

**Prisons &
Probation**

Ombudsman
Independent Investigations

Independent investigation into the death of Mr John Allen, a prisoner at HMP Bure, on 3 May 2025

A report by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman

Third Floor, 10 South Colonnade
Canary Wharf, London E14 4PU

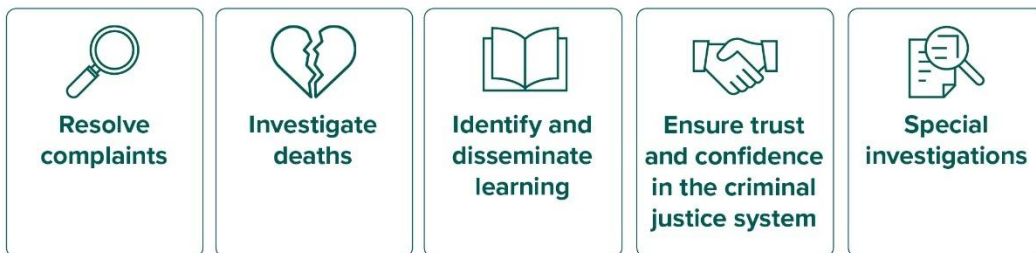
Email: mail@ppo.gov.uk
Web: www.ppo.gov.uk

T | 020 7633 4100

OUR VISION

To deliver high quality and timely independent investigations and work closely with partners to achieve tangible benefits for the safety and confidence of those in custody and under community supervision.

WHAT WE DO



WHAT WE VALUE



© Crown copyright, 2026

This report is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0. To view this licence, visit nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3

Where we have identified any third-party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

1. The Prisons and Probation Ombudsman aims to make a significant contribution to safer, fairer custody and community supervision. One of the most important ways in which we work towards that aim is by carrying out independent investigations into deaths, due to any cause, of prisoners, young people in detention, residents of approved premises and detainees in immigration centres.
2. If my office is to best assist His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) in ensuring the standard of care received by those within service remit is appropriate, our recommendations should be focused, evidenced and viable. This is especially the case if there is evidence of systemic failure.
3. On 8 January 2020, Mr John Allen was sentenced to life imprisonment for sexual offences. He died in hospital of metastatic anal cancer on 3 May 2025, while a prisoner at HMP Bure. He was 83 years old. We offer our condolences to Mr Allen's family and friends.
4. The Ombudsman's office wrote to Mr Allen's next of kin to explain the investigation and to ask if they had any matters they wanted us to consider. They did not respond.
5. NHS England commissioned an independent clinical reviewer to review Mr Allen's clinical care at HMP Bure. The clinical reviewer's report was attached as Annex 1.
6. The clinical reviewer concluded that the clinical care Mr Allen received at Bure was of a good standard and at least equivalent to what he could have expected to receive in the community. She found that Mr Allen's medical records contained evidence of excellent individualised end of life care planning. The clinical reviewer made recommendations not related to Mr Allen's death that the Head of Healthcare will wish to address.
7. The PPO investigator investigated the non-clinical issues relating to Mr Allen's care.
8. We did not find any non-clinical issues of concern. We make no recommendations.
9. The initial report was shared with HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) and Healthcare. HMPPS and Practice Plus Group did not find any factual inaccuracies.
10. At the inquest held on 12 December 2025, the coroner concluded that Mr John Allen died of natural causes.

Adrian Usher
Prisons and Probation Ombudsman

October 2025

**Prisons &
Probation**

Ombudsman
Independent Investigations

Third Floor, 10 South Colonnade
Canary Wharf, London E14 4PU

Email: mail@ppo.gov.uk
Web: www.ppo.gov.uk

T | 020 7633 4100