

Annual Report 2025 to 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



“The 12 months covered in this report represent a huge amount of effort in delivering a substantially improved output and performance.”

ADRIAN USHER - Ombudsman



5,226 complaints received:	5,022 from prisoners	198 from people on probation	4 from detained individuals	2 from secure training centres
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We pushed back **95** cases received to the relevant establishment to reconsider.

Prisons are still not incentivised to focus upon early complaint resolutions properly.

Of the **2,150** investigations completed, the most common complaint categories investigated were:

Property 34%	Staff behaviour 7%	Administration 6%
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455

death investigations started:



235 deaths from natural causes	84 self-inflicted deaths	104 other non-natural deaths
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8 apparent homicides	1 unascertained death
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The rate of self-inflicted deaths means that a prisoner in England and Wales will kill themselves approximately every five days.

This year, we found reception prisons present the highest-level of self-inflicted deaths.

Drug-related deaths made up 13% of prison deaths we investigated this year. In a world of increasingly sophisticated drone technology, this number is fuelled by unknown chemical compounds with unpredictable effects.

354 prison deaths	13 probation deaths	0 immigration deaths
83 post-release deaths	5 discretionary deaths	