



Detainee survey methodology, results and analyses

Tinsley House IRC

June 2026

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Detainee survey methodology

A representative survey of detainees is carried out at the start of every inspection, the results of which contribute to the evidence base for the inspection.

HMI Prisons researchers developed a self-completion questionnaire in May 2019 to support HMI Prisons' *Expectations*. The questionnaire consists of structured questions covering the detainee 'journey' from reception to removal/release together with demographic and background questions which enables comparison of responses from different sub-groups of the detainee population. There are also three open questions at the end of the questionnaire which allow detainees to express in their own words what they find most positive and negative about the IRC. Qualitative analysis of these written comments is undertaken by HMI Prisons researchers and used by inspectors.

Sampling

For smaller IRCs or where the current detainee population is small, questionnaires are offered to every detainee. If the detainee population is large at the time of the survey, questionnaires are offered to a sample of detainees, using the following procedure. On the day of the survey a random sample is drawn by HMI Prisons researchers from a detainee population printout ordered by room 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 centre. The formula used in the calculation assumes a 65% response rate 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. Detainees 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 detainees and therefore returned and completed questionnaires were deemed as providing consent. The questionnaire was available in 23 languages.

Survey responses

At the time of the survey on 15 June 2026 the detainee population at Tinsley House IRC was 134. There was no sampling conducted due to the small population size, and instead questionnaires were distributed to all 134 detainees. We received a total of 81 completed questionnaires, a response rate of 60%.

Returned language	Number of completed survey returns
English	30 (37%)
Arabic	13 (16%)
Farsi	7 (9%)
Albanian	6 (7%)
Vietnamese	6 (7%)
Pashto	5 (6%)
Portuguese	4 (5%)
Kurdish	2 (2%)
Spanish	2 (2%)
Tigrinya	2 (2%)
French	1 (1%)
Punjabi	1 (1%)
Romanian	1 (1%)
Russian	1 (1%)
Total	81 (100%)

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

Detainee survey results and analyses

The detainee survey analysis workbook contains the following analyses:

Responses from Tinsley House IRC 2026 compared with those from other HMI Prisons surveys

These analyses are carried out on summary data from all survey questions. As we have been using a revised version of the questionnaire since June 2026, we do not yet have full comparator data for all questions.

- Survey responses from Tinsley House IRC in 2026 compared with survey responses from the following IRCs since June 2023:
 - Yarl's Wood June 2023
 - Harmondsworth February 2024
 - Brook House August 2024
 - Colnbrook January 2025
 - Dungavel September 2025
 - Derwentside September 2025
- Survey responses from Tinsley House IRC in 2026 compared with survey responses from Tinsley House IRC in 2023.

Comparisons between self-reported sub-populations of detainees within Tinsley House IRC 2026

These analyses are carried out on summary data from selected survey questions only.

- Responses of detainees aged 21 and under compared with those aged over 21.
- Responses of detainees aged 25 and under compared with those aged over 25.
- Responses of detainees from all other ethnic groups combined are compared with those of white detainees.
- Responses of Muslim detainees compared with those of non-Muslim detainees.
- Responses of detainees who reported that they had a disability compared to those who did not.
- Responses of detainees who reported that they had mental health problems compared with those who did not.
- Responses of non-heterosexual detainees compared with heterosexual detainees.
- Responses of detainees who reported not being able to understand written or spoken English very / quite well compared with those who can.
- Responses of detainees who reported that they had been held in prison in the UK compared with those of detainees who reported that they had not been held in prison in the UK.

For the comparator analyses each question was recoded 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).

In the comparator analyses, Chi-square tests (or Fisher's exact test if there are fewer than five expected counts in a cell) are used to identify statistically significant differences which 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 are no valid comparative data for that question.

Filtered questions are indented and preceded by an explanation in italics of how the filter has been applied. In the comparator analyses, percentages for filtered questions refer to the number of respondents filtered to that question. For all other questions, percentages refer to the total number of valid responses to the question.

Please note that we only carry out within-centre comparator analysis where there is a minimum of 10 responses which must also represent at least 10% of the total response.

Detainee survey

Background information

1.1	What wing or unit are you currently living on?	
	Tinsley House.....	81 (60%)
1.2	How old are you?	
	Under 21.....	11 (14%)
	21-24	10 (13%)
	25-29	24 (30%)
	30-39	23 (29%)
	40-49	8 (10%)
	50-59	3 (4%)
	60-69	0 (0%)
	70 or over	0 (0%)
1.3	How would you describe your ethnicity?	
	Asian	27 (34%)
	Black	20 (25%)
	Mixed.....	9 (11%)
	White	20 (25%)
	Other	3 (4%)
1.4	How well do you understand spoken English?	
	Very well.....	16 (20%)
	Quite well.....	19 (24%)
	A little.....	33 (41%)
	Not at all	12 (15%)
1.5	How well do you understand written English?	
	Very well.....	16 (20%)
	Quite well.....	21 (27%)
	A little.....	27 (34%)
	Not at all	15 (19%)

Section 2: Immigration detention

2.1	How much time have you spent in immigration detention in the UK in total?	
	Less than 1 month	36 (46%)
	1 month or more but less than 3 months	29 (37%)
	3 months or more but less than 6 months	10 (13%)
	6 months or more	3 (4%)
	Do not remember	1 (1%)
2.2	Have you ever been held in prison in the UK?	
	Yes	27 (34%)
	No	52 (66%)

Section 3: Your journey to this centre

- 3.1 Before being brought to this centre, were you told where you were going?**
 Yes 30 (38%)
 No 49 (62%)
- 3.2 How were you treated by escort staff during your journey to this centre?**
 Very well 24 (30%)
 Quite well 39 (49%)
 Quite badly 9 (11%)
 Very badly 6 (8%)
 Don't remember 2 (3%)

Section 4: Reception and first night

- 4.1 When you were searched in reception, was this done in a respectful way?**
 Yes 66 (83%)
 No 13 (16%)
 Do not remember 1 (1%)
 Was not searched 0 (0%)
- 4.2 While in reception, were you able to speak to someone from the health care team?**
 Yes 55 (69%)
 No 21 (26%)
 Do not remember 4 (5%)
- 4.3 Overall, how were you treated in reception?**
 Very well 34 (43%)
 Quite well 35 (44%)
 Quite badly 8 (10%)
 Very badly 1 (1%)
 Do not remember 2 (3%)
- 4.4 When you first arrived, did you have any problems with the following? (Please tick all that apply.)**
 Contacting family 30 (38%)
 Feeling depressed 50 (63%)
 Feeling suicidal 21 (26%)
 Your mental health 38 (48%)
 Your physical health 31 (39%)
 Did not have these problems 11 (14%)
- 4.5 Did staff help you to deal with any of these problems?**
 Yes 21 (30%)
 No 38 (54%)
 Did not have these problems 11 (16%)
- 4.6 Did you feel safe on your first night in this centre?**
 Yes 36 (46%)
 No 35 (44%)
 Do not remember 8 (10%)

4.7 In your first two days here, did you receive information in a language you could understand about:

	Yes	No	Do not remember
Daily life at this centre	41 (56%)	25 (34%)	7 (10%)
Visits	27 (43%)	31 (49%)	5 (8%)
How to see immigration staff	38 (60%)	20 (32%)	5 (8%)
How to get legal advice	44 (69%)	15 (23%)	5 (8%)
How to see health care staff	41 (66%)	19 (31%)	2 (3%)
Other support available	24 (46%)	21 (40%)	7 (13%)

Section 5: Legal rights and immigration

5.1 Do you have an immigration lawyer?

Yes - one that I pay for	17 (24%)
Yes - one that is provided for me free of charge.....	25 (35%)
No	30 (42%)

5.2 If you have an immigration lawyer, how easy or difficult is it to:

	Easy	Difficult	Do not know
Contact your lawyer	19 (50%)	16 (42%)	3 (8%)
Have a visit from your lawyer	5 (17%)	18 (60%)	7 (23%)
Have a video call with your lawyer	5 (17%)	15 (52%)	9 (31%)

5.3 Is it easy or difficult to:

	Easy	Difficult	Do not know
Obtain bail information	13 (20%)	38 (58%)	15 (23%)
See Home Office immigration staff in the centre	24 (41%)	24 (41%)	10 (17%)

5.4 Is the Home Office keeping you informed about the progress of your case?

Yes	34 (51%)
No.....	33 (49%)

Section 6: Respectful detention

6.1 Please answer the following questions about the residential unit you are currently living on:

	Yes	No	Do not know
Do you normally have enough clean, suitable clothes for the week?	46 (67%)	22 (32%)	1 (1%)
Can you shower every day?	64 (88%)	9 (12%)	0 (0%)
Do you have clean sheets every week?	32 (46%)	35 (51%)	2 (3%)
Do you get cleaning materials for your room every week?	26 (37%)	40 (56%)	5 (7%)
Is it normally quiet enough for you to sleep or relax at night?	30 (41%)	41 (56%)	2 (3%)
Can you get your property from the centre's property store when you need it?	42 (60%)	23 (33%)	5 (7%)

- 6.2 Normally, how clean or dirty are the communal/shared areas of your residential unit (landings, stairs, showers etc.)?**
- | | |
|-------------------|----------|
| Very clean | 16 (21%) |
| Quite clean | 32 (43%) |
| Quite dirty | 14 (19%) |
| Very dirty | 13 (17%) |
- 6.3 Does the centre's shop sell the things that you need?**
- | | |
|-------------------|----------|
| Yes | 51 (67%) |
| No..... | 15 (20%) |
| Do not know | 10 (13%) |
- 6.4 Are you able to access the following things in a language you understand?**
- | | Yes | No |
|----------------------------------|----------|----------|
| Complaint forms | 42 (66%) | 22 (34%) |
| Food menu | 49 (74%) | 17 (26%) |
| Daily timetable | 44 (69%) | 20 (31%) |
| Details of support organisations | 39 (60%) | 26 (40%) |
- 6.5 What is the quality of food like here?**
- | | |
|-----------------|----------|
| Very good | 14 (19%) |
| Quite good..... | 26 (36%) |
| Quite bad..... | 19 (26%) |
| Very bad | 13 (18%) |
- 6.6 Do you get enough to eat at meal times?**
- | | |
|------------------------|----------|
| Always | 20 (28%) |
| Most of the time | 16 (23%) |
| Some of the time | 19 (27%) |
| Never..... | 16 (23%) |
- 6.7 Do you know how to make a complaint about your treatment in this centre?**
- | | |
|-----------|----------|
| Yes | 28 (39%) |
| No..... | 43 (61%) |
- 6.8 In your experience, are complaints dealt with fairly?**
- | | |
|----------------------------|----------|
| Yes | 8 (11%) |
| No | 5 (7%) |
| Not made a complaint | 58 (82%) |
- 6.9 Have you ever been too afraid to make a complaint about your treatment in this centre?**
- | | |
|--|----------|
| Yes | 27 (44%) |
| No..... | 22 (36%) |
| Not wanted or needed to make a complaint | 12 (20%) |

Section 7: Staff

7.1	Do staff here treat you with respect?	
	Always	27 (39%)
	Most of the time	22 (31%)
	Some of the time	19 (27%)
	Never	2 (3%)
7.2	Do staff here knock and wait for an answer before entering your room?	
	Always	22 (30%)
	Most of the time	16 (22%)
	Some of the time	20 (27%)
	Never	15 (21%)
7.3	Are there any members of staff here you can talk to in a language you understand?	
	Yes	45 (66%)
	No	23 (34%)
7.4	If yes, can you turn to them for help if you have a problem?	
	Yes	32 (48%)
	No	12 (18%)
	There are no members of staff I can talk to	23 (34%)
7.5	How easy or difficult is it to get advice from the welfare team?	
	Very easy	20 (31%)
	Quite easy	17 (26%)
	Quite difficult	16 (25%)
	Very difficult	7 (11%)
	Do not need to see the welfare team	5 (8%)
7.6	Are the welfare team helping you with your problems?	
	Yes	33 (54%)
	No	23 (38%)
	Do not have any problems	5 (8%)
7.7	Have staff physically restrained you since you have been in this centre?	
	Yes	15 (20%)
	No	59 (80%)
7.8	Have you spent any time in the separation/isolation unit, in this centre?	
	Yes	7 (9%)
	No	67 (91%)

Section 8: Faith

8.1	What is your religion?	
	No religion	6 (8%)
	Christianity	21 (29%)
	Buddhism	0 (0%)
	Hinduism	3 (4%)
	Judaism	1 (1%)
	Islam	39 (53%)
	Sikhism	0 (0%)
	Paganism	0 (0%)
	Rastafarianism	0 (0%)
	Other	3 (4%)

8.2 Are your religious beliefs respected here?

Yes	55 (77%)
No.....	5 (7%)
Do not know	5 (7%)
Not applicable (no religion).....	6 (8%)

8.3 Can you speak to a Chaplain of your faith in private, if you want to?

Yes	42 (59%)
No.....	7 (10%)
Do not know	16 (23%)
Not applicable (no religion).....	6 (8%)

Section 9: Safety**9.1 Have you ever felt unsafe here?**

Yes	56 (75%)
No.....	19 (25%)

9.2 Do you feel unsafe now?

Yes	38 (54%)
No.....	33 (46%)

9.3 Would you report it if you were being bullied/victimised in this centre by:

	Yes	No
Other detainees?	40 (57%)	30 (43%)
Staff?	28 (51%)	27 (49%)

9.4 Have you been bullied/victimised in this centre by:

	Yes	No
Other detainees?	28 (43%)	37 (57%)
Staff?	11 (20%)	44 (80%)

9.5 If yes, which of these types of bullying/victimisation from other detainees or staff did you experience? (Please tick all that apply.)

	By detainees	By staff
Verbal abuse	18 (28%)	5 (9%)
Threats or intimidation	11 (17%)	1 (2%)
Physical assault	3 (5%)	2 (4%)
Sexual assault	2 (3%)	1 (2%)
Racial harassment	10 (15%)	4 (7%)
Theft of property	10 (15%)	1 (2%)
Other bullying/victimisation	9 (14%)	3 (5%)

Section 10: Alcohol and drugs**10.1 Do you have a problem with:**

	Yes	No
Illicit drugs	8 (13%)	56 (88%)
Medication not prescribed to you	18 (27%)	49 (73%)
Alcohol	3 (5%)	59 (95%)

10.2 While in this centre, have you developed any problems with:

	Yes	No
Illicit drugs	4 (6%)	61 (94%)
Medication not prescribed to you	11 (16%)	56 (84%)
Alcohol	0 (0%)	62 (100%)

10.3 While in this centre, have you been helped with your problems with:

	Yes	No	Not applicable
Illicit drugs	1 (2%)	3 (5%)	56 (93%)
Medication not prescribed to you	7 (11%)	6 (10%)	49 (79%)
Alcohol	0 (0%)	2 (3%)	59 (97%)

10.4 In this centre, is it easy or difficult to get these things?

	Very easy	Quite easy	Quite difficult	Very difficult	Do not know
Illicit drugs	3 (5%)	2 (3%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	55 (90%)
Medication not prescribed to you	3 (5%)	4 (7%)	1 (2%)	5 (8%)	46 (78%)
Alcohol	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	2 (3%)	56 (95%)

Section 11: Health and support**11.1 Is a professional interpreter available, if you need one, during health care assessments?**

Yes	35 (50%)
No.....	13 (19%)
Do not need an interpreter.....	17 (24%)
Have not had a health care assessment	5 (7%)

11.2 How easy or difficult is it to see a health care professional?

Very easy	9 (13%)
Quite easy	14 (20%)
Quite difficult.....	13 (19%)
Very difficult.....	24 (35%)
Do not know	9 (13%)

11.3 What is the quality of health care services here?

Very good	7 (10%)
Quite good	23 (32%)
Quite bad.....	8 (11%)
Very bad	28 (39%)
Have not used the health care services	6 (8%)

11.4 Do you have any mental health problems?

Yes	40 (56%)
No.....	32 (44%)

11.5 Have you been helped with your mental health problems while in this centre?

Yes	12 (17%)
No.....	28 (39%)
Do not have mental health problems.....	32 (44%)

- 11.6 Have you ever felt depressed while in this centre?**
 Yes 67 (89%)
 No..... 8 (11%)
- 11.7 Have you ever felt suicidal while in this centre?**
 Yes 31 (43%)
 No..... 41 (57%)
- 11.8 If you have felt depressed or suicidal here, did you receive any help from staff?**
 Yes 17 (30%)
 No..... 32 (56%)
 Have not felt depressed or suicidal 8 (14%)

Section 12: Other needs and support

- 12.1 Do you consider yourself to have a disability (long-term physical, mental or learning needs that affect your day-to-day life)?**
 Yes 27 (37%)
 No..... 46 (63%)
- 12.2 If you have a disability, are you getting the support you need?**
 Yes 3 (5%)
 No..... 16 (25%)
 Do not have a disability 46 (71%)
- 12.3 Do you consider yourself to be neurodivergent (this includes any neurological or brain difference that impacts your daily life, for example, ADHD, Autism or an Acquired Brain Injury)?**
 Yes 20 (29%)
 No..... 48 (71%)
- 12.4 If you do consider yourself to be neurodivergent, are you getting the support you need in this centre?**
 Yes 2 (3%)
 No..... 16 (24%)
 Do not considered myself to be neurodivergent 48 (73%)

Section 13: Activities

- 13.1 Are you taking part in any education here?**
 Yes 30 (41%)
 No, but I want to 25 (34%)
 No and I do not want to 18 (25%)
- 13.2 If you are taking part in education, is it helpful?**
 Yes 26 (36%)
 No..... 4 (5%)
 Not taking part in education..... 43 (59%)

13.3	Do you have a job here?	
	Yes	14 (20%)
	No, but I want one	33 (46%)
	No and I do not want one	24 (34%)
13.4	Does the library have a range of materials to meet your needs?	
	Yes	24 (34%)
	No.....	32 (45%)
	Do not know	15 (21%)
13.5	How easy or difficult is it to access what you need on the internet?	
	Very easy	8 (11%)
	Quite easy	7 (10%)
	Quite difficult.....	17 (24%)
	Very difficult.....	30 (42%)
	Do not know	9 (13%)
13.6	Can you go to the gym as often as you want to?	
	Yes	48 (67%)
	No.....	13 (18%)
	Do not know	6 (8%)
	Do not want to go	5 (7%)
13.7	Is there enough to do in this centre to fill your time?	
	Yes	29 (40%)
	No.....	28 (39%)
	Do not know	15 (21%)

Section 14: Keeping in touch with family and friends

14.1	Have you had a visit from family and friends since you have been in this centre?	
	Yes	9 (13%)
	No.....	54 (77%)
	Not applicable.....	7 (10%)
14.2	How easy or difficult is it for your family and friends to visit you?	
	Very easy	5 (8%)
	Quite easy	6 (9%)
	Quite difficult.....	12 (18%)
	Very difficult.....	15 (23%)
	Not applicable.....	27 (42%)
14.3	Are your visitors usually treated with respect by staff?	
	Yes	4 (6%)
	No.....	2 (3%)
	Do not know	3 (4%)
	Have not had a visit.....	61 (87%)

14.4 How easy or difficult is it to contact your family and friends by:

	Very easy	Quite easy	Quite difficult	Very difficult	Do not know
Phone?	16 (30%)	8 (15%)	9 (17%)	18 (34%)	2 (4%)
Video call?	6 (17%)	5 (14%)	4 (11%)	11 (31%)	9 (26%)

14.5 Have you had any problems with phone signal when contacting family and friends?

Yes	42 (64%)
No.....	18 (27%)
Have not contacted family and friends	6 (9%)

14.6 Have you had any problems with sending or receiving mail (letters or parcels)?

Yes	27 (42%)
No.....	38 (58%)

Section 15: Leaving this centre**15.1 Has anyone here helped you prepare for leaving this centre?**

Yes	12 (17%)
No.....	58 (83%)

15.2 Do you have any problems with finding appropriate accommodation for when you leave this centre?

Yes	24 (40%)
No.....	36 (60%)

Section 16: More about you**16.1 Are you responsible for any children under the age of 18 in the UK?**

Yes	6 (8%)
No.....	65 (92%)

16.2 What is your gender?

Female	1 (1%)
Male	68 (96%)
Non-binary.....	1 (1%)
Other	1 (1%)

16.3 How would you describe your sexual orientation?

Straight/heterosexual	51 (81%)
Gay/lesbian/homosexual	5 (8%)
Bisexual.....	6 (10%)
Other	1 (2%)

16.4 Do you identify as transgender or trans?

Yes	0 (0%)
No.....	67 (100%)