



# **Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP/YOI Hindley**

**For reporting year  
1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025**

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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

2.1 The secure site at HMP/YOI Hindley near Wigan, Greater Manchester, was originally opened as a young offenders' institution in 1961 but now provides a resettlement and training prison to category C adult, male prisoners and young adults aged 18-21.

2.2 The prison has eight residential wings, including a care and separation unit (CSU, where prisoners are segregated) and a preparation psychologically informed planned environment, or Prep-PIPE. The Prep-PIPE is a 10-bed unit, jointly funded by the NHS and HMPPS. It is the only category C Prep-PIPE in the country and operates as a national resource.

The unit forms part of the offender personality disorder (OPD) pathway, which supports prisoners who are likely to have a 'personality disorder' and provides guidance for staff working with them. The Prep-PIPE aims to help prisoners develop increased motivation, readiness and relational capacity in preparation for further treatment.

2.3 Each wing houses the full age range of prisoners, with young adults dispersed across the estate. 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, known as the operational capacity, was 600<sup>1</sup>. This reduced in November 2025 to 582 due to fire detection improvements starting on cells throughout the prison. The work is due to be completed by March 2026. The prison therefore ran at virtually full capacity throughout the year.

2.4 There was an ambitious capital plan in place to significantly extend the current prison to increase accommodation from 600 to 1341 men. In March 2025, the decision was taken to rescope to deliver an additional 741 places. These revised proposals will effectively double the population. This was due to commence in May 2024 but was delayed due to the plans being revised and additional planning permission being sought for an extra houseblock. Construction work is expected to start in December 2026 after enabling works have been completed.

2.5 The current core six residential wings A-F vary in size and purpose. The original four wings A-D house 83, 75, 84 and 84 prisoners respectively, with E wing accommodating 131 beds and F wing 133. The pre-PIPE has capacity for 10 men.

2.6 Previously, the prison mainly accommodated men with up to four years of their sentence remaining. However, recent pressures nationally on prison spaces means HMP/YOI Hindley now accommodates prisoners serving life sentences and those with imprisonment for public protection (IPP) sentences alongside the original target group. A third of prisoners stay for three months or less.

2.7 There is a large sports hall marked out for games, including football, badminton and volleyball; two fully equipped weightlifting areas; a cardiovascular area; a remedial room, along with good shower and changing facilities; and an artificial turf pitch.

2.8 The prison has two multi-faith centres, which provide a full programme of services, groups, group work and support activities for all faiths, including those of no faith. On the site of the chaplaincy services area there is a small but impactful outdoor nature

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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.

area, which houses chickens, rabbits, birds, and beehives. The area provides a relaxed, family friendly environment for certain identified men and their families to meet and enjoy the outdoor experience together. This has been particularly effective for prisoners or family members who are neurodiverse and find it a challenge to be in the main visiting area.

2.9 The healthcare centre at HMP/YOI Hindley is purpose built and houses GP services four times a week, twice weekly dental surgeries, immunisation sessions and a variety of nurse led specialist healthcare and wellbeing clinics. The prison has not experienced any significant health related infections during the period of this report.

### **3. Key points**

#### **Background**

Over the reporting period, the prison has had a number of changes in some leadership roles, with some vacant senior posts being filled with short term secondments or internal temporary promotions. Although this brought 'new eyes' to the issues, a lack of consistency can be challenging, as can frequent changes in policy without time allowed for initial ideas to embed as each appointment attempts to, as appears to the Board, 'make their mark'. Senior management, however, continue to maintain their profile around the prison and are known by the prisoners, who refer to them by name in conversations with Board members. Communications have improved between staff and prisoners. For example, 'Way out' TV, which is the default channel on all in-cell televisions, was useful during extended lock down periods, providing effective communication and information. The prisoner council also continues to bring real benefits to the prison, with prisoners believing that it is a worthwhile, productive group enabling direct communication with senior staff. However, communications still fall short at times, particularly with regard to regime changes.

#### **The prison adopted four key strategic priorities for 2025/26:**

- Drugs – Reduce, Restrict & Recover
- Purposeful Activity
- Safer Community
- Staff Development

Issues around the availability and ease of access to drugs and the impact this has on the prison population once again caused concern to the Board throughout the year. The consequential rise in debts leading to violence and self-harm, the reduction in full-time meaningful activity places (education and employment) and the poor quality of existing residential accommodation have all been highlighted in previous IMB annual reports and continued to be the main concerns throughout 2025.

#### **3.1 Main findings**

##### **Safety**

The Board is increasingly concerned about the prison not always feeling safe. This is due to the rising levels of violence, affecting both prisoners and staff, and the availability of illicit substances which leads to high levels of men being under the influence and/or self-isolating. This is evidenced by:

- The increased number of assaults on both prisoners and staff, with a peak in the second quarter of the year (48 in 2024 rising to 70 in 2025).
- Drugs, mobile devices and weapons continuing to be readily available.
- The lack of security and searching at the main gate.
- HMP/YOI Hindley being situated mid-way between Manchester and Liverpool with a population covering both conurbations. This means that the prison houses gang members from both areas and issues external to the prison are brought inside and reflected in some of the violence. In the prison's analysis gang

allegiance is the second most significant trigger for violence, after 'arguments' for the year. The prison is working closely with external bodies to try and minimise the risk.

### **Fair and humane treatment**

- Overall, the Board considers that prisoners are treated with fairness and humanity.
- The national problem of overcrowding in prisons impacted on HMP/YOI Hindley, which was operating at very near or full capacity throughout the year. Difficulties with prisoner management were compounded by staff absence levels and despite successful bids for extra funding to support incentivised overtime, prisoners suffered an unacceptable level of lock downs.
- Hindley IMB voiced concerns over the year regarding the number of prisoners who were self-isolating for long periods, especially those with long sentences to serve. Many in this category are understood to be in debt and wish to remain in isolation for their own safety. Whilst the regular safety intervention meetings (SIMs) ensured that these prisoners were regularly monitored, engaged and encouraged to re-join the general prison community, this section of the prison population continued to cause concern.
- There continue to be extended periods of lockdown, meaning that men can be locked up in a cell that is unfit for purpose, due to its size and cell sharing, for up to 23 hours per day. This is unacceptable and is the result of high levels of staff absence and insufficient activity spaces.
- The number of prisoners at Hindley under an imprisonment for public protection (IPP) sentence has been maintained at similar levels to those in 2024. However, the Board does not believe that HMP Hindley has the resources to support their long-term care or prepare them for release.

### **Health and wellbeing**

- Overall, the Board considers the health and wellbeing needs of prisoners are being satisfactorily met at HMP/YOI Hindley.
- Regular, anecdotal informal feedback to the Board from the men in receipt of healthcare over the past year indicates a general satisfaction with the standard of healthcare services.
- There is good cross prison co-operation, particularly between catering, PE and healthcare staff, working closely for the benefit of prisoners despite severe budget constraints.
- The Board has been impressed by the prompt actions of healthcare and prison staff, saving lives when prisoners were under the influence of illicit substances.
- Alongside the general clinical services on offer, worthy of commendation is the high standard of other wellbeing related services provided via the gym and physical fitness team, chaplaincy services and the Partners of Prisoners Service (POPS). Together, they provide a range of health, fitness and wellbeing related activities and programmes that complement and support the work of the prison medical team, particularly around lower-level mental health support, self-care and engagement with prisoner families.
- The neurodiversity lead has ensured that comprehensive analyses of need are carried out on men at Hindley, making sure that any neurodiverse requirements are considered as part of the decision-making process throughout their period of detention at HMP/YOI Hindley..

## **Progression and resettlement**

- As highlighted in previous annual reports, the Board remains concerned about the insufficient number of available activity places, which support progress towards successful rehabilitation, for men at HMP/YOI Hindley. Only 43% of men had at least half-time purposeful activity, falling to 17% who were occupied full-time. This leads to boredom, frustration, increased time in cells, negatively impacts mental health, fails to prepare men for employment on release and can increase the chances of substance misuse.
- The above situation has been exacerbated by the number of sessions being cancelled due to the lack of both prison and activity staff, due to vacancies or absence. This has been compounded by a number of the men, unused to regular work, education or routine, refusing to attend their allocated activity, despite the sanctions imposed upon them.
- The introduction of early release schemes to manage the national capacity crisis in prisons at relatively short notice meant that many men left Hindley unprepared for their release.

### **3.2 Main areas for development**

#### ***TO THE MINISTER***

As the Minister will be aware from his recent visit, the Board continues to be very concerned about the level of substance misuse and the number of weapons found throughout the prison and the apparent ease with which illicit items enter. The Board acknowledges the work carried out by staff to attempt to minimise this, including the particularly difficult challenge of preventing drone deliveries, but remains concerned about the lack of security checks at the main gate where staff, contractors, visitors and their bags are seldom searched and there are limited x-ray facilities. What is planned to enhance gate security and reduce this route for illicit items getting into the prison?

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

Recent cuts to the education budget have caused a reduction in the number of activity places available to prisoners and aggravated an already poor situation. At Hindley this means only 43% of men have any purposeful activity, with only 17% partaking on a full-time basis. This is unacceptable at a resettlement and training prison whose very remit is to prepare men for their release. Will the Prison Service review funding allocations and provide sufficient funds to meet Hindley's activity and educational needs?

#### ***TO THE GOVERNOR***

The prison welcomed a new Governor in January 2026 and the Board appreciates that this report highlights issues that occurred prior to her arrival.

Although the Board acknowledges the efforts made to treat all wings equally, the level of lockdown, up to 23 hours per day, is neither fair nor humane, and causes increased frustration, anger and further challenging behaviours. How is the Governor proposing to ensure that lockdowns of this length no longer occur?

Staff absence levels have been unacceptably high, which is impacting on the prisoners with extended periods of lockdown, restricted regime and disruption to work and educational activity. How is this to be improved?

### 3.3 Response to the last report

Issue Raised	Response given	Progress
<b>To the Minister</b>		
<p>Concerns about the number of prisoners on IPP sentences</p> <p>remaining in prison without review and the impact on their mental health and families and friends.</p>	<p>The Minister understands the concerns and acknowledges they were not included within the sentencing review and promises ongoing reduction in numbers whilst housing them in appropriate prisons.</p>	<p>Numbers have reduced nationally but not at HMP/YOI Hindley despite the fact that it is not an appropriate establishment for IPP prisoners. Numbers (37) are similar to last year without the necessary infrastructure to support their preparation for release.</p>
<b>To the Prison Service</b>		
<p>The impact of the prison extension plans on the current, older estate.</p>	<p>No further funding is available.</p>	<p>The situation has further worsened as budgets are tightened, inflation rises and project is 'value engineered', removing essential elements. The announcement of a third wing has delayed commencement further as planning permission is sought. Existing accommodation is unfit for purpose, which was confirmed by HMIP in 2024 and in the response to the 2024 IMB annual report.</p>
<b>To the Governor</b>		
<p>Concerns about the level and use of illicit substances and ease of access with minimal security on the gate.</p>	<p>There is no space or funding to introduce an upgraded security entrance.</p>	<p>There has been no progress on an updated security entrance or the high levels of illicit items entering the prison.</p>
<p>Staff absence levels have been unacceptably high resulting in periods of lock down, missed appointments, boredom, frustration and further challenging behaviour.</p>	<p>Ongoing initiatives, successful bids for additional funding to support extra staffing.</p>	<p>Staff absence remained stubbornly high for much of the year and wing lock downs were commonplace.</p>

## **Evidence sections 4 – 7**

### **4. Safety**

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

4.1.1 The prison continues to have a transient population with 983 prisoners arriving at the prison during the year (888 in 2024), 764 released back into the community (613 in 2024) and 242 transferred to another establishment (271 in 2024). This can present challenges in dealing with prisoners' property transfers, settling the men into their new environment, allocating activity places when available, the loss of skilled workers from some areas and the significant additional workload for staff based in the offender management unit (OMU).

4.1.2 All prisoners are received into the main reception area where they meet healthcare and chaplaincy staff. The prison has been operating at or near to full capacity for much of the year but despite this, men have, in general, been allocated and moved to wings in a timely manner. There has been an increase in the number of men arriving at the prison late in the day resulting in staff having to remain on duty, difficulties in sourcing meals and delays to some other first day processes.

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

4.2.1 There were two deaths in custody during the year. The inquest for one is scheduled for September 2026 and the second still awaits toxicology reports. These delays are upsetting for families, friends, fellow prisoners and staff.

4.2.2 The number of incidents of self-harm reduced significantly in the second half of the year (2024: 220 in the last 6 months, 2025: 153 in the comparable period, a fall of 30%). Although the Board would not wish to see any incidents, it is pleasing to note a significant downward trend sustained over a six month period.

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

4.3.1 There continue to be a significant number of violent incidents with a high rate of gang-based allegiance. There was an overall annual increase in violent incidents of 11%, following a 22% increase last year (315 in 2024 rising to 350 in 2025). The increase in assaults on staff during the year is particularly concerning to the Board, as the number almost doubled to 98.

4.3.2 The prevalence of serious organised crime gang members in Hindley and the rivalry of those from different areas of the northwest have contributed to the increased violence. Separating these gangs is particularly difficult due to the pressure on the available cell space on individual wings and the prevalence of known associates across the establishment. A Greater Manchester initiative and close working with other prisons is trying to reduce risk.

4.3.3 The numbers of men self-isolating fluctuated throughout the year, peaking at 18 and falling as low as five. These men receive regular visits from the safer custody team, chaplaincy, senior management and Board members alongside the wing officers.

#### **4.4 Use of force**

4.4.1 There has been an increase of 3% in the number of incidents where force was used this year, rising beyond the high levels recorded in 2024 (604 in 2023, 703 in 2024, 725 in 2025). Numbers peaked in July and then in October, when 77 incidents were recorded. However, although this shows an upward trend and is a concern to the Board, it is lower than the national comparator group lying sixth out of eight prisons.

4.4.2 The main reasons given for the use of force during the year were: fights between prisoners, refusal to locate to a cell and preventing harm to others.

4.4.3 Investigation into the higher levels of black, mixed race and Asian prisoners who were subject to the use of force found that those targeted tended to be under 25 (48% of incidents compared to 32% of the population) and with gang allegiances prior to their arrival at HMP/YOI Hindley. This will continue to be monitored by the Board.

#### **4.5 Preventing illicit items**

4.5.1 The instances of drug related issues remain high, with almost daily occurrences of prisoners found under the influence. This gave rise to serious safety issues, medical emergencies and violence. The prompt and effective interventions by medical and prison staff have undoubtedly saved lives, as acknowledged by ambulance crews.

4.5.2 The use of drones continues to present a key route for illicit items to enter the establishment. Larger drones are now being deployed with increased technical capabilities and capacity for increased loads.

4.5.3 There remains, as reported by the IMB for a number of years, minimal deterrent to prevent illicit items entering the establishment through the routine searching of staff, contractors and other official visitors and their property entering the prison.

#### **4.6 Conventional safety**

4.6.1 There has been a significant reduction in the number of cell fires during the year, falling from 24 in 2024 to 5 in 2025 following a range of initiatives including the banning of vapes in the CSU.

#### **4.7 Adjudications**

4.7.1 As reported last year, the number of adjudications (disciplinary hearings when a prisoner is alleged to have broken prison rules) remains resource intensive. Hearings occur six days a week and frequently take up to a total of over three hours. There were 3,695 in 2025, similar to 2024 numbers (3,676), but significantly more than in 2023 (2,754), an increase of 34%. This reflects an increase in successful searching for illicit items, violence against other prisoners and staff and failures to comply with a direct order.

4.7.2 Although completion of the required paperwork has improved, too many cases have been adjourned, resulting in increased future workloads and some cases being dismissed as out of time.

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

Generally, the Board considers prisoners to be treated with fairness and humanity. However, the Board continually voiced concerns regarding the numbers of prisoners choosing to self-isolate for extended periods. Many of these prisoners cite debt and fear of violence and wish to remain in isolation for their own safety. Despite regular safety intervention meetings (SIMs), monitoring and encouragement to engage, this section of the prison population continues to cause the Board concern. Chaplaincy regularly engages with self-isolators and actively encourages prisoners to leave their cell and attend the nature area. The prison has also recently introduced a dedicated breakfast club specifically for self-isolators.

Throughout the reporting year there were extended periods of restriction to the regime, meaning that prisoners were locked up in a cell without any meaningful activity. Many of these cells, which were originally designed for occupancy by a single young offender, are now being shared by two adult prisoners and are therefore unfit for purpose due to their size and poor facilities. In addition, these restrictions have had a disruptive influence on prisoners' work routine and education provision, as well as leading to a reduction in social engagement. These factors, when combined, have not only failed to prepare prisoners for the world of work, but they also have had a negative impact on their mental stability and levels of frustration, often resulting in violence and unrest.

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

5.1.1 The Board continues to raise concerns regarding prisoners sharing a cell that was originally only designed for one. The structure of accommodation remains the same, with the original four wings A, B, C and D unfit for purpose, cramped, with poor ventilation, inadequate heating, inadequate showers and poor lines of sight. Wings E and F, although more modern and much brighter with more association space, still consist of mainly shared cells.

5.1.2 HMP Hindley has a separate pre-PIPE (psychologically informed planned environment) unit for prisoners with complex psychological needs. This unit although small, has excellent facilities and all prisoners are housed in single cells.

5.1.3 The Board is concerned that the proposed extension, although welcome, will lead to a three-tier system of accommodation. The prison will range from the unfit, inhumane original wings, through the newer but still shared accommodation, to the new wings with single, ensuite cells, built to the latest specification. This could have a negative impact on both prisoners and staff.

5.1.4 The Board undertook regular "*deep dives*" of each residential wing, looking at the appearance of the wing, completeness and quality of paperwork, and speaking to prisoners and staff. These revealed some cleanliness, maintenance and hygiene issues over time, with standards varying from day to day. This was often in relation to showers and some electrical equipment being out of use. Competitions to reward the cleanest wing, however, have been positive and successful.

5.1.5 The exercise yards are generally well used and some have outdoor gym equipment that the prisoners enjoy in the warmer months.

5.1.6 The Board is pleased to note that wing cleaners are offered monthly training to ensure standards of cleanliness and hygiene are prioritised.

5.1.7 The kitchen is one of the oldest and least modern parts of the prison and there continue to be regular challenges with the ageing and inefficient cooking equipment.

5.1.8 The kitchen staff are to be commended on how well they perform in these difficult circumstances and are often inventive in how and what they produce on time each day.

5.1.9 The planned new kitchen has been further delayed until at least 2030, and the Board has significant concerns for the current facility's ability to continue to function until replaced.

5.1.10 For the wings furthest from the kitchen, the heated trolleys are inadequate, and food is often tepid or cold on arrival.

5.1.11 Kitchen staff are responsive to prisoner suggestions on menu options and hold regular consultations. However, the kitchen manager is restricted by budget constraints which have been compounded by the increased cost of basic foodstuffs.

5.1.12 The Board regularly visits the kitchen and samples the food. The food is generally of a good standard, although at times portions appear small. The kitchen staff fully appreciate differing religious requirements and ensure they are complied with.

5.1.13 Prisoners regularly tell the Board they would like better facilities to cook for themselves. However, the cost of establishing these facilities is too high and recent experiences with the number of fire alarms activated and the cleanliness of the equipment means further risk assessments are required. All wings have a microwave and fridge.

## **5.2 Segregation**

5.2.1 The care and separation unit (CSU) continues to be well maintained, bright, welcoming and, despite dealing with some particularly vulnerable and challenging men, generally calm.

5.2.2 The custodial managers and staff were observed to be understanding, patient and responded well to prisoner needs. The unit housed several extremely challenging prisoners, including those who made serious attempts at self-harm. The staff dealt with each monitored situation with courtesy and professionalism. The Board always found the CSU to be clean, tidy and well organised. Where possible, prisoners are provided with items that will help promote self-improvement and keep them motivated, for example books and sketch pads. Despite some extremely challenging events the staff appeared to extend equal compassion and respect to all residents. It is rare for the Board to receive negative comments from prisoners regarding their treatment in the CSU.

5.2.3 The problem of prison spaces nationally impacts on transferring prisoners both out of and within the prison itself. Security concerns and lack of spaces mean relocating men back onto the wing can be challenging. This has led to some longer stays on the unit pending allocation of suitable accommodation both within the prison and in the wider prison estate.

5.2.4 The Board regularly observed reviews of prisoners on the unit. Monitored reviews were carried out efficiently and effectively by the designated governor. Prisoner views were taken into account and any decision by the governor ensured the best outcome for both the individual prisoner and for the prison. Often governors had to be firm about managing prisoner expectations. The Board considers the process to be fair and humane.

5.2.5 18 prisoners remained on the unit for over 42 days (19 in 2024). The reasons varied from awaiting transfer to a specialist mental health facility, to young adults awaiting reclassification to a category B prison which required regional approval. All decisions were based on the needs of the prisoner or security issues, often under difficult circumstances. The correct approvals were received, and paperwork was completed.

5.2.6 The staff are diligent in relocating prisoners back to normal location as soon as is practical.

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

5.3.1 HMP Hindley facilitates a prisoner council where prisoners are actively encouraged, via their representative, to have a voice. The Prison Council consists of representatives from each wing plus a young adult (18-21 years old). It has become better established and met regularly under the leadership of a governor. Concerns raised have included food, property, canteen, the condition of showers, machines not working and the lack of smart clothes available to attend funerals. The Board considers it to be a good process, with realistic expectations of what can be achieved. It has been very successful in resolving issues, for example kitchen menus and portion sizes. The prisoners inform the IMB that they feel their opinions matter and that they are now being listened to.

5.3.2 A revised, targeted approach to keywork was implemented during the year, with each prisoner being risk assessed on their vulnerability and need. Focus has been on the quality delivered, including the written records. It was pleasing to note that the prison had met its target by the year end, with a notable improvement in the quality of sessions. This is due to specialist training and better use of staff with the requisite skills.

5.3.3 Following a significant fall last year in the resignations of Band 3-5 prison officers, this trend has continued reducing from 10% to 8%. However, staff absence levels have remained stubbornly high despite the focus that has been placed upon addressing this. This has caused challenges across the prison with regular lock downs (the impact that frustrates prisoners the most), restrictions on activity, and difficulties in attending appointments across the prison.

### **5.4 Equality and diversity**

5.4.1 The population of the prison is predominately white (80%), with black prisoners (9%), Asian (7%) and mixed race (4%). There were 31 DIRF (discrimination incident reporting forms) submitted during the reporting year, which after investigation, 8 were proven. Submissions were made by both staff, 7, and prisoners, 24, all were independently reviewed.

5.4.2 101 of prisoners under the age of 25 were care leavers or care experienced, around 50% of Hindley's young adult population, significantly higher than in the general population.

5.4.3 The prison identifies those prisoners who are neurodivergent. This is around 55-60% of the prison population compared with 50% of the national prison population and 15-20% in the general population. These men have higher rates of proven adjudications, lower engagement with purposeful activity, higher refusals to attend activities, are more often found to be under the influence of illicit substances, lower incentives status, higher numbers segregated and higher rates of having been in care. The neurodiversity support manager has done much to educate staff, prisoners and the IMB. She has worked with staff across the prison on a risk-based assessment for keywork.

5.4.4 The pre-engagement project commenced in June 2025 with seven participants completing the 'Lifeboat' programme. Feedback from the prisoners was positive, four came off self-isolation and engaged with purposeful activity, three of whom sustained their work.

5.4.5 Interested prisoners have been trained as peer mentors and support others in the challenges faced. One prisoner commented very positively about how helpful the training had been in understanding his neurodivergent son.

## **5.5 Faith and pastoral support**

5.5.1 The Board has observed the chaplaincy team to be extremely committed and to provide an outstanding contribution towards the welfare and support of the prisoners, particularly those with complex needs.

5.5.2 Their role is widespread across and beyond the prison community, and involves work with those self-isolating, all segregated prisoners, new inductions, prisoners undergoing an assessment care in custody teamwork (ACCT – the process used to support those at risk of self-harm or suicide) review, and providing general practical help where it is required, for example with family liaison. The team also facilitates any attendance of a prisoner at a funeral of a close family member.

5.5.3 The chaplaincy office and grounds are welcoming and interesting, with a greenhouse, raised beds and planters and a range of small animals and chickens. Vulnerable prisoners are actively encouraged to attend to care for the gardens and animals. In the summer months the prisoners are able to grow salad crops and ornamental plants. The prisoners tell the Board they find the nature area, including the animals, therapeutic, calm and tranquil and that it provides them with a focus and sense of responsibility that they cannot find whilst confined on the wings.

5.5.4 The chaplaincy caters for those with or without faith and also celebrates significant events, such as Remembrance Day, with displays in the prison grounds. In December, the chaplaincy organised several multi-faith events, including a "blue carol service" for prisoners "who felt they had nothing to celebrate in December", which was well attended.

5.5.5 Attendance at the various faith services was negatively impacted by low staffing levels which prevented prisoners from being escorted from their wing.

5.5.6 The chaplaincy organised memorial services for the two prisoners who died whilst at HMP/YOI Hindley which appeared to be appreciated by prisoners and staff.

## **5.6 Incentives schemes**

5.6.1 The incentives scheme is designed to encourage good behaviour, engagement in rehabilitation, and compliance with rules. It rewards prisoners by awarding them

privileges. Prisoners start at a standard level, with opportunities to move up to enhanced (more rewards), or move down to basic (fewer rewards) based on conduct.

5.6.2 The Board notes the scheme is not consistent across the prison due to inconsistent decision making and attention to detail by staff, with some prisoners remaining on enhanced pending, during and after an adjudication. Similarly, some prisoners who have lost enhanced status and whose adjudication is found not proven struggle to regain enhanced status. The Board is aware of some prisoners having achieved enhanced status, then refusing to attend work or education, and remaining on enhanced. The activities allocations board now highlights and actions a review of any such cases, and there were no enhanced prisoners refusing to attend activities at the year end.

5.6.3 At the close of 2025, 15% of prisoners were on basic regime, 47% on standard and 38% enhanced. Of the 88 prisoners on basic, 28 (32%) were 18-21 years old which was 23% of the cohort and 10% of these young adults were on enhanced. In conversation with prisoners aged under 22 they stated that they could see little value in moving to enhanced.

## **5.7 Complaints**

5.7.1 Prison data shows that complaints have fallen in 2025 to 1,408 (from 1,585 in 2023 and 1,592 in 2024), with 14% of the complaints concerning accommodation. This reflects the concerns raised by the Board and HMIP about the condition of the current infrastructure and wider residential issues. 17% of complaints to the prison were about prisoner's property.

5.7.2 Applications (written representations to the IMB about any matter a prisoner wishes to raise) to the Board are normally raised when the outcome to a complaint has been unfavourable to the prisoner. Applications to the IMB about residential complaints were low, at six (5%) during the year.

## **5.8 Property**

5.8.1 This is a failure of the prison system generally, as prisoner transfer often leads to loss of property. There is a poor response from other establishments when they are queried and it is the source of much frustration amongst the men when irreplaceable, sentimental personal belongings are lost. The increase in prisoner 'churn' has seen an increase in lost property during transfer.

## **6. Health and wellbeing**

### **6.1 Healthcare general**

6.1.1 The Board continues to observe good relationships between healthcare, other professionals across the prison and external partners. The local health delivery board meet regularly to maintain links between services, local authorities and health commissioners. It is well attended with all parties contributing to discussions.

6.1.2 On arrival at the establishment, men receive an initial reception screening by the primary healthcare team within 24 hours of arrival and, if required, a referral to the mental health team.

6.1.3 The Board was pleased to note that the staffing issues from last year were virtually overcome and problems with the distribution of some prescriptions reduced significantly.

6.1.4 The healthcare team enabled a prisoner healthcare forum which captures their experiences of healthcare and mental health services. This ran monthly with membership drawn at random. Satisfaction rates were 95% in March 2025.

### **6.2 Physical healthcare**

6.2.1 Spectrum healthcare continues to provide healthcare which was generally regarded positively by prisoners. Notwithstanding the very transient population and the difficulties this brings to service delivery, the Board observed a good standard of care during 2025. The Local Delivery Board consider HMP Hindley as one of the best performing prisons in the region.

6.2.2 One GP delivers five sessions a week, one for substance misuse. Health staff visit the CSU daily, with GPs visiting three times per week. There was about a three week wait for a doctor's appointment.

6.2.3 The dental service offers five sessions per week with no more than an eight week waiting period for appointments. Both waiting periods have increased from 2024.

6.2.4 The prison had the second highest uptake of the flu vaccine in the region with 41% vaccinated.

6.2.5 The healthcare team have had additional pressures with the increased number of prisoners found under the influence of illicit substances. They have been prompt to respond and, in some cases, saved lives with timely action. They were commended by the NHS ambulance service in recognition of their work.

### **6.3 Mental health**

6.3.1 Mental health services at HMP/YOI Hindley operate with a model of care and assessment, interventions and support. The service is reportedly highly valued by prisoners and its impact by multi-disciplinary colleagues.

6.3.2 The team included: eight qualified mental health nurses, a counsellor, support worker, health and wellbeing worker, a neurodiversity developmental nurse, forensic psychiatrist (half a day per week) and a high intensity therapist providing EMDR (eye movement desensitisation and reprocessing, a trauma therapy).

6.3.3 A well man clinic (for men's health) is extremely popular and offers valuable advice to prisoners.

6.3.4 The regime changes and increased periods of lock down have impacted on mental health services, and this continues to be monitored by the Board. IMB notes that in July 2025 there were 27 prisoners on ACCTs with a rise in demand for face-to-face meetings. This increase in the volume of ACCTs places additional pressure on the mental health team as they are required to attend all reviews.

6.3.5 The number of men requiring constant watches increased in June (12), July and August (6), many of whom presented with multiple, complex mental health issues.

6.3.6 The mental health team has introduced a fortnightly breakfast club for self-isolators to provide supportive social interaction, emotional support, reduce loneliness, and provide an opportunity for early identification of care needs and a proactive strategy focussing on prevention and early care.

6.3.6 The team has provided a stable service which prisoners report to the IMB as being very supportive, meeting their needs in a timely and friendly way. Most prisoners are seen within five days. Urgent requests are dealt with on the day.

6.3.7 The pre-PIPE unit runs separately from the main mental health services, under a national contract, although the prisoners are still under the care of the mental health service in the prison. The unit can house 10 men, with a maximum of three under 21 years of age. The atmosphere and general condition of the pre-PIPE unit is of a good standard and the unit presents as calm and welcoming. The IMB observed good engagement in activities, with staff and prisoners working well together. The men are encouraged to use the enclosed outdoor area with fitness equipment, plants and seating to promote their physical health and emotional wellbeing. In December 2025 staff and prisoners embraced the Christmas spirit by decorating the communal area to a high standard. This activity raised the spirits, alleviating some of the stress associated with Christmas in prison.

6.3.8 'We are survivors' were contracted for three days per week to provide therapy sessions.

## **6.4 Social care**

6.4.1 The prison works closely with the local authorities to deliver any required social care to those that meet requirements. Only ten prisoners were over 55 at the end of the year.

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

6.5.1 Physical exercise (PE) continues to be an integral part of health and wellbeing for prisoners. The gym is very popular and classes are well attended. The IMB has observed that the PE team/staff are well respected by the prison population, and that they have the emotional and physical wellbeing of the prisoners at the forefront of their daily practice. The timetable in 2025 was modified to meet the needs of the prisoners with a specific session available for full-time workers.

6.5.2 The maximum group size of 25 in the gym provides a better experience with sufficient equipment and a less tense atmosphere.

6.5.3 The regular park runs within prison grounds continue to be popular with the men, with around 20 participating weekly; one prisoner celebrated his 100<sup>th</sup> parkrun at Hindley.

6.5.4 Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue, together with PE staff and the safer custody team, introduced FIREFIT which provides fitness training and some awareness of the role as a firefighter.

6.5.5 PE on prescription or socially prescribed PE allows those with mental health or neurodiverse needs to access the gym in smaller groups.

6.5.6 The Manchester City project continued throughout the year, targeting men under 26 years from Greater Manchester with 3-6 months of their sentence remaining. It has developed since the original pilot in 2022 with 10-12 men per cohort. Original Board concerns about the narrowness of the criteria and the number of men excluded from the opportunity have been partially eliminated.

### **6.6.1 Drug and alcohol rehabilitation**

6.6.1 The drug strategy takes a whole prison approach with the greater use of prisoner peer mentors who provide a recovery network, out of hours advice and guidance, lead mutual aid groups and assist in the induction process.

6.6.2 Given the widespread drug problem across the prison, the drug strategy lead introduced a drug supply reduction action plan. This focussed on reducing ingress and disrupting internal trafficking. This included:

- Regular risk assessments
- Installation of drone resistant windows
- Strengthened parcel control
- Perimeter patrols to deter throwovers
- Intelligence-led cell searches and proactive response to drone activity
- Out-of-hours operations with NWST (North West Search Team) and GMP (Greater Manchester Police), controlled movement zones to limit trafficking routes, and quick "pop-up" searches delivering disruption with minimal staffing.

6.6.3 The levels of men found under the influence of illicit substances continue to cause concern. For example, 200 prisoners in August and 114 in September. All were seen by healthcare and Change, Grow, Live (CGL) and offered support.

6.6.4 CGL continue to provide psychosocial services with individual and group sessions available. A 14 week programme was available with prisoners speaking positively about the experience.

6.6.5 In addition, the provision of holistic interventions such as Theatre in prison and Run for your Life were run alongside structured psychosocial sessions in acupuncture and mindfulness.

6.6.6 The chaplaincy has introduced an alcohol recovery programme facilitated by the Church of Latter-Day Saints which was well received. There are indications of this having had a positive impact.

6.6.7 The team worked hard on ensuring that support continues on release with an 83.3% success rate (compared to a national success rate of 75%).

## **6.7 Soft skills**

6.7.1 The centre housing chaplaincy services offers men the opportunity to care for a range of animals (rabbits, chickens, bees, birds and fish).

6.7.2 The wings have been refreshed with a range of murals painted by the prisoners, complemented by artwork in other areas of the prison. In a prison where the fabric of the building is old and tired, the bright colours do much to lift spirits.

6.7.3 There is wide use of 'red bands', trusted prisoners who work across the prison assisting teams and providing support.

6.7.4 In 2025, the prison employed ten prisoners as Listeners with six on duty at any one time. They received training over three days from the Samaritans who provided ongoing training and support. Numbers, however, varied as trained prisoners were released or transferred.

## **7. Progression and resettlement**

The main issue continues to be the shortage of activity spaces, which leads to only around half of the men in the prison being able to pursue meaningful activities at any one time. As a result, some prisoners experience mental health challenges that can lead to an increase in self-harm and the use of illegal drugs. This behaviour often results in mounting debt, which further isolates prisoners and can trigger violence.

### **7.1 Education, library**

7.1.1 The new education contract was introduced during the year and meant a significant reduction in provision, increased class sizes, shorter sessions and the removal of some options. There are now 56 places in education down from 108, based on a revised budget of £1.1m from £1.8m.

7.1.2 Attendance at full-time educational workshops (barbering, joinery, mentoring, multi-skills dry, multi-skills wet and restaurant) reached 91% by the end of the year, peaking at 98% in the restaurant and barbering, and falling to 74% in mentoring. Overall, attendance in part-time activities is slightly lower at 86%.

7.1.3 43% of prisoners were engaged in at least some form of purposeful activity, although only 17% benefitted from this being full-time and hence any form of experience of life after release.

7.1.4 Attendance at activities from those allocated to a specific area was at 78% at the year end. The relatively short stay for many prisoners (36% under 3 months, 56% under 6 months) means that it is challenging to maintain any stability in work areas as prisoners come and go.

7.1.5 The prison has experienced significant IT issues during the year, some software, some hardware. It is very frustrating that these are ongoing and despite chasing, the responsible organisations have not resolved the problems.

7.1.6 There were six new Shannon trust mentors trained who led reading groups in the library.

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

7.2.1 There has been some movement in the range of industries supporting prisoners as Remade with Hope was replaced by Link Polymer and new opportunities were pursued.

7.2.2 Attendance at workshops was at 70% at the end of the year. This has been impacted by wing lock downs as those undertaking vocational training are classified as non-essential workers and prisoners were not always able to be taken to workshops. Attendance remains higher for full-time employment with enhanced cleaning achieving 100%.

7.2.3 To counteract the reduction in education places with the change to the prison education contract, many of the workshop activities have moved from full to part-time. Previously there were 106 full-time places and 40 part-time ones, with a total of 146 men employed. This was changed to 36 full-time and 180 part-time, so 216 men are employed, an addition of 70 places to help compensate for the loss of 56 education spaces. Although this did engage more men and provide them with meaningful activity, it is a pity that this comes at the expense of providing full-time employment, leaving some prisoners frustrated.

7.2.4 The prison continues to pursue and engage with external companies and bodies to attempt to secure additional workspaces to meet the long-term shortfall. However, initial start-up capital and the ongoing running costs mean that several, frustratingly, have fallen by the wayside through lack of finance. When funding is secured, Amey can be slow in providing the supporting infrastructure, delaying start dates and frustrating new partners.

7.2.5 A new achievement award was introduced to recognise prisoners who 'go the extra mile' in their employment or on the wing. Nominations were accepted from across the prison with 30 recognised at an awards ceremony held in September. This was well received and the men showed obvious pride in the recognition earned.

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

7.3.1 There has been an increased turnover of prisoners, with 983 (888 in 2024) arriving into the prison during the year and 93% remaining at Hindley for less than two years, either being released (764) or transferred to another establishment (242). Arrivals peaked in December at 104, all of whom needed processing, reviewing and an action plan produced. HMP Hindley was established to cater for around 30 arrivals per month.

7.3.2 The age breakdown at the year-end shows 36% were under 25, the same as the previous year.

7.3.3 The increasingly high turnover rate of prisoners through HMP/YOI Hindley has meant that the work of the offender management unit (OMU) has been extremely pressurised.

7.3.4 The introduction of various early release schemes meant a considerable increase in workload to tight timescales. The team was recognised as team of the year at the Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire regional awards.

### **7.4 Family contact**

7.4.1 The chaplaincy and the charitable organisation Partners of Prisoners support family contact. The importance of family ties is well recognised throughout the prison.

7.4.2 A range of visit days were arranged for target groups: adult only, neurodivergent individuals, families, those on IPP sentences etc. A specific group for those not receiving visitors was convened and met monthly.

### **7.5 Resettlement planning**

7.5.1 On arrival at Hindley, all prisoners are assessed on their readiness for employment on release. This indicates the intervention required to prepare a prisoner for employment on release and individual targeted plans to be drawn up.

7.5.2 The prison organised a range of employer recruitment activities throughout the year, most resulting in interviews and, for a few, employment on release. All men involved gained useful experience.

7.5.3 The high prison churn rate has significantly increased the numbers of prisoners being released monthly and sometimes at relatively short notice, increasing the work of the employment team.

7.5.4 Resettlement boards are held weekly and are staffed by a full multi-disciplinary team, including a representative of the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP),

information advice & guidance (IAG), the prison employment lead, the offender management unit, housing advisers and POPs. Attendance is around two thirds of prisoners due for release within 12 weeks. Those men who do not attend are contacted individually so that all efforts to have post release services in place are made.

7.5.5 Employment at six months after release was at 56% for the year, the highest in the country (out of the 23 resettlement prisons). The prison employment lead has received a Butler Trust Award for his work at HMP/YOI Hindley.

7.5.6 The prison's target for accommodation on release is 90%. This has been consistently exceeded throughout the year, peaking at 98% in September. However, this still leaves around 30 men in the year who are released without suitable accommodation to go to.

## 8. The work of the IMB

8.1 The IMB monitoring HMP/YOI Hindley has a recommended complement of 13 members.

8.2 At the start of the reporting period there was a total of 9 IMB members, including: one monitoring from a distance, one on extended leave of absence and two dual boarders at HMP Risley. By the end of the year this had reduced to 8 following a resignation from a long serving member.

8.3 The number of applications received by the Board rose from previous years to 112 from 85, see table below for details. This does not follow the same trend as prison complaints which had fallen from 1,592 in 2024 to 1,408. Property was the area about which the IMB received most concerns (17% of prison complaints and 18% of IMB applications).

8.4 The monitoring of segregation reviews has remained constant at 134 (133 in 2024, 127 in 2023). This is estimated to be around a third of all reviews held.

8.5 Board visits have been maintained despite the reduced Board numbers at 229 (219 in 2024, 240 in 2023).

8.6 Whilst retaining its independence, over the year the Board at Hindley has had an open and honest relationship with the Governor and senior leadership team of the prison. Despite the challenges, there is good communication and openness with a shared desire to improve the prison facilities and outcomes for prisoners.

8.7 The Governor or deputy governor continue to attend part of every Board meeting. This supports open dialogue and understanding from different perspectives.

### Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	13
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	9 (includes 1 member on leave of absence)
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	8 (includes 1 new member & 1 member on restricted duties)
Total number of visits to the establishment	229
IMB member attendance at Board meetings	63%

## Applications to the IMB

Code	Subject	Previous reporting year 2024	Current reporting year 2025	% of applications in 2025
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	3	6	5%
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives scheme, sanctions	5	13	11%
C	Equality	9	1	1%
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, time out of cell	5	5	4%
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection, restrictions	4	9	8%
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	2	2	2%
F	Food and kitchens	10	3	3%
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	6	18	16%
H1	Property within the establishment	3	6	5%
H2	Property during transfer or in another facility	10	14	13%
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogues	0	0	0%
I	Sentence management, including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-categorisation	8	20	18%
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	16	12	11%
K	Transfers	3	3	3%
L	Miscellaneous	1	0	0%
	<b>Total number of applications</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>112</b>	

## **Annex A**

### **Service providers**

- Maintenance: Amey
- Resettlement services: Seetec and Ingeus
- Healthcare: Spectrum
- Psychosocial services: Change, Grow, Live
- Mental healthcare: Greater Manchester mental health NHS foundation trust
- Education services: Novus
- Initial Advice and Guidance services: The Growth Company
- Employment, Training and Education (ETE) services: Achieve North West Connect

## Annex B

### Further tables on the work of the IMB

*Segregation reviews: comparison table*

<b>Year</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>Total number monitored by IMB</b>	93	119	127	133	134

## Annex C

### Tables of prison data

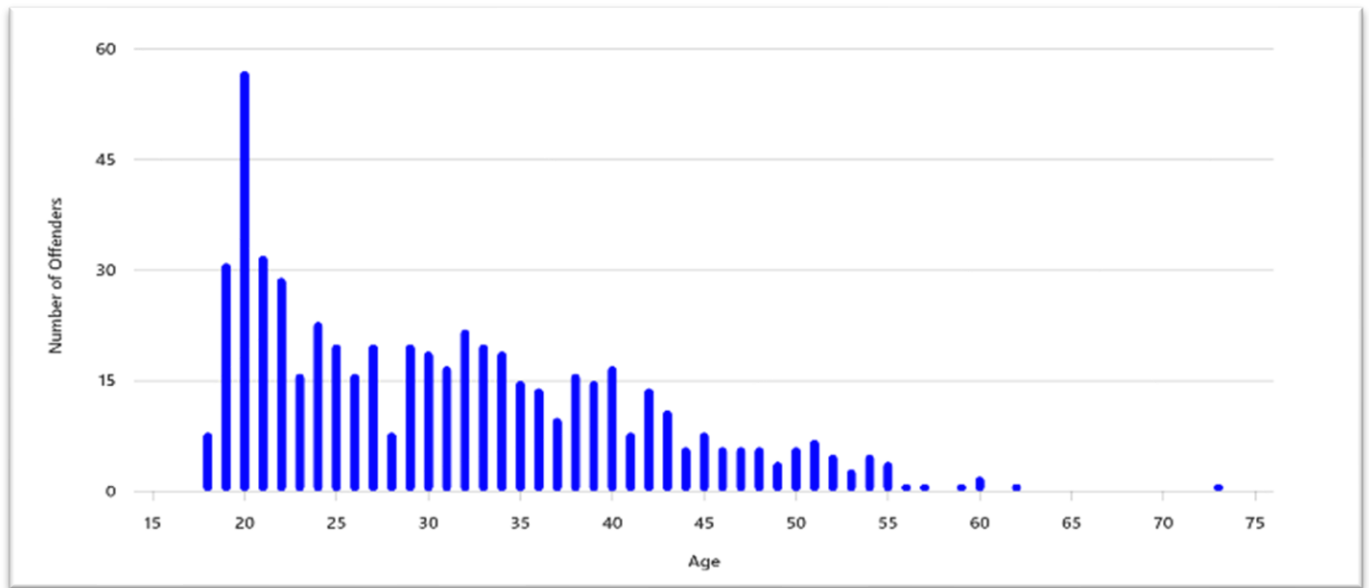
#### Length of stay in Hindley:

<b>As at year end 2025</b>	<b>No. of prisoners</b>	<b>% of prisoners</b>
Less than 1 month	79	14%
1 – 3 months	127	22%
3 - 6 months	115	20%
6 – 12 months	129	23%
1 – 2 years	80	14%
2 - 4 years	36	6%
4 years or more	4	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>570</b>	

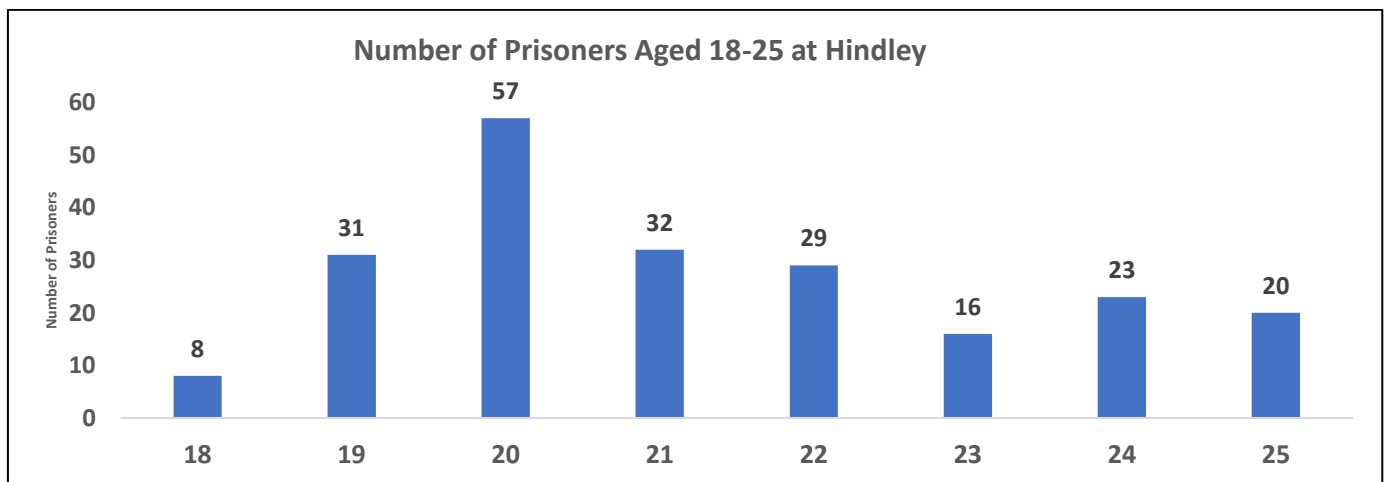
#### Age breakdown

<b>As at year end 2025</b>	<b>No. of prisoners</b>	<b>% of prisoners</b>
18 - 25 years	201	36%
26 - 34 years	153	27%
35 - 44 years	138	25%
45 - 54 years	60	10%
55+ years	10	2%

### Age profile of prisoners at HMP Hindley at 3 October 2025



### Prisoner numbers aged 18-25 years old at HMP Hindley at 3 October 2025





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