



# **Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Doncaster**

**For reporting year  
1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024**

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## Introductory sections 1 – 3

### 1. Statutory role of the IMB

The Prison Act 1952 requires every prison to be monitored by an independent board appointed by the Secretary of State from members of the community in which the prison is situated.

Under the National Monitoring Framework agreed with ministers, the Board is required to:

- satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody within its prison and the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release
- inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom authority has been delegated as it judges appropriate, any concern it has
- report annually to the Secretary of State on how well the prison has met the standards and requirements placed on it and what impact these have on those in its custody.

To enable the Board to carry out these duties effectively, its members have right of access to every prisoner and every part of the prison and also to the prison's records.

The Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT) is an international human rights treaty designed to strengthen protection for people deprived of their liberty. The protocol recognises that such people are particularly vulnerable and aims to prevent their ill-treatment through establishing a system of visits or inspections to all places of detention. OPCAT requires that states designate a National Preventive Mechanism to carry out visits to places of detention, to monitor the treatment of and conditions for detainees and to make recommendations for the prevention of ill-treatment. The IMB is part of the United Kingdom's National Preventive Mechanism.

## **2. Description of the establishment**

HMP Doncaster, in South Yorkshire, opened in June 1994 and is a local prison serving the courts, with an additional function of resettlement for prisoners released into the local community. A category B prison for men, it is managed under contract to HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) by Serco Group PLC on a 15-year contract. This contract is up for renewal in 2026.

The Governor of a private prison is referred to as the Director. All private sector prisons have a Controllers team from HMPPS, based within the prison on behalf of the Ministry of Justice, to ensure full compliance.

The prison has a certified normal accommodation, or CNA (the number of prisoners a prison can hold without being overcrowded) of 738<sup>1</sup>, revised in 2013, with an official operating capacity (the maximum number of prisoners that can be held without serious risk to safety, security, good order and the proper running of the planned regime) of 1145. The prison houses a male population consisting of approximately 41% sentenced prisoners, 35% remanded and 24% who are convicted and awaiting sentence

The prison accommodation is made up of three houseblocks, each with four residential wings. The care and separation unit (CSU) has 21 cells housed over two floors. Prisoners who require a higher level of support for mental health conditions or learning disabilities have separate accommodation, based on two landings within the healthcare centre.

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<sup>1</sup> Figures included in this report are local management information. They reflect the prison's position at the time of reporting, but may be subject to change following further validation and therefore may not always tally with Official Statistics later published by the Ministry of Justice.

### **3. Key points**

#### **3.1 Main findings**

##### **Safety**

- The Board is concerned about the effects ‘population pressures’ are having on HMP Doncaster, particularly in its role as a reception prison. The prison regularly receives prisoners from out of the region, mainly from the north east, who tend to arrive late into the evening. This places undue stress on to the reception process, resulting in a less than satisfactory experience for the prisoner, despite efforts being made by the prison to streamline the process.
- A further concern for the Board is that this then causes problems with the induction process, which is designed to transition prisoners quickly on to the residential wings where they are able to access all facilities and amenities such as laundry, in-cell technology and a phone.

##### **Fair and humane treatment**

- Overall, it is the opinion of the Board that prisoners at HMP Doncaster are usually treated fairly and with respect. The Board acknowledges that the establishment continues to place a positive emphasis on fair and humane treatment. This is evidenced in the efforts made by the prison to refurbish shower facilities, the ongoing programme of painting in each of the houseblocks and a planned upgrade to the CSU.
- However, the Board would be remiss if we did not comment on the disappointing number of prisoners doubled up in single-cell accommodation. Whilst we acknowledges this is out of the control of the prison management, the practice of using single cells for two people completely undermines all the best efforts to treat people fairly and humanely.

##### **Health and wellbeing**

- In general terms, from our observations, the Board believes that prisoners’ health and wellbeing needs are adequately catered for. Our prisoner survey results show a slightly different picture but, as we only had a 39% response over one week in July (representing a snapshot of prisoners’ experience), it is not wholly representative. (See Annex A).
- Pressures on mental health services have increased and prisoners requiring secure mental health care waited too long for a transfer.

##### **Progression and resettlement**

- From the Board’s observations, the offender management unit (OMU) and the resettlement team continue to work hard to support prisoners throughout their sentence and in preparation for release. In the reporting year, attendance in education and work has increased significantly. It is, evident, however that over the past few months, it has become more difficult for them to accommodate the increasingly large numbers of prisoners who live out of the area and who have no accommodation. The departure lounge staff try hard to provide advice and support, but far too many prisoners are being released as ‘no fixed abode’ and, if on recall, with only a travel warrant and basic toiletries.

### 3.2 Main areas for development

#### **TO THE MINISTER**

1. The Board remains extremely concerned about the length of time it takes for a mentally ill patients to be transferred to a secure hospital. All too often, prison managers have few options open to them during this 'waiting' period and prisoners are invariably held in the CSU, resulting in a further deterioration of their mental health. When and how will the Minister address this serious issue?
2. The continued overcrowding within the prison and the inhumane double occupancy of single cells generally remains a great concern for the Board. Can the Minister please explain what measures are in place to reduce the prison population and the double occupancy of single cells?

#### **TO THE PRISON SERVICE**

1. The continued imprisonment of prisoners serving Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) sentences leaves them feeling stuck in the system, with little hope of release. The Board acknowledges recent steps taken by the Prison Service, but we feel that more should and could be done to improve their preparation for parole hearings and, potentially, their release.
2. The lack of adequate probation and community support for prisoners being released into the community is negatively impacting on prisoners who, without the necessary accommodation and support, are at a greatly increased chance of them returning to prison. The Board requests that resources, necessary within the community to ensure that those released have the opportunity to rehabilitate into society and help reduce reoffending, are made a priority.

#### **TO THE DIRECTOR**

1. The Board has identified, on a significant number of occasions, cell bells not being answered. Whilst we welcome the continued scrutiny of cell bell data and attempts by the management team to improve answering times, this issue remains a grave concern for the Board.
2. Due to the increased pressures on the induction process, the Board requests that a review of the system is instigated to ensure that all prisoners, whichever area they come from, can access basic amenities and are treated fairly.

### 3.3 Response to the last report

Issues Raised	Response	Progress
<b>To the Prison Service</b>  1. In ensuring there are sufficient officers in post to offer a full regime.	Recruitment of prison custody officers is the responsibility of the Director, being a privately managed prison. The HMPPS [HM Prison and Probation Service] Controller and onsite team maintain oversight and staffing levels at HMP Doncaster. There is an ongoing and	The prison now has a full complement of officers, although external pressures such as bed watches, continue to impact on day-

<p>2. To monitor the mix of experienced and less experienced officers.</p> <p>3. To protect the spending power of prisoners' prison work earnings.</p>	<p>comprehensive review and overhaul of the recruitment and retention strategy, leading to the prison being able to successfully over-recruit against its normal staffing levels.</p> <p>The recent focus and progress made with recruitment has allowed the prison to channel efforts towards training and development of staff to improve the knowledge gap between experienced staff and newer staff or those with less experience. A transformed approach in the training and development of new and existing staff has been evident through the Controller and onsite team engagement with the Director and SMT at a local level.</p> <p>It is recognised that inflationary pressures also affect prisoners, and these are kept under constant review. HMPPS have set out some changes to address the issue of increasing prices of canteen items and the impact on prisoners. In September 2022, a national approach to the cost of living was agreed and a 10% uplift in private cash allowances was introduced. Several new value-brand product lines were made available through the prison retail service. Early signs are that these are becoming increasingly popular.</p>	<p>to-day staffing issues.</p> <p>There is a proactive approach to the training and development of new staff at all levels.</p> <p>Despite the measures introduced by HMPPS, inflation continues to hit prisoners' ability to afford canteen items. This has been exacerbated by the lack of competition, due to DHL's monopoly of the service.</p>
<p><b>To the Director</b></p> <p>1. Measures to improve prisoner confidence in the DIRF [discrimination incident reporting form] system.</p>	<p>The Prison Director provides a detailed report to the Board each month.</p>	<p>A new equality manager has been appointed. There are quarterly DEAT (diversity and equality) meetings, where procedures are thoroughly scrutinised.</p>

<p>2. Measures to improve prisoner ability to engage effectively with healthcare.</p>	<p>The Prison Director provides a detailed report to the Board each month.</p>	<p>There is a new healthcare liaison role, which is an Assistant Director grade. The monthly prison health operational group (PHOG) meeting is chaired by the Director. All operational issues are dealt with by robust scrutiny.</p>
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## **Evidence sections 4 – 7**

### **4. Safety**

#### **4.1 Reception and induction**

Doncaster is a reception and resettlement prison that manages men through the courts and is, therefore, extremely busy. It also has two dedicated induction wings.

New admissions have steadily increased over the reporting period. During monitoring, the Board has noted that the reception area is very busy every day, dealing with new and transferred prisoners coming into the prison or returning from court. Also, because of a shortage of prison places nationally, the demographic of those arriving at HMP Doncaster has changed, with a significant increase in prisoners from out of the area and mainly from the north east. Many prisoners, therefore, on arrival at the prison have often sustained a lengthy journey. The arrivals coming from court must be processed and there are many evenings when the staff have to deal with prison vehicles arriving in quick succession, causing bottlenecks which, due to the very late arrival, has affected the quality of prisoner's experience.

More prisoners are arriving with a range of complex needs. This puts greater pressure on reception and healthcare staff. Daily briefing sheets show that, on a number of occasions, reception has not been cleared until after 10pm. Prisoners are complaining to the Board of delays in accessing medication due to shorter initial healthcare assessments being necessary, with a fuller assessment being conducted the following day.

There is one phone in reception, located at the front desk, which is sometimes not working and offers little privacy. In the recent prisoner survey (see Annex A), two-thirds of those surveyed stated they had not had access to a phone call on arrival at the prison.

Prisoners are transferred initially on to the induction wing or early days' centre (EDC). This is designed as a 'next stage' and seen as a temporary measure for the prisoner, offering support from 'insiders' (peer mentors) on the wing, who ensure all new prisoners receive the information and guidance they need. However, as already stated, issues that have not always been resolved at reception follow through on to the wing. Healthcare medication, clothing parcel codes and PINs (personal identification numbers) for the phone access often take quite a few days to sort.

As the induction wing is a transit (ideally two or three days), there is very limited access to laundry facilities and prisoners have no access to any in-cell technology, although they can still use one of the free-standing ATMs on the wing. Due to population pressures throughout the system, prisoners are often having to spend longer on the induction wing than they should, which restricts their ability to access laundry and order canteen (a facility where prisoners can buy snacks, toiletries, stationery and other essentials using their allocated funds) and can delay their ability to apply for education, work or training courses. The Board has received a growing number of complaints both written and verbal, on the problems relating to this, as well as instances of incomplete toiletries, towels and bedding.

## **4.2 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody**

The prison has an active process to support prisoners who self-harm. The assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) document is regularly checked and quality assured and prisoners are discussed at the weekly safety intervention meeting (SIM). Those at risk of repeated self-harm may continue to be monitored on an open challenge, support and intervention plan (CSIP). Distraction materials can be accessed by all staff from a shared drive, with further materials available from the safer custody team. In-cell technology allows for extra activities, such as physical workouts, educational courses. This facility, however, is not available to prisoners in the CSU (see 5.2).

In the Board's view, there is a robust plan in place to support those who are vulnerable. It is closely monitored by the safer custody team, with key data scrutinised at the monthly safer custody meeting.

Comparator figures for self-harm show that the prison has the lowest figures within the Yorkshire/Humber region.

The Board believes that, despite being a busy local prison, prisoners are, in general, safe in the prison and the staff work hard to maintain this. The IMB annual prisoner survey (see Annex A) showed that a total of 68% of those who responded said they feel safe in the prison and the Board has received few applications regarding safety. Self-harm, having decreased since Covid, is now on the increase, with 831 incidents recorded, compared with 816 in the previous year. A total of 1009 ACCT documents, which are used to support prisoners at risk of self-harm and suicide, were opened in the reporting period, compared with 873 in the previous year. The Board has noticed an increase in ACCTs being opened during the reporting year.

### **Deaths in custody**

There were six deaths in custody during the reporting year. The head of the safer custody team co-ordinates the action plans resulting from the recommendations in these reports, which are then reported back at the safer custody monthly meetings.

The Board is impressed with the high level of concern and importance given to this by the management team and by the way the prison has handled these sad events, as well as the care extended to staff, other prisoners and family members affected.

## **4.3 Violence and violence reduction, self-isolation**

Recorded violence in the prison shows a similar picture to the previous year, with a slight fall in the number of assaults on staff. However, there was an increasing number of assaults involving prisoners out of the area and within identified areas of the prison.

In the Board's view, the management team has a clear plan in place for early intervention, which includes the Listener scheme and the Buddy scheme (both involving peer support to help prevent self-harm and suicide) and the Samaritans, who are available 24-hours a day. There are plans underway to provide a Listeners' suite to help facilitate and support early intervention. The prison holds a Safety Week each year, which is attended by key organisations such as the Samaritans and Shout (which offers mental health support), a wellbeing roadshow, plus information desks, demonstrations and targeted scenarios.

The Board acknowledges the hard work of the leadership team to address this growing problem within the prison system and the fact that, using comparator figures for the Yorkshire Prison Group, Doncaster has the third lowest level of violence within its sector comprising of eight prisons. However, we remain concerned at the level of violence recorded in the prison and would encourage an increased effort to reduce this. Nevertheless, we wish to acknowledge the work of the prison staff in their efforts to help reduce violence in the prison.

This is an area the Board will focus more closely on in the coming year, as we recognise it as an issue that underpins other areas of concern.

#### **4.4 Preventing illicit items**

Illegal drugs entering the prison by varying methods has increased during the reporting period. Drugs are the main reason for debt, bullying and violence. The Board acknowledges the hard work the management team is doing to reduce what is a national issue. Again, the Board will focus on this area in the next reporting year.

## **5. Fair and humane treatment**

### **5.1 Accommodation, clothing, food**

At HMP Doncaster, there are three houseblocks built on two levels, with four separate wings, each housing approximately 90 prisoners. Almost all the cells are single, with the majority now double occupancy. The prison remains overcrowded. There is adequate furniture in the cells and all, apart from those on the induction wing, have a phone and in-cell technology. This allows prisoners to order canteen, request healthcare appointments, order books from the library, view their prison financial accounts, select food menu choices and enrol on education courses or for purposeful activity.

The Board is satisfied that the prison is working hard to minimise the effects of overcrowding on the prisoners - which is due to population pressures - and that the cells meet minimum statutory requirements. However, we remain extremely concerned about the level of overcrowding, which results in little or no privacy and minimal separation between toilet use, eating and sleeping.

In our recent survey (see Annex A), prisoners identified temperature control as a major issue. This is particularly problematic in the summer months, when there is a lack of ventilation coupled with being doubled up in single cells for 22 hours at weekends, and when the regime is locked down because of staffing shortages.

One concern for the Board is the issue of cell bells. Our monitoring has shown that on too many occasions cell bells are not being answered quickly enough. The prison is actively making some progress with this issue. Cell bell times are recorded and monitored and the prison is working on an enhanced programme of purposeful activity, which they hope will help reduce the amount of time prisoners spend in their cells and will, therefore, reduce cell bell activity.

There is a rolling programme of painting the cells and refurbishing the shower facilities, starting with houseblock 1. It will take approximately one year to fully implement.

Serveries are generally clean. There are some shortages of utensils and uniforms for serving food and there is no process to feedback via the complaint books on the serveries.

In our survey, 65% of prisoners identified that food was not good, portion sizes were small and the food was not always hot. The Board has, however, noted there are good cultural options available and prisoners have been submitted few applications to the Board concerning food in the reporting year.

### **5.2 Segregation and special accommodation**

The care and separation unit, or CSU, where men are segregated is on two floors and consists of 21 single cells, two of which are high-visibility cells for the constant supervision of vulnerable prisoners; the unit also has a small server, where prisoners can collect their meals. Prisoners are placed in the unit, either as a result of an adjudication, due to good order or discipline issues on the wings, or for their own protection. The unit is always very busy. Staff seem to have a good knowledge and understanding of the individual needs of the prisoners and, from our observations, show patience and offer support wherever possible.

Accommodation cells are quite sparse and during the winter months can be quite cold, due to a lack of heating on the unit. Prisoners have very little to do whilst in the CSU. Their basic regime consists of a shower and 30 minutes' exercise. Prisoners can contact family using a cordless phone, which is taken to their cell.

The quality of reading material, especially for those who have low reading age, is limited; there is a book trolley, which is replenished every couple of weeks, but the offering remains very limited. There is no in-cell technology and no access to a television in the CSU, as there are no power sockets in the cells. This has been the case for some time, due to a prisoner removing the trunking and it not being replaced. Prisoners are offered distraction packs and small 'wind up' radios are available, although they are not very sturdy and the Board has found that far too often prisoners are unable to access one at all due to breakages.

The Board's monitoring, via attendance at good order and discipline reviews (GOoD), notification of moves to the unit and paperwork concludes that the segregation process is used appropriately.

### **5.3 Staff and prisoner relationships, key workers**

From the Board's observations, staffing levels within the prison are good and there is a full complement of officers. Weekly prisoner consultative committee (PCC) meetings are held, giving the prisoner wing representatives the opportunity to discuss any issues; monthly meetings are also held, which are chaired by an Assistant Director. The Board has observed some of the meetings and feels there is a good working relationship that offers two-way communication between the prison and prisoner. Despite this, there remain many external pressures on staffing, which then impacts on the daily regime within the prison. In the past 12 months, the number of bed watches has increased significantly, putting safe staffing levels, on occasions, at risk, leading to restricted regimes. The prison has a system in place to help ensure that when this occurs, it is 'rolled out' fairly and tries hard to minimise this, as any increase in prisoners being locked up for over 21 hours a day is less than acceptable and has, in the last few months of the reporting period, accounted for a more than average number of complaints from prisoners to the Board.

#### **5.3.1 Staffing**

As previously stated, the prison has a full complement of staff, but it remains a fact that a large percentage are relatively inexperienced. On the whole, from our observations on the wings, the Board recognises that the majority of interactions between staff and prisoner are positive. As stated above, the number of bed watches required sometimes severely impacted staffing levels within the prison and sometimes restricted the daily regime offered to the prisoner.

#### **5.3.2 Key workers**

The key worker scheme was introduced by HMPPS in 2018 as part of the offender management in custody model (OMiC) and seeks to provide staff and prisoner discussions associated with rehabilitation, safety and security. The prison aims for all prisoners to see a key worker on a regular basis.

The Board has evidence of good practice with the key worker programme at Doncaster and this is actively promoted via the leadership team with a robust quality-assurance system in place. Regular interactions are recorded and boundaries and

expectations clear. However, there are some indications that staffing pressures (see above) often mean that there is not a great deal of consistency in these sessions, due to frequent changes in the key worker; this can lead to some repetitiveness in subsequent interviews, often at the expense of focusing on goals and targets leading to meaningful progression plans being in place.

The leadership team is aware of these issues and there is an action plan in place to ensure a whole-prison approach to support this, with additional training being given.

#### **5.4 Equality and diversity**

The small equality team is very proactive and, from the Board's observations, is working hard to develop a positive culture throughout the prison. There is a quarterly diversity and equality (DEAT) meeting, where they discuss and analyse a wide range of data, including race, religion and other protected characteristics in areas such as adjudications, complaints, segregation, use of force and education, and to implement appropriate strategies to support prisoner needs.

Approximately 10% of the men in HMP Doncaster are foreign national prisoners, made up of 34 nationalities, and one transgender prisoner. They are supported by regular forums with prisoners and staff, which focus on the protected characteristics, as well as equality representatives on each wing (who are carefully selected for the role) and through education, library and chaplaincy staff.

Throughout the year, there are a number of events tailored to various minority groups such as the LGBTQ+ and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, plus Ramadan, etc. Black History Month was celebrated through a range of activities, with steel drumming sessions, quizzes and canteen packs handed out to prisoners, which were very well received.

#### **5.5 Faith and pastoral support**

Chaplaincy at Doncaster represents all faiths. Those represented on a more regular basis include Free Church, Church of England, Roman Catholic, Muslim, Jewish and Buddhist, as well as Pagan, Sikh and Jehovah Witness. The department is about to recruit a Hindu chaplain. Chaplaincy is there to support everyone and offers pastoral care for people who are vulnerable, bereaved and distressed, thus playing a vital role in supporting prisoners during difficult times. Prisoners are handed a leaflet on induction that details the valuable services provide by the chaplaincy team and prisoners can apply for services, bible study classes and other support using in-cell technology.

The large, spacious chapel is used for many services and gatherings at key festivals throughout the year. There are rooms available for study groups to meet and there is a music worship group and a choir (Bird Song), which meets weekly. The Board recognises the invaluable work carried out by the chaplaincy team to support prisoners and their families.

## **6. Health and wellbeing**

### **6.1 Healthcare general**

The prison's healthcare service is provided by Practice Plus Group. The prison has a large, purpose-built unit that offers a range of clinics and services, including an on-site dentist, an ophthalmology service and on-site 24-hour healthcare cover. The Board received more healthcare applications than last year and our survey highlighted a high number of respondents who were dissatisfied with the healthcare department. However, when investigating complaints, the Board generally found that many were down to missed appointments by the prisoners themselves. The Board has no concerns about prisoners' access to urgent healthcare services or to dentistry and optical services.

The Board would, however, point out that population pressures and the issues faced in reception (see 4.1) are having an impact on prisoners receiving initial health assessments and medication quickly.

### **6.2 Mental health**

The mental health team is managed by the healthcare provider Practice Plus Group. At the end of the reporting year, there were 202 men on the mental health team's caseload. During the reporting year, 16 prisoners were assessed on whether there was need for them to be transferred to a more secure unit.

The establishment has seen an increase in the number of prisoners arriving at HMP Doncaster in need of mental health support, which often results in an increase in ACCTs being opened.

A major concern for the Board is that of prisoners waiting for a bed in a secure hospital after having had a gatekeeping assessment. HMP Doncaster has some provision in the Loft or social care unit, but those who need a more secure environment often have to remain in the CSU for long periods while awaiting a bed. In one instance, a prisoner was finally transferred after 101 days.

The Board acknowledges this is a national issue, which will require a national solution. However, we wish to reiterate that there is much evidence to support the fact that extended periods of isolation have a detrimental effect on a person's mental health.

### **6.3 Time out of cell, regime**

The prison has a full complement of staff, but this is obviously impacted by staff absences and training. One key issue for the prison is due to a rising number of bed watches, which has a detrimental impact on staffing levels, leading to an often more restrictive regime. The prison appears to have a robust plan in place to mitigate this. However, the Board has seen the impact this is having, with prisoners being 'locked down' for longer than they should be and exacerbated by the double occupancy of what is single-cell accommodation.

The Sports Academy at the prison aims to provide a physical education and recreational activity programme within a safe secure and a zero-tolerance environment. All prisoners have the opportunity to attend the gym twice a week to use the weights and cardio equipment and to play football or other games, supported by qualified instructors; prisoners are able to apply for gym activities using their in-

cell technology. The prison has a well-used weights room and cardio suite, plus a large sports hall and an artificially surfaced football pitch. HMP Doncaster has strong links with Doncaster Rovers Football Club and Leeds Rhinos Rugby Club, and there is a range of vocational courses available from level 1 through to a level 3 course in first aid.



## **7. Progression and resettlement**

### **7.1 Education, library**

Education within the prison is delivered by Novus under the PEF (Prison Education Framework). The model of education and work focuses on assessment, engagement and employability skills and is based on five core principles of teamwork, communication, self-management, problem solving and presentation.

The education, skills and work curriculum was designed to complement prison work and focus on 'upskilling' – thus preparing the prisoner to adopt a 'can do' culture to support his chances of a successful rehabilitation into society.

All prisoners are assessed at induction and given a personal learning plan (PLP). These are conducted as part of the information, advice and guidance (IAG) induction process. This, together with the Shannon Trust charity, helps identify those with reading difficulties and determines a starting level for all prisoners.

Historically, too few prisoners had access to education and attendance was low. During the writing of the report, there has been a concerted focus throughout the prison, with different departments working more cohesively to increase the figures. To support this, the education and skills team has clear messages. A learning journey has been created, which is available to all men on arrival in the form of a booklet clearly outlining the learning journey. Posters signposting this journey, the courses available and the entry requirements are clearly displayed in all areas of the prison.

In the last few weeks of the reporting year, attendance at education and workshops has increased to an average of 70% and the prison continues to work towards 80%.

Classrooms are bright, airy, well equipped and offer a wide range of education classes. There is an excellent media suite, offering digital media, plus courses in enterprise hospitality, with an opportunity to gain qualifications as a barista in the purpose-built coffee shop (Doncosta). Catering and hospitality offer both Level 1 and Level 2, and opportunities such as barbering, construction, rail track and the CSCS qualification are available. 'Market Street' is an innovative area in the prison that offers a wide range of practical activities, such as cycle repair, art and woodwork.

The library has been refurbished and has a good selection of fiction and non-fiction books, as well as religious and legal books and DVDs. The staff are enthusiastic and offer a range of enrichment activities, including arts and crafts, chess club and a choir. They organise World Book Day and have an 'author of the month', all designed to promote literacy, with reading schemes and quizzes. In addition, they have links with the local public library and the National Literacy Trust and run a children's book shop, where books can be posted out families. Access to the library is on a weekly rota basis and prisoners are encouraged to sign up to the activities on offer via in-cell technology.

### **7.2 Vocational training, work**

The establishment offers a varied curriculum that aims to meet the needs of the prison population. There is a range of vocational courses available, and prisoners, through the learning journey posters and booklets, can choose courses by visiting the education tab on their in-cell technology. Prisoners can clearly see what

qualifications are required, the level of security clearance and the progression route these courses can provide.

The prison has a large textiles workshop, which has a contract with DFS and where valuable skills are taught. There is also a newly built construction hub where prisoners can learn plastering, painting and woodwork.

Many of the job opportunities support the running of the prison, such as the laundry, cleaning, server working and the prison shop. Whilst prisoners are working and acquiring some level of skill such as food safety, many of these roles do not lead to higher level accreditation, which would help support a meaningful pathway on release.

### **7.3 Offender management, progression**

#### **7.3.1 Indeterminate sentences for IPP prisoners**

At the end of the reporting period there were nine imprisoned for public protection (IPP) prisoners at HMP Doncaster. Whilst this is a small cohort for this group of prisoners, the Board remains concerned about the provision available to them. The Board interviewed these prisoners over the summer.

The results were, sadly, not unexpected:

- Despite being informed via letter, prisoners stated they had not heard of IPP progression boards.
- Most had heard that the qualifying period for referral of a licence to the Parole Board to consider termination had reduced. However, this information came to them through the media.
- All prisoners stated a high degree of hopelessness, many stating they would be in prison for the rest of their life.

Implementing change for these men is no easy task and the prison holds monthly meetings with key stakeholders to discuss and support prisoner progression. The Board recognises the conflicting pressures prison managers face to support prisoner progression, but we believe that more must be done to address the unique situation of prisoners serving IPP sentences.

### **7.4 Resettlement planning**

HMP Doncaster is a designated resettlement prison. In compliance with their sentence plan, prisoners are given the opportunity to attend a number of vocational courses and appropriate employment opportunities.

The prisoner offender manager (POM) team arranges a monthly resettlement/ careers event, to which all prisoners with less than 16 weeks to release are invited. At the event, there are a various stalls under the theme of resettlement services, including accommodation providers, Nacro (a social justice charity), employers, ID and drugs' treatment providers.

On release, prisoners can attend the departure lounge, located outside the prison. It is run by Nacro, which has excellent links locally in supporting prisoners with accommodation and external services. They provide hot food, clothing and toiletries, much of which has been donated by food banks, charities and the public.

The staff are professional and very supportive but, over the last few months of the reporting period, the Board identified that it was becoming increasingly difficult for the team to accommodate individuals who are from outside the area, have nowhere to live and who are, therefore, more likely to reoffend.

## 8. The work of the IMB

### Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	12
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	0 (3 members going through early induction, no Chair or Business Development Officer)
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	6 (2 of which are 'Dual' Boarders, including the Chair; 1 on sabbatical)
Total number of visits to the establishment	199

### Applications to the IMB

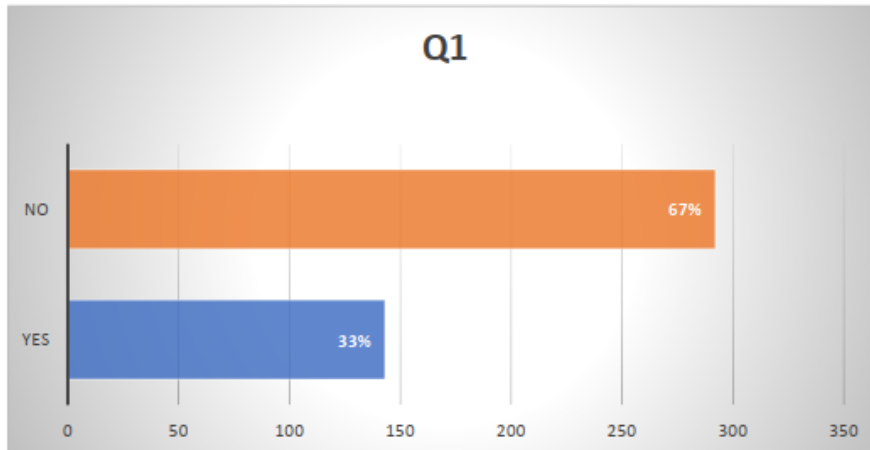
Code	Subject	Reporting year
A	Accommodation including laundry, clothing, ablutions	15
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives schemes, sanctions	4
C	Equality	22
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, time out of cell	30
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection, restrictions	21
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	21
F	Food and kitchens	9
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	59
H1	Property within the establishment	26
H2	Property during transfer or in another facility	17
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogues	2
I	Sentence management, including HDC (home detention curfew), ROTL (release on temporary licence), parole, release dates, recategorisation.	15
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	38
K	Transfers	3
L	Miscellaneous	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>283</b>

## Annex A

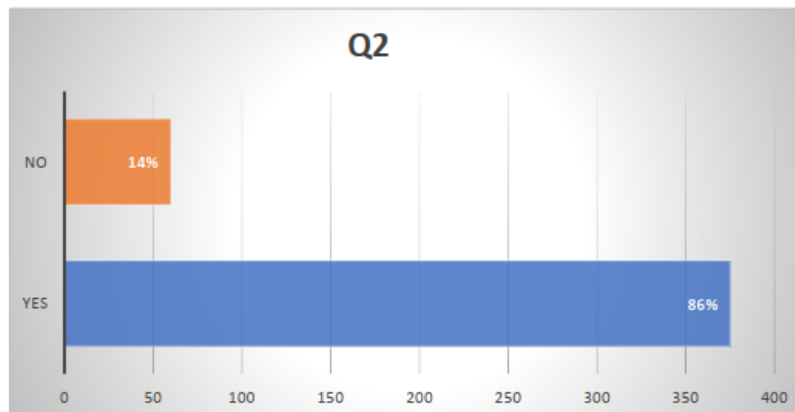
### IMB Survey

The survey was open to all prisoners, was conducted using in-cell technology and ran from 5-12 July 2024, when the prison's average roll for the week was 1128. The information, below, shows the results from the 435 prisoners (39%) who responded.

- 1 On your arrival at HMP Doncaster in Reception were you offered the opportunity to make a phone call?
- |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 143 | 33% |
| No  | 292 | 67% |

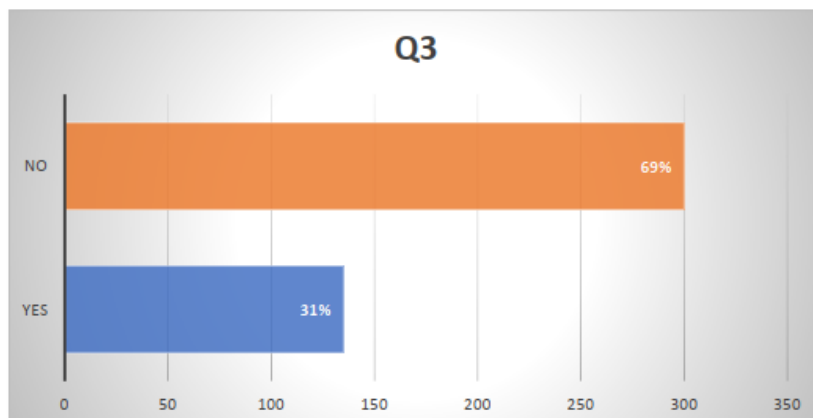


- 2 On your arrival at HMP Doncaster in Reception were you offered the opportunity to speak to Healthcare staff and have a health check?
- |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 375 | 86% |
| No  | 60  | 14% |



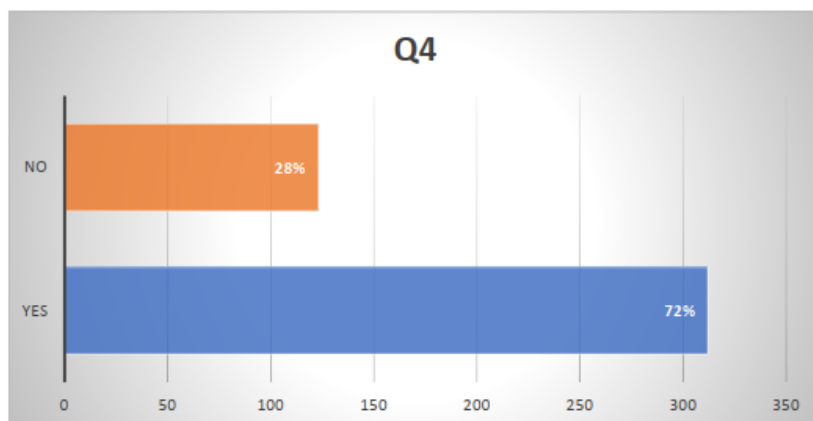
3 On your arrival at HMP Doncaster in Reception were you offered the opportunity to speak to peer support?

Yes	135	31%
No	300	69%



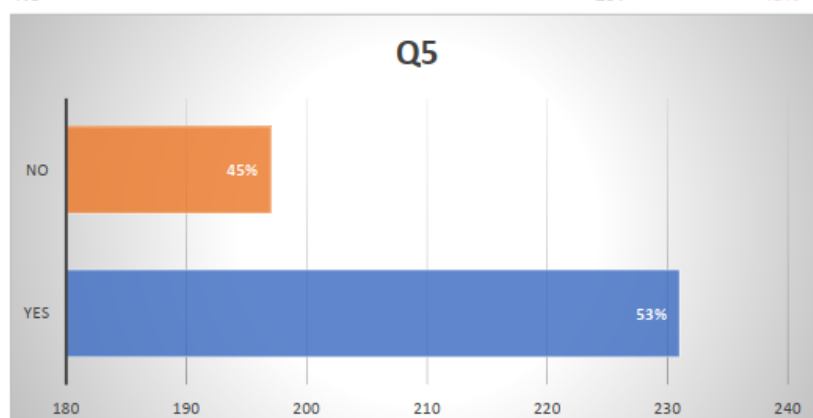
4 Within the first few days of your arrival at HMP Doncaster were you provided with a pin phone code?

Yes	312	72%
No	123	28%

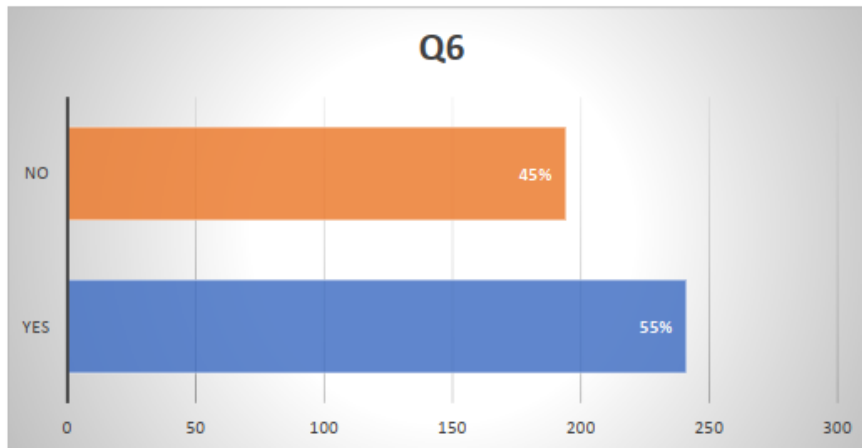


5 Within the first few days of your arrival at HMP Doncaster were you provided with a clothing parcel code (if a new reception)?

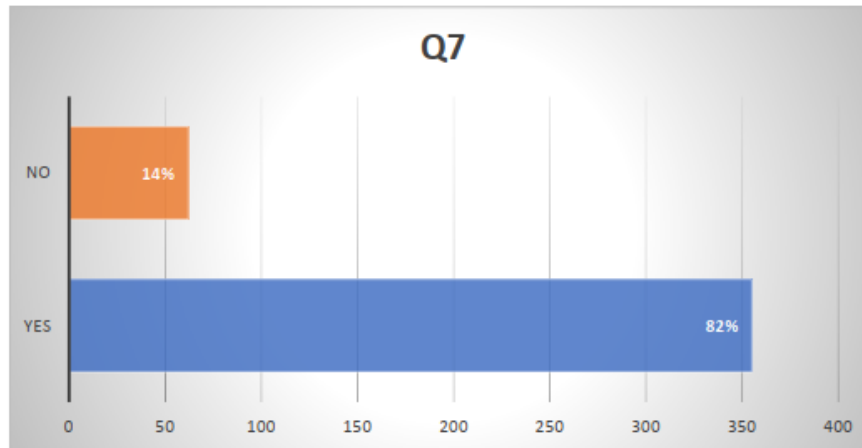
Yes	231	53%
No	197	45%



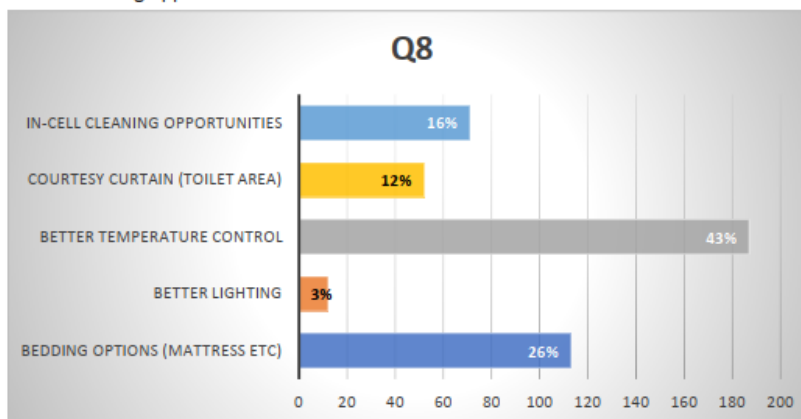
- 6 Within the first few days of your arrival at HMP Doncaster were you provided with a first night canteen?
- |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 241 | 55% |
| No  | 194 | 45% |



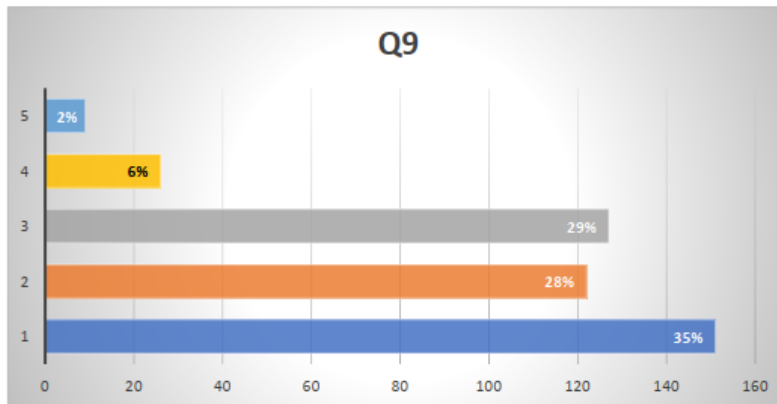
- 7 If English is not your first language were you able to understand what was happening/being told?
- |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 355 | 82% |
| No  | 62  | 14% |



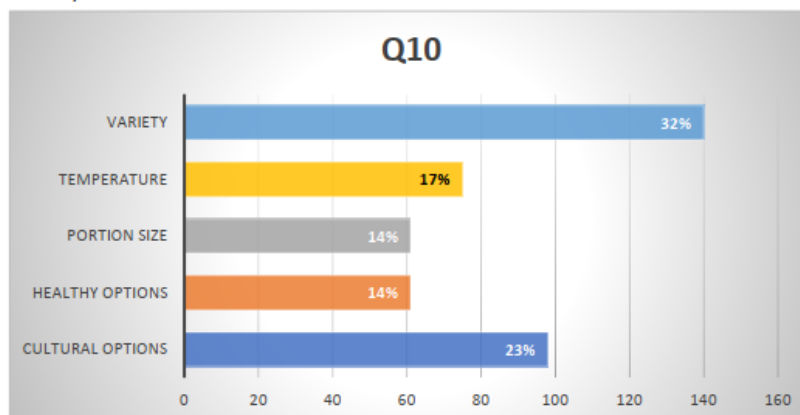
- 8 In your opinion what is the most important improvement that could improve your cell? PLEASE CHOOSE ONE
- |                                |     |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Bedding options (mattress etc) | 113 | 26% |
| Better lighting                | 12  | 3%  |
| Better temperature control     | 187 | 43% |
| Courtesy curtain (toilet area) | 52  | 12% |
| In-cell cleaning opportunities | 71  | 16% |



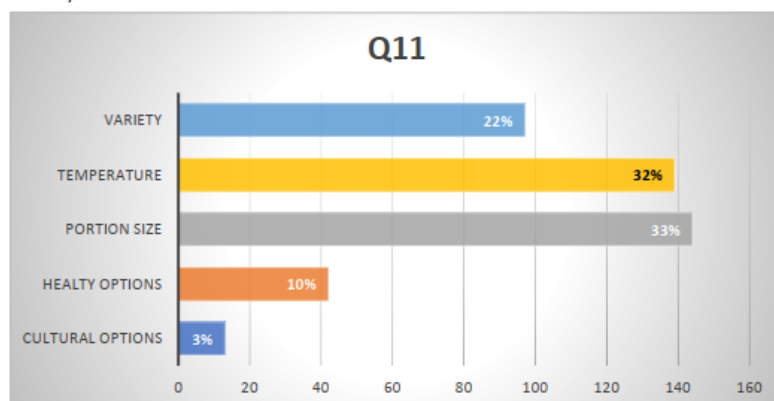
9	What is your opinion about the food served to you? (1 being worst 5 being best)		
	1	151	35%
	2	122	28%
	3	127	29%
	4	26	6%
	5	9	2%



10	Choose one good thing about the food: CHOOSE ONE		
	Cultural Options	98	23%
	Healthy Options	61	14%
	Portion Size	61	14%
	Temperature	75	17%
	Variety	140	32%



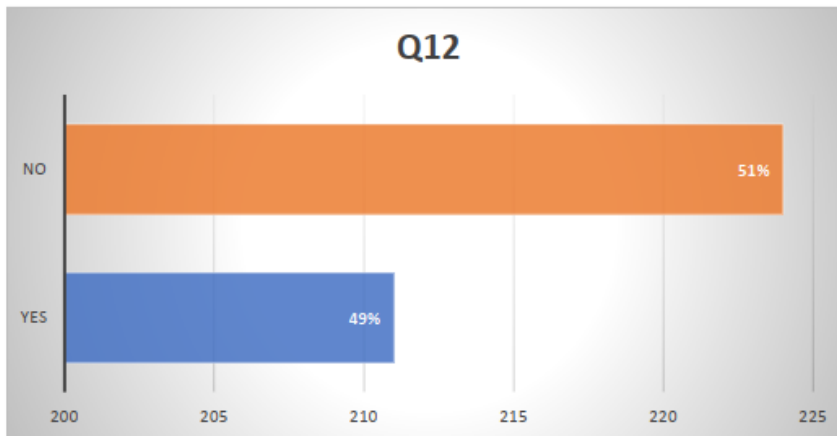
11	In your opinion how can food be improved? CHOOSE ONE		
	Cultural Options	13	3%
	Healty Options	42	10%
	Portion Size	144	33%
	Temperature	139	32%
	Variety	97	22%





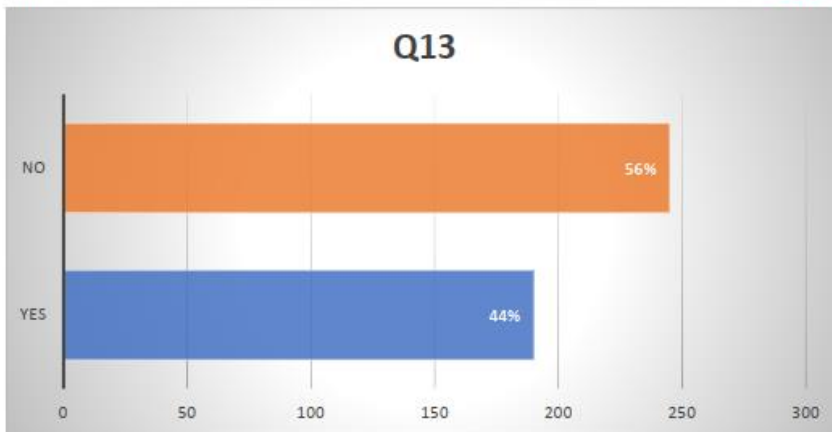
12 Are you aware of the Peer Support available to you?

Yes	211	49%
No	224	51%



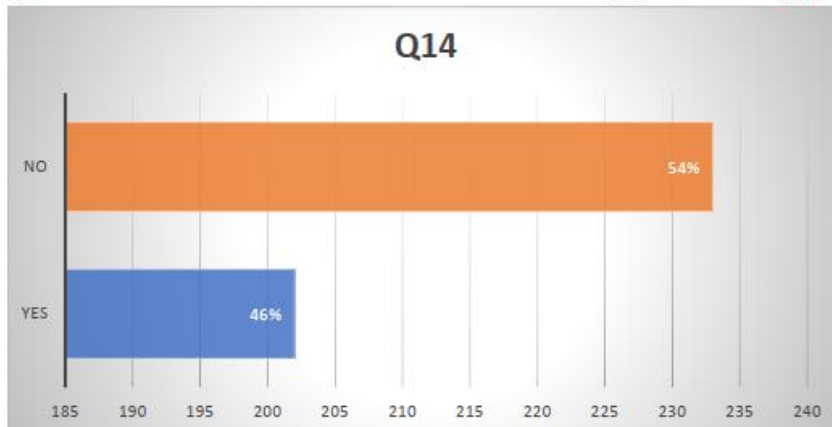
13 Do you know how to access Peer Support if required?

Yes	190	44%
No	245	56%



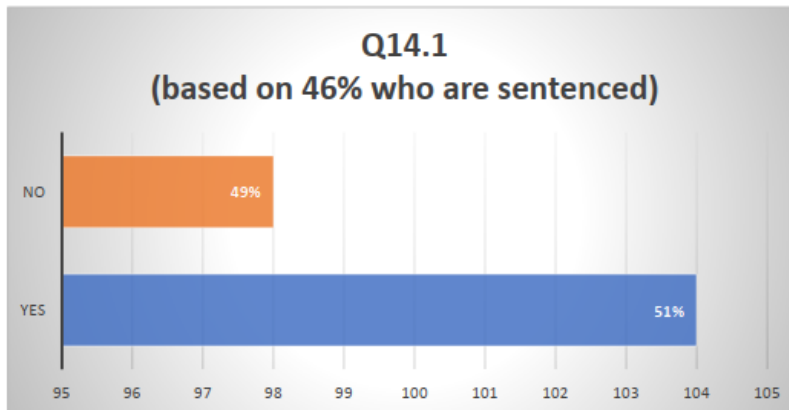
14 Are you sentenced?

Yes	202	46%
No	233	54%



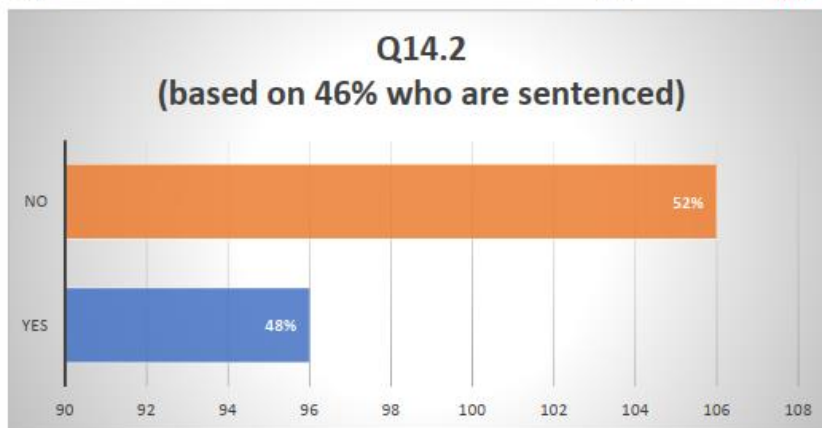
14.1 If sentenced did you have contact with your Offender Manager (POM) within 28 days of arriving?

Yes	104	51%
No	98	49%



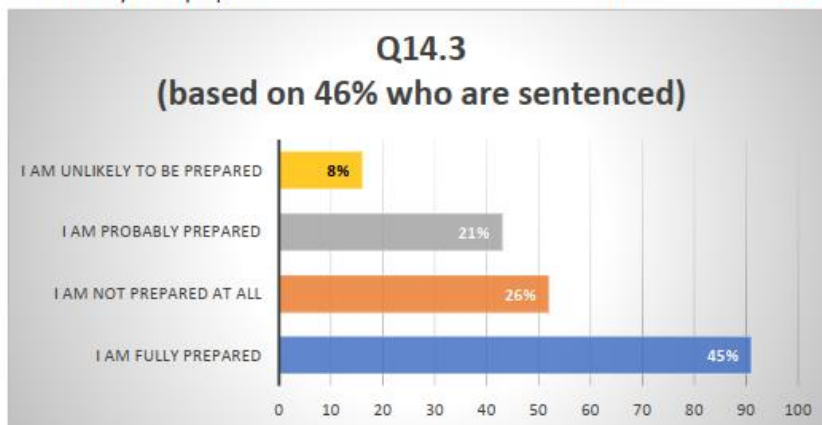
14.2 If sentenced are you aware of your Sentence Plan and what work you need to do?

Yes	96	48%
No	106	52%

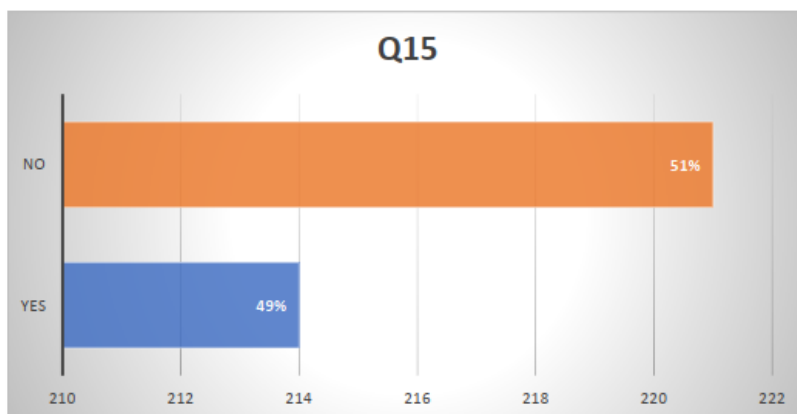


14.3 If sentenced do you consider that your Sentence Plan is preparing you for your release? CHOOSE ONE

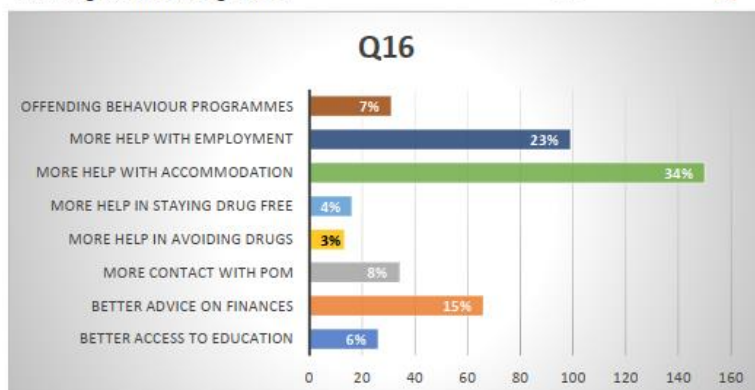
I am fully prepared	91	45%
I am not prepared at all	52	26%
I am probably prepared	43	21%
I am unlikely to be prepared	16	8%



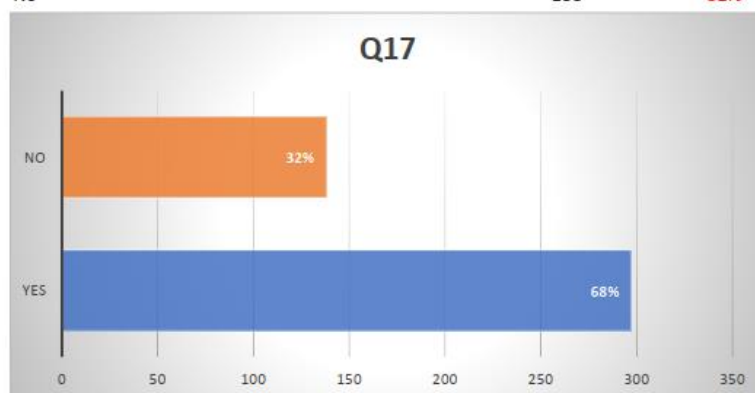
- 15 Do you think that the work and/or education being offered to you is adequately supporting you for your release?
- |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 214 | 49% |
| No  | 221 | 51% |



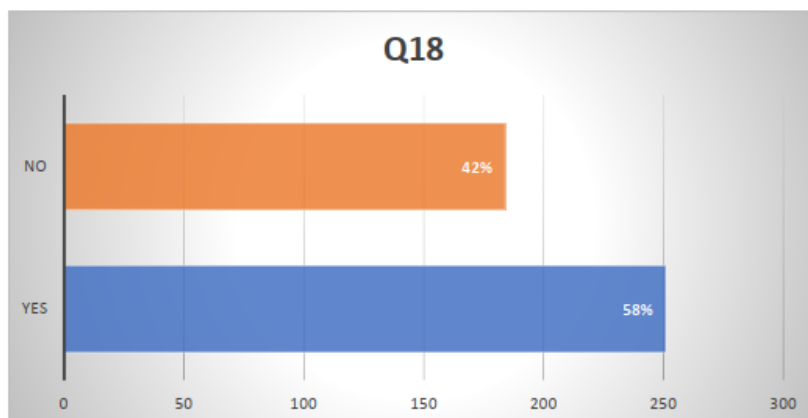
- 16 Thinking about your release which of the following would make you more prepared for your release: CHOOSE ONE
- |                                |     |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Better access to education     | 26  | 6%  |
| Better advice on finances      | 66  | 15% |
| More contact with POM          | 34  | 8%  |
| More help in avoiding drugs    | 13  | 3%  |
| More help in staying drug free | 16  | 4%  |
| More help with accommodation   | 150 | 34% |
| More help with employment      | 99  | 23% |
| Offending Behaviour Programmes | 31  | 7%  |



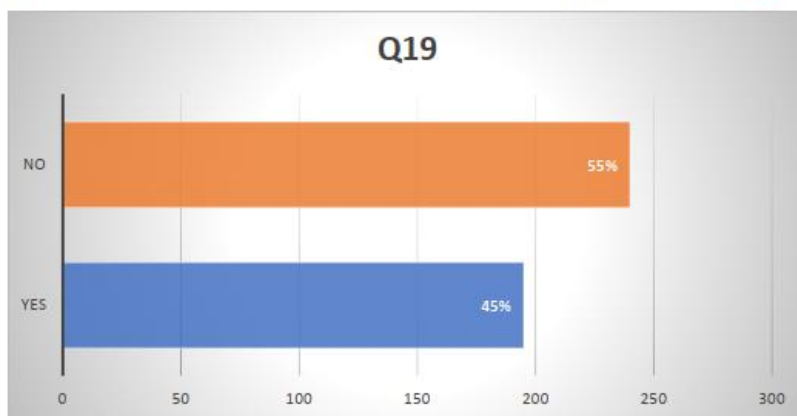
- 17 Do you feel safe in this prison?
- |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 297 | 68% |
| No  | 138 | 32% |



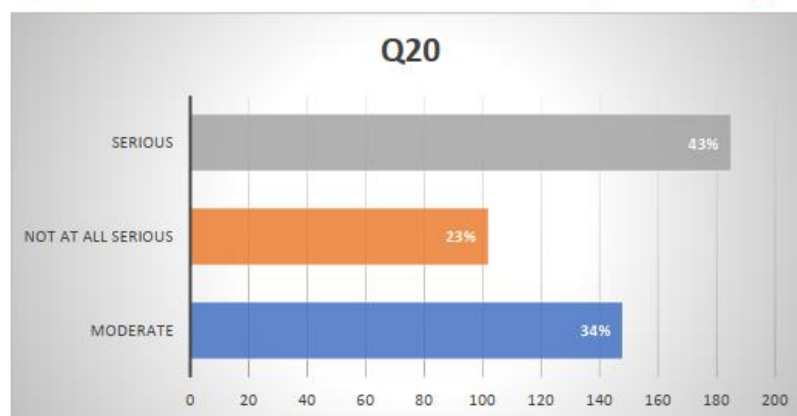
- 18 Are you aware of victimisation racism or bullying from any quarter?
- |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 251 | 58% |
| No  | 184 | 42% |



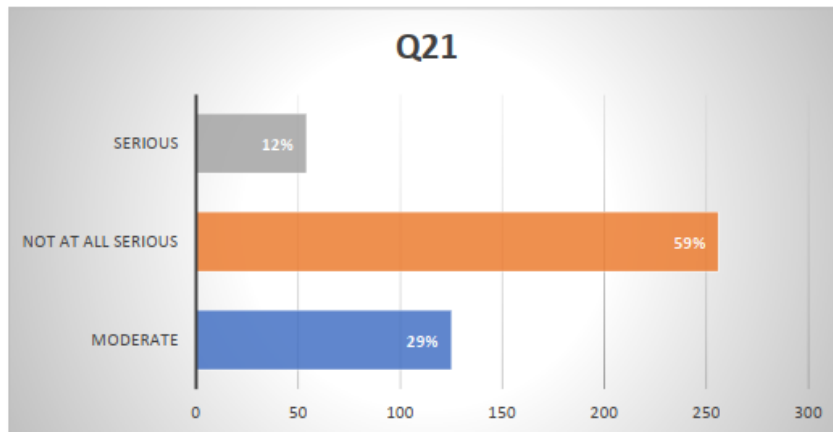
- 19 Do you know how to submit a DIRF (Discrimination Incident Reporting Form) / what the DIRF process is?
- |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 195 | 45% |
| No  | 240 | 55% |



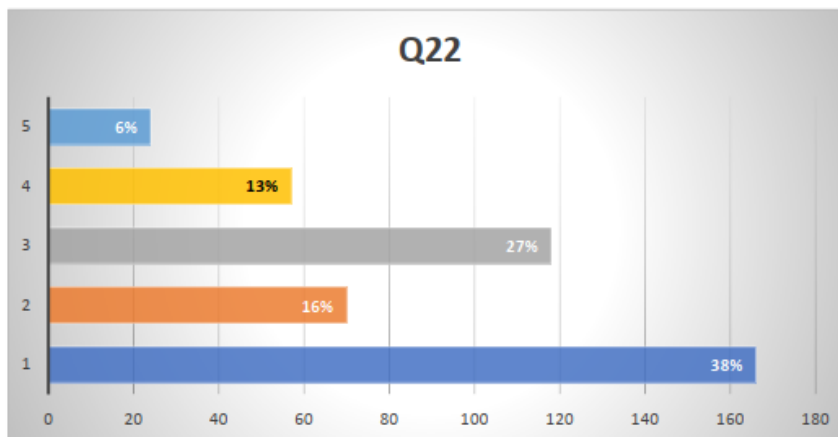
- 20 How serious do you consider the drug problem is at HMP Doncaster?
- |                    |     |     |
|--------------------|-----|-----|
| Moderate           | 148 | 34% |
| Not at all serious | 102 | 23% |
| Serious            | 185 | 43% |



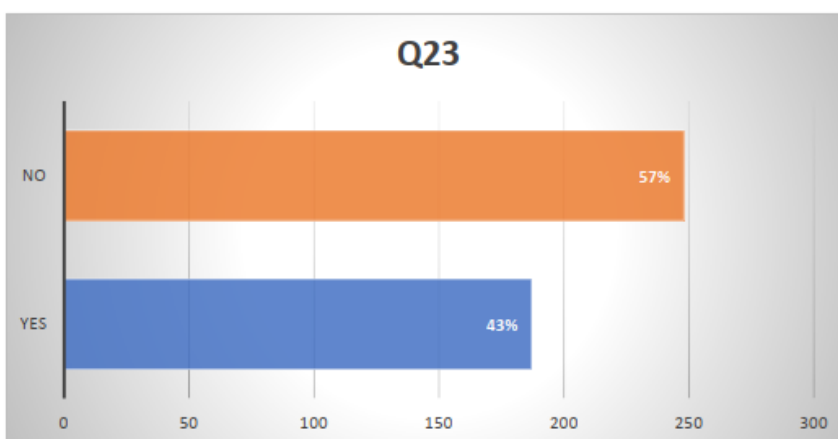
- 21 How serious do you consider the alcohol problem is at HMP Doncaster?
- |                    |     |     |
|--------------------|-----|-----|
| Moderate           | 125 | 29% |
| Not at all serious | 256 | 59% |
| Serious            | 54  | 12% |



- 22 What do you think of the healthcare services provided? (1 being worst 5 being best)
- |   |     |     |
|---|-----|-----|
| 1 | 166 | 38% |
| 2 | 70  | 16% |
| 3 | 118 | 27% |
| 4 | 57  | 13% |
| 5 | 24  | 6%  |

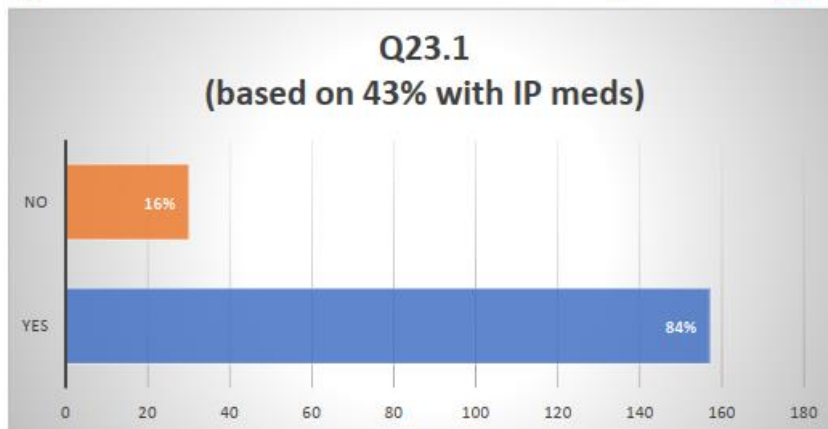


- 23 Do you have in-possession medication?
- |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 187 | 43% |
| No  | 248 | 57% |



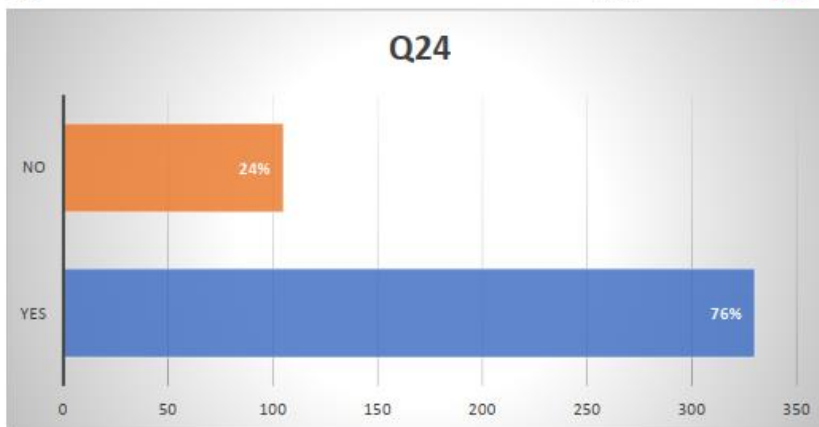
23.1 Are you able to take your medication as prescribed?

Yes	157	84%
No	30	16%



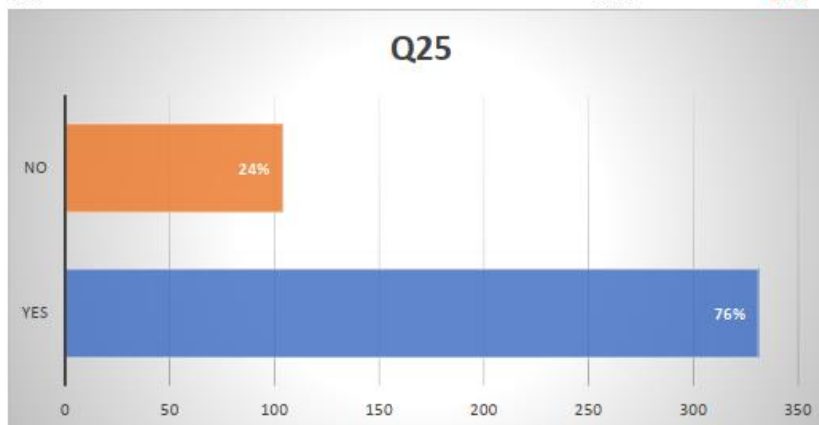
24 Are you able to book visits easily on the ATM?

Yes	330	76%
No	105	24%



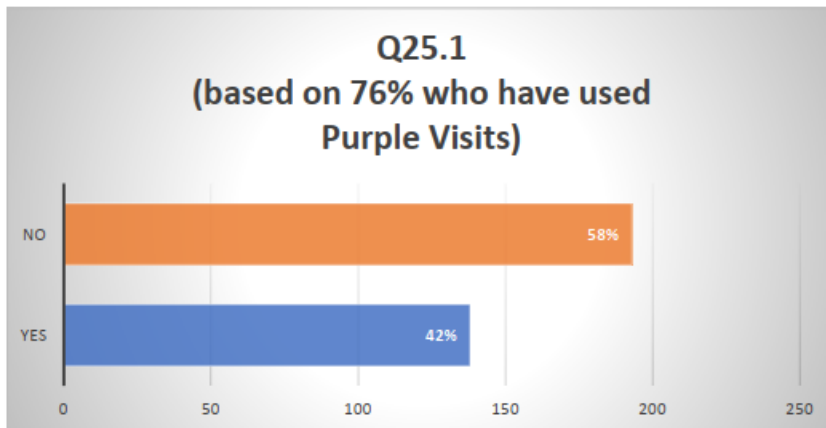
25 Do you know what Purple Visits is?

Yes	331	76%
No	104	24%



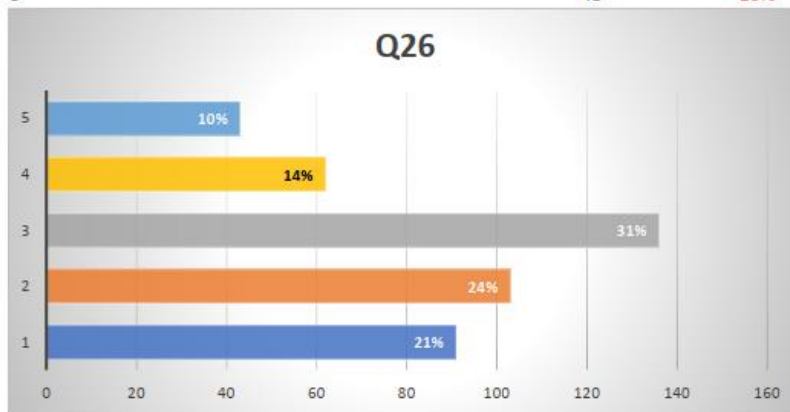
25.1 Have you used Purple Visits?

Yes	138	42%
No	193	58%



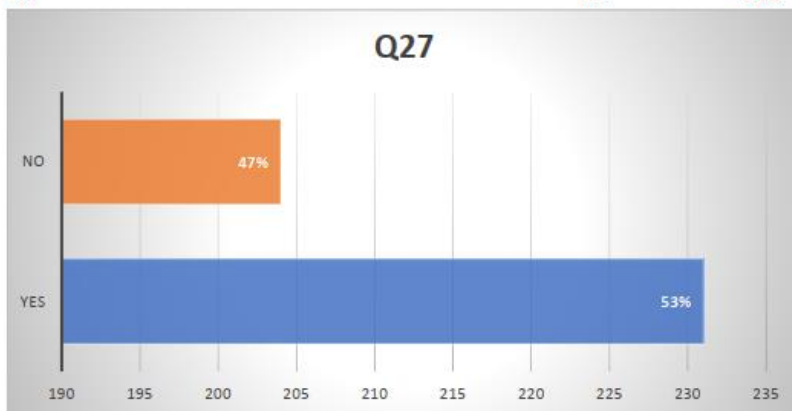
26 Thinking about RESPECT how would you consider you are treated within the prison? (1 being worst 5 being best)

1	91	21%
2	103	24%
3	136	31%
4	62	14%
5	43	10%



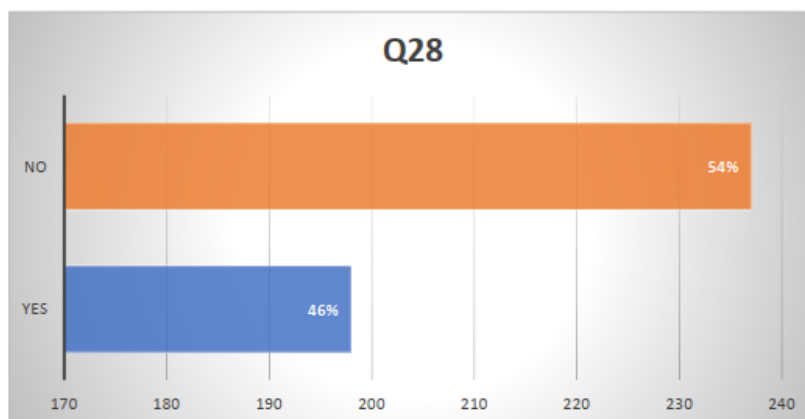
27 Are you aware of the IMB (Independent Monitoring Board)?

Yes	231	53%
No	204	47%



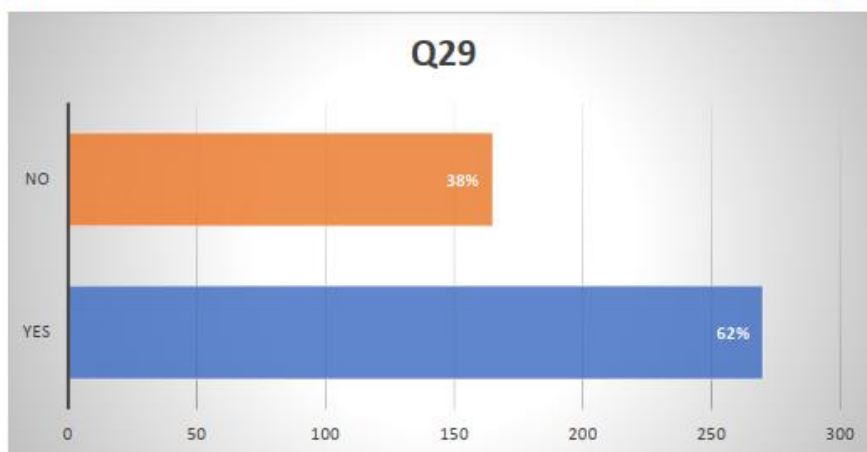
28 Do you know how to make an application to the IMB?

Yes	198	46%
No	237	54%



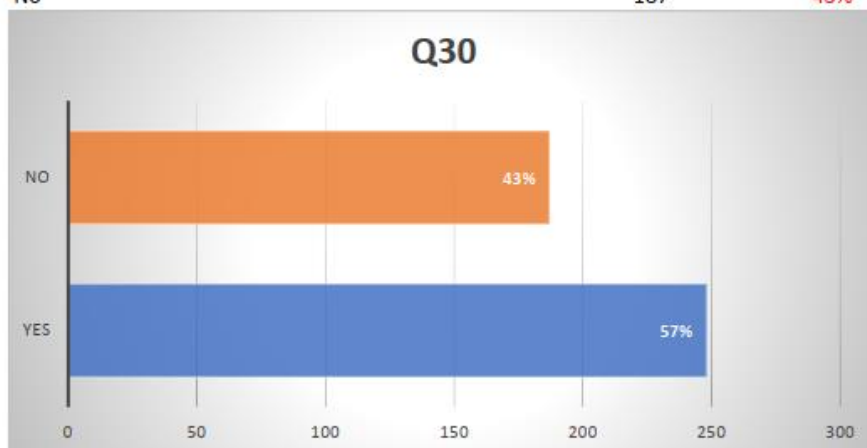
29 Do you know how to use the prison complaints procedure?

Yes	270	62%
No	165	38%



30 Are complaint forms readily available on your wing?

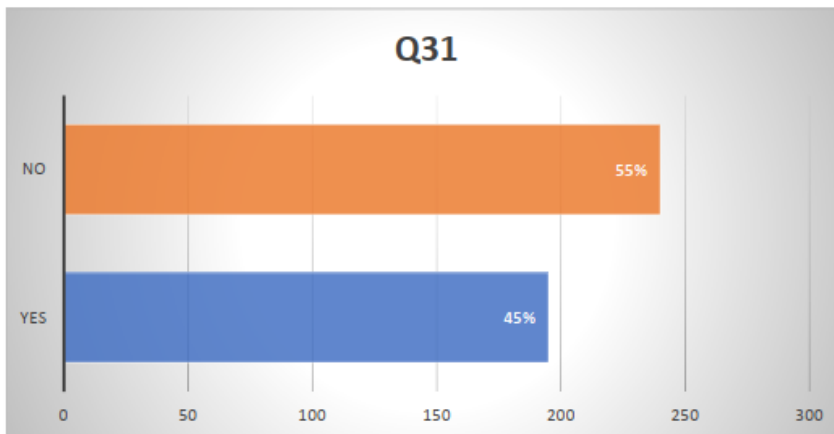
Yes	248	57%
No	187	43%





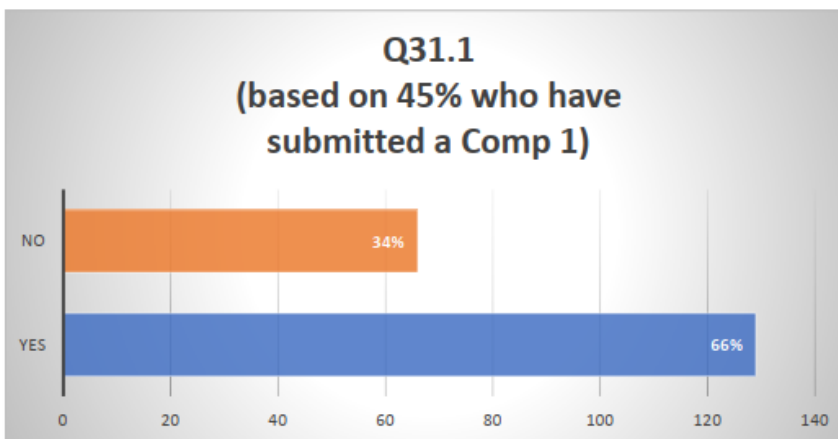
31 Have you ever submitted a COMP 1 complaint form?

Yes	195	45%
No	240	55%



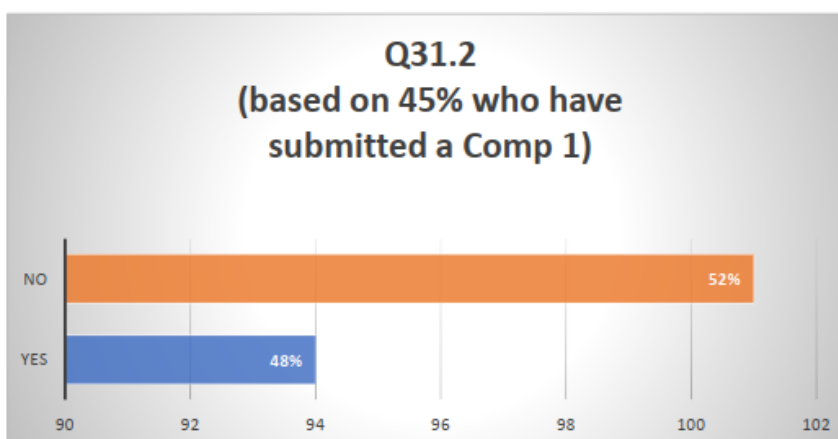
31.1 Did you receive an acknowledgement confirming the COMP 1 had been received by the Complaints Clerk?

Yes	129	66%
No	66	34%



31.2 Was your COMP 1 dealt with within the prescribed time scale (i.e. 5 working days)?

Yes	94	48%
No	101	52%





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