods of lock up, and education provision was poor. The use of segregation at Cookham Wood was enormously concerning, with two boys held in what we described as solitary confinement for more than 100 days. The privately-run Parc YOI remained the exception, continuing to be a much safer and more decent establishment. The repurposing of Cookham

Wood as an adult prison will inevitably add to the pressures elsewhere in the youth estate.

Despite the many challenges, we found some prisons that managed to be safe, decent and productive. Our inspections this year of seven open prisons revealed a part of the estate that was generally performing well, while reports on Preston, Swansea and Leicester showed that even the most overcrowded Victorian reception prisons can be safe and decent. Prisons holding men convicted of sexual offences were also doing a reasonably good job, although purposeful activity was not good enough in any of them.

Unsurprisingly good leadership was central to the success of the best prisons, in which governors walked the wings, listened to prisoners and staff, used data effectively, set clear priorities, monitored progress and dealt with poor performance. At Swaleside, Huntercombe, Morton Hall and Moorland effective leaders were driving improvement.

They operated, however, within a system that often appeared to work against them. Many described the long hours they spent plodding through labyrinthine HR processes, while frequent demands from the centre for information were another drag on their time. Although large sums of money were being spent on building new jails or cells in existing prisons, our reports consistently found problems with prison infrastructure and an estate that was becoming increasingly dilapidated.

I worry about the pipeline of new governors, with some of the most challenging prisons getting very few applicants. There continued to be a lack of professional development for leaders, and a group of custodial managers we met said they had received no training for the job, despite some managing up to 20 officers.

Lowdham Grange was the first contracted prison to pass from one provider to another (Serco to Sodexo), but the process was shambolic. Many staff left the jail to work at Serco's new prison at Fosse Way, and Sodexo failed to recruit enough replacements. Quickly, what had in the past been a reasonable prison deteriorated, with high levels of violence, drug infestation and hardly any purposeful activity. The prison service had no choice but to take over the jail in December 2023 to restore stability.

Our inspections of immigration detention found a worrying rise in disturbances as the population grew, a particular concern for an estate that has been mostly calm for the last decade. At Yarl's Wood, we found increasingly prison-like conditions, and the safety of detainees and their access to activities had deteriorated significantly. Given that such a large proportion of those held were released into the community, it is not clear why many were there in the first place, particularly where there was no reasonable possibility of deportation. Often desperately slow decision-making from the Home Office added to the anxiety of

detainees. The Inspectorate will continue to monitor closely all developments in this fast-changing area, in particular the impact of possible new legislation.

Court custody inspections have continued to report on decent staff doing their best in often austere, subterranean cells. There have been some notable improvements in joint working between different agencies and better on-site health services, although some arrangements for releasing detainees continued to cause us concern.

New ministers have already made, and will continue to have to make, urgent decisions about the prison population. With the number of prisoners projected to grow by as much as 27,000 by 2028, it is unlikely to be possible to build enough new accommodation. Most jails already fail to give prisoners enough to do and population increases are likely to make things worse. If prisoners leave prison without having learnt the skills and habits that will help them to hold down a job, if they are not being taught to read, if they are being sold drugs without support to break their addiction and if they continue to live in environments in which violence is commonplace, prisons will fail in their duty to prevent future reoffending. Alongside decisive short-term action, there is a pressing need for a much bigger conversation about who we are sending to prison, for how long and what we want prisoners to do while they are inside. Beyond prison

population pressures, we will continue to monitor other key developments, including the ongoing arrangements for IPP prisoners and the passage of the planned Mental Health Bill, which was included in the King's Speech in July.

I want to finish by paying tribute to my hardworking and dedicated team and to the many outstanding leaders and staff we meet in prisons, YOIs, immigration detention and court custody. Leaders and frontline staff do a job of enormous importance in often difficult and unpredictable circumstances and, despite the pressures of being inspected, we continue to be grateful for the professional way with which they engage with us.

**Charlie Taylor**

Chief Inspector of Prisons

# Who we are and what we do



## **Our purpose**

We are an independent inspectorate led by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons. We scrutinise the conditions for and treatment of prisoners and other detainees and report on our findings.

We help to make sure that detention in England and Wales, and Scotland for immigration, is humane, safe, respectful and helps to prepare people for release.

We do that by carrying out independent inspections of prisons, young offender institutions, secure training centres, courts and places of immigration detention.

We publish reports to let people know about our findings and hold the government, and those running places of detention, to account. We also identify and share examples of positive practice to support leaders in learning from other, comparable institutions.

Our role is to shine a light on what needs to change, but we cannot enforce it. It is up to leaders to consider the best way to respond to our concerns and use their resources and expertise to find solutions. HM Prison and Probation Service, HM Courts & Tribunals Service and the Home Office should work with establishments to support this progress.



## Our Expectations and healthy establishment tests

Our Expectations set out the criteria we use to inspect prisons and other forms of detention. They are based on international human rights standards and are used to examine all aspects of life in detention.

There is a different version of Expectations for each type of custody we inspect. However, our basic inspection methodology is consistent across all places of detention. It consists of a series of broad thematic judgements known as healthy establishment tests. The tests vary slightly but all have been developed from our four tests of a healthy prison, which are:

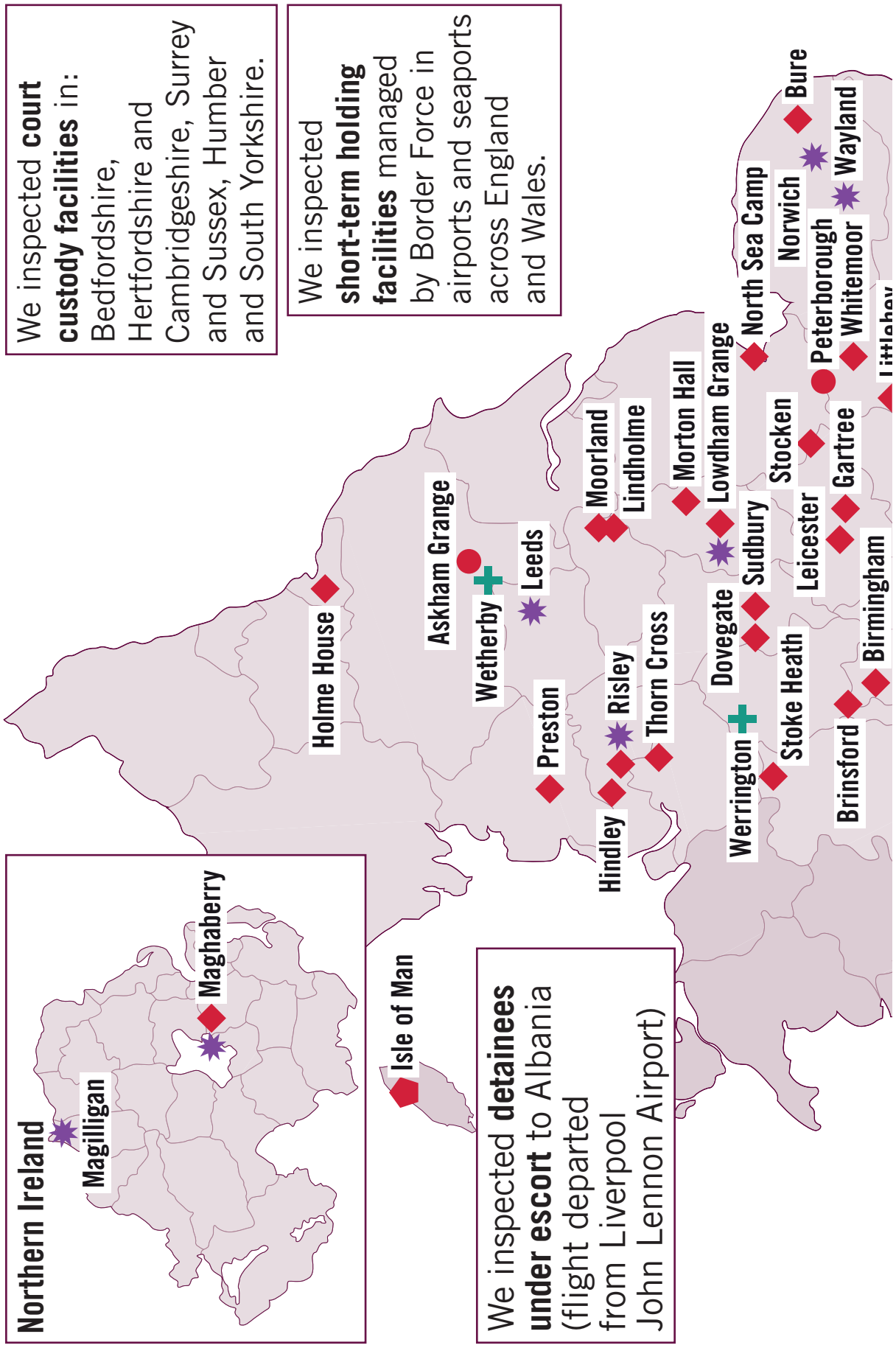
- **Safety:** prisoners, particularly the most vulnerable, are held safely.
- **Respect:** prisoners are treated with respect for their human dignity.
- **Purposeful activity:** prisoners are able, and expected, to engage in activity that is likely to benefit them.
- **Preparation for release:** preparation for release is understood as a core function of the prison; prisoners are supported to maintain and develop relationships with their family and friends, are helped to reduce their likelihood of reoffending and have their risk of harm managed effectively, and are prepared for their release into the community.

**For more information about the work of the Inspectorate, as well as our international obligations, please visit our website: [hmiprisons.justiceinspectors.gov.uk](https://hmiprisons.justiceinspectors.gov.uk)**

# The year in brief



# Inspection reports published - 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

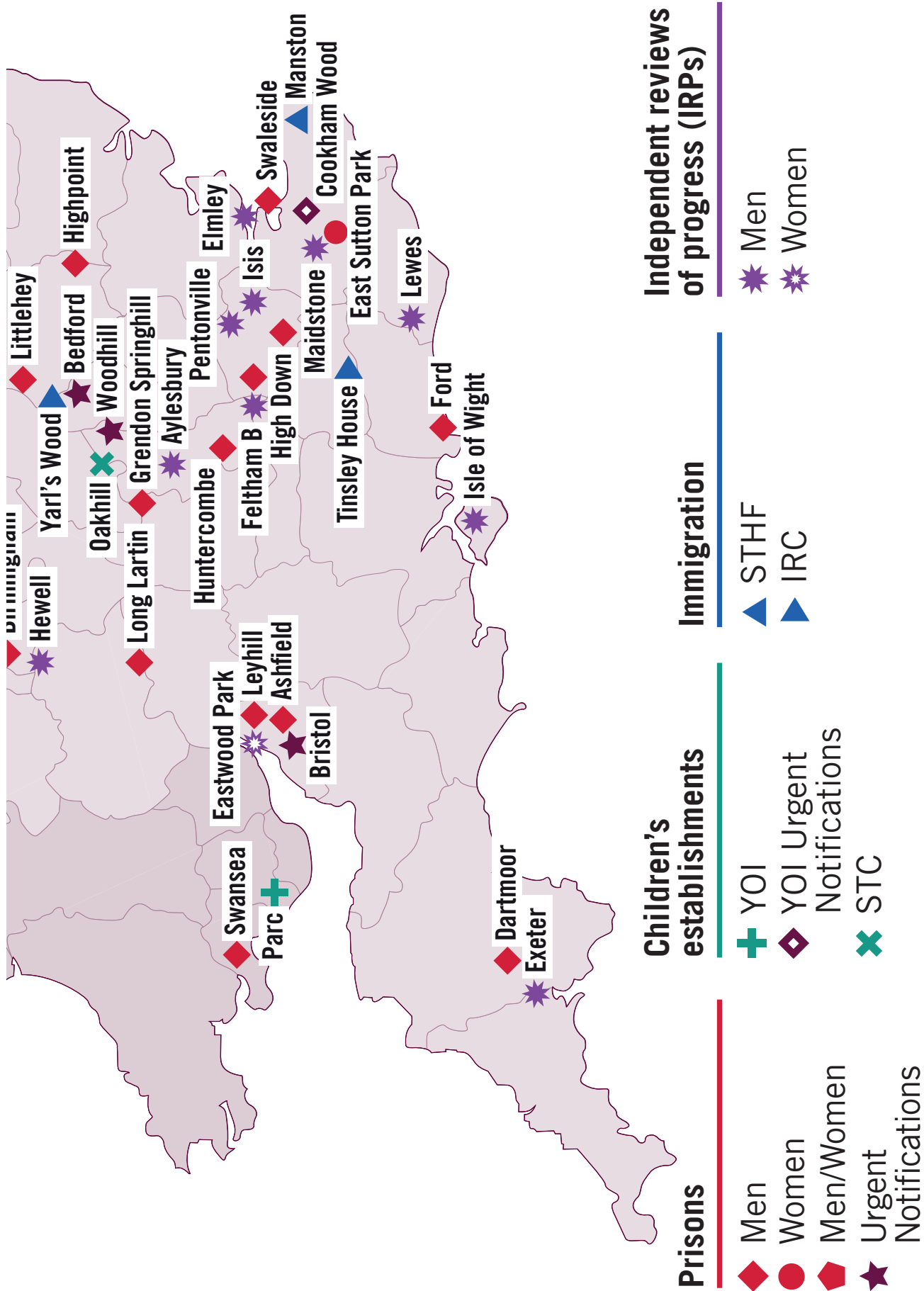


We inspected **court custody facilities** in: Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire, Surrey and Sussex, Humber and South Yorkshire.

We inspected **short-term holding facilities** managed by Border Force in airports and seaports across England and Wales.

**Northern Ireland**  
Magilligan  
Maghaberry

We inspected **detainees under escort to Albania** (flight departed from Liverpool John Lennon Airport)



**Between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024, we published 79 inspection, independent review of progress and thematic reports.**

### **Adult prisons (England and Wales)**

- Full inspections of 36 prisons holding men
- Independent reviews of progress (IRPs) at 15 prisons holding men
- Full inspection of three prisons holding women
- IRP at one prison holding women

### **Establishments holding children and young people**

- Full inspections of four young offender institutions (YOIs) holding children under the age of 18
- Inspection of one secure training centre (STC) jointly with Ofsted

### **Immigration detention**

- Inspection of two immigration removal centres (IRCs)
- Inspection of two short-term holding facilities (STHFs)
- Inspection of one overseas charter flight removal

## **Court custody**

- Inspection of three court custody areas

## **Extra-jurisdiction**

- Inspection of Maghaberry prison in Northern Ireland
- IRPs of two Northern Ireland prisons: Maghaberry and Magilligan
- Inspection of Isle of Man prison

## Other publications

We also published the following publications:

- A thematic review of weekends in prison
- A thematic review of restricted status children and women
- The quality of reading education in prisons: one year on (jointly with Ofsted)
- A joint thematic inspection of work with children subject to remand in youth detention (jointly with HMI Probation and Ofsted)
- Efficiency spotlight report: the impact of recruitment and retention on the criminal justice system (Criminal Justice Joint Inspection)
- Children in custody 2022–23: an analysis of 12–18-year-olds' perceptions of their experiences in secure training centres and young offender institutions
- The long wait: a thematic review of delays in the transfer of mentally unwell prisoners (jointly with the Care Quality Commission)

During the year we made written submissions to consultations and inquiries, and gave oral evidence to parliamentary committees.



## **Written submissions and oral evidence**

During the year we made the following written submissions to consultations and inquiries:

- Public Accounts Committee, Improving Resettlement Support for Prison Leavers inquiry (May 2023)
- Justice and Home Affairs Committee, Community Sentences inquiry (June 2023)
- Justice Select Committee, Future Prison Population and Estate Capacity inquiry (October 2023)
- Sentencing Council, consultation on the Imposition of Community and Custodial Sentences Guidelines (February 2024)
- HM Inspectorate of Prisons' response to the final report of the Brook House inquiry (March 2024)

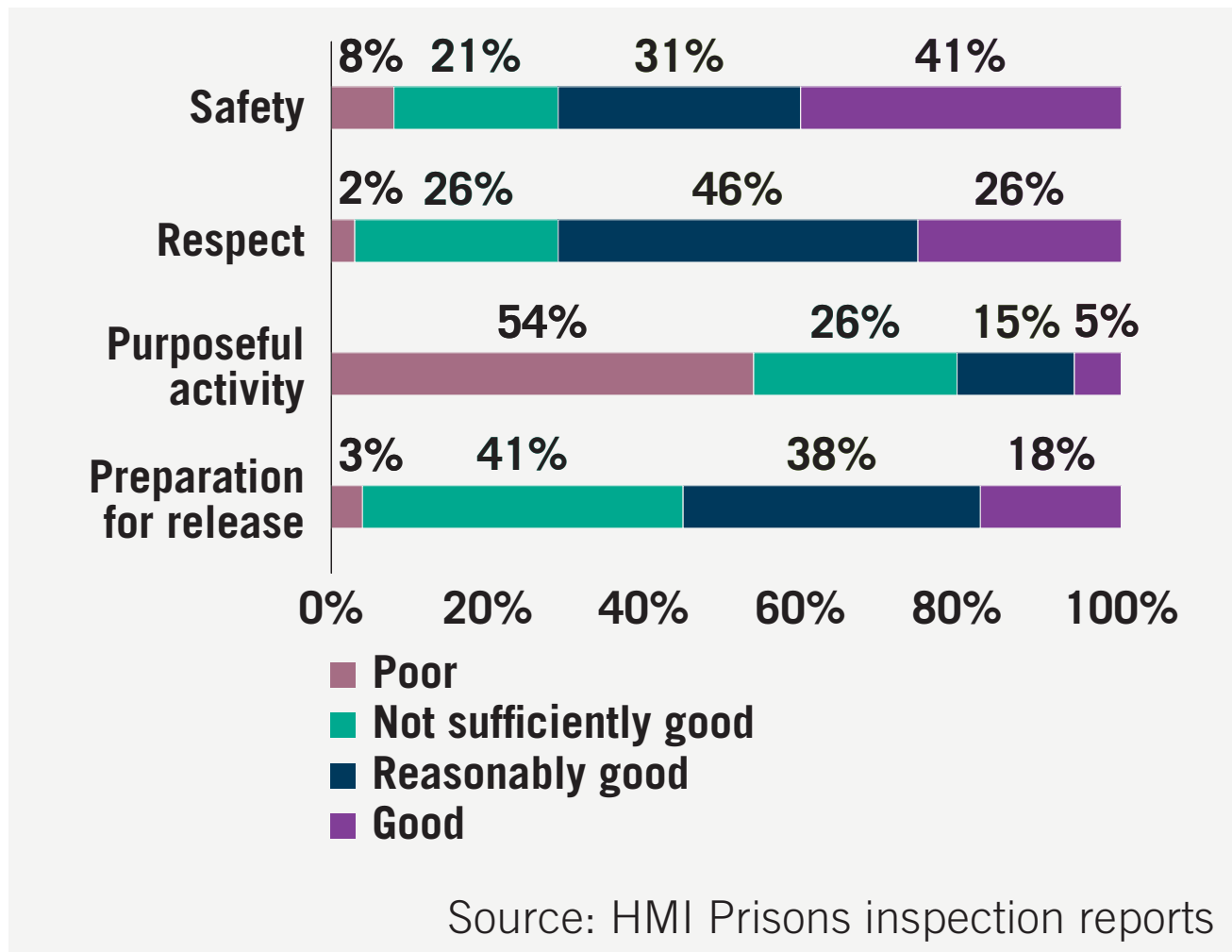
We gave oral evidence to:

- Justice Select Committee, Future Prison Population and Estate Capacity (21 November 2023)

## The year in data

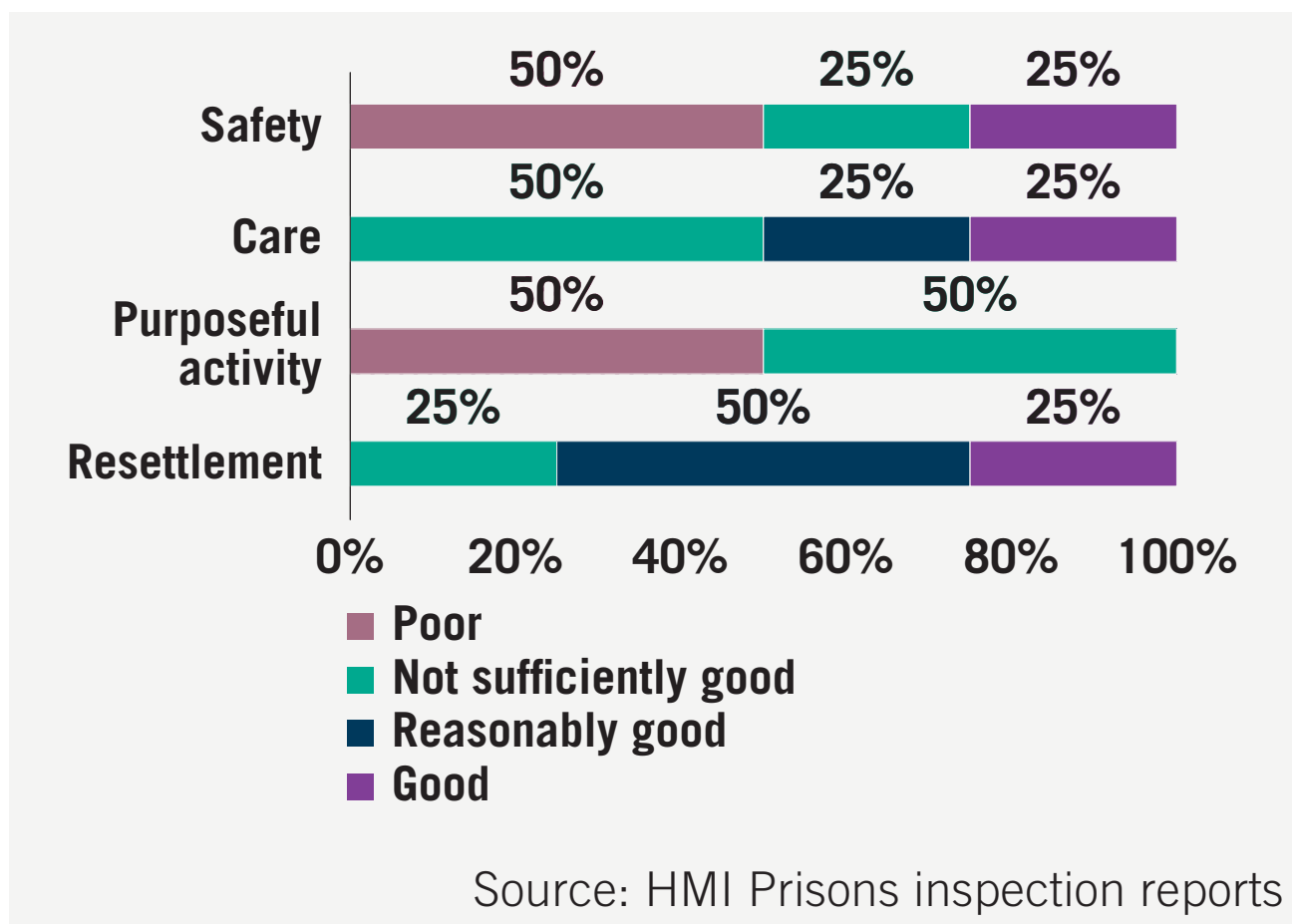
### Figure 1: Healthy prison judgements show worse outcomes for prisoners in purposeful activity

HMI Prisons inspections of adult men’s and women’s prisons (n=39) in England and Wales, 2023–24



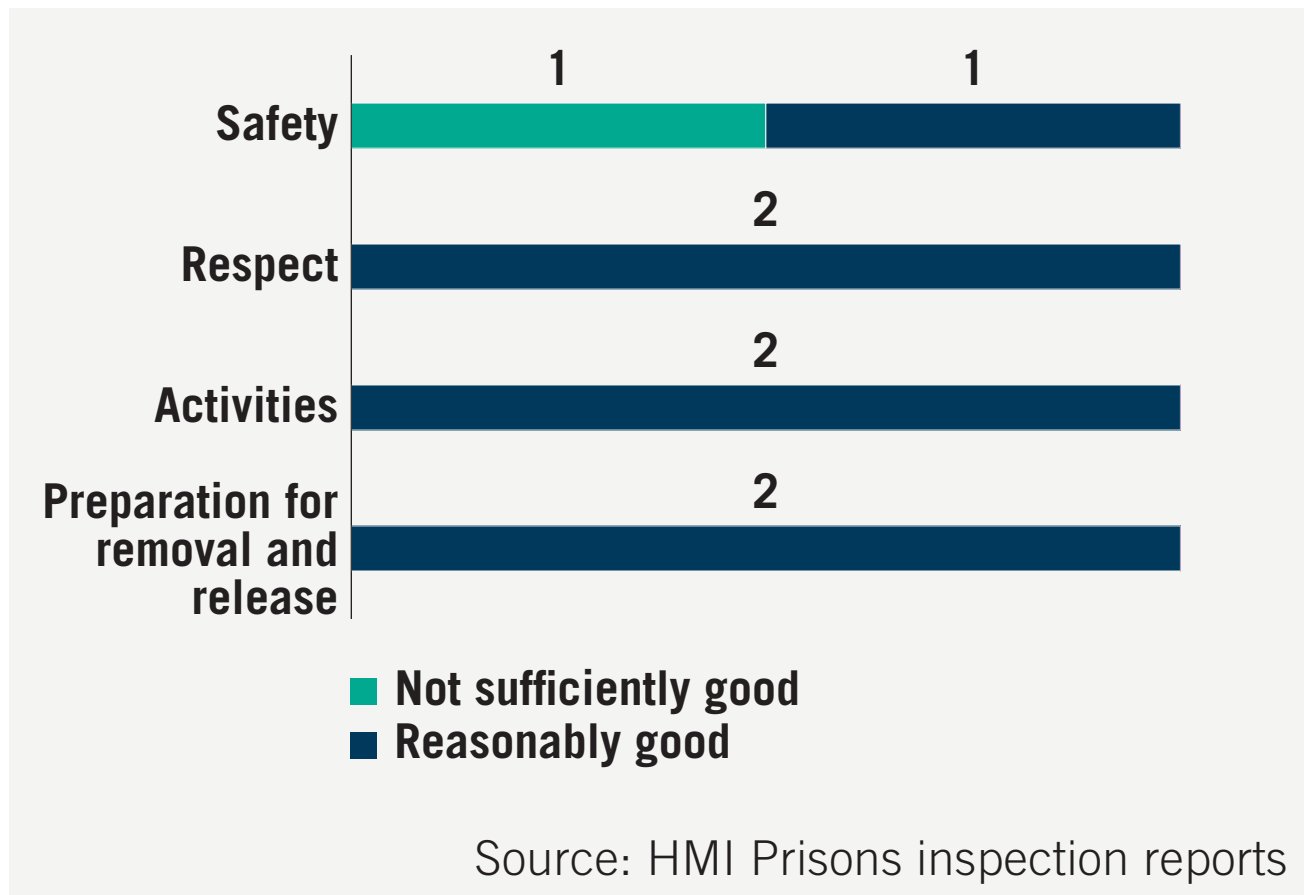
## Figure 2: Healthy establishment judgements show worse outcomes for children in purposeful activity and safety

HMI Prisons inspections of YOIs (n=4) in England and Wales, 2023–24



### Figure 3: Healthy establishment judgements show broadly positive outcomes for detainees

HMI Prisons inspections of immigration removal centres (n=2) in England, 2023–24



You can find healthy establishment assessments for 2023–24, the numbers of concerns accepted and addressed by establishments, and analyses of survey responses for adult men’s and women’s prisons, children’s establishments and immigration removal centres on our website: [hmiprisons.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk](https://hmiprisons.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk)

## **Four Urgent Notifications issued**

In 2023–24, we were so concerned by what we found at our inspections of HMYOI Cookham Wood, HMP Bristol, HMP Woodhill and HMP Bedford that we issued Urgent Notifications (see Glossary) to the Secretary of State for Justice. Of particular concern, Bristol and Bedford had both previously received Urgent Notifications: Bedford in 2018 and Bristol at our previous inspection in 2019.

### **Bristol - issued 26 July 2023**

There had been eight self-inflicted deaths at Bristol since our last inspection, and one prisoner had been charged with murdering his cellmate. Leaders had failed to set appropriate boundaries or high enough standards, and poor behaviour went unchallenged. Underpinning many of these failings were ineffective relationships between staff and prisoners, and a poor regime.

### **Woodhill - issued 30 August 2023**

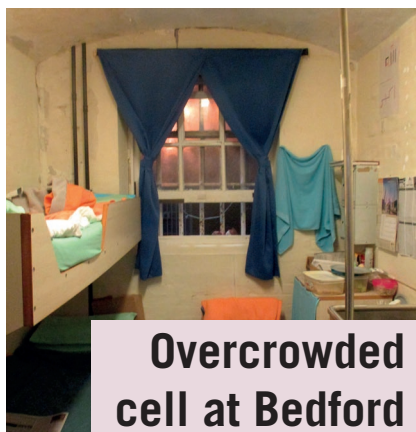
At Woodhill, 48% of prisoners said they felt unsafe at the time of our survey, but so too did staff, many of whom were very inexperienced and lacked the confidence to challenge poor behaviour, including intimidation by prisoners. A dirty and neglected infrastructure and poor regime contributed to the chronic problems facing the prison, and a shortage of officers remained at the crux of its difficulties.

### **Bedford - issued 15 November 2023**

Bedford had high levels of violence and self-harm, which were attributed to limited time out of cell, no key work (see Glossary), and a failing applications and complaints system which meant that prisoners found it hard to get day-to-day questions answered or problems solved. The considerably reduced standards of cleanliness since our previous inspection further compounded the overcrowded conditions in which most prisoners were held.

### **Cookham Wood YOI - issued 26 April 2023**

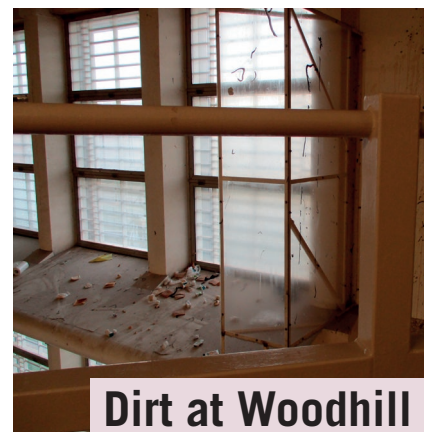
The Urgent Notification for Cookham Wood was the fifth issued to an establishment in the youth estate since the process was introduced. There was an acceptance of very low standards of behaviour, a lack of activity and widespread use of solitary confinement in the YOI. Over a quarter of the children were completely separated from the main population, and at the time of our inspection, 90% were subject to ‘keep apart’ arrangements, with staff managing 583 individual conflicts in a population of 77.



**Overcrowded cell at Bedford**



**Bedford cell**



**Dirt at Woodhill**

# One

**Adult prisons - increasingly volatile and failing to prepare prisoners for their return to the community**



## **Violence and illicit drugs disrupted daily life in men’s local and training prisons**

- **Levels of violence in prison were rising.**
- **Illicit drugs were a concern in too many prisons.**

We judged safety to be poor or not sufficiently good at 11 of the 39 prisons and YOIs holding adult and young adult men and women. Worryingly, Long Lartin, a high security prison, was not safe enough, with high levels of violence, drugs and self-harm despite being better resourced than other jails. The poorest scores tended to be in local and category B training prisons.

Many prisoners in these jails were trapped in a cycle of boredom, frustration and poor behaviour, which fuelled the demand for drugs and increased violence, debt and self-harm. This was often underpinned by poor relationships with staff, a failure to establish or reinforce the rules, and far too little purposeful activity.



We raised very few concerns about safety in the seven open prisons that we inspected this year, finding good or reasonably good outcomes in most. The prospect of release on temporary licence (ROTL) to support employment, family ties and resettlement was an effective incentive for many prisoners, although we did note high supply and demand for illicit drugs at Sudbury. Prisons holding those convicted of sexual offences (known as PCoSO prisons) were also all considered safe.



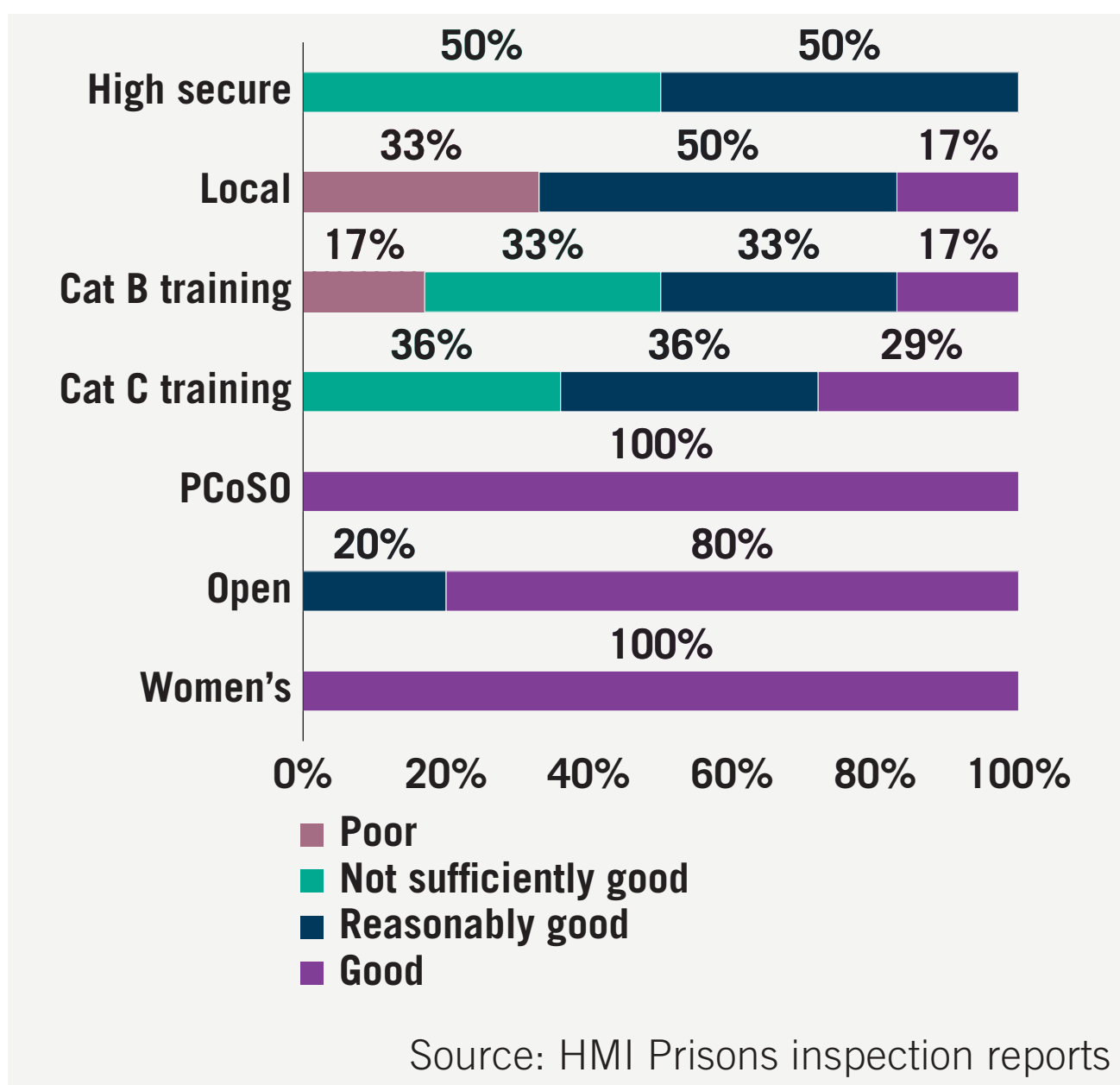
**High Down walkways**



**Pod accommodation  
at Sudbury**

### Figure 4: Safety healthy prison judgements show more positive outcomes for prisoners in open and women’s prisons, and prisons holding people convicted of sexual offences

HMI Prisons inspections of adult men’s and women’s prisons (n=39) in England and Wales, 2023–24



## Rising violence

Violence was a priority concern in 14 adult male prisons we visited this year and was often a product of the illicit drug market. Official Ministry of Justice safety data indicated a 20% increase in reported rates of violence across adult male prisons in 2023, compared with the year before.

We noted particular concerns in the three adult prisons in which we invoked the Urgent Notification process (see Glossary and page 25), but violence had also increased in other jails. At Lowdham Grange, for example, it had risen 55% in the six months before our independent review of progress (IRP) in January 2024, from already high levels at the full inspection.

Staff regularly failed to challenge poor behaviour on the wings. In some prisons, rules were broken with near impunity because leaders had not established clear boundaries, and drug testing and adjudication processes were not used effectively.

**The many relatively inexperienced staff lacked the confidence and were not sufficiently supported to challenge poor behaviour, and we found bullying and intimidation by prisoners to be rife. Many prison officers told us they feared for their safety, and morale was low.**

**Woodhill**

Prisons often relied on standard HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) processes, such as challenge, support and intervention plans (CSIPs, see Glossary), to manage violent prisoners. However, investigations into incidents were not always thorough and there was a lack of constructive intervention to address the underlying causes of poor behaviour. CSIPs were used to better effect at Swansea, Holme House and Moorland. Violence had reduced at each of these prisons - rather than relying solely on punitive measures to manage behaviour, leaders were developing positive cultures, underpinned by clear boundaries, good engagement with prisoners and meaningful incentives.

There had been an increase in the use of force by staff in half of the adult male prisons we inspected this year, with use high at prisons such as Brinsford, Feltham B and Woodhill. When we raised concerns about use of force, they focused on poor governance and a failure of staff to use body-worn video cameras.

Although the rate of assaults in women's prisons had risen sharply since 2021, the three we inspected this year were calm, well ordered and safe.

## **Illicit drugs a concern in too many prisons**

While we were pleased to see the rollout of technology to reduce the ingress of drugs, and some proactive work from substance misuse services to treat prisoners, we raised priority or key concerns about illicit drugs at 15 adult men's prisons. In men's prisons around one-third (32%) of prisoners told us that it was easy to get illicit drugs; in women's prisons, it was around a fifth (21%). Nine per cent of men said they had developed a problem with illicit drugs since arriving in jail, rising to a shocking 21% at Lindholme.

The negative consequences of drug abuse were clear. It was the biggest challenge at Lindholme, contributing to violence and deaths in custody, and illicit drugs threatened the stability of prisons including High Down, Hindley and Lowdham Grange. Prison-wide activity to reduce supply and demand, as well as to increase support for prisoners, often needed more focus.

Mandatory drug testing had still not returned to pre-pandemic levels, making it difficult to estimate national drug use or compare outcomes between prisons. The positive drug testing rate at some prisons was very high, most notably at Hindley, where 53% of tests were positive. The key drivers of demand for drugs, such as a poor regime and lack of time out of cell, leaving prisoners bored and frustrated, had often not been addressed.

**Safety was being undermined by violence and bullying, which were linked to drugs, very low wages, debt and a lack of full-time purposeful activity... Mandatory drug testing had only resumed in February 2023 after a gap of almost three years... The positive drug testing rate in the previous three months was very high at 33.7%.**

### **High Down**

Professional support for prisoners with addiction and substance misuse problems was generally reasonable, but access to flexible, individualised clinical interventions and mutual aid from support organisations were not yet fully embedded. Staff shortages meant services were frequently stretched, and it was often only because of the resilience of existing staff that adequate support for prisoners continued. Providing a secure place for prisoners to store medicine in their cells to prevent theft, and preventing diversion at medicine hatches were still not prioritised.

More prison wings were classified as drug-free living units this year, though the criteria for admission varied between prisons, as did their effectiveness. We saw a few sites where these wings were making a difference, including at Swansea, Preston and Holme House, where dedicated officers with specialist training worked on recovery wings. In contrast, the substance-free living wing at Hindley was identified as one of the two most problematic wings in the prison for drug use.

## **Concerning increases in suicide and self-harm**

- Suicide and self-harm had increased considerably in some men's prisons.
- We found reasonable support in place to manage self-harm in the women's prisons inspected, despite concerning national trends.
- Induction arrangements and early days support were sometimes weak.
- There were worrying gaps in mental health services.

### **Increases in suicide and self-harm in some prisons**

In 2023, there were 90 self-inflicted deaths in adult men's prisons, a rise of 27% from 2022, and three self-inflicted deaths in women's jails, a fall from five in the previous year. Our inspection at Bristol, which resulted in an Urgent Notification, found that there had been eight self-inflicted deaths since our last inspection, and our IRP at Leeds reported that seven men had taken their own lives in the 13 months since our last inspection.

In around a third of the men's prisons we inspected this year, the self-harm rate had increased significantly, and in some cases had as much as doubled. Nationally, self-harm rates increased by 24% in adult men's prisons and 11% in the women's estate between 2022 and 2023. Despite these worrying numbers, work to identify and address the root causes often lacked any real grip from leaders in some of the riskiest prisons. Too often, the answer was to manage a prisoner through the assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) case management process, which was often poorly applied. Only 49% of men who had previously been supported through this process said they felt cared for by staff.

Prisoners reported debt, drug problems and family breakdown among the factors contributing to self-harm, yet action to address these issues was often piecemeal. Limited regimes left many with little to occupy themselves and inconsistent support from staff meant prisoners were often frustrated (see pages 50 to 56); at Bristol prisoners told us that self-harming was an effective way to get attention and get things done. Access to peer supporters, such as Listeners trained by the Samaritans, was frequently poor, particularly at night. In our survey only 33% of men said that their cell call bell would be answered within five minutes if they needed assistance and only 36% said that an officer had asked how they were in the last week.



Despite the concerning rise in self-inflicted deaths in men’s prisons, the quality of early learning reviews following a death or serious self-harm incident was often poor. On some occasions there had been no systematic review or investigation to make sure lessons could be learned quickly. Even when official independent reports were published, Prisons and Probation Ombudsman recommendations were not routinely reviewed to make sure they were effective over time.

**Despite a large number of prisoners subject to constant supervision, and about 50 incidents of self-harm requiring hospital attendance in the previous year, only three incidents of serious self-harm had been investigated. Lowdham Grange**

Where rates of self-harm were low or had reduced, we often found more positive cultures with better time out of cell, a variety of enrichment activities and engaged multidisciplinary staff. Swansea was one of the safest reception prisons we visited, with low levels of violence and self-harm. It took a prison-wide, evidence-led approach to reducing self-harm, underpinned by strong staff-prisoner relationships.

## **Positive provision in place in three women’s prisons, despite worrying national increase in self-harm by women prisoners**

Although the annual rate of self-harm among women continued to rise in 2023 and was nine times higher than in the adult male estate, we found some positive support in place at Peterborough, where recorded levels of self-harm had decreased significantly in the six months before the inspection.

In the two open prisons we visited, women were much less likely to self-harm, even when they had a history of doing so. Women cited the space, freedom, support from staff and peers, and progression opportunities as protective factors. Inspectors found some excellent interventions, including the Hope programme at Askham Grange - which helped women to understand their emotions and develop positive coping strategies - and blended therapy and coaching support at East Sutton Park.

Force was sometimes applied to prevent women from self-harming. We were pleased that this had declined since our last inspection at Peterborough, but at our IRP of Eastwood Park - which at the time had the highest rate of self-harm in the women’s estate - we were concerned that force was not always used as a last resort, and highlighted a lack of guidance or training from HMPPS to help staff deal with these situations.

**The number of times force had been used to manage women in crisis was high, and in the last eight months it had been used 22 times to strip women of all their clothing in order to place them in anti-tear clothing, which was very concerning. Eastwood Park IRP**



**Askham Grange grounds**



**Brinsford reception room**

## **Weaknesses in induction and early days support**

It was disappointing that we had to raise the poor support offered to newly arrived prisoners as a concern at eight male prisons, five of which were reception jails (Preston, Birmingham, Swansea, Brinsford and Bedford).

We expect staff to interview new arrivals to identify risks and vulnerability, but some were failing to do so, or were not holding the interviews in private, making it less likely that sensitive information would be disclosed. Other safeguards, such as additional first-night well-being checks, were not completed, and prisoners often had to wait to have phone numbers added to their accounts to contact family or other people who could provide them with support. While most prisoners completed an induction programme, only 55% of men and 50% of women in our survey said it covered everything they needed to know.

Our last inspection at Exeter had led to an Urgent Notification being issued. Although progress at the IRP in November was fragile, it was encouraging to find that care and support for individuals in crisis, including new arrivals, was improving.

### **Gaps in health services**

High health care staff vacancy rates, coupled with chronic recruitment and retention issues, meant that many prisons did not have an adequate number of clinical staff to deliver effective care. This was more prevalent in the areas of mental health and the safe provision of medicines, resulting in unmet need and adverse patient outcomes for some. At 14 prisons we raised concerns with medicines practices and oversight. During these joint inspections, our Care Quality Commission partner issued seven regulatory notices specific to medicines in England.

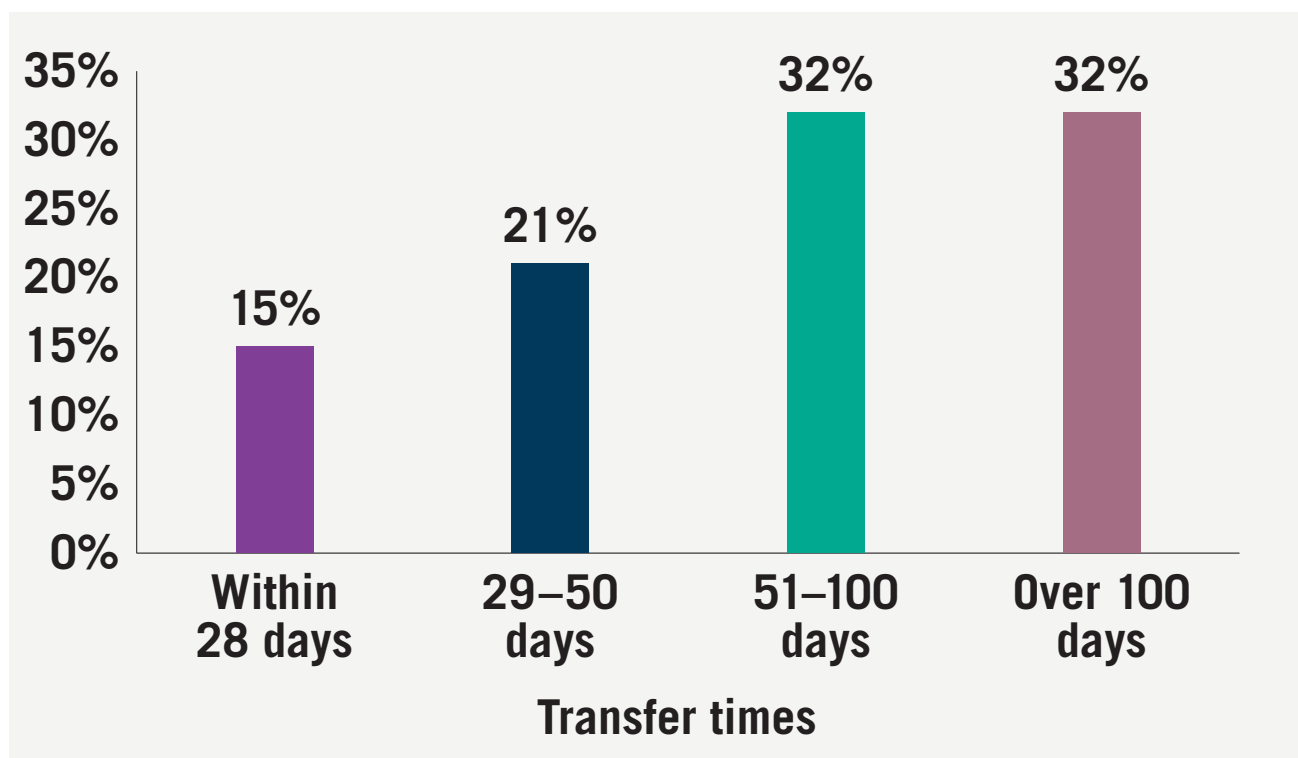
We raised concerns about gaps in mental health provision at 12 sites this year. Most were about excessive waits for transfers to secure hospitals under the Mental Health Act, and the risks associated with delayed assessment and treatment while in prison. Our thematic review of the experiences of prisoners awaiting transfer found some unsurprising but disturbing outcomes.

**“ Treatment, assessment and care for patients under the Mental Health Act (MHA) cannot legally be provided in prisons. Early treatment for mental health disorders is vital and delays in accessing care that cannot be provided in prison can cause irreversible harm. Given this, the current strain on prison places, and the psychological and physical challenge for prison officers and nurses attempting to care for such unwell people, their prompt removal from prison to secure hospitals should be a priority. But it is not. [...] Of the cases we looked at, fewer than 15% of patients were transferred within 28 days. ”**

**The long wait. A thematic review of delays in the transfer of mentally unwell prisoners**

### Figure 5: Most patients we sampled were not transferred within the recommended 28 days

Based on 171 patients in 21 prisons across England and Wales 2022–23



Deficits were also found in the provision of NHS talking therapies and psychology services. These gaps were severely limiting access at Lowdham Grange, where over 100 patients had been waiting over a year for treatment, and at Swaleside we found 124 patients waiting for psychological treatment. Three prisons - Brinsford, Morton Hall and Swansea - delivered no psychologically informed treatment whatsoever, leaving prisoners with unresolved and unmet mental health needs. In contrast, our focus on category D establishments this year revealed positive mental health services.

Wider pressures also impacted care. At Bristol, a lack of officers meant patients were not taken to their appointments, and at Long Lartin and Brinsford, regime restrictions meant a regular curtailment in mental health clinicians' access to patients.

## **Deteriorating living conditions for men in prison**

- **Living conditions had deteriorated in many prisons.**
- **Overcrowding exacerbated poor conditions.**
- **Some leaders had been effective in prioritising living conditions, to positive effect.**

### **Living conditions had deteriorated for many men in prison**

This year, we raised concerns about living conditions at 16 adult men's prisons and found a worrying picture of deterioration. Although more predictable at Victorian prisons like Bedford or Bristol, there had been a significant decline at several open prisons, as well as at the two high security prisons we inspected. Even at Grendon, a therapeutic community (see Glossary), many of the buildings were 'dilapidated'.

A variety of problems had contributed to this decline, but chief among them was a lack of investment in ageing infrastructure and an inability to commission or undertake building work. Far too many buildings and systems needed upgrading, and the continued existence of night sanitation in some prisons was unacceptable.



In too many establishments, leaders had failed to set high enough standards for prisoners and staff. Wings were dirty, cleaning routines had been allowed to lapse and sometimes prisoners did not have easy access to cleaning equipment. One of the worst examples was in a high security jail.

**There is no better sign of decline in a prison than a lack of cleanliness and at Whitemoor the wings were the dirtiest I have seen since I became Chief Inspector.**  
**Whitemoor**

Even Ford, an open establishment, was ‘filthy’ in some residential areas. The poor conditions at some prisons like ‘antiquated’ Leicester, Bedford and Preston had led to infestations of rats, cockroaches, flies and even pigeons. Many cells used for new arrivals were also dirty, graffitied or poorly equipped and maintained.



At some closed prisons, prisoners had too little time out of cell to clean establishments effectively. Communal shower areas were often in a particularly poor state; many were mouldy or badly ventilated, and replacement programmes were much too slow. Some we saw at Risley were appalling and ‘parts of the prison [were] now beyond repair’ - but our report stimulated improvements and in a subsequent IRP it was clear that leaders had made concerted efforts to refurbish the showers and improve the environment. Other serious problems included broken heating systems that left prisoners in cold cells or inadequate ventilation that made wings unbearably hot.

### **Overcrowding aggravated poor conditions**

Many prisons continued to receive more prisoners and operate above their certified normal accommodation capacity as a result of national prison population pressures. By March 2024, 60% of prison establishments (72) were overcrowded.

In addition to our concerns about general living conditions, we frequently raised concerns about overcrowding. Far too many prisoners in 2023–24 shared cells designed for one person. Sometimes, such as at Stoke Heath, this meant that cells were so crowded that the beds were directly next to toilets with little or no screening. Too many prisoners at Swansea were living in overcrowded cells and at North Sea Camp almost all prisoners lived in shared cells that were far too small, with not enough space for even a table or chair. At Leeds IRP, we found almost 80% of men sharing cells designed for one person, and at Bedford almost three-quarters of men shared cramped cells, exacerbating the particularly poor conditions there.

At Leicester we noted instances where overcrowding had increased tensions between prisoners and at Exeter we found that:

**Action to improve living conditions had taken too long to implement and national population pressures meant that Exeter remained one of the most overcrowded prisons in England and Wales. Exeter IRP**



**Swansea cell**



**Leeds cell**



**Damp walls at Exeter**



**Corridors at Holme House**

## Importance of leadership in improving living conditions

Effective leadership was often key to driving improvements in conditions. Leaders at Swansea and Leeds had managed to make the best of their ageing buildings by prioritising decency and ongoing maintenance. After consulting with prisoners, leaders at Holme House had made impressive efforts to transform the otherwise dull environment with murals and artwork and managers at Swaleside had used prisoner cleaning and painting teams to good effect.



Leeds central hub

## **More work needed to improve staff-prisoner relationships and treat all groups fairly**

- **Interactions with staff were too often experienced by men as uncaring and transactional.**
- **There were better staff-prisoner relationships in prisons with a specialist function.**
- **Prisons needed to do more to treat different groups fairly.**

### **Staff-prisoner relationships were often transactional**

Effective, trusting relationships between prisoners and staff, with clear rules, can help to make prisons safer and support work to reduce the risk of reoffending. Prisoners are completely dependent on staff to do the simplest tasks and if relationships are not good or officers do not understand what is expected of them it can lead to frustration and sometimes conflict. This year we reported on too many men's prisons where interactions were perfunctory and transactional. Many prisoners told us of their frustration at being unable to get everyday things done quickly. This included straightforward requests such as checking their cash balance or making an appointment with staff from another unit.

A common source of frustration was new, short-term, or inexperienced staff who were unfamiliar with the prison, the wing or the prisoners. In several jails, staff shortages also hindered officers' ability to get to know their prisoners; for example, at Swaleside we noted that staff on detached duty from other prisons were often less engaged in their work and prisoners were frustrated by their lack of knowledge of prison procedures. Only half of the quota of Band 3 officers at Woodhill were available for duty, which undermined 'almost all elements of delivery and limited the amount of time unlocked for prisoners, their access to activities and the care they received'.

At prisons such as Brinsford and Bedford, the quality of staff-prisoner relationships was affected by the restricted regime that limited the time prisoners had out of their cell to seek help. At Peterborough, officers were often redeployed from the men's prison to work on the women's site. Some were less familiar with working with women, which meant they could not always deal with issues or answer simple requests. We saw a more positive picture at Leicester, Gartree and Morton Hall, where day-to-day issues tended to be resolved informally and in a timely manner.

In some jails we found a good balance between care and control, with officers setting and enforcing clear behavioural expectations for prisoners. However, in many of the men's establishments, supervision and management of prisoners was limited, with officers not visible enough on the wings and, in a few prisons, lacking the confidence to challenge persistent rule-breaking (see page 31). In many places, we found staff congregating in offices or leaning on railings rather than engaging with prisoners, even when they were calling for help.

We also saw some examples of very poor behaviour. In Bedford, there was evidence of staff using physical force inappropriately against prisoners, and staff and prisoners reported witnessing racism by staff.

### **Better relationships in prisons with a specialist function**

Women's prisons and those with a specialist function, such as Grendon and Dovegate, had very good relationships between staff and prisoners. Similarly, units with a clear function, such as psychologically informed planned environments (PIPEs, see Glossary), therapeutic communities (TCs, see Glossary) and enhanced units located in the wider prison, showed excellent joint working between officers and specialist staff that promoted a positive community model, where mutual respect and good relationships were evident.



**Specialist prison officers were specially selected, had comprehensive training for their role and were well supported with regular clinical supervision and group sensitivity meetings to address the emotional demands of working in a therapeutic environment. Grendon**

Prisons for people convicted of sexual offences also tended to have good staff-prisoner relationships, for example Bure and Littlehey.

Prisoner peer workers, if well trained and supervised, often also added to the quality of these relationships.

In prisons with non-specialist functions, training for officers to understand and respond to prisoners with very complex behaviour or varying needs was rarely provided. Even in prisons where staff-prisoner relationships were positive, additional training, for example about the needs of women and foreign national prisoners, would have been helpful. In our survey of staff, 30% in frontline operational roles told us they met a manager or mentor only once a year or less, a concern given the many relatively new and inexperienced staff currently in the service.

## **Prisons needed to do more to treat different groups fairly**

Too often we found that the experiences of different groups of prisoners were poorly understood, consultation was limited and prisons did not use data effectively to identify potential disparities or act on the findings. Where evidence was collected, leaders often failed to use it to drive tangible improvements in outcomes. Too many prisoners also lacked confidence in the system to complain about discrimination.

In our survey of men's prisons, those from an ethnic background other than white continued to be less likely than white prisoners to report that they had been treated with respect by most staff and that there was a member of staff they could turn to for help.

We reported on challenges for prisoners with disabilities in accessing services at prisons such as Bristol, Long Lartin and Peterborough (Women). At Bristol, disabled prisoners were unable to attend health care or dental appointments. In our survey, just under a third of women with disabilities told us they were getting the support they needed, but no women with disabilities and from a minority ethnic background felt they had been supported.



**Adapted washroom  
at Sudbury**



**Adapted cell  
at Leyhill**

Although foreign national prisoners were supported well in a few prisons, too often not enough contact with Home Office Immigration and Enforcement staff created lack of clarity about their immigration status. In the absence of any information or decision-making from the Home Office, some prisons denied foreign nationals the opportunity to move to open prisons, access release on temporary licence (ROTL) or be released on home detention curfew.

In several prisons, staff did not use professional interpreting services with prisoners who did not speak English. Some foreign prisoners said they had not communicated with a member of staff in their own language since they had arrived at the prison, which left them bewildered and isolated. The use of prisoners to translate, including for some very personal information, was not appropriate.

Positively, we saw additional funding from HMPPS to provide staff to lead on neurodiversity in many prisons. However, their skills levels varied, and the impact of this work is still to be evaluated. At Leicester, Risley, North Sea Camp and High Down we saw particularly good neurodiverse assessment and care provision. However, disappointingly, we also saw many fragmented services and, in some prisons, services were non-existent.

### **Work to reduce the risk of reoffending was not good enough**

- **Prisoners were still spending far too long locked in their cells.**
- **Prisons were not providing meaningful work, education and skills to help prisoners move on from offending.**
- **Access to interventions and accredited programmes was too limited.**
- **Poor inspection findings had provided a catalyst for improvement in some prisons.**

“ It is not just that it is bad in some of the prisons where you might expect it – some of the Victorian locals. We also go to prisons in the north of England that do not have some of the staffing problems and that have reasonably good facilities, and we still find workshops that are empty, classrooms with a handful of prisoners in them, and prisoners doing what are, ultimately, fake jobs. Someone might have a wing-cleaning job that takes them probably half an hour. Supposedly they are employed for the day, but they spend the rest of the time just hanging around the place. The idea that that is any preparation, particularly in cat C prisons, for that sense of progress... is really just fanciful.

**Chief Inspector oral evidence to the Justice Select Committee, 21 November 2023** ”

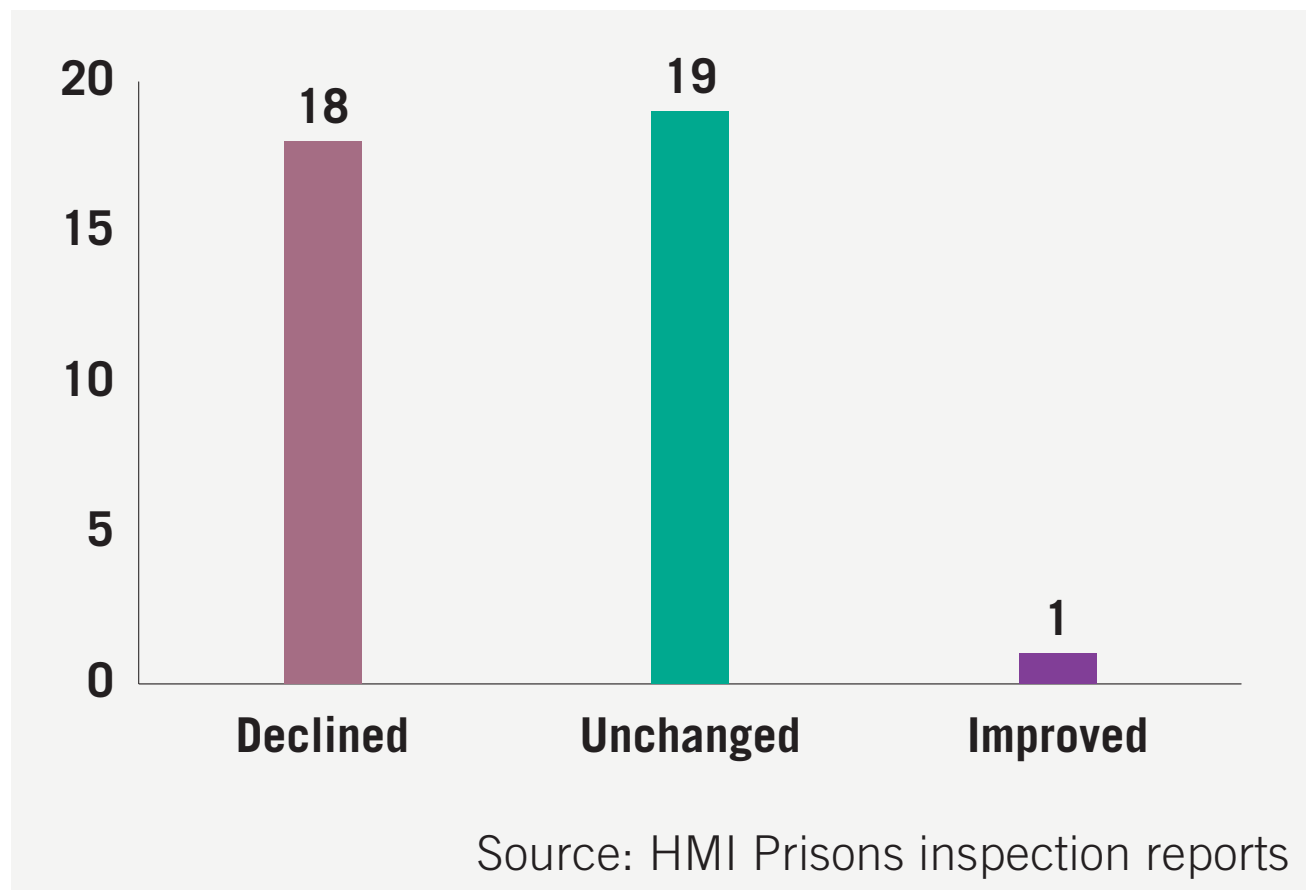


**Stocken plumbing workshop**

In 2023–24, purposeful activity continued to be the worst performing area: 32% of our priority concerns for adult prisons related to this healthy prison test. We judged purposeful activity to be poor or not sufficiently good in 31 of the 39 adult prisons we inspected this year, and in 18 establishments the outcomes had got worse since the previous inspection. Only at Swansea did we see scores improve, although they remained not sufficiently good.

**Figure 6: Purposeful activity healthy prison judgements have declined since the prisons’ previous inspection**

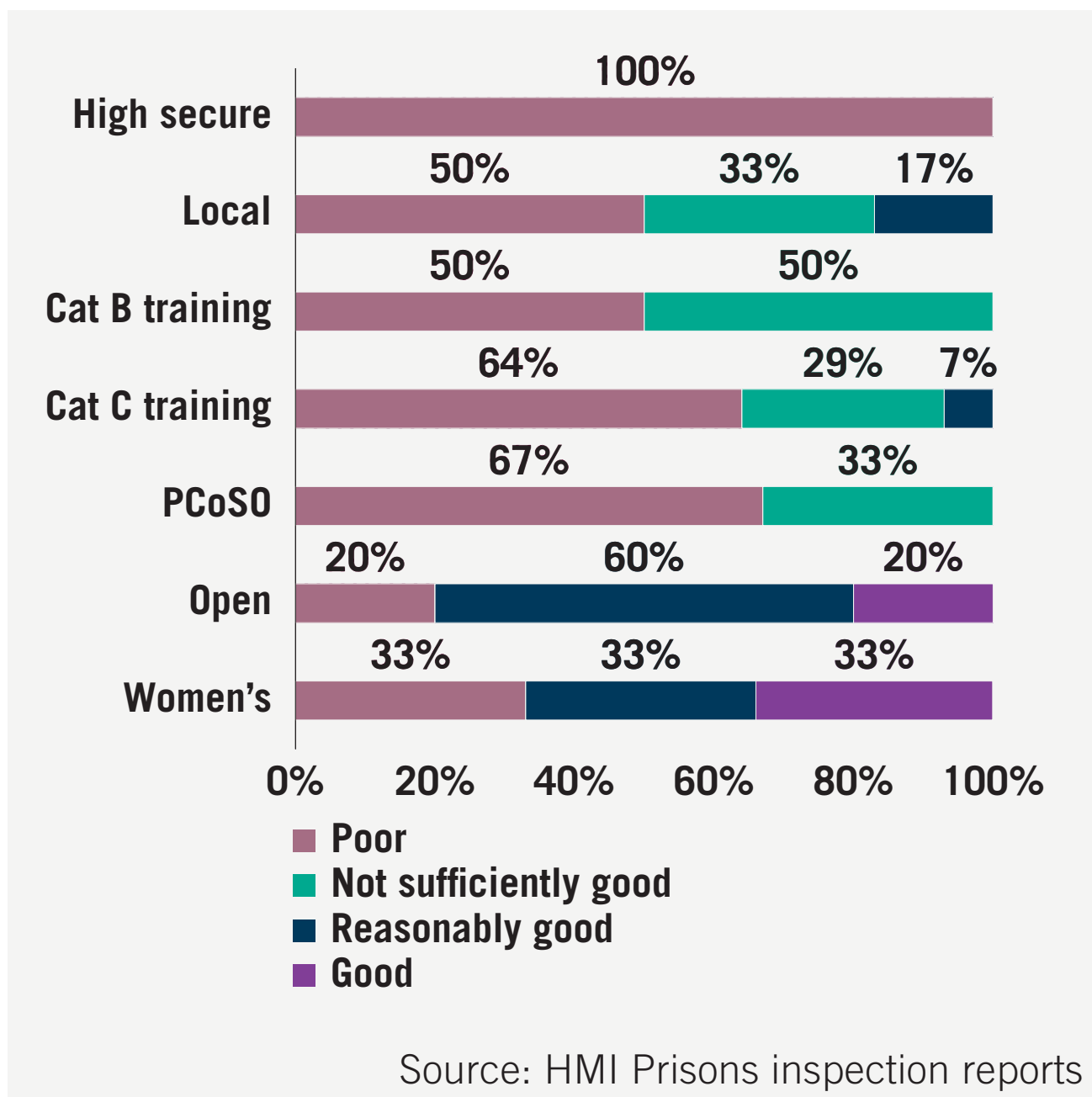
HMI Prisons inspections of adult men’s and women’s prisons (n=38) in England and Wales, 2023–24



Preston and Moorland were notable exceptions in the closed estate, with both rated reasonably good in purposeful activity. It was especially concerning that Moorland was the only training prison considered to be reasonably good given that these jails should have been providing opportunities for prisoners to develop their skills before they returned to the community. Outcomes in the open estate - both adult men's and women's - were generally more positive (see 'Open prisons - a vital role', page 74).

### Figure 7: Purposeful activity healthy prison judgements show more negative outcomes in men’s closed prisons

HMI Prisons inspections of adult men’s and women’s prisons (n=39) in England and Wales, 2023–24





## **Prisoners still spending too long locked up**

Despite some improvements from the severely impoverished regimes during the pandemic, this year many prisoners still spent far too long locked up. Worryingly, 81% of frontline operational staff and 79% of operational managers in our staff survey strongly or somewhat agreed that prisoners had enough time out of their cells, despite our inspectors often finding otherwise.

At Bedford, 67% of prisoners said they spent fewer than two hours a day out of their cell and, in our roll checks, 45% were locked up during the working day. At Dartmoor, the regime was curtailed more than 80% of the time. At Lowdham Grange, prisoners were still only unlocked in small groups - a legacy from the pandemic - and during our IRP at Leeds, staff referred to 'COVID-19 bubbles'. At Peterborough (Women), in our role checks just under a quarter of women were locked up during the working day - twice as many as at our last inspection - and inspectors found too few recreational or social activities to support women's well-being and to help them use their spare time constructively.

Men in segregation experienced extremely limited regimes, with most unlocked for 30 minutes a day.

## **Not enough meaningful activities to help prisoners make progress**

The effectiveness of education, skills and work activities in prisons was poor overall and had continued to decline, with prison leaders struggling to hold their education providers to account where services were ineffective. Our Ofsted partners judged overall effectiveness in 33 prisons in England as ‘requires improvement’ or ‘inadequate’, and 32 received the same judgement for the quality of education. In Wales, Estyn assessed the learning and skills work provision at Swansea to be a combination of ‘good’ and ‘adequate’.

Key issues raised included shortages of activity spaces for prisoners, staff shortages negatively impacting delivery of vocational and education courses as well as prisoner attendance, and inappropriate curriculums, where the range, quantity and quality of education, training and work did not equip prisoners with the skills they needed for employment on release. Too many prisoners were underemployed, often doing wing work that was menial and repetitive.

Although most prisons now had a reading strategy, leaders had been mostly slow to implement them and few had improved prisoners’ reading skills significantly. Notable exceptions included Swaleside and Askham Grange.

## **Not enough access to interventions and accredited programmes**

Although many prisoners' sentence plans recommend participation in accredited programmes that can help to reduce their risk of future harm, jails often did not run courses or have enough spaces, leading to long waiting lists.

**Many had a feeling of helplessness, unable to progress with their sentence or complete the non-existent accredited programmes that featured on many of their sentence plans. Lindholme**

Of the over 1,000 prisoners received at Stoke Heath each year, only 35 were due to complete accredited programmes in 2023–24. At Lowdham Grange, about 40% of the population who were serving indeterminate sentences were likely to wait years for a place on programmes to address violent behaviour, as others were prioritised ahead of them.

Men in prisons holding people convicted of sexual offences were the least likely in our survey to report having completed an offending behaviour (36%) or other programme (29%). At Dartmoor and Moorland, both of which hold significant numbers of men convicted of sexual offences, no such programmes were being delivered at all and population pressures meant that arranging transfers to other prisons to complete programmes was difficult. At Dartmoor one prisoner had been waiting for four years.



**Encouraging reading at Askham Grange**

## Some poor inspection findings had created catalysts for improvement

We often criticised a lack of management ambition in driving forward more productive regimes. Positively, following concerns from earlier inspections, IRPs at several jails, including Aylesbury, Risley, Isle of Wight and Norwich, found that improvements in this area had been made in a relatively short time. The introduction of heads of education, skills and work was also promising, but their impact was not yet fully evident.

### Aylesbury IRP

The work to improve time out of cell to deliver a more consistent daily routine had been particularly successful.

- 75% of the population were now unlocked for more than eight hours.
- A new reading strategy was in place and was beginning to have an impact.
- Leaders had started to make better use of the activity spaces they had - as a result, unemployment had reduced from 40% to 25%.



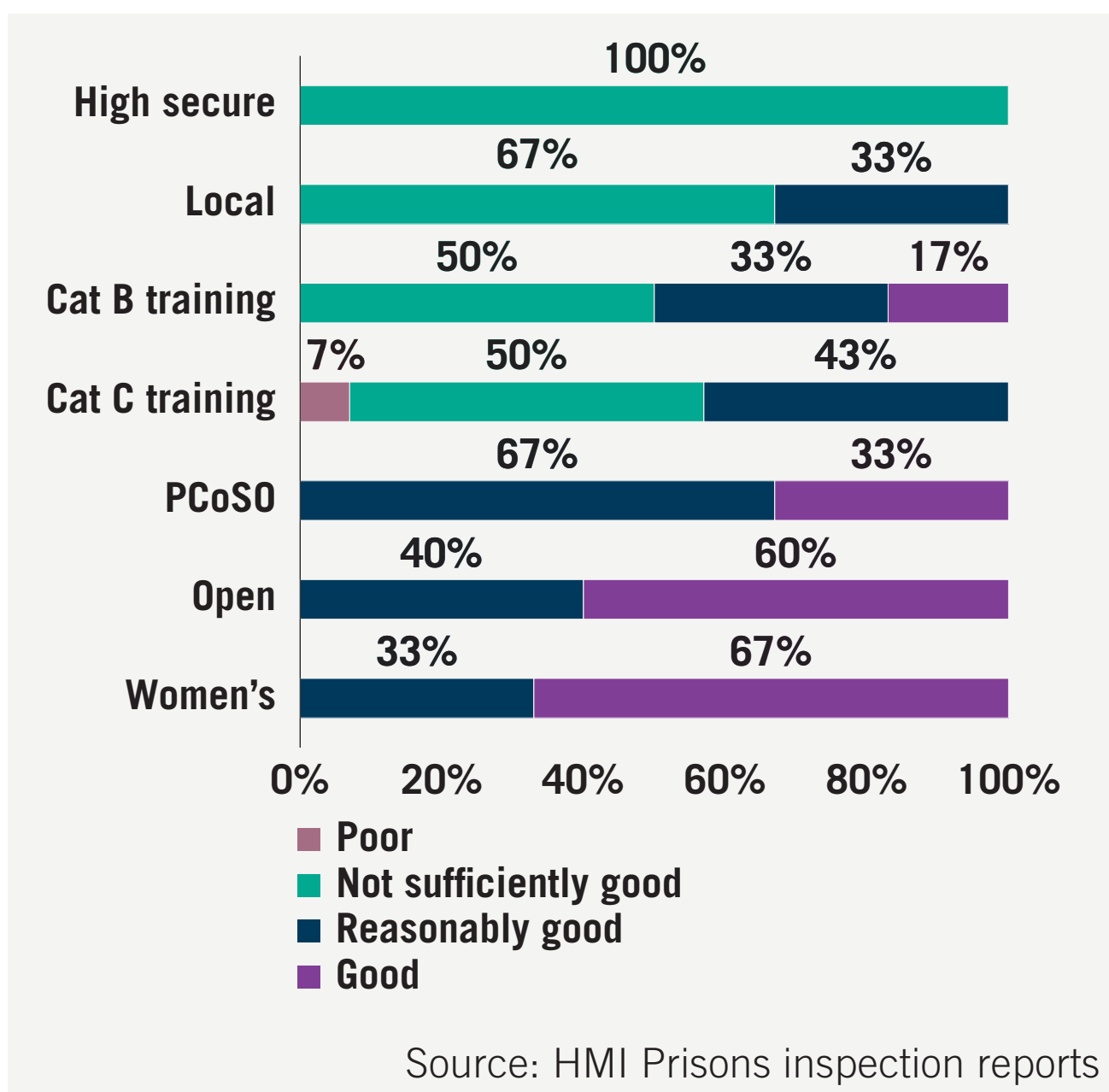
Gardening at Aylesbury

## **Failure to prepare prisoners for release creates risks**

- **There was a lack of effective offender management and key work in many prisons.**
- **Resettlement provision was disjointed with important gaps.**
- **Staff shortages undermined work on public protection.**
- **There was not enough focus on supporting family relationships.**
- **Open prisons played a vital role in preparing men and women for release.**

### Figure 8: Preparation for release healthy prison judgements show more positive outcomes for prisoners in open and women’s prisons, and prisons holding people convicted of sexual offences

HMI Prisons inspections of adult men’s and women’s prisons (n=39) in England and Wales, 2023–24



## **Lack of effective offender management and key work**

Jails often failed to fulfil their vital role in preparing prisoners coming to the end of their sentence for return to the community.

Prison offender manager (POM) shortages were impeding effective offender management and prisoners' ability to work through their sentence plans. Contact between POMs and prisoners was still not good enough.

**Only half the probation-trained prison offender managers (POMs) were in post. This had resulted in unmanageable caseloads, which the POMs were appropriately prioritising by working with prisoners at critical points in their sentence, such as parole hearings... Contact levels were inadequate and a very high number complained to us about how this affected their ability to progress through their sentence.'**

**Lindholme**

This lack of contact was compounded by key work (see Glossary) that was often infrequent, of poor quality and insufficiently focused on progression. It contributed to a sense of hopelessness in high security prisons like Whitemoor and Long Lartin, where men were serving very lengthy sentences.



More positively, key work interactions at Ashfield were frequent and thorough, and staff entries in prisoner case notes took account of individual needs and were of very good quality. At High Down, prisoners who had been in the care of a local authority as a child received a dedicated key worker, and at Moorland we reported favourably on the key work undertaken with young adults, prisoners serving indeterminate sentences for public protection (IPPs) and those with complex personal issues.

Leicester, Swansea, Brinsford and Moorland had some of the best outcomes in preparation for release outside of the open estate (see page 39). They had fully staffed offender management units, reasonable caseloads and effective, supportive leadership. At these prisons, we also saw some good examples of one-to-one work that supported prisoners' rehabilitative needs.

### **Disjointed resettlement provision with troubling gaps**

Resettlement teams continued to experience challenges following unification of the probation service in 2021, leading to contractual issues and staffing difficulties. We often found gaps in provision, and a complicated management structure caused confusion for prisoners about the support available before their release. The introduction of an employment hub at several prisons, however, was a promising development.

## **A struggle to find a home on release**

We continued to find prisons struggling to provide accommodation support for prisoners, including some which were releasing prisoners despite not having a resettlement function. For example, Lindholme - not a resettlement prison - had released 86 prisoners during the previous 12 months and Lowdham Grange, with no resettlement function or housing workers on site, had released 80.

At Dovegate, data showed that in the previous 12 months 29% of the sentenced prisoners released had no accommodation. At Bedford, we were concerned to find that 30% of prisoners were released homeless and 42% to unsustainable accommodation.

## **Uneven support for remand prisoners**

Despite record numbers being held in prison on remand and our concerns last year about this cohort having been omitted from the unified probation contracts, we continued to find gaps in provision. At Bristol, housing support 'excluded remanded prisoners, so there was nobody to help these prisoners maintain housing or manage their tenancies'.

At Birmingham, we found an 'unacceptable' lack of support, especially given that over 60% of its population were on remand or unsentenced.

More positively, an IRP visit to Leeds showed reasonable progress and positive attempts were being made to support the remand populations at Dovegate and Leicester. However, our IRP at Pentonville warned that ‘support was based on the passion and dedication of staff rather than a formal, structured process and there remained a gap in funded resettlement support for the increasing remand population’.

In the women’s estate, an IRP visit to Eastwood Park found that HMPPS had not yet made any meaningful progress in providing remanded women with the full range of resettlement help, even though remanded and unsentenced women made up 27% of the population. However, at Peterborough, women could access some useful resettlement help from the prison’s ‘Inside links’ hub.

Remand prisoners are more likely than sentenced prisoners to harm themselves or take their own lives, so it was particularly concerning that in our survey remand and unsentenced prisoners had significantly more negative perceptions in several areas. Fifty-two per cent reported struggling to contact their family when they first arrived at the prison, compared with 25% of sentenced prisoners, and more remand than sentenced prisoners said they had problems when they first arrived, less time out of cell and challenges accessing health care.

## **Short staffing undermined public protection**

We reported on weaknesses in the management of public protection in 15 prisons this year, which often related to shortfalls in staffing. For example, at Birmingham, one of the highest risk prisoners was being managed by a POM who had not received suitable training.

Public protection release planning was also hindered by shortages of probation officers in the community. Prisons spent considerable time chasing up officers for a handover of cases, as well as trying to get confirmation of prisoners' multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) risk management levels.

We raised concerns about the timeliness of this at prisons including Littlehey and Highpoint. At Highpoint we found 30 prisoners within six months of their release date who still had not had confirmation of their MAPPA level.

Despite a change in HMPPS policy creating a reduction in the number of prisoners subject to phone and letter monitoring due to the nature of their offence, we regularly found delays in listening to calls and completing reviews, as well as a lack of understanding about the purpose of monitoring.

## **Limited support to maintain family relationships**

Despite the importance of family ties for prisoners and their families outside, and proven links to reducing reoffending, the support for maintaining family relationships was often limited. In our survey, only 29% of men said they had been able to see family or friends in person in the last month, falling to 17% in the high secure estate. Population pressures also meant that many prisoners were held further from home.

The lack of focus on family relationships was acute at Dartmoor, where uptake of social visits had halved since the previous year and was still declining; despite this, leaders had not recently monitored visits data and had no plan to address the issue.

Most prisons provided in-cell phones, a few offered laptops for prisoner use and most had video-calling technology, although just 16% of men told us they had used video calling to see friends or family in the previous month.

Family days - extended visits lasting several hours, often with activities and thematic programmes organised - are now well established in many prisons, but very few offered courses in parenting or relationships.

## **Open prisons - a vital role**

Open prisons generally had the best outcomes of all prison categories, with an increased focus on rehabilitation and supporting prisoners towards release. However, spaces in open prisons sometimes went unfilled without clear reason. When we inspected the impressive Askham Grange, it was only at 73% of its capacity, even though there were plenty of suitably assessed women in the closed estate.

In our survey, men in open prisons were the most likely to agree that their experience in prison had made them less likely to offend in the future (69%), compared with men in other function types, such as local (58%) or category C trainer (57%). At Ford, we found many opportunities for men to work outside the jail or attend courses and Thorn Cross had an impressive education and work offer. Disappointingly, Leyhill offered fewer opportunities and was judged poor for purposeful activity.

In the women's estate, we found excellent use of ROTL. At East Sutton Park, over 80% of women had access to ROTL and many had full-time, paid employment in the community with national companies, which meant that they could transfer to a job near home on final release. An impressive 60% of the women released into paid employment were still in work six months later. At Askham Grange, over three-quarters of the population were accessing some form of ROTL, and nearly half of the women had an education, skills or work placement in the community, much of which was paid employment.

Both women's open prisons also demonstrated particularly strong key work, with Askham Grange providing some of the best we have seen - it was meaningful, engaging and supported sentence progression, with staff contacting their prisoners generally every two weeks. At East Sutton Park, key workers consulted other departments regularly, had in-depth knowledge of the women in their care, and promoted progression and rehabilitation; in our survey there, most women (98%) said they had a key worker, and 90% of those found them helpful.

## **Relationships with children and family - central to the care of women prisoners**

Many women in prison are held far from their family homes, and just 5% of children stay in the family home when their mother is imprisoned (Corston report, 2007). Maintaining ties with children and families is often central to women's care in custody.

In Peterborough, only around a third of women said they had been able to see family or friends more than once in the past month for a social visit. However, a Mothering Justice course had been delivered to staff and prisoners to raise their awareness and understanding of mothers in custody. Workers from the family engagement team provided individual help to women, regularly communicated with children's services and had begun to work with schools so women could receive school reports and attend parents' evenings via video calls, which were all positive improvements.

Mothers in the mother and baby unit had access to a digital camera so they could take pictures of their children at key milestones to keep or send to family members, and they valued this initiative. Mothers in the unit also mentored expectant mothers, providing excellent support, although no parenting or antenatal courses were available.



At East Sutton Park and Askham Grange, ROTL was used extensively to enable women to spend time with their family, and they were very positive about these opportunities.



# Two

## Children in prison - drift, decline and failures



**In 2023–24, we published five reports following inspections of establishments holding children, including four young offender institutions (YOIs) and the secure training centre (STC) at Oakhill.**

Children’s survey results cover the four YOIs and one STC inspected this year.

- **We found drift and decline in conditions for children, despite substantial resources in the youth estate.**
- **There had been a breakdown of behaviour management and an overreliance on keeping children apart.**
- **There were poor relationships between staff and children.**
- **Children were not receiving the education to which they were entitled.**
- **Children’s establishments were holding more young adults and children on remand.**

## **Drift and decline in conditions**

The most recent figures show the Youth Custody Service spent £197 million caring for around 500 children - significantly more than £300,000 per child.<sup>1</sup>

Yet we often found wasted resources as teachers, health care staff and resettlement caseworkers were unable to access children due to shortages of frontline operational staff or meeting rooms. There was a lack of accountability for failures, despite large senior teams; for example, at Cookham Wood there were 24 senior leaders in an establishment holding just 77 children.

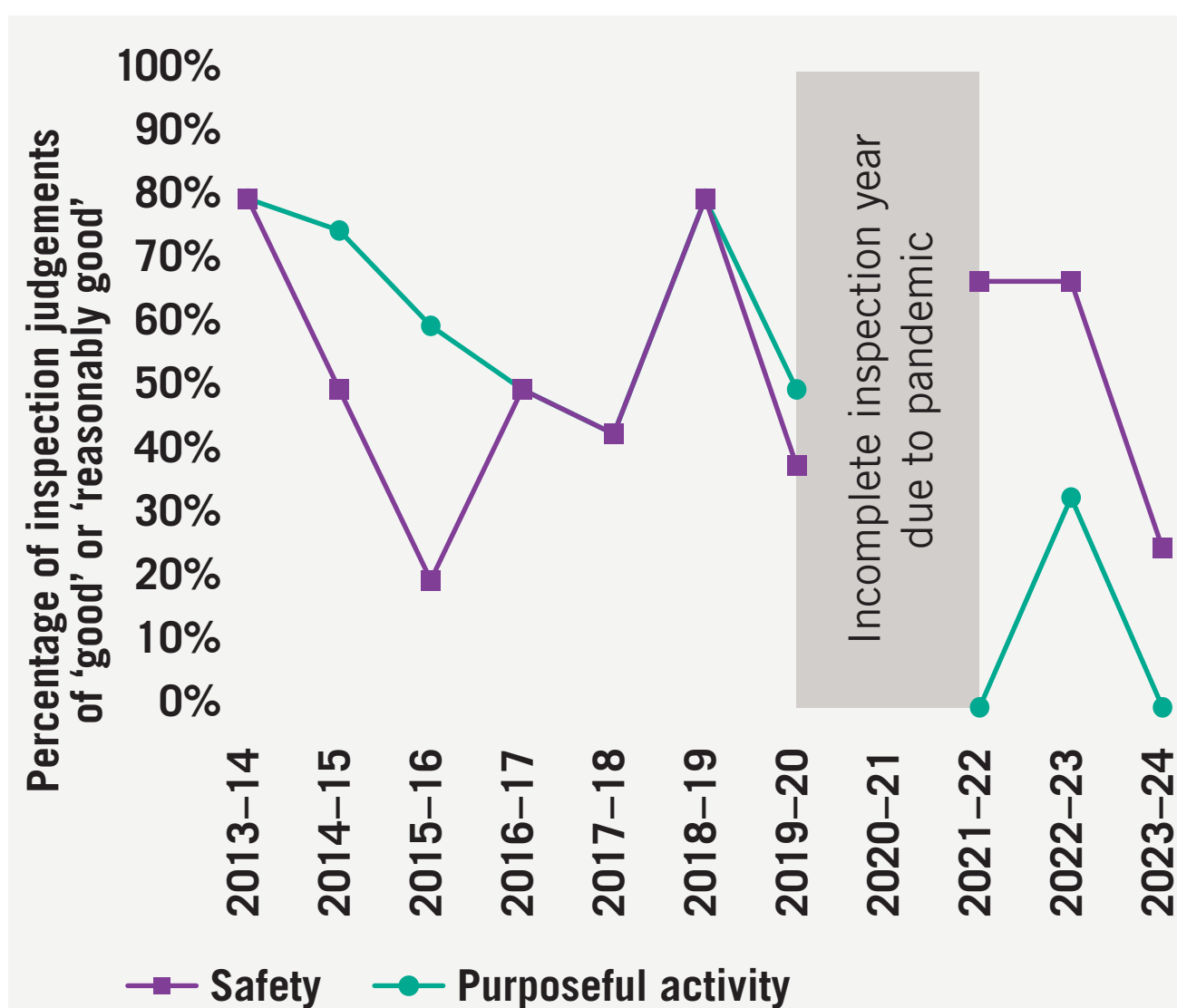
The continued absence of a national plan for sustained reform made the continued reliance on YOIs inevitable, despite the now long-running failures to educate children or keep them safe.

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<sup>1</sup>HMPPS Annual Report and Accounts 2022-2023  
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hmppps-annual-report-and-accounts-2022-23>)

### Figure 9: Declining outcomes for purposeful activity in children’s establishments with safety outcomes more volatile year on year

Healthy prison judgements of ‘good’ and ‘reasonably good’ in HMI Prisons inspections of YOIs in England and Wales since 2013–14 annual report year



Source: HMI Prisons inspection reports. Note: Wetherby and Keppel unit received separate judgements until 2023–24. Not all children’s establishments were inspected in each annual report year. Establishments which closed during this period have not been included.

## **Breakdown of behaviour management**

In all establishments apart from Parc, safety ('help and protect' in STCs) had declined and was not good enough. In our survey, 40% of children had felt unsafe while in custody and 16% felt unsafe at the time of the inspection.

Inspectors found that, with the exception of Parc, behaviour management had declined across the estate. At most sites high levels of staff turnover, sickness and officers who were unable to be deployed for other reasons meant leaders struggled to deliver even the statutory minimum activities, including education and exercise. As a result, incentives for good behaviour, including more time out of cell or additional activities, were not delivered, and managers were unable to implement sanctions for poor behaviour, even when it was serious.

These failures led to escalating poor behaviour, with an increase in weapon-making at Cookham Wood and incidents of serious disorder at Werrington. In the absence of a consistent, motivational and effective approach to behaviour management, leaders were almost wholly reliant on keeping children apart from each other to minimise violence. This was out of control; at Cookham Wood, staff were attempting to manage 583 separate keep aparts. The impact was debilitating as children were regularly unable to access education, group-based offending behaviour programmes or visits because of non-associations.

Another consequence of the complex web of keep aparts was that children had very little time out of their cells. On weekdays, the average time spent unlocked was just four-and-a-half hours at Wetherby, four hours at Werrington, and three-and-a-half hours at Cookham Wood. Even these low figures masked some children who were rarely unlocked at all. Too often, children who were separated using YOI rule 49 (the equivalent of segregation in the adult estate) because they were assessed as a risk to others or were too scared to leave their cell, received little or no time unlocked at all.

**Solitary confinement of children had become normalised at the establishment. Over a quarter of the population was completely segregated from the main population. Most were locked in their cells for 23.5 hours a day with no meaningful human interaction... it was not unusual for this group of children to not come out of their cells for days on end. Education and other interventions were almost never delivered. Two boys who needed protecting from their peers had been subjected to these conditions for more than 100 days. **Cookham Wood****

Even at Parc, where we previously found little use of separation, the situation had deteriorated. While some separated children received a varied daily routine, including education, enrichment and up to nine hours a day out of their cells, others had much more restricted routines with a maximum of 90 minutes a day unlocked.

### **Poor relationships between staff and children**

In our survey, just 48% of children said they felt cared for by staff. The complicated keep apart arrangements and high use of separation meant that staff simply did not have the time to form the good relationships to underpin effective behaviour management. With the exception of Parc, leaders in YOIs could not guarantee children one private conversation with a member of staff each week, despite having, in Cookham Wood for example, over five times more staff than children.



### **Good leadership and culture at Parc**

At Parc, leaders had been successful in maintaining a very supportive culture. In our staff survey, 63% of respondents said that leaders were always approachable and 72% that they always set high standards of behaviour for staff, while 60% reported that poor behaviour from staff was always challenged and 49% said that leaders always celebrated good work. Our findings supported these views.

Unit leaders and middle managers were particularly innovative and effective, for example in the development of the excellent enrichment programme implemented since the previous inspection.

This support for staff was reflected in the perceptions of children, 80% of whom felt cared for. Staff used these relationships to motivate children to behave well and to encourage them to mix with their peers.

### **Children not getting an education**

An inability to manage conflict meant that children spent far too long locked in their cells and rarely received their statutory entitlement to education.

In most sites, we found children who could not attend lessons because they were unable to mix with others in the class. Allocation to education was not based on the needs or aspirations of children, but rather who they were able to mix with in a classroom.

Children routinely arrived late to education, and at Cookham Wood, Wetherby and Werrington often spent longer moving to and from classrooms than they did in the lessons themselves. Even when they got there, the standard of teaching was not good enough in all the YOIs, particularly in English and maths. In our survey, just 53% of children said they learned anything that would help them when released.

Keep apart restrictions also caused problems with access to health care, although high staffing levels meant that appointments could be rescheduled promptly.



**Weapon found at  
Cookham Wood**

## **More young adults and children held on remand**

Population pressures had resulted in young adults not routinely being transferred to the adult estate shortly after their 18th birthday. At Parc, for example, this meant that 35% of the population was now 18 years old, a significant proportion with different needs for education and employment.

While in some cases this practice may be appropriate and support the individual, it should not come at the cost of effectively managing and responding to the needs of children in custody.

Children on remand make up more than 40% of the population of detained children in England and Wales. Our joint thematic report with HMI Probation found that remand was not always necessary, and its consequences were considerable.

“

The increase in the proportion of children on remand, and the long periods of time spent on remand, is concerning. It puts additional pressure on both the YOI and STC sectors, making it more difficult to achieve positive outcomes for all the children held.

”

**A joint thematic inspection of work with children subject to remand in youth detention**



**Parc YOI  
exercise yard**

# Three

**Court custody remains safe,  
but release planning weak**



**This section draws on the findings from the inspections of court custody facilities in three clusters: Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire; Surrey and Sussex; and Humber and South Yorkshire.**

- **Multi-agency relationships in the provision of court custody continued to improve, but outcomes for detainees were too often hampered by staff shortages and wider pressures.**
- **There were some notable improvements in the experience of detainees.**
- **Release planning remained weak.**

### **Staff shortages hamper outcomes for people in custody**

Leaders in the three main agencies responsible for court custody - HM Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS), Prisoner Escort and Custody Services (PECS) and the escort and custody contracted providers, GEOAmey and Serco - worked effectively together to balance their distinct functions of delivering court business and looking after people in custody.

However, there were staff shortages in the escort and custody contracted providers in all three inspections. Insufficient staff frequently led to detainees arriving late at court, delays in court proceedings and waits in moving people to prison if they were remanded or sentenced. There were also further delays where detainees had been displaced to out-of-area prisons, often due to prison population pressures.

### **Detainee experience had improved**

Detainees were largely positive about their treatment in court custody and we noted various improvements this year, including some growing staff confidence in using interpreting services to communicate with non-English speaking detainees. Provision for neurodivergent detainees, however, needed improvement, and far too few court custody facilities were accessible for those with disabilities.

Despite finding some incongruous and excessive searching and handcuffing, force was used infrequently, was generally low level and de-escalated quickly, and oversight was improving. The oversight and awareness of safeguarding were also much improved, as was the treatment of most children.

**At Sheffield magistrates' custody suite, the holding areas were much more child-friendly. Two rooms, the first of their kind that we have seen, had been refurbished and equipped specifically for children, with warmer colours, fitted carpets, comfortable seating, pictures and a TV. **Humber and South Yorkshire****

We were pleased to see the results of considerable investment in health services, including the provision of automated external defibrillators in all court custody facilities. Custody staff were, however, still not sufficiently trained in basic life-saving resuscitation skills, and liaison and diversion practitioners were not always readily available.

We noted some improvements in arrangements for transfers to prison. Detainees continued to be transported in clean and well-maintained vehicles, and there had been significant efforts to ensure some separation when vehicles were shared by men and women or children. Although still not good enough everywhere, some regions had paid attention to protecting detainee dignity and privacy when they alighted from vehicles in areas visible to the public.



## Weaknesses in release planning

Some arrangements for releasing detainees continued to cause concern. The process was often rushed and some detainees were not given the means to get home, including those with disabilities whose trials took place a long way from home due to the lack of accessible court custody facilities. People were rarely given any information about local support agencies or charities that could help them, including detainees who were released from court homeless.

For several years now we have reported our concerns about delays in releasing people who arrived from prison after directions from the court. Despite efforts from PECS senior managers, it was disappointing that too many people still continued to wait for excessive periods for their sending establishment to authorise their release, denying them their freedom.



**Sheffield magistrate's  
custody suite**

# Four

## Increasing unrest in immigration detention



- **There had been growing incidents of unrest in immigration detention and poor identification of the most vulnerable detainees.**
- **We found contrasts in leadership at short-term holding facilities.**
- **There had been improvements in overseas escorts.**

Over the last year, immigration removal centres (IRCs) had become more crowded. One reason was the increasing pressures on the prison population - as jails continued to struggle with space, more foreign nationals detained under immigration powers were transferred to IRCs. There was a concerning rise in violence and use of force across IRCs, and there had been eight protests and disturbances in an estate that had experienced very few such incidents over the previous decade.

To accommodate the higher numbers of detainees, the Home Office has been planning to create more spaces at existing detention sites and, over the next few years, plans to reopen centres at Campsfield House near Oxford and Haslar in Gosport.

## More unrest and poor identification of the most vulnerable

We visited two IRCs - Yarl's Wood and Tinsley House. Living conditions continued to be reasonably good at both, and staff-detainee relationships were mainly positive.

However, at Yarl's Wood the safety of detainees and their access to activities had deteriorated significantly. There had been a tangible change in atmosphere since our last visit: there were more detainees and more protests, fuelled by longer periods of cumulative detention without enough progress in immigration cases. Length of detention was also an issue at Tinsley House: three people had been detained for over a year.



**Visits hall at  
Yarl's Wood**

The most serious disturbance at Yarl's Wood had involved more than 50 detainees refusing to return to their cells and resulted in the escape of 13. Many were frustrated at being held with no release or removal date. Far too many were detained despite being granted bail, because of a lack of approved accommodation. In our survey, only 23% of detainees agreed that Home Office staff were keeping them informed about the progress of their case.

The Home Office was unable to provide Serco with accurate safeguarding data for detainees held at Yarl's Wood. It did not, for example, show current detainee risk levels or the outcomes of Rule 35 reports (which are completed by doctors and identify detainees whose health is likely to be worsened by their detention, have suicidal ideations or who have been a victim of torture). As a result, centre staff were not always aware of the most vulnerable detainees, which meant they could not plan and deliver appropriate care. Insufficient awareness of detainees who were at risk and weak Rule 35 assessments were also a concern at Tinsley House.

Women at Yarl's Wood had worse access to some services than men, and the inherent risks of co-location were highlighted by the intimidation of women in a yard overlooked by a male residential unit. Welfare work was generally effective, but leaders had not identified the need for more consistent provision in the women's unit.

Many detainees at Yarl's Wood had been illegitimately located in separation conditions pending charter removals. This was not based on individual risk nor subject to proper oversight, as would have been required if they had been held under Rule 40 (removal from association in the interests of security or safety).

In general, the infrastructure at Yarl's Wood was struggling to cope with the numbers, and detainees often congregated in corridors, sitting on the floor because of a lack of association and activity space. There was now more focus on security and a more prison-like feel in the centre, with the installation of cell doors and non-opening sealed windows with air vents.

**While the experience for most detainees was currently adequate, we left Yarl's Wood concerned about deteriorating outcomes in a centre that was having to manage a complex and larger population of detainees, who were held for longer periods. Yarl's Wood**

## **Contrasts at short-term holding facilities**

We inspected short-term holding facilities (STHFs) staffed and run directly by Border Force, and Manston and other nearby sites in Kent, which are operated by multiple providers.

The Border Force STHFs were based at five airports and 10 seaports across the UK. We had previously inspected these sites in March 2020, when we found that most had poor physical conditions, and suffered from an alarming lack of leadership. It was pleasing to find that Border Force had made substantial improvements in response to that inspection. With the exception of Felixstowe and Purfleet Docks, all the other sites had now been refurbished or rebuilt. Leadership was more consistent and focused on improvements: there were more permanent managers, and Border Force national leaders now had frequent contact with the regional managers responsible for everyday operations. There were still considerable challenges in keeping all sites at a decent standard, and we found some weaknesses in safeguarding and inconsistencies in use of force and searching. Overall, however, this was an encouraging inspection showing good progress.



**Processing area  
at Manston**

We visited Western Jet Foil (WJF), Manston and Kent Intake Unit (KIU), which process migrants who cross the Channel by small boats, during a lull when the number of new arrivals was low, with just a few hundred passing through them. The facilities at WJF had improved, with working showers and good stocks of clean clothing for those who had got wet during the crossing. KIU had moved to a more suitable site with better accommodation. Manston was caring reasonably well for the smaller numbers held, with most people moved on within 24 hours of arrival, and improved health services.

However, the leadership of Manston continued to be a major concern. Border Force, Interforce, MTC, Mitie Care and Custody and GSA Security Solutions all provided services on the site, but governance arrangements did not ensure coordination of their work or continuity of direct, onsite leadership of the facility as a whole. This meant there was weak oversight and analysis of areas including safeguarding, use of force and violence. We had little confidence that Manston would function sufficiently well when numbers rose once again. Even with smaller numbers, too many people were held for long periods, and detainees often struggled to obtain information from disengaged staff. We were not confident that welfare issues were properly identified or handled.



## **Improvements on overseas escorts**

The majority of charter flights to remove detainees over the last year were to Albania. On the flight that we inspected, we saw improvements in overall organisation, staff practices and culture. The staff were mainly friendly and professional, and waist restraint belts and force were not used, although waist belts had been recorded as being used on the previous three charter flights.

We observed 26 detainees, all men, removed on the flight. Twenty had chosen to return voluntarily, which increased their compliance and made it easier to manage their removal.

During the removal operations, there were good efforts to reduce total journey times. While professional interpreting was used regularly, it was not always when required.

# Five

## Income and expenditure



## Income and expenditure - 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

<b>Income</b>	<b>£</b>
MoJ (prisons and court cells)	<b>4,960,855</b>
Home Office (immigration detention)	<b>352,220</b>
Home Office (HMICFRS/police custody)	<b>27,655</b>
Youth Justice Board/Youth Justice Commissioning Team (YJCT) (children’s custody)	<b>150,558</b>
Other income (HMI Probation, Prisons and Probation Ombudsman, STC, Ministry of Defence, Border Force)	<b>45,781</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,537,069</b>

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>%</b>
Staff costs (Includes staff, fee-paid inspectors, secondees and joint inspection/partner organisation costs, e.g. General Pharmaceutical Council and contribution to secretariat support of the Joint Criminal Justice Inspection Chief Inspectors Group)	<b>4,787,718</b>	<b>86.16%</b>
Travel and subsistence	<b>460,311</b>	<b>8.28%</b>
Printing and stationery	<b>12,338</b>	<b>0.22%</b>
Information technology and telecommunications (Includes the cost of discovery work on a replacement IT solution for current Evidence Gathering Template)	<b>47,376</b>	<b>0.85%</b>
Translators	<b>14,524</b>	<b>0.26%</b>
Training and development	<b>35,457</b>	<b>0.64%</b>
Other costs (including recruitment costs, conferences and professional memberships)	<b>199,345</b>	<b>3.59%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,557,069*</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*This figure indicates an overspend of £20,000. This is a result of some historical recharges for centrally-managed services (such as travel and hotel bookings) provided by the Ministry of Justice, which we had already accrued, leading to some costs being reflected twice in our end-of-year reporting.

# Six

## Appendices



## Appendix one

### Inspection reports published 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

Establishment	Inspection period	Date published
Elmley IRP	13–15 February 2023	3 April 2023
Lewes IRP	20–22 February 2023	5 April 2023
Long Lartin	5–16 December 2022	12 April 2023
Whitemoor	5–15 December 2022	12 April 2023
Feltham B	3–13 January 2023	25 April 2024
Stoke Heath	9–20 January 2023	2 May 2023
Wayland IRP	20–22 March 2023	2 May 2023
Stocken	16–27 January 2023	16 May 2023
Gartree	16–26 January 2023	16 May 2023
Border Force STHFs	9–20 January 2023	17 May 2023
Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire court custody	27 February – 11 March 2023	17 May 2023

<b>Establishment</b>	<b>Inspection period</b>	<b>Date published</b>
Pentonville IRP	11–13 April 2023	22 May 2023
Birmingham	30 January – 9 February 2023	30 May 2023
Leicester	13–23 February 2023	30 May 2023
Albania escort and removals	22–23 February 2023	30 May 2023
Western Jet Foil, Manston and Kent Intake Unit STHFs	30 January – 17 February 2023	6 June 2023
Maghaberry	20 September – 6 October 2022	16 June 2023
Swansea	21 February – 10 March 2023	20 June 2023
Isle of Man	27 February – 10 March 2023	26 June 2023
Preston	7–23 March 2023	26 June 2023
Holme House	6–16 March 2023	26 June 2023
Isis IRP	15–17 May 2023	26 June 2023
Moorland	13–24 March 2023	10 July 2023
Ford	4–20 April 2023	10 July 2023
Norwich IRP	30 May – 1 June 2023	10 July 2023
Isle of Wight IRP	5–7 June 2023	10 July 2023
Cookham Wood	4–20 April 2023	18 July 2023

<b>Establishment</b>	<b>Inspection period</b>	<b>Date published</b>
Risley	12–27 April 2023	24 July 2023
Tinsley House IRC	17 April – 5 May 2023	7 August 2023
Grendon	2–19 May 2023	14 August 2023
Thorn Cross	2–19 May 2023	14 August 2023
Lowdham Grange	15–26 May 2023	16 August 2023
North Sea Camp	22 May – 2 June 2023	30 August 2023
Leeds IRP	18–20 July 2023	30 August 2023
Surrey and Sussex court custody	12–22 July 2023	4 September 2023
Brinsford	5–16 June 2023	11 September 2023
Leyhill	12–22 June 2023	20 September 2023
Askham Grange	19 June – 6 July 2023	25 September 2023
Aylesbury IRP	29–31 August 2023	3 October 2023
Yarl's Wood IRC	12 June – 6 July 2023	4 October 2023
Dartmoor	19 June – 6 July 2023	9 October 2023
Eastwood Park IRP	4–13 September 2023	12 October 2023
Bristol	10–20 July 2023	17 October 2023
Lindholme	17–27 July 2023	24 October 2023



<b>Establishment</b>	<b>Inspection period</b>	<b>Date published</b>
Sudbury	24 July – 3 August 2023	30 October 2023
High Down	31 July – 17 August 2023	13 November 2023
Huntercombe	14–24 August 2023	13 November 2023
Oakhill STC	2–6 August 2023	17 November 2023
Werrington	31 July – 11 August 2023	21 November 2023
Woodhill	14–25 August 2023	28 November 2023
Littlehey	4–14 September 2021	4 December 2023
Swaleside	11–21 September 2023	12 December 2023
Hewell IRP	13–15 November 2023	18 December 2023
Exeter IRP	13–15 November 2023	3 January 2024
Dovegate	18 September – 5 October 2023	8 January 2024
East Sutton Park	25 September – 5 October 2023	8 January 2024
Maidstone IRP	20–22 November 2023	15 January 2024
Bure	2–12 October 2023	15 January 2024

<b>Establishment</b>	<b>Inspection period</b>	<b>Date published</b>
Ashfield	9–20 October 2023	15 January 2024
Parc YOI	9–19 October 2023	23 January 2024
Highpoint	16–27 October 2023	30 January 2024
Humber and South Yorkshire court custody	27 November – 9 December 2023	5 February 2024
Maghaberry IRP	31 October – 2 November 2023	8 February 2024
Magilligan IRP	31 October – 2 November 2023	8 February 2024
Bedford	30 October – 9 November 2023	14 February 2024
Feltham B IRP	8–10 January 2024	19 February 2024
Risley IRP	8–10 January 2024	19 February 2024
Lowdham Grange IRP	8–10 January 2024	20 February 2024
Morton Hall	30 October – 9 November 2023	26 February 2024
Peterborough Women	6–16 November 2023	26 February 2024
Wetherby	20 November – 7 December 2023	5 March 2024
Hindley	21 November – 8 December 2023	12 March 2024

## Appendix two

### Further resources and references

All HM Inspectorate of Prisons reports published in 2023–24, Expectations and inspection methodology are published on our website. Healthy establishment assessments, the numbers of concerns accepted and addressed by establishments, and analyses of survey responses for adult men’s and women’s prisons, children’s establishments and immigration removal centres to accompany this report are also available on our website: [hmiprisons.justiceinspectors.gov.uk](https://hmiprisons.justiceinspectors.gov.uk)

Ministry of Justice prison population projections 2022 to 2027 can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/prison-population-projections-2022-to-2027>

HM Prison and Probation Service safety in custody statistics can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics>

## Appendix three

### Glossary

#### **ACCT**

Assessment, care in custody and teamwork; case management for prisoners at risk of suicide or self-harm.

#### **Care Quality Commission**

CQC is the independent regulator of health and adult social care in England. It monitors, inspects and regulates services to make sure they meet fundamental standards of quality and safety. For information on CQC's standards of care and the action it takes to improve services, please visit: <http://www.cqc.org.uk>

#### **Challenge, support and intervention plan (CSIP)**

HMPPS system used by all adult prisons to manage prisoners who are violent or pose a heightened risk of being violent. These prisoners are managed and supported on a plan with individualised targets and regular reviews. Not everyone who is violent is case managed on CSIP. Some prisons also use the CSIP framework to support victims of violence.

#### **Early removal scheme**

Allows foreign national prisoners to be removed up to 365 days earlier than they would otherwise be released into the UK.

## **Estyn**

The education and training inspectorate for Wales.

## **Health Inspectorate Wales**

The independent inspectorate and regulator of health care in Wales.

## **HMCTS**

His Majesty's Courts & Tribunals Service.

## **HMPPS**

His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service.

## **Independent review of progress (IRP)**

A short follow-up visit to provide independent evidence about how much progress has been made in improving the treatment and conditions for prisoners following concerns from previous inspections.

## **IRC**

Immigration removal centre.

## **Key workers**

Prison officer key workers aim to have regular contact with named prisoners.

## **Leader**

Anyone with leadership or management responsibility.

## **Listeners**

Prisoners trained by the Samaritans to provide confidential emotional support to fellow prisoners.

## **Local prisons**

Local prisons house prisoners who are taken directly from court in the local area (sentenced or on remand).

## **MAPPA**

Multi-agency public protection arrangements.

## **Ofsted**

Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills.

## **OPCAT**

Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

## **PECS**

Prisoner Escort and Custody Services.

## **PIPE (psychologically informed planned environment)**

PIPEs are specifically designed living areas where staff specially trained in psychological understanding aim to create a supportive environment that can facilitate the development of prisoners with challenging offender behaviour needs.

## **POM**

Prison offender manager.

## **Remand prisoners**

Prisoners who have not yet been tried and are therefore unconvicted. If there are no security concerns, a remand prisoner will have a number of special rights and privileges, including receiving additional letters and visits, not having to share a cell with a convicted prisoner and not working unless they choose to. Remand prisoners are normally held in local category B prisons.

## **ROTL**

Release on temporary licence.

## **STC**

Secure training centre.

## **STHF**

Short-term holding facility.

## **Therapeutic communities (TCs)**

Provide group-based therapy within a social climate that promotes positive relationships, personal responsibility and social participation. They address a range of prisoner needs, including interpersonal relationships, emotional regulation, self-management and psychological well-being.

### **Time out of cell**

Time out of cell, in addition to formal ‘purposeful activity’, includes any time prisoners are out of their cells to associate or use communal facilities to take showers or make telephone calls.

### **Urgent Notification**

Where an inspection identifies significant concerns about the treatment and conditions of detainees, the Chief Inspector may issue an Urgent Notification to the Secretary of State within seven calendar days stating the reasons for concerns and identifying issues that require improvement. The Secretary of State commits to respond publicly to the concerns raised within 28 calendar days.

### **YOI**

Young offender institution.





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