HM Inspectorate of Prisons

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HM Chief Inspector of Prisons

Charlie Taylor

8th July 2025

The Rt Hon. the Lord Foster of Bath

Chair, Justice and Home Affairs Committee

House of Lords

London

SW1A 0PW

Dear Lord Foster,

Publication of HM Chief Inspector of Prisons' Annual Report 2024-25

HM Inspectorate of Prisons today published its 2024-25 Annual Report.

The report describes the work of the Inspectorate in 2024-25 and summarises the findings of 83 reports from inspections, independent reviews of progress and thematic reviews from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

In this period, four Urgent Notifications were issued to HMPs Wandsworth, Rochester, Manchester and Winchester. In many prisons, the supply of drugs and other illicit items continued to undermine every aspect of prison life. In our survey 39% of adult male prisoners told us it was easy to get drugs, and in the two category B training prisons we inspected, the figure was 58%.

Purposeful activity continued to be the worst performing of our healthy prison tests, with 28 out of the 38 adult prisons that we inspected judged to be 'poor' or 'not sufficiently good'. Violence rose considerably in some jails with little to encourage good behaviour. Self-harm had increased in over half of the prisons inspected and there continued to not be enough learning from self-inflicted deaths.

Living conditions were a concern in 24 of the 38 adult prisons inspected. Overcrowding persisted and much of the estate was ageing and lacking sufficient capital investment. Though there were some improvements in preparing prisoners

for release, population pressures continued to cause problems. Remanded prisoners experienced poor outcomes and too many were released homeless.

The children's estate remains a huge concern, with violence, limited access to education or time out of cell, poor relationships with staff and unmanageable keep-apart lists.

In immigration detention, we had serious concerns about the safety and conditions at IRCs, with our worst ever judgements of an IRC at Harmondsworth. There were improvements in the detention of small boat arrivals at the south coast and some improvements in conditions at STHFs, but there was not enough focus on vulnerability.

I am very happy to discuss any comments or queries the Committee may have on the report.

CHARLIE TAYLOR