



Prisoner survey methodology

A survey of prisoners is carried out at the start of every scrutiny visit, the results of which contribute to the evidence base for the visit.

HMI Prisons researchers developed a short self-completion questionnaire in June 2020 to support the scrutiny visit methodology. The questionnaire consists of structured questions covering key issues relating to the prisoner experience during the outbreak of COVID-19, together with demographic and background questions which enable us to compare responses from different sub-groups of the prisoner population. There is also an open question at the end of the questionnaire which allows prisoners to expand on any of their responses. All written comments are typed up and provided to the inspection team.

Sampling

On the day of the survey a random sample is drawn by HMI Prisons researchers from a P-NOMIS prisoner population printout ordered by cell location. Using a power calculation, HMI Prisons researchers calculate the minimum sample size required to ensure that the survey findings are representative of the entire population of the establishment. The formula comprising the calculation assumes a 75% response rate (65% in open establishments) and a 95% confidence interval with a 7% margin of error.

Distributing and collecting questionnaires

HMI Prisons researchers distributed and collected the questionnaires in person. A cover sheet was included with the questionnaire which explained the purpose of the survey and that participation was voluntary. Assurances were given about confidentiality, anonymity and the storage and retention of the data. Prisoners were provided with a sealable envelope for their completed questionnaire and told when researchers would return to collect it. Due to social distancing measures researchers were not able to obtain verbal consent from prisoners and therefore returned and completed questionnaires were deemed as providing consent. It was also not possible to facilitate participation in the survey for those who required the survey in a language other than English, or to conduct interviews with prisoners who have literacy problems or visual impairments.

Survey response

At the time of the survey on 24 November 2020 the prisoner population at HMP Birmingham was 915. Using the sampling method described above, questionnaires were distributed to 216 prisoners. We received a total of 144 completed questionnaires, a response rate of 67%.

The full scrutiny visit report is available on our website at:
<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/inspections/>

Prisoner survey results and analyses

Over the following pages we present the full survey results followed by numerous comparative analyses for HMP Birmingham. For the comparator analyses, where relevant, each question was reformulated using the Chi-square test (or Fisher's exact test if there are fewer than five expected counts in a cell) into a binary 'yes/no' format and affirmative responses compared. Missing responses have been excluded from all analyses and for some questions, responses from a sub-group of the sample are reported (as indicated in the data).

Full survey results

A full breakdown of responses is provided for every question. Percentages have been rounded and therefore may not add up to 100%.

Summary statistics for HMP Birmingham 2020

- a percentage for the affirmative response for each question is provided.

Comparisons between different residential locations within HMP Birmingham 2020

- responses of prisoners on the Substance misuse unit (M wing) compared with those from the rest of the establishment.
- responses of prisoners on the PCoSO and situational VPs unit (P wing) compared with those from the rest of the establishment.
- responses of the prisoners on the RCU units (D and N wings) compared with those from the rest of the establishment.

Comparisons between self-reported sub-populations of prisoners within HMP Birmingham 2020

- responses of prisoners aged 25 and under compared with those over 25.
- responses of prisoners aged 50 and over compared with those under 50.
- responses of prisoners in self-identified racial minority groups are compared with those of white prisoners.
- responses of foreign national prisoners are compared with those of UK/British national prisoners.
- responses of prisoners who reported that they had mental health problems compared with those who did not.
- responses of prisoners who reported that they had a disability compared to those who did not.

Please note that we only carry out within-prison comparator analysis where there is a minimum of 10 responses in each comparison group.

In the comparator analyses, statistically significant differences are indicated by shading. The probability threshold (i.e., p-value) is set at 0.01 which means that there is a 1% likelihood the statistically significant difference between the two groups is due to chance. Results that are significantly more positive are indicated by green shading and results that are significantly more negative are indicated by blue shading. Orange shading has been used to show a statistically significant difference in demographic or other background details. If there is no shading, any difference between the two results is not statistically significant and may have occurred by chance. Grey shading indicates that there is no valid comparative data for that question.

Confidential questionnaire for HM Inspectorate of Prisons

1 What wing or houseblock are you currently living on?

D wing.....	7 (5%)
G wing.....	13 (9%)
J wing.....	5 (3%)
K wing.....	35 (24%)
L wing.....	17 (12%)
M wing.....	20 (14%)
N wing.....	15 (10%)
P wing.....	22 (15%)
GI wing.....	4 (3%)
Segregation unit.....	3 (2%)
Health care unit.....	3 (2%)

2 How old are you?

25 or under.....	31 (22%)
26 - 49.....	100 (70%)
50 or over.....	12 (8%)

3 How would you describe yourself?

White.....	84 (60%)
Black.....	15 (11%)
Asian.....	16 (11%)
Mixed.....	19 (14%)
Other.....	6 (4%)

4 Are you a UK / British citizen?

Yes.....	122 (87%)
No.....	18 (13%)

5 There are currently restrictions in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic:

	Yes	No
Do you know what the restrictions are here?	100 (74%)	36 (26%)
Have the reasons for the restrictions been explained to you?	79 (83%)	16 (17%)
Do you agree the restrictions are necessary?	62 (69%)	28 (31%)
Do you feel you have been kept safe from the virus?	71 (54%)	60 (46%)

6 On the wing or houseblock you are currently living on:

	Yes	No	Don't know
Do you have enough soap or sanitiser to keep your hands clean?	78 (55%)	61 (43%)	2 (1%)
Do you have enough clean, suitable clothes for the week?	65 (47%)	73 (53%)	0 (0%)
Can you shower every day?	120 (85%)	17 (12%)	4 (3%)
Do you have clean sheets every week?	86 (61%)	48 (34%)	7 (5%)
Do you get cell cleaning materials every week?	59 (43%)	71 (51%)	8 (6%)
Are the communal / shared areas of your wing or houseblock (landing, stairs, showers etc.) clean?	92 (68%)	37 (27%)	7 (5%)
Is your cell call bell normally answered within five minutes?	65 (46%)	62 (44%)	13 (9%)
Can you make a complaint easily?	66 (48%)	52 (38%)	20 (14%)

- 7 What is the quality of food like?**
- | | |
|------------------|----------|
| Good | 18 (13%) |
| Reasonable | 54 (38%) |
| Not good..... | 70 (49%) |
- 8 Can you access the canteen / shop if you want to?**
- | | |
|-----------------|-----------|
| Yes | 116 (83%) |
| No..... | 16 (11%) |
| Don't know..... | 8 (6%) |
- 9 Please answer the following questions about staff in this prison:**
- | | Yes | No |
|---|----------|----------|
| Do most staff here treat you with respect? | 99 (72%) | 39 (28%) |
| Are there any staff you could turn to if you had a problem? | 98 (72%) | 38 (28%) |
| In the last week, has any member of staff talked to you about how you are getting on? | 53 (39%) | 83 (61%) |
- 10 Please answer the following questions about contact with the outside world:**
- | | Yes | No |
|--|-----------|----------|
| Have you had any problems with sending or receiving mail (letters or parcels)? | 80 (57%) | 60 (43%) |
| Are you able to use a phone every day (if you have credit)? | 131 (94%) | 9 (6%) |
- 11 How often have you been able to see your family and friends in the last month:**
- | | Every week | Two or three times | Once | Not at all |
|---------------------------|------------|--------------------|----------|------------|
| In person (prison visit)? | 2 (1%) | 3 (2%) | 18 (13%) | 112 (83%) |
| Using video calling? | 3 (2%) | 3 (2%) | 17 (14%) | 102 (82%) |
- 12 Under the current regime, how long do you spend out of your cell each day (including time spent at education, work etc.)?**
- | | |
|------------------------|----------|
| Less than 1 hour | 47 (34%) |
| 1 to 2 hours..... | 72 (53%) |
| 2 to 6 hours..... | 6 (4%) |
| 6 hours or more..... | 12 (9%) |
- 13 Are you able to exercise outside every day, if you want to?**
- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| Yes | 108 (78%) |
| No..... | 31 (22%) |
- 14 Have you been provided with in-cell activity packs?**
- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------|
| Yes, and they are helpful | 35 (25%) |
| Yes, but they are not helpful | 36 (26%) |
| No..... | 67 (49%) |
- 15 Is it easy or difficult to get into the following activities?**
- | | Easy | Difficult | Don't know |
|-------------------------------|----------|-----------|------------|
| Education | 36 (27%) | 66 (49%) | 33 (24%) |
| Vocational or skills training | 13 (10%) | 77 (60%) | 38 (30%) |
| Prison job | 14 (11%) | 88 (67%) | 30 (23%) |

- 16 Is it easy or difficult to see the following people?**
- | | Easy | Difficult | Don't know |
|--------------------------|----------|-----------|------------|
| Doctor | 31 (22%) | 92 (65%) | 18 (13%) |
| Nurse | 70 (50%) | 52 (37%) | 17 (12%) |
| Dentist | 4 (3%) | 110 (80%) | 24 (17%) |
| Pharmacist | 44 (32%) | 66 (49%) | 26 (19%) |
| Mental health workers | 17 (13%) | 86 (63%) | 33 (24%) |
| Substance misuse workers | 19 (14%) | 53 (40%) | 61 (46%) |
- 17 What do you think of the overall quality of the health services here?**
- | | |
|------------------|----------|
| Good | 46 (34%) |
| Bad | 67 (49%) |
| Don't know | 24 (18%) |
- 18 Do you have:**
- | | Yes | No |
|-------------------------|----------|----------|
| Mental health problems? | 91 (67%) | 44 (33%) |
| A disability? | 38 (32%) | 82 (68%) |
- 19 If you have been on an ACCT, did you feel cared for by staff?**
- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|
| I have not been on an ACCT | 84 (69%) |
| Yes, I did feel cared for | 15 (12%) |
| No, I didn't feel cared for | 23 (19%) |
- 20 Is it easy or difficult for you to speak to a Listener, if you need to?**
- | | |
|------------------|----------|
| Easy | 41 (30%) |
| Difficult | 30 (22%) |
| Don't know | 67 (49%) |
- 21 Is it easy or difficult for prisoners here to:**
- | | Easy | Difficult | Don't know |
|--------------------|----------|-----------|------------|
| Get illicit drugs? | 28 (20%) | 22 (16%) | 89 (64%) |
| Get alcohol? | 11 (8%) | 31 (23%) | 92 (69%) |
- 22 Have you experienced any types of bullying / victimisation from:**
- | | Yes | No |
|-----------------------|----------|-----------|
| Other prisoners here? | 35 (26%) | 102 (74%) |
| Staff here? | 48 (35%) | 90 (65%) |
- 23 Do you feel unsafe now?**
- | | |
|-----------|----------|
| Yes | 44 (33%) |
| No | 91 (67%) |
- 24 Do you feel you have been treated fairly in the behaviour management scheme (e.g. IEP) in this prison?**
- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| Yes | 61 (44%) |
| No | 40 (29%) |
| Don't know what this is | 38 (27%) |
- 25 Are staff here supporting you to achieve your custody plan objectives or targets?**
- | | |
|--|----------|
| Don't know what my objectives or targets are | 66 (49%) |
| Yes | 21 (16%) |
| No | 47 (35%) |

If you expect to be released in the next three months, is anybody helping you to prepare for your release (e.g. probation, offender managers, resettlement workers)?

Not expecting to be released in the next three months.....	65 (51%)
Yes, somebody is helping me to prepare for release	20 (16%)
No, nobody is helping me to prepare for release	43 (34%)