

**Prisons &  
Probation**

**Ombudsman**  
Independent Investigations

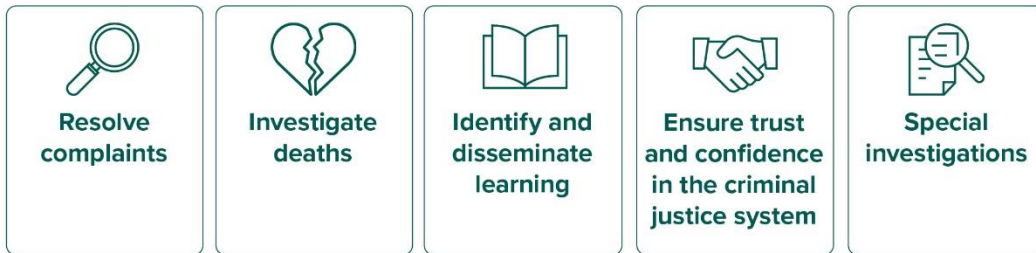
# **Independent investigation into the death of Mr Andrew Seal, a prisoner at HMP Parc, on 13 July 2021**

**A report by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman**

## 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



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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. Our office carries out investigations to understand what happened and identify how the organisations whose actions we oversee can improve their work in the future.
3. Mr Andrew Seal, who was 54 years old, died of lung cancer on 13 July 2021, while a prisoner at HMP Parc. We offer our condolences to Mr Seal's family and friends.
4. The clinical reviewer concluded that the clinical care Mr Seal received at Parc was equivalent to that he could have expected to receive in the community.
5. We found no non-clinical issues of concern. We make no recommendations.

## The Investigation Process

6. NHS England commissioned an independent clinical reviewer to review Mr Seal's clinical care at Parc.
7. The PPO investigator has investigated the non-clinical issues in Mr Seal's care, including his location, the security arrangements for his hospital escorts, liaison with his family and whether compassionate release was considered.
8. The PPO's family liaison officer wrote to Mr Seal's next of kin, his sister, to explain the investigation.
9. The initial report was shared with HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS). HMPPS pointed out some factual inaccuracies, and this report has been amended accordingly.

## Previous deaths at HMP Parc

10. Mr Seal was the 14<sup>th</sup> prisoner to die at Parc since July 2019. Nine of those deaths were from natural causes, two were self-inflicted and two were drug related. Four prisoners have died at Parc since Mr Seal. Two of those deaths were from natural causes, one was self-inflicted, and one was drug related. There are no significant similarities between our findings in those investigations and the investigation into Mr Seal's death.

## Key Events

11. In May 2016, Mr Andrew Seal was remanded to HMP Cardiff. He was sentenced to life with a minimum of 12 years for manslaughter and attempted manslaughter in December. Mr Seal was transferred to HMP Parc in December 2019.
12. On 2 March 2020, Mr Seal had a routine screening for tuberculosis which showed a shadow on his lung. The hospital did further investigations between March and November. The hospital investigations were delayed, which Mr Seal found stressful. The prison supported him through Prison Service suicide and self-harm monitoring (known as ACCT), speaking to the hospital on his behalf and summarising information using health Widgeits (symbols used to communicate concepts). Mr Seal stayed in hospital after his final investigative procedure on 13 November. On 19 November, the hospital doctor told Mr Seal he had lung cancer.
13. On 10 December, Mr Seal went to hospital with breathing difficulties, and he stayed for four weeks. While he was in hospital, the prison was told by hospital staff that Mr Seal's cancer was too advanced for treatment. Mr Seal returned to Parc on 7 January 2021, the hospital emailed a Do Not Attempt Resuscitation form to Parc and he was given a cell on the assisted living unit.
14. During January 2021, the prison started an application for Mr Seal's early release on compassionate grounds. The prison prepared Mr Seal's application, including letters from the doctors and plans for a community care package. As he did not have a prognosis, the prison did not submit the application to the Public Protection Casework Section (PPCS) at that point, but wanted to be prepared for when Mr Seal neared the end of his life.
15. The prison's family liaison officer contacted Mr Seal's family and stayed in touch with them throughout this time. The family liaison officer organised visits for Mr Seal in the prison's family room and in the healthcare unit.
16. On 6 July, a mental health nurse at Parc emailed the Offender Management Unit asking for the early release application to be submitted. On 8 July, Mr Seal was moved to a palliative care bed at the hospice. On 9 July, he was released on temporary licence. On 13 July, Mr Seal died with his family at his bedside.
17. Parc offered to contribute to his funeral costs in line with national policy.
18. The coroner accepted Mr Seal's cause of death provided by a hospice doctor and no post-mortem examination was carried out. The doctor gave Mr Seal's cause of death as lung cancer.

**Karen Johnson**  
**Assistant Ombudsman**

**January 2022**

## Inquest

The inquest, held on 18 September 2023, concluded that Mr Seal died from natural causes.

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