

**Prisons &
Probation**

Ombudsman
Independent Investigations

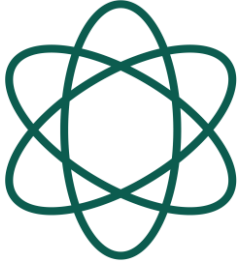
Independent investigation into the death of Mr Martin Bond on 24 May 2022, following his release from HMP Cardiff

A report by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman



Our vision

To carry out independent investigations to make custody and community supervision safer and fairer



Our values

We are:

Impartial: we do not take sides

Respectful: we are considerate and courteous

Inclusive: we value diversity

Dedicated: we are determined and focused

Fair: we are honest and act with integrity

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Summary

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. Since 6 September 2021, the PPO has been investigating post-release deaths that occur within 14 days of the person's release from prison.
3. We carry out investigations to understand what happened and identify how the organisations whose actions we oversee can improve their work in the future.
4. Mr Martin Bond died from the toxic effects of methadone, pregabalin, benzodiazepines and cocaine on 24 May 2022, following his release from HMP Cardiff on 20 May. He was 38 years old. We offer our condolences to those who knew him.
5. Mr Bond had a history of substance misuse. We are satisfied that he received appropriate support with his substance misuse issues in prison and that there was an appropriate handover to community drug services before his release.
6. We make no recommendations.

The Investigation Process

7. The PPO investigator obtained copies of relevant extracts from Mr Bond's prison and probation records.
8. We informed HM Coroner for Gwent of the investigation, who gave us the results of the post-mortem examination. We have sent the coroner a copy of this report.
9. The Ombudsman's family liaison officer contacted Mr Bond's mother to explain the investigation and to ask if she had any matters she wanted us to consider. She raised no issues but asked for a copy of our report.
10. We shared our initial report with HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS). They found no factual inaccuracies.
11. We sent a copy of our initial report to Mr Bond's mother. She did not notify us of any factual inaccuracies.

Background Information

HMP Cardiff

12. HMP Cardiff is a Category B prison in Wales that holds approximately 800 men. Cardiff and Vale University NHS Health Board provides primary physical and mental health services at the prison.

Probation Service

13. The Probation Service works with all individuals subject to custodial and community sentences. During a person's imprisonment, they oversee their sentence plan to assist in rehabilitation, as well as prepare reports to advise the Parole Board and have links with local partnerships to whom, where appropriate, they refer people for resettlement services. Post-release, the Probation Service supervises people throughout their licence period and post-sentence supervision.

Key Events

14. On 28 March 2022, Mr Martin Bond was recalled to prison after he committed a theft. He was sent to HMP Cardiff.

Pre-release planning

15. Mr Bond was a heroin user. He was already working with Dyfodol, a community-based drug and alcohol support service. Prison healthcare staff at Cardiff continued the methadone (heroin substitute) programme Mr Bond was on in the community.
16. On 11 April, the prison's Resettlement Team helped Mr Bond complete and submit an All Wales Local Authority Application (which lets the local council know someone will be homeless and would like to be considered for temporary accommodation). On 19 May, Merthyr Tydfil Council agreed to house Mr Bond in temporary accommodation in the Tredegar area.
17. One of Mr Bond's licence conditions was to continue to engage with Dyfodol, who arranged an appointment for 20 May, the date of his release. Healthcare staff offered him a naloxone kit (medication that can rapidly reverse opioid overdose) upon release, but he declined (the reason for this is not recorded).

Post-release planning

18. On 20 May, Mr Bond reported to the Merthyr Tydfil Probation Office at approximately 1.00pm for his supervision meeting with his probation practitioner and his Dyfodol key worker, who wrote a prescription for him to collect his methadone from a pharmacy and told him that his drug tolerance might be lower on release from prison and that the risks of overdose might be higher.
19. The probation practitioner instructed him to attend another dual probation and Dyfodol appointment on 24 May. She also went through his licence conditions and explained to him where his temporary accommodation was and the conditions of his stay there.

Circumstances of Mr Bond's death

20. On Tuesday 24 May, Mr Bond's mother called the probation practitioner to ask if she had seen Mr Bond. The probation practitioner rang Mr Bond's temporary accommodation to ask if he was there. Mr Bond's housing outreach worker said that Mr Bond had been seen over the weekend but was marked absent on Saturday. The probation practitioner asked staff to check Mr Bond's room. Staff called her back and informed her Mr Bond had been found dead in his room.

Post-mortem report

21. The post-mortem concluded that Mr Bond died of drugs (methadone, pregabalin, benzodiazepines, cocaine) intake.

Findings

22. We found that Mr Bond received good support with his substance misuse issues at Cardiff and that an appointment with a community drug recovery service was arranged for his release. Staff also offered him a naloxone kit, but he declined.
23. We consider the joint probation and Dyfodol meetings to have been good practice.
24. We make no recommendations.
25. The inquest, held on 30 January 2023, concluded that Mr Bond's death was drug related.

Susannah Eagle
Deputy Prisons and Probation Ombudsman

June 2023

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