



Ministry
of Justice

Summary data from the Prison Estate Conditions Survey Programme (2021 - 2023)

Ad hoc statistical release

This ad hoc release provides summary findings from the Prison Estate Conditions Survey Programme (PECSP). The findings in this release are taken from the PECSP output data, which is internal HMPPS data.

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Contacts

Media contacts

Press enquiries should be directed to the Ministry of Justice press office.

020 3334 3536

Statistical contacts

Other enquiries about these statistics should be directed to Analysis at the Ministry of Justice: Elliot.Kirk@justice.gov.uk

Ministry of Justice

Analysis Directorate: Sentencing and Offender Management Analysis

10th Floor

102 Petty France

London

SW1H 9AJ

1. Background

The National Audit Office (NAO) have published estimates of the costs of bringing the prison estate into a fair condition. This was previously unpublished data and this release contains information relating to the Prison Estate Conditions Survey Programme (PECSP) to explain the source, strengths and limitations of these cost estimates.

PECSP was a survey of all publicly owned prisons, carried out from December 2021 to November 2023. Each prison was subject to a complete, non-intrusive survey. In total, 111 prisons and Youth Offender Institutes were surveyed.

2. Data

For each prison, all areas outside of the cells were surveyed by external independent infrastructure consultants. A representative sample of the cells were surveyed. Every asset that could be identified with a non-intrusive survey in each of the prisons was identified with its current condition, likely lifespan, and cost to maintain¹. An 'asset' is any physical object that requires maintenance. They are grouped into two categories:

- Mechanical and Electrical (M&E) assets are those with electrical or mechanical components. Examples include ovens, boilers, pumps.
- Fabric assets are assets that compose the structure of the building. Examples include wall superstructure, paint decoration, tiling, doors.

Each asset in the prison estate was rated according to the following:

- 'Good': As New and can be expected to perform adequately to its full normal life.
- 'Fair'²: Sound, operationally safe and exhibits only minor deterioration.
- 'Poor': Operational but major repair or replacement is currently needed to bring up to 'fair' condition.
- 'Very Poor': Operationally unsound and in imminent danger of failure

The survey output data has been used to estimate the condition of the publicly owned prison estate at the time of survey, and the costs needed to bring and then maintain the publicly owned estate into an operationally sound condition – a 'fair' condition.

To provide a summary of the condition of each of our prison buildings, the conditions of the assets in each building were combined to provide an overall condition of the building, for both Fabric and M&E assets. In total, 13% of buildings have a Fabric condition rating of 'Poor' or 'Very poor' and 18% of buildings have a M&E rating of 'poor' or 'very poor'. A building is defined as 'poor' if at least 50% of one of its major systems is 'poor' or 'very

¹ Non-Intrusive means that only assets that could be seen by surveyors were included.

² For 'Fair' assets, there was a separate category provided for assets that would become 'poor' within 5 years.

poor'. For example, if at least 50% of a building's walls are 'poor', a building receives a Fabric condition of 'poor'. The overall survey findings for buildings are summarised below.

Table 1: Summary of overall building conditions, as assessed during the Prison Estate Conditions Survey Programme

Assessed condition	Fabric	Mechanical &Electrical
Good	2.4%	2.0%
Fair	82.8%	72.0%
Poor	11.7%	15.6%
Very poor	1.6%	2.5%
NA	1.4%	7.9%

Note figures are rounded to 1 decimal place.

Alongside the item condition rating, the expert surveyors estimated the remaining lifespan as well as the cost of replacing/repairing the individual items. Using the PECS outputs in this way estimates that the total cost needed to bring the publicly owned estate into a 'fair' condition and then maintain it to the end of the decade (Financial year 29/30), is **c. £1.4bn** (nominal). This includes VAT, Optimism Bias³ and an assumption on the costs of assets that were not surveyed (see the Limitations section below for an explanation).

In addition, HMPPS has a commitment to make all cells Fire Safety Compliant. This is classified as maintenance work and is estimated to cost a further **c. £1.4bn** (nominal). This work is a legal requirement.

Therefore, the total cost of bringing the estate into a 'fair' condition and maintaining it until the end of the decade, including the legally required Fire Safety Improvement (FSI) works is **c. £2.8bn**.

Limitations

- Cost estimates are based on surveys of assets that could be physically seen and surveyed. 'Unseen' assets are not included in the PECSP data, for example wiring or drainage inside walls. An assumption has been made to account for maintaining these 'unseen' assets in the absence of recorded survey data based on the average annual investment in unseen assets and those not surveyed by PECSP data over the last 3 years.
- Fire safety compliance costs were estimated prior to ISG entering administration and these cost estimates may change in future.
- The surveys were completed in 2023, so estimates of costs and conditions are based on the estate at that time.

³ Optimism Bias used is the standard internal figure for maintenance business cases, which is calculated as per Green Book guidance.

3. Sources and notes

- Internal data from the Prison Estate Conditions Survey Programme, which was delivered by external consultants for HMPPS.