



Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Liverpool

**For reporting year
1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024**

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Introductory sections 1 – 3

1. Statutory role of the IMB

The Prison Act 1952 requires every prison to be monitored by an independent Board appointed by the Secretary of State from members of the community in which the prison is situated.

Under the National Monitoring Framework agreed with ministers, the Board is required to:

- Satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody within its prison and the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release.
- Inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom authority has been delegated as it judges appropriate, any concern it has.
- Report annually to the Secretary of State on how well the prison has met the standards and requirements placed on it and what impact these have on those in its custody.

To enable the Board to carry out these duties effectively, its members have a right of access to every prisoner and every part of the prison and also to the prison's records.

The Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT) is an international human rights treaty designed to strengthen protection for people deprived of their liberty. The protocol recognises that such people are particularly vulnerable and aims to prevent their ill-treatment by establishing a system of visits or inspections to all places of detention. OPCAT requires that states designate a National Preventive Mechanism to carry out visits to places of detention, to monitor the treatment of and conditions for detainees and to make recommendations for the prevention of ill-treatment. The IMB is part of the United Kingdom's National Preventive Mechanism.

2. Description of establishment

HMP Liverpool is a Category B local adult male prison. It was opened in 1855 and, as a Victorian prison, continues to face many challenges with the infrastructure of the original building. During the year, the prison was notified that it was not, as previously thought, going to transition from a category B to a category C prison. Instead, it was designated as a category B reception prison serving the Liverpool Courts. This took effect over the last quarter of 2024 and the full reprofiling of staffing took effect in January 2025.

The residential accommodation consists of 10 living units in total, including first night/induction (B wing), care and separation unit (CSU), drug rehabilitation and vulnerable prisoners' units, and a healthcare inpatient facility with 18 beds.

The operational capacity remained at around 800 throughout 2024, with the prison always at, or exceeding, its capacity due to the rising prison population numbers across the northwest.¹ Table 1 in appendix 2 shows a peak of 862 in January, dropping to around 830 throughout the rest of the year as refurbishment work progressed. A drop in numbers in September reflects the government's early release scheme and the need to move prisoners between prisons to establish the settled status as a local reception prison. Throughout the reporting year, there has been at least one wing out of use for refurbishment. K wing completed its refurbishment during the reporting year and reopened in April 2024. The refurbishment of G wing began in May 2024 and remained closed for the remainder of the year. It was scheduled to reopen early in 2025; however, the main contractor serving Liverpool and numerous other establishments went into liquidation in September 2024 and this caused significant delay. The programme to complete refurbishment of the rest of the prison is now uncertain with no replacement contractor or timescale.

Education is provided by Novus. This includes English, maths, art and digital skills, as well as key life skills, such as mentoring and wellbeing. In addition, a range of vocational training courses in several skills are provided, including, plastering, painting and decorating, catering, hospitality, gardening, construction and industrial cleaning. There are industrial workshops, including leather goods (for prisons and the public service), laundry (for prisons and hospitality service) and bike repairs (for two local charities). Four much-needed additional workshops are scheduled as part of the refurbishment programme and while work did commence on these during 2024, they were also delayed by the liquidation of the main contractor. Plans for refurbishment in some of the older buildings, many of which are in urgent need of repair and renovation, are now in abeyance with no target date for delivery.

The prison has a mock cafe/restaurant, named 'The Lock Inn', which has been established in partnership with Marston's Brewery. Whilst working in this facility, prisoners can learn hospitality skills and receive accreditation towards City & Guilds qualifications in hospitality and catering.

There is a rail track laying training programme, which ran in 2024 with good prospects for employment on release.

¹ Figures included in this report are local management information. They reflect the prison's position at the time of reporting, but may be subject to change following further validation and therefore may not always tally with Official Statistics later published by the Ministry of Justice.

The prison works in partnership with a range of agencies to help prisoners find employment, education, housing and other life skills on release.

Partners of Prisoners (POPs) focus on maintaining family links. The chaplaincy provides individual support and Samaritans-trained prisoners act as Listeners to support other prisoners through difficult periods.

The prison has a weights room, sports hall and outdoor sports pitches, and provides a programme of fitness activities.

3. Key points

3.1 Main findings

General findings

The Board reported in our last report of 2023 that a new Governor took over mid-year and began a process of change and improvement. The Board has noted that this improvement has continued despite the permanent handicap of limited staff resources.

The Board believes that the prison has made positive progress in many areas of its work over the last year and is well-placed to further support and enhance the fair and humane treatment of prisoners at HMP Liverpool. However, there are still areas of concern as described below, together with uncertainty as to how the new regime of a category B reception prison will work in practice.

Specific findings

The overriding issue that permeates every aspect of the prison's performance is that each day appears to be a constant struggle to find staff resources to deliver the expected service. When staffing is reduced due to external escorts (hospital attendance especially emergency or bed guards) or high sickness rates, the management team are having to take resources from one area to address another, often creating a short-term fix that could create more issues later. For example, taking staff from back-office functions to provide entrance gate security or escorts for contractors in the prison leads to frustration if post, email, telephone accounts, etc are delayed. This is on top of the most obvious impact when planned regime is not delivered and prisoners spend very little time out of cells. The lack of regime during 2024 was significant and the delivery of meaningful key worker contact was very poor.

During the latter half of the year the prison was in transition to become a local Category B reception prison serving the Merseyside Courts. This corresponded with the Government's initiatives to reduce prison numbers with early release. The additional time and resource in planning and delivering these outcomes has been considerable and to some extent must have been to the detriment of prisoners as resources were redirected. The prison has seen a considerable increase in the churn of prisoners (turnover of prisoners) in the last two months of the year and this has the potential to create an unsettled environment and makes it more difficult for staff to build relationships.

Safety

- Increase in reported self-harm incidents, from 400 to 557 per year (see table 11 in annex A).
- Increase in violence on both prisoners and staff, with peaks in July and August but upticks showing in the last two months of the year (tables 8 and 9 in annex A).
- Increase in use of force (UoF) incidents, from 270 incidents in 2022, to 334 in 2023 and 469 in 2024 (with 8 uses of PAVA, an incapacitant spray) (see table 2 in annex A).

- Use of body worn video cameras (BWVC) is still not comprehensive and the infrastructure relating to CCTV equipment in particular is prone to failure

Fair and humane treatment

- Failure to go beyond minimum regime and leaving prisoners locked in cells for prolonged periods has been too frequent an occurrence in 2024; for example, in June, on 13.5 days there was essential labour only, meaning the majority of prisoners only left their cells for brief periods during these days.
- There remains a lack of accessible cells (two) for prisoners with disabilities.
- The complaints regarding food provided have remained relatively low.
- Referral processes for admittance to mental health establishments and length of stay in the care and separation unit (CSU, for segregation) for prisoners experiencing mental health illness remain a concern to the Board.
- Outstanding prisoner complaints from other establishments remain a concern to the Board.
- Prisoners' property going missing during transfer between establishments and within the establishment is a frequent cause of frustration for prisoners.

Health and wellbeing

- In the Board's view, overall, prisoners' health needs are met.
- The Board feels that the multidisciplinary team approach means that issues for individual prisoners are usually highlighted quickly, with follow-up action and intervention then taking place as soon as possible.
- The healthcare department's leadership team changed during the year and planned improvements to performance were only starting to be seen by year-end.
- The Board has major concerns about prisoners kept in the CSU, who have serious mental illnesses, waiting too long for an appropriate hospital bed. There is anecdotal evidence that prisoners' mental health has deteriorated during their often-long stays in the CSU. These concerns are shared by prison management and the healthcare department.

Progression and resettlement

- During 2024, the prison failed to achieve the national policy framework target for key worker sessions. More concerning was the failure to achieve the reduced target set for a prison in 'amber red' status (when a prison has reduced but sustainable delivery of activities and services due to low staffing levels). During 2024 the prison's ability to achieve even minimum keyworker sessions was woeful.
- The quality of educational and vocational training provision for prisoners is satisfactory when spaces are allocated. However, delays in systems to allocate prisoners to work or education and failure to achieve targets show that further improvement is needed.
- The prison needs to consider how it will respond to the higher churn rate of prisoners as a reception prison, together with increased numbers of young offenders when planning courses. In the last two months of the year, over 230 new admissions a month entered the prison (this is around 25% of the total

population). Around 30% of places went to newly admitted prisoners and this turnover figure is not expected to decrease (see table 6 annex A).

- When considering the whole population either in full or part-time work, the number of unemployed has always been the largest group and by December, this had climbed to 280 roughly 35% (it should be noted that those on remand, held in prison until the time of their trial or subsequent sentence hearing, are not required to work) (table 10 annex A).
- The Board remains impressed with the work of the Partners of Prisoners (POPs) team and the arrangements in place for social visits and family contact.
- Most resettlement targets are being met, despite obvious challenges around the prison working at, or exceeding, its capacity, with the prison also still taking many prisoners directly from the courts. However, men can still enter and leave the prison with no fixed abode.
- The prison runs a successful weekly resettlement board, which is attended by prisoners who are in the last few weeks of their sentence. Several external agencies attend the resettlement board, which offer appropriate support and help such as with housing, banking, welfare benefits, etc. The numbers leaving prison with no fixed abode continue to be a concern. Despite the efforts put into this area, there are still only 82% of those released with confirmed accommodation needs met on the first night.

3.2 Main areas for developments

TO THE MINISTER

- Despite assurances in response to concerns raised last year, the delay in relocating prisoners with severe mental health issues continues. When does the minister expect this to change?

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

- When does the prison service expect to complete both the refurbishment of G wing, which is currently not available for use and the new workshops, that were abandoned with the collapse of ISG, the construction contractor in the summer of 2024?
- Staff absence is still an issue at HMP Liverpool, affecting daily staffing levels and resulting in frequent regime cancellations for prisoners. Does HMPPS accept that measures taken to date have been ineffective and that it needs a different approach?
- The Prison Service is aware of the inhumane length of time some prisoners have been in the CSU at HMP Liverpool whilst waiting for transfer to an appropriate mental health establishment. In the absence of any change will the Prison Service seek to bring additional resources to the site?
- Illicit items (drugs, mobile phones and weapons) continue to be found in significant quantities. This leads to significant disruption within the prison and potentially fails to keep the public safe. Will the Prison Service set a timescale for implementing any aspect of the following, as set out in its response to the 2023 annual report: *'HMPPS are exploring options to mitigate this growing risk [drones], including technological deployments and resourcing to maximise their impact, and work closely across government to assess the effectiveness in a rapidly changing technological landscape'*?

- Prisoners are still not receiving responses to complaints from other establishments within the timeframes specified in Prison Service policies. Will the Prison Service reconsider its approach to policing the implementation of this policy? In addition, does the Prison Group Director (PGD) have an option of imposing financial sanctions when those prisons that fail to respond are privately run?
- Prisoners' property during transfers is still going missing and is not managed effectively by the Prison Service, despite the updated Prisoners' Property Policy Framework. The Board has raised this issue with the Prison Service for several years through our annual reports. What action will the Prison Service take to eliminate prisoners' property being lost or mislaid between transfers, as previous approaches have not eliminated the problem?
- Given the age and nature of HMP Liverpool, will the Prison Service improve the maintenance response times, both planned and delivered, to ensure the prison provides consistently decent and safe accommodation? In addressing this issue, will the service consider that employing a dedicated responsive maintenance manager could be self-financing by eliminating waste and over charging, and making prison operations more efficient?
- Will the Prison Service invest in resetting the CCTV equipment to a usable monitoring performance standard and maintain it at this level?

TO THE GOVERNOR

- Does the Governor have any target date of being able to provide keyworker sessions as set out in the Manage Custodial Sentence Policy Framework (an average of 45 minutes per prisoner per week)?
- What local actions will the governor consider for improving staff attendance, which is seen as a root cause of the poorest service delivery areas?
- The use of body worn video cameras is a potential benefit for staff and prisoners alike. Will the prison enforce the mandatory wearing of this equipment, as required by the National Policy Framework?

3.3 Response to the last report (calendar year 2023)

Issue raised to the Minister	Response given	Progress
Immediate action is needed to prevent the inhumane detention of prisoners with severe mental health needs in CSU.	The delay, as is often the case, was due to a lack of capacity in the system together with NHS England's prioritisation processes... I invite the Board to read the press release of 6 November 2024 about Mental Health Act reforms (which can be found on the .gov website) where the Government and I have committed to introducing a new statutory time limit of 28 days for transfers from prison to mental health hospitals.	During the reporting period, the new target time for transfer was not in place and prisoners continued to wait for excessive periods of time.

Issues raised with the Prison Service	Response Given	Progress
As a cluster death site, what additional resources will be available to HMP Liverpool to protect prisoners?	No longer a cluster death site. The prison now also has an additional Custodial Manager within the Safer Custody department specifically for managing self-harm, along with a full-time Safety Analyst. The NHS Health and Justice Quality Team also conduct regular Quality Visits at HMP Liverpool. During these visits, Death in Custody action plans are reviewed.	In 2024 the prison had eight deaths with two apparently self-inflicted (NB one of the eight incidences occurred post release).
What action will the Prison Service take to directly reduce staff absence at HMP Liverpool and eliminate regime closures due to low staffing levels?	The Ministry of Justice People Group undertook a deep dive into absences at HMP Liverpool in April 2024. There is a planned review and re-profile of the current shift pattern for operational grades due to commence as part of a potential operational shift to a core reception prison. Due to the length of time it takes to review, plan, and implement a re-profiling of the prison, it would provide greater operational stability to consider one re-profile combining the recommendations and re-role requirements.	Absence levels in HMP Liverpool are reported by the prison to be the highest in the comparator prison group.
What will the Prison Service do to ensure that prisoners at HMP Liverpool are not waiting for inhumane periods for such transfers?	During the reporting period, the new target time for transfer was not in place and prisoners continued to wait for excessive periods of time.	Delays continued throughout 2024.
What additional support will the Prison Service provide to explicitly target drone activity at HMP Liverpool?	Through collaborative working with police and the regional organised crime unit, several arrests and convictions have been made in relation to drone activity at the prison. Close collaborative working continues between the directorate, subject matter experts, including the key threat manager, SOC (Serious Organised Crime) Operations and intelligence teams, along with the prison and law	During 2024 there were 99 drone sightings, with probably more undetected. The evidence of recovered contraband indicates that drones are likely to still be a significant delivery mechanism.

	enforcement to continue to seek to punish perpetrators.	
What action will the Prison Service take to ensure that prisoners with disabilities and accessibility needs have appropriate accommodation?	A business case for funding has been received and approved by HMPPS Estates for the conversion of four regular cells to be repurposed into two fully accessible cells.	The number of fully accessible cells is two, outside of healthcare.
What will the Prison Service do to ensure that failure to respond to complaints lodged with other HMP establishments is addressed and delays prevented?	To avoid delays, it is essential that respective prisons agree at an early stage which of them is responsible for providing the substantive response. If agreement cannot be reached, the complaint should be referred to the relevant PGD as soon as possible. The responsibility for referring the complaint rests with the prison where the complaint was initially lodged. HMP Liverpool have put in place a process whereby any outstanding complaint responses from other establishments are escalated via the Deputy Governor at HMP Liverpool to the Deputy Governor of the relevant establishment.	Outstanding complaints remained a persistent problem in 2024.
What action will the Prison Service take to eliminate prisoners' property being lost or mislaid between transfers?	HMPPS notes the Board's concerns about property when a prisoner transfers establishments. The introduction of the digitally recorded Prisoner Escort Record (dPER) included a property section that accurately records the number and type of sealed property transferred with the prisoner and an accurate record of property handover between different stakeholders. This is now embedded as business as usual.	In 2024 there remained twice as many applications raised with the Board about property issues outside of the prison as there were within it. While a record of when handovers occur is positive, it does not help if a prison or the national courier does not fulfil their respective roles.
What plans does the Prison Service have for ensuring that as many suitable courses and training opportunities are formally accredited to	An Education Skills and Work Needs Analysis is currently underway, however it should be noted that HMP Liverpool was identified to re-roll to a category C resettlement prison but will now remain a local reception jail. It is	During 2024 the situation did not improve, in part due to the changes identified in the response.

enable a sense of achievement for the prisoners during their time at HMP Liverpool and to enhance their chances of not returning to prison?	anticipated the population will change significantly in due course, moving to 30% remand and 70% sentenced prisoners. It is expected many of the sentenced prisoners will be 'short stay', being transferred on to other establishments to complete the majority of their sentence. By January 2025, when the population changes are expected to be completed, a further Needs Analysis is planned to provide an update on prisoner need, labour market trends, and employment opportunities.	
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Issues raised with the Governor	Response	Progress
What action will be taken to ensure sufficient resources within safer custody are available to ensure safety and positive outcomes for prisoners?	Two safety staff are detailed each day to the Safer Custody department to address and complete the basic safety requirements including CSIP investigations and ACCT assessments (assessment, care in custody and teamwork documents, used to support prisoners who are at risk of self-harm and suicide).	CSIP referrals and ACCT trainings have improved and work is on-going.
What action will be taken to improve notification to the Board of serious incidents so that effective monitoring can be undertaken?	All functional Heads have been reminded of the need to notify the Board of all applicable incidents and to ensure invites are sent for all relevant meetings.	The Board has seen a positive improvement in this area and it is no longer a concern.
What further action will be taken to improve oversight of the UoF?	We have a Custodial Manager with oversight of Use of Force and we now have a profiled Use of Force coordinator who oversees all UoF and completes weekly scrutiny meetings and assurance checks. This has led to an improvement in the oversight of this work.	The Board recognises that the prison has taken steps to improve oversight in this area. However, inconsistent BWVC and CCTV failures mean that full confidence is not yet established.
What action will be taken to ensure that such segregated prisoners	All prisoners located in CSU for longer than 72 hours, will have a reintegration plan which	CSU gym not occurring. However, good work is observed

have appropriate access to activities?	will identify supportive actions to promote not only reintegration to their normal location, but management of their time in the CSU. We are currently exploring options with the Activities Department to support CSU gym.	in preparing men for reintegration.
What action will be taken to reduce property going missing during transfers / moves within the prison?	A refresh of the need for a cell clearance is to be completed in line with BWVC (Body Worn Video Camera) and a copy of the cell clearance to be issued to the prisoner, placed on wing file and also stored on the unit he moved from.	The Board has not had the resources or time to monitor this area
What plans are in place to further enhance training and education programmes, e.g. accreditation of more courses, ensuring all courses are full?	Due to the re assignment of the prison to a reception/remand prison, running a wider range of vocational qualifications would not benefit the ongoing prison population. It is forecasted that they will not be in the prison long enough to complete the qualification. To prepare our prisoners for release or longer sentencing in another establishment, we will increase the maths and English provision, shorten vocational experience to work on basic skills, put short-form employability courses through AQA (Awarding Body) into work areas, promote the Progress in Work Booklets or similar in all areas, use coracle laptop courses in cell and work areas and increase outreach provision in functional skills. We will also place 4 direct employer routes in work areas (Marstons-Hospitality, Plastering-construction, Railtrack, Inside Connections - Civils).	Re assignment only occurred at the end of the reporting year and prior to this there was no increase in accredited courses. Railtrack ended after 2024.

Evidence sections 4 – 7

4. Safety

4.1 Reception and induction

The Board has had limited opportunities to monitor the prison's reception process, and when it has, no concerns have been raised. The induction wing was relocated during the year, but experienced staff did not transfer to the newly designated wing.

There are a group of prisoners within the induction wing who support new prisoners and they appear to take pride in the help and support that they can provide. Every weekday morning, groups of new prisoners attend a presentation run by prisoners using an extensive PowerPoint presentation. While this is very comprehensive, the excessive use of text for a population largely known to have low levels of literacy seems counterproductive. Despite this, the delivery is effective and the trusted prisoners appear very supportive throughout their stay on the induction wing.

4.2 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody

During the year there were eight deaths in custody (seven in 2023). It should be remembered that any death, while in custody, or within 14 days of release, is recorded in these figures. Any death associated with the prison is deeply regrettable and has a significant impact on both staff and prisoners. However, given the ageing population and the prevalence of serious health issues among incoming prisoners, these figures must be considered carefully.

Month, location and age of prisoners on death				
2024		Location / wing		Age
January		H		38
March		A		58
July		B		53
July		post release		
Sept		HCC*		57
Sept		Hospice		80
Nov		A		32
Dec		F		43

*HCC = Health Care Centre within the prison

All deaths in custody are subject to investigation by the Prison and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) and a clinical reviewer considers the care given prior to the death.

Two deaths were apparently self-inflicted. One death occurred while in a hospice and one occurred shortly after release from prison.

The conclusions of the PPO include any recommendations for learning or changes in practice that the prison is asked to consider. The Board is satisfied that all such recommendations have been acted upon (with exception of key worker sessions) by the Governor. NB: Some reports from the PPO have yet to be drafted or finalised at the time of writing this report.

The monthly record of self-harm incidents remained always within the range of 40, plus or minus 10%, until December, when it peaked at 57.557 incidents were recorded during the year.

The prison has directly linked the lack of a regime to an increased risk of self-harm, which clearly contributes to frustration among prisoners. Of a possible 456 sessions of meaningful activity, only 162 (35%) were delivered (this can be seen as reflective of the extent that regime was curtailed mainly due to staff shortages) (see table 13). This, together with delays in being allocated work, meant many men were left with little time out of their cells. The efforts of the prison to offer more men opportunities in these activities has meant that not all work is full-time (i.e. morning and afternoon sessions). Increasingly men will only have a morning or afternoon session, and afternoon sessions are never more than four per week (no activities take place on Friday afternoon). See also section 5.5.

4.3 Violence and violence reduction, self-isolation

During 2024 there was a rising trend of violence directed from prisoners towards staff and other prisoners (see tables 8 and 9, annex A). From July onwards, violence in both categories rose and this period was one of significant change in the prison, including: the early release scheme, transfers of significant numbers both in and out of the establishment, high staff sickness absence, etc. While this may be a correlation, the exact cause(s) cannot be confirmed.

4.4 Use of force

The use of force (UoF) has increased over the previous year and included the first use of PAVA (an incapacitant spray) within the establishment (see table 2). The 469 incidents, including eight uses of PAVA, is an upward trend that the Board will continue to monitor. Some of the increase could relate to better recording, but this is not thought to be the main driver.

Board members endeavour to attend weekly reviews of UoF within the establishment. However, it should be noted that due to low membership numbers, not all can be attended and additionally, only a selection of UoF actions are reviewed using Body Worn Video Camera (BWVC) footage.

The Board has raised the following concerns:

- a) Not all officers wear BWVCs
- b) There are delays in officers submitting their written records of the events as required under prison regulations
- c) The CCTV infrastructure is not reliable and subject to breakdown.

4.5 Preventing illicit items

The prevalence of drones approaching the site (99 sighted during the year) (see table 3), has led to growing concerns that illicit articles can be delivered to prisoners too easily. This is borne out by the success of searches, where multiple phones, including iPhones and drugs, are found. 235 incidents of phones found in searches led to the recovery of 342 phones. The constant replenishment of phones and other contraband found and confiscated leads to concerns that drone delivery is not the

only significant route of contraband into the prison (see table 4: phones found and table 5: drug test results).

The prison is constantly vigilant, searching deliveries to the prison and visitors entering the prison. One parcel was intercepted with the following:

- Two hot dog tins containing 440g of cannabis in 30g sausage-shaped packages
- 41 Zanco phones (ultra-compact mobile phone known for its tiny size)
- Five iPhones
- 39 chargers
- 30g cannabis

While this success should be celebrated, it highlights the risk should just one package enter the prison.

Table 5 shows that 530 drug tests on prisoners found both 'traditional' and synthetic drugs in use. The ability to infuse newer synthetic drugs in paper and fabric presents new routes into the prison and has led to more restrictions and delays on prisoners receiving legitimate items from outside (e.g. post, clothing).

5. Fair and humane treatment

5.1 Accommodation, clothing, food

During the course of 2024, new rules were introduced to restrict the opportunities for prisoners to have personal clothing taken from their store or to have clothing sent in by family or friends. These restrictions clearly assist in controlling illicit items entering the prison but at the same time, can cause some resentment and impact on prisoner staff relations.

During 2024, the refurbishment of K wing was completed and the movement of prisoners within the prison was completed efficiently, allowing contractors to start work on the refurbishment of G wing, due for completion in early 2025. However, this work, and the creation of three new workshops, was put on hold when the main contractor went into receivership in September. This has led to 115 cells and approximately 230 bedspaces being unavailable. At the time of writing this report (January 2025) there has been no announcement of who will be appointed to take up the work or any timetable for completion. This frustration (with contracts in over 30 other prison establishments) has meant that the Governor's plans to adjust staffing in line with increased numbers and change the regime have been put on hold.

With a prison role of around 800 throughout the year, there are 260 cells in double occupancy and all 500 cells have individual toilet facilities but shared showers². The fabric of the prison and electrical mechanical services are a cause for concern. The prison is 170 years old and merely keeping the structure in weather-tight condition is a significant drain on resources. Of even greater concern is the need to keep electro-mechanical services in good order. This impacts both the security of the prison, the safety and the decency of prisoner's environments. There have been repeated false alarms relating to fire alarms, failure of CCTV systems and breakdown in electrical systems. Most recently, it took several weeks to clear blocked drains in communal showers on one wing. There have been occasions when large vehicle gate mechanisms have failed, requiring hand cranking. The cause of these issues can be attributed to misuse in some cases, but also to slow response times from the maintenance contractor. In addition, the IT infrastructure is prone to error, and this puts additional strain on stretched resources. The delivery of responsive maintenance is a source of frustration to both staff and prisoners and the Board speculates that the amount spent must be significant but the local prison management has no sight of costs or direct control of contractor. Therefore, the Board believes that a dedicated staff member responsible for managing contract delivery and quality would be cost-effective.

5.2 Segregation

The segregation unit, normally referred to as Care and Separation Unit (CSU) is an area that the Board pays particular attention to as it is seen to be a potential area of high vulnerability.

The Board recognises a high degree of professionalism among the staff in this area, recognising that prisoners can be placed in segregation for a variety of reasons including:

² Numbers in this section are approximations as cells go in and out of use and the prison population is in constant flux.

- a) Cellular confinement as punishment for poor behaviour
- b) Temporary holding pending adjudication of charge (a disciplinary hearing when a prisoner is alleged to have broken prison rules) for poor behaviour
- c) Holding facility for prisoners exhibiting frequent poor behaviour due poor to mental health.

Just as in the report of 2023, the Board remains concerned that individuals with severe mental health conditions are having to be kept in the CSU where facilities and staff skills/training are not conducive to their care. This is neither fair nor humane for the sick prisoners or the staff. In 2024 there were at least three cases where prisoners waited for such transfers in an inappropriate environment, where staff are expected to carry the burden of this without specialist knowledge or mental health training. The Board acknowledges the support of Merseycare in this area, but their presence is only for specific case visits or reviews.

During the 11 months for which data is available (Jan – Dec) a total of 345 prisoners spent an average of five days in the CSU (note some prisoners will have had multiple periods in the CSU and some stayed much longer than the mean figure quoted).

Anecdotally, one prisoner who has served time in numerous prisons, expressed the opinion that Liverpool's was the 'best CSU' that he had been in. This was taken to be a reflection of the support that he had received.

5.3 Staff and prisoner relationships, key workers

The Board is impressed with the relationships displayed daily between the majority of prisoners and staff. Although some prisoners have said they feel that certain officers 'don't care' or can be 'vindictive', most interactions witnessed are fair and supportive.

Examples of cooperative activities include prisoner versus officer football matches and combined attempts at fundraising for local charities.

The failure to run anything close to an effective key worker programme is a concern and the lack of this was highlighted in one of the Prison and Probation Ombudsman's reports following a death in custody.

The custodial sentence policy framework, implemented nationally in 2018, sets an expectation of one key worker session per month with every prisoner. It is the experience of the Board that rarely does a prisoner know who their key worker is. During 2024, the prison was rated 'amber red' status due to low staffing levels, as reflected in the low regime offer (see section 5.5). This meant that a lower target should have been achieved, but the figures show only a 61% achievement of this reduced target (see table 15).

The significance of the key worker failure is that the target of 45 minutes per week is that efforts to reduce reoffending, reduce the risk of harm, diversion from substance misuse and the overarching goal of transforming their lives is not delivered.

A sample of 1,311 sessions run through the year, found that only 15 met a reasonable standard and none were rated as 'good'.

5.4 Equality and diversity

The prison monitors the protected characteristics, as set out under the Equality Act, and records any complaints using discrimination incident report forms (DIRFs). These may be completed by prisoners, staff or visitors. Dedicated DIRF post boxes are located on all prison wings.

The DIRFs, notices and other publications are translated and displayed in numerous languages, although the foreign national prisoner population at Liverpool remains relatively low. The equality team has issued staff guidance in the past on the use of the Big Word translation service for foreign national prisoners with limited understanding of spoken or written English language. Handsets and instructions for use are sited in all residential and communal areas around the prison. Unfortunately, it is under-used and staff/prisoner awareness needs to be raised regarding this service. The information regarding men who require translation is passed to residential teams and, where possible, they are located with other members of their native country who do speak English. The Board has found that when presenting potential discrimination issues to the DIRF manager that they are effectively dealt with.

Personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs), for disabled prisoners who require support in the event of an evacuation, are in place and those with a plan are clearly identified on each wing.

5.5 Faith and pastoral support

The chaplaincy continues to provide excellent multi-faith and non-faith support across the prison and supports all major faiths and beliefs. The prison, through the work of the chaplaincy, maintains a calendar of special religious days and care is taken that appropriate food is provided by the kitchens during these periods. The Board has been impressed with the visibility of the chaplaincy team around the prison, and prisoners comment positively about the support they receive, regardless of their own beliefs or backgrounds. The chaplaincy is well-led, provides a vital service to prisoners and their families and offers high-quality comfort and support at times of bereavement, anguish and illness. Staff can also be supported by the chaplaincy team.

5.6 Complaints

The Board has monitored outstanding complaints (COMPs) during the reporting year. Once again, both prisoners and staff have raised the issue of other establishments not responding to prisoners' complaints, which causes frustration. The Board receives applications (prisoners' written representations to the IMB) about this issue frequently. When prisoners don't get responses to complaints, their issues do not get resolved, they cannot receive compensation for lost property and the Board then receives applications about the same issue, which creates additional work for the IMB and the prison staff. The Board must stress that this is not the fault of HMP Liverpool. We have observed a proactive business hub, which repeatedly contacts other establishments for a response, to no avail. The Board does not view it as fair that prisoners wait so long for a response to complaints, contrary to the prison's policy on this matter. We have also raised this matter with other IMBs in the northwest for their awareness.

During the year, the Board saw a reduction in outstanding complaints within the prison but the failure of other prisons to respond to complaints in a timely and appropriate manner was a source of frustration. These external complaints normally related to property matters.

5.7 Property

In previous years the problem with prisoners' property going missing has been a persistent problem in HMP Liverpool and across the whole prison estate. However, 2024 produced fewer applications relating to this issue. During 2024, out of 305 apps received, there were 10 relating to property issues within HMP Liverpool and 22 relating to property on transfer. Recognising that issues raised relating to 5.1 above (changed rules around access to personal property from stores) will be included in these figures, there has been both a perceived and measurable improvement in this area. Pressure needs to be maintained to ensure that the improvement is sustained.

6. Health and wellbeing

6.1 Healthcare general

As can be seen by the number of applications submitted to the Board (see page 33), healthcare has remained a considerable concern during 2024. The Board has observed a wide range of reasons for prisoners to express dissatisfaction with the healthcare provided. These include waiting times to see a GP, changes in medication, delays in receiving medication and delays in receiving appointments to outside hospitals. Not all of these are unique to the prison population and many people in the community experience similar frustrations. However, the Board does believe that during 2024 there have been significant issues particular to life in HMP Liverpool.

The contract that Spectrum Healthcare operates under is commissioned by NHS England North West Health and Justice Group and provides funding for only two escorted prison trips to hospital each weekday. This means that when a hospital appointment is offered, prisoners often miss these appointments due to the escorts either being already committed or being given to more urgent medical cases. In addition, an urgent unplanned escort to hospital can mean that the staffing resources are diverted there being little or no resilience in the staffing levels. The Governor has expressed a willingness to staff more planned escorts, but no one is funding them. Missed appointments are a major frustration and seen as a source of unfairness, given how long a prisoner might wait for an alternative. In addition, it can waste hospital resources when the substitution of escorts is made at short notice.

The number of unplanned trips to hospital, particularly outside normal work time (evening and weekends) is a drain on staff resources when numbers are often low anyway. Sending two prison officers as escorts for an urgent hospital visit of unpredictable duration can greatly impact the smooth operation of the prison at any time of day. The causes of these visits range from heart and other chronic conditions, self-inflicted wounds, overdoses and the swallowing of foreign objects such as batteries.

When prisoners arrive at HMP Liverpool, they often come with pre-existing conditions and an existing treatment regime. The staff at HMP Liverpool will review the appropriateness of continuing with the same prescription medicines and changes can be a source of friction. Where the aim is to reduce dependence on certain drugs or the dosage level, it can be for a long-term positive benefit, but the communication of the reasoning may need to be improved.

There was a change in local management at the prison by Spectrum Healthcare mid-year and revised targets established. The Board accepts that there have been improvements and moves towards achieving these targets but believes there is still further work to be done. In particular, by improving communications at every point of contact, the Board believes that the number of complaints and associated frustration could be reduced.

6.2 Physical healthcare

All prisoners are seen by the healthcare department as part of their initial assessment. With the rerole of the prison changing to a category B reception, the churn in numbers has increased reception and discharge numbers by an average of

100 per month, this has not been reflected in the contracted resources. The kiosk system and the daily presence of healthcare staff on the wings enable prisoners to book appointments and be seen by staff within a reasonable amount of time. The Board has found that complaints regarding healthcare have been significant throughout the year and have been the largest source of applications (prisoners' written representations to the IMB, 66 out of 308) during the year. In the second half of the year changes to the local management of the service by the external provider started to deliver some improvements. This is praiseworthy, given that the depression register has increased from 149 to 204, the number of under the influence (UTI) call outs by 20% and urgent call outs are now averaging 15 per day.

The key performance indicators for healthcare improved in the latter half of the year, with figures provided by Spectrum Healthcare indicating that targets are being achieved or within a very narrow margin.

The number of GP appointments offered has risen from 200 to 250 per month.

Nurse led appointments average 1,500 per month.

The did not attend (DNA) rate of 22% is reported as in line with national average but in the Board's view, is still a waste of resources.

New initiatives that have been introduced or planned for early 2025 include:

- Primary care mental health clinics (i.e. picking up issues such as depression that would normally be dealt with by GPs in the community, rather than the dedicated mental health team referred to below).
- A shift coordinator role to make best use of available resources
- Clinical skills workshops to support staff
- In 2025 a triage phone line (to assess the most appropriate clinical response) and patients' forum are planned to start.

The Board does not have performance figures like the above for the first half of the year but believes that this is a significant improvement.

6.3 Mental health

Merseycare are contracted to provide mental health services working with Spectrum community health. Merseycare see every prisoner within 72 hours of their arrival. Whilst numbers fluctuate, there are typically between 70 and 90 prisoners who would be categorised with a serious mental illness (SMI) and each would be on a support pathway according to their needs with approximately half having a named nurse. There are typically another 260 prisoners on the caseload of the integrated mental health team (IMHT) who are known to have some sort of mental health need and would be accessing some sort of therapy through one of the clinics for older people, people with learning disabilities, psychology, occupational therapy, speech and language or people requiring support with neurodiversity.

The IMB rarely receives applications from prisoners who are in mental health crisis that are not already known to healthcare. The IMB has been reassured by the prompt response prisoners receive when the IMB reaches out on their behalf. Mental health report receiving typically 70 - 80 crisis calls per week, which are responded to same day.

The occupational therapy team in the IMHT comprises occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants. The team assesses an individual's history, supports needs, strengths, interests, risk factors and environment and offers 1:1 or group sessions to help develop skills to support recovery and participation in meaningful roles, activities and routines in prison and for release into the community. Group or individual sessions might include relaxation, coping strategies, sleep hygiene or budgeting skills. Prisoners who have occupational needs related to their mental health and are under the integrated mental health team, on assessment, care in custody and teamwork documents, used to support prisoners who are at risk of self-harm and suicide (ACCTs) or on the IMHT talking therapies list and can be referred to the occupational therapy team.

The psychology service within the IMHT is designed to deliver psychological interventions for mental health difficulties to all men in HMP Liverpool. This service is open to any men who wish to be referred and are willing to engage in intervention on self-identified difficulties. Referrals are usually self-generated, but any professional or member of prison staff can refer on behalf of the men. At the point of referral, assessment is conducted with the men to determine their needs and what therapeutic approach is appropriate.

A range of therapies are offered, including cognitive behavioural therapy, person centred counselling, eye movement and desensitisation therapy, cognitive analytic therapy, acceptance and commitment therapy, compassion focussed therapy, dialectic behavioural therapy skills and schema-informed therapy. Therapy is typically offered for up to twelve sessions, although can be extended if there is a clear clinical rationale. Therapy is adapted to meet the individual needs of the patient.

The criteria for acceptance into the service is that the men are willing and able to engage in psychological work and have something they wish to focus on or work on. Referrals are accepted for patients on open ACCTS, and who are in the CSU. To ensure that access is equal to all, the only exclusion criteria is those men who want to work on risk or offence related issues (as this is provided by prison psychology) and men who are currently unwell or experiencing active psychosis. For the latter, the prison would assess men once their mental state has stabilised. Engagement with the service is optional, and men are not required to engage as part of sentence planning.

Due to the nature of remand prisons, the prison offers shorter term interventions for men who do not remain in the prison long enough to access twelve sessions. The service works with men as long as they remain in the prison, within the limit of sessions. For men who are due to be imminently released, the service tries to offer a single session of therapy which entails an extended assessment, brief intervention and signposting to further resources.

6.4 Social care

The Board rarely receives applications concerning social care needs and very few concerns have been brought to our attention. Prisoners use peer supporters, and those with mobility issues are generally housed at ground level. Some prisoners may find it difficult to attend the wing servery to collect food and, in such cases, delivery to their cell is arranged.

6.5 Exercise, regime

The core day requirement that all prisoners get access to 60 minutes of fresh air is from the Board's observations, normally delivered. However, this can be achieved by allowing prisoners onto the yard attached to each wing. Here there is no equipment to exercise and at best, prisoners can walk around the yard in twos and threes. Access to the gym is not available when the full regime is not delivered and as has been noted in section below, the full regime was often not delivered in 2024.

The amount of time spent out of cell and in exercise, varied according to individual choice and regime restrictions reducing the offer. HMP Liverpool was generally able to maintain access to the exercise yard for all prisoners daily. However, the Board found that access to exercise facilities and fresh air was often hampered, due to staff shortages or a wing decision that the weather was too inclement. The Board feels this should not be a reason for outdoor exercise to be curtailed unless the weather conditions are dangerous or extreme. We received very few applications concerning access to exercise or activities, but we often received 'collective unhappiness' complaints about the disrupted arrangements from groups of prisoners when visiting the wings. Table 13 shows the poor attendance at allocated work which can be seen to reflect the curtailed regime where prisoners are not allowed off wing and are more often confined to cells.

The prison has maintained 'park runs' throughout the year and has hosted visits from external professional football teams to take part in prisoner-related activities, including a football match. In addition, there have been football competitions amongst staff and prisoners to raise money for local charities.

6.6 Drug and alcohol rehabilitation

The mandatory drugs testing (MDT) programme has been affected by staffing issues across the prison and this has continued to impact on the scope of testing done throughout the reporting year. The Board continues to express concern about the low number of random tests taking place. On average, 44 drug tests per month occurred in 2024. The prison scored low on this metric compared to national targets/performance. In the Board's view, the prison's governance is trying its best to raise the effectiveness of the MDT programme and recognises that drugs and access to illicit drugs are a growing problem for the prison. Throughout the year it was not unusual to see on the daily orderly officers log sheets that a prisoner was found under the influence of one or more substances. During the year, Naloxone (a medication used to reverse or reduce the effects of opioids) was increasingly made available to staff, and training was provided on its administration when the use of synthetic drugs was suspected. This followed last year's report, which stated that the number of visits from the sniffer dog team had been increased: *'It seems apparent that prison governance is determined to step up its daily and weekly approach to reducing the access and availability of illicit drugs across the prison estate.'* The problem persists and stopping drugs entering the prison is a constant battle.

The IMB considers that the problem of illicit drugs across the prison is getting worse, which is a worrying trend that needs a swift and consistent approach to improve the situation.

6.7 Soft skills

Neurodiversity support

Work continues to support the needs of those who are neurodiverse and to raise awareness amongst staff.

Prison documentation used by prisoners has been reviewed to improve accessibility and each wing has a neurodiversity toolkit to help staff support prisoners who have needs.

The neurodiversity support manager (NSM) is working successfully with education, healthcare, the library service and Partners of Prisoners, a charity that provides information and support to the families of prisoners to identify all prisoners (and families) with neurodiverse needs during initial assessment. The Board has been pleased with the work undertaken to date and will continue to monitor the work of the neurodiversity team.

Drug misuse support

NHS England Health and Justice Commission Spectrum Healthcare deliver substance misuse services within HMP Liverpool. Part of this commissioned service is sub-contracted to Change, Grow, Live (CGL).

CGL is an organisation utilising volunteers alongside paid staff. It helps prisoners and their families cope with their substance misuse issues. At HMP Liverpool, CGL has a team of recovery co-ordinators, a programmes team and a connecting community's team. Prisoners and their families who engage with the service can access one-to-one support, which looks at their drug or alcohol misuse, the impact it has had on their lives and ways to avoid this in the future. The service means that on release prisoners can avail themselves of continuity of support for three months in the community through the CGL network of service within the city region.

The programme's team offers several group works, ranging from one-day sessions to more intense programmes. It also offers a range of mutual aid groups, including NA (Narcotics Anonymous), AA (Alcoholics Anonymous) CA (Cocaine Anonymous), SMART (a self-help addiction recovery programme) and Inside Out (an exchange programme for social change).

The connecting communities team works with prisoners who are due for release within three to four months, preparing them for release and a more stable lifestyle. They will also help with access to residential rehabilitation and supported recovery homes.

7. Progression and resettlement

The importance of work and training is brought to the attention of the Board by the prison, reporting that those engaged meaningfully through the week are less likely to self-harm while in prison.

The Board finds the way that national or regional contracts are set up to need improvement. To be approved for placement in a workshop, prisoners must be assessed for their levels in basic English and maths. They are then assessed for their potential to make progress in a workshop or vocational training. Thus, the prison needs to manage two contractors in a chain with potential bottlenecks. In addition, these contracts were set up in a rather inflexible way that prevented requests for adjustment in process or outputs to match the changing role of the prison that occurred mid-year. These contracts run until April 2025. Lastly, the prison has to undertake a security risk assessment before prisoners can be placed in environments with tools, knives and additional freedoms.

With the change in the status of the prison, the early release scheme and the removal of many prisoners convicted of sexual offences (PCOSO) to other establishments, the churn rate of prisoners rose dramatically in the latter months of the year. This made planning for education and training, etc, very difficult. Even when a prisoner might be placed on short literacy or maths courses, these became much extended due to regime shut down.

7.1 Education

The educational offering included English and maths together with art, and computer studies. Education was delivered via Novus. The number of prisoners attaining improved levels in English and maths was pleasing, despite being hampered by frequent regime interruptions.

The library has between 30 and 300 visitors per week, with fluctuations due to labour moves being suspended, another impact of staffing numbers. The space is welcoming and has a wide range of books available.

The library also supported 33 prisoners through Storybook Dads, allowing a prisoner to record a story for their children, which is then sent out for the child to listen to at home.

7.2 Vocational training, work

IAG (sometimes known as The Growth Company) are contracted to undertake the subsequent suitability assessment to place prisoners in appropriate vocational or work-based placements. Such placements are voluntary for remand prisoners, while failure to undertake work or training for sentenced prisoners can come with a sanction.

The Board is disappointed with the low achievement of allocating all work and training places and the further low attendance of prisoners. This was exacerbated by the confinement to cells during the normal workdays due to staffing shortages leading to curtailment of regime. The poor performance is further impacted by the higher churn in prisoners since redesignation.

Two particular schemes made links with outside employers for training. Railtrack for railway track maintenance and Marston's for hospitality work. Both proved successful and popular but unfortunately due to the churn in prisoners it was not possible to continue with Railtrack beyond 2024. The scheme could not be sustained due to a lead time of up to two months to be admitted and an eight-week course.

7.3 Offender management, progression

Offender management and prisoner progression has seen additional pressures in the latter half of the year due to changes described above. In the Board's view, the prison's offender managers (POMs) work effectively with the men to progress them through their sentences, identify offence focused work to address their offending behaviour and hopefully reduce any possibility of re-offending. However, the POMs have to focus most attention on those newly arrived or approaching release. The POMs continue to liaise with community offending managers (COMs) to support men being released from custody. There are comprehensive and timely hand overs that ensure that release plans are in place. In addition, there is the pre-release team who deal with men on short term sentences.

The transfer of men in and out of the prison has met the criteria laid down by the Ministry of Justice. Throughout 2024, the prison has had considerable success in transferring category B and D prisoners to other suitable sites, thus enabling men to progress their sentence and be managed in appropriate security category establishments. However, because of external pressures of the prison population, the POMs team has experienced some challenges transferring long term category C prisoners to appropriate training establishments; this hinders the men from completing appropriate courses to help address their offending behaviour.

In 2024, regular face-to-face prisoner contact by the POMs was stepped up and enhanced using the in-cell telephone system. The system enabled the POMs to develop and manage a professional relationship with men on their caseloads relative to their offending behaviours, in preparation for release back into the community.

In the Board's view, home detention curfew (HDC) continues to be well managed by offender management staff as they ensured that they got prisoners on or as near as possible to their home detention curfew eligibility date (HDCED). At times delays in safeguarding steps by the police and or social services have impacted on men getting out on their HDCED.

The IMB is of the view that the offender and prisoner management team have had a successful 2024, in spite of the challenging circumstances of dealing continual local and national difficulties that in part can be attributed to private contractual changes and difficulties.

7.4 Family contact

Partners of Prisoners (POPs) operates in several prisons across the NW, including HMP Liverpool.

Families can book social visits via the government website or over the phone with the booking line. POPs continues to monitor the response times for the booking line and finds both this and treatment of families is very good. This is supported by feedback from families to POPs.

Social visits are run twice daily, with one hour per slot (1.45- 2.45pm and 3.15- 4.15pm). Visitors are advised by POPs to arrive 30 minutes before their visit time. POPs is now also supporting the 'no social visits' list: prisoners who receive no family visits or make family calls. POPs will refer to the chaplaincy prison visitor programme when needed. These referrals have increased as monitoring has developed. In addition, POPs having raised concerns about PCOSO prisoner families, a separate visit session has been introduced.

The increasing number of remand prisoners with greater visiting entitlements started to impact the visits programme towards the end of 2024 and this issue was to be addressed by prison management in 2025.

POPs continues its bi-monthly family forum, which is chaired by the head of POPs. The lead officer for each prison department is invited, including operations, chaplaincy, safer custody, mental health, etc. Most departments are represented at the forum. In addition, up to 12 families are also represented, following an invite to all families who attend. As an incentive, families can access an extra social visit for attending, which has proved to be an effective strategy. The forums became more structured in 2024, ensuring specific issues can be addressed directly to individual officers responsible in the prison.

POPs conduct a periodic survey of family satisfaction with the visit process; in October 2024 this showed high levels of satisfaction with the booking experience and with the welcome received and searching procedures on arrival.

A number of revived, or new, initiatives are now taking place as part of the prison visiting regime. These include:

- Family days take place a minimum of six times per year. These are visits by families where prisoners can engage with their families in activities such as art, reading, playing games, etc., usually around an agreed theme, such as Christmas and Easter. Around 12 prisoners at a time can join this activity with members of their families. There is a waiting list of families who wish to take part in this activity.
- A new baby programme remains in place: during the first four weeks of a baby's life, photos and updates (such as information on the new baby) can be sent to the prison and uploaded to a prisoner's personal account. Within 48 hours of a baby's birth, a social video call is set up for the respective prisoner, mother (and baby). All these activities give the prisoner an insight into their child's early days, which will create important memories.
- The prison continues its own neurodiversity lanyards for families to use when going through the booking-in process. This makes staff and other visitors aware that the visitor may have a hidden disability and may need further support going through the process of visiting a family member or friend. POPs support the prison initiative, distributing ear defenders and fidget toys to assist those for whom the environment can be overwhelming.
- The visits' regime has introduced a new 'intervention room' which looks like a living room. This is now used for a range of programmes including counselling, and new baby intimate contact.
- During 2024 an option was given to have photos taken with family members during visits; this was used to raise funds for a local charity (Sefton bank).

POPs ran two Nurture programmes in conjunction with Liverpool CC. This accredited programme supports parenting and healthy relationships.

The prison maintains a range of involvement with the Liverpool community, as is evidenced by fundraising initiatives by both prisoners and staff. The most significant of these was £15,800 raised for Zoe's Place, a children's hospice. In addition, funds were raised for Mind (a mental health charity) with a Christmas Jumper Day, Andy's Man Club, a bake sale during Safety Week/International Men's Day and a collection for Woodlands Hospice. Prisoner involvement included sponsored runs and staff versus prisoner football matches, purchases of cakes with profits going to charities including Sefton Community Kitchen.

7.5 Resettlement planning

The resettlement board, which is mandatory, identify men on long term imprisonment who are due for release, 12 weeks before such release. At the weekly resettlement board meeting, men can discuss their release plans with participating stakeholders regarding accommodation, banking matters, including opening bank accounts and accessing NHS services, amongst others. The target of getting 90% of men into accommodation on their first night following release was met in the reporting year. Referrals are being completed by the community offender manager in liaison with the pre-release team and POM for men who have presented at the resettlement board as having no ready accommodation on the day of release.

On a few occasions, prisoners indicate that they have not been able to attend on their planned day due to local staffing issues at wing level; this will continue to be monitored by the Board in 2025.

The Board has been impressed with the work of the resettlement teams since it recommenced post Covid-19 and has been well received by prisoners and staff alike.

The sentence management team have experienced considerable challenges, since the private contract for prisoner release into permanent or temporary accommodation at the end of their sentence has changed. Locally, the commissioned rehabilitative services of Seetec (Merseyside) and Ingeus (Greater Manchester) have a maintained part-time presence within the prisons and have been an invaluable source of information and assistance for men released into their respective areas. However, the commissioned rehabilitative service at, or on behalf of, HMP Liverpool for men being released was failing to achieve targets; and for those released to areas outside of the Merseyside and Greater Manchester areas, the service was lacking. (This struggling aspect of the service was made worse by the early release schemes putting pressure on finding accommodation.) These men were being supported, wherever possible, by the pre-release team or the POM to address any accommodation issues.

The accommodation lead continues to support men on release, identifying any gaps in the provision of accommodation support to men on release from HMP Liverpool. The accommodation lead reviews outcomes that highlight any challenges for men going into accommodation on their day of release. In 2024 (April to December) a total of 964 men were released from HMP Liverpool, with 171 negative outcomes (meaning no specific first night accommodation identified).

The accommodation lead is also providing continuous advice and guidance to staff on measures to overcome accommodation issues encountered by prisoners upon release.

There have been considerable challenges for POMs whilst trying to maintain regular contact with offenders. Overall, staffing issues have caused increases in caseloads intermittently. POMs maintained contact with offenders that they are looking after via in-cell telephones, face to face interviews and via Teams, thereby allowing POMs to complete evidence-based risk assessments (OASys), pre-release and parole reports on time.

The introduction of Teams (a collaboration and communication platform) provided the prisoners an option to have a three-way discussion with their POMs and COMs, thereby allowing vital information to be made available across to key cadre of staff, for effective management of risk and to prepare an enhanced release process of the prisoners.

Due to internal staffing absences and vacancies, basic custody screening tool, BCST part 1 is not being completed within the guidelines of 72 hours from point of reception. This has impacted on the completion of BCST part 2, which act as a guide to individual prisoners' resettlement release planning.

Despite the continuous difficulties, experienced by the HMP Liverpool staff, the IMB considers that the prison staff team continued to deliver a good resettlement programme for the ever-changing prisoner population.

8. The work of the IMB

The Board has operated significantly below its recommended complement of members for several years. This was worse in 2024, when low member numbers had impacted on our monitoring capability and placed additional pressures on individual members. During the middle of the reporting year to the end, there were only three fully trained and active members. Others were either on sabbatical or in different stages of their induction training.

The Board does not believe that with its resources in 2024, it could effectively monitor all aspects of the prison as it should. There has had to be a focus on several higher risk areas, mainly CSU and a reactive approach where complaints through applications or casual conversations with prisoners elevated concerns. The Board is pleased with the responses that the senior management team have shown when issues have been raised. The open discussions and willingness to explore options have been welcome.

The use of hybrid monitoring that was explored in 2023 has almost entirely disappeared in 2023 due to the lack of availability of Board members but may need to be reinvigorated with the recruitment of new members going forward.

During the reporting year, the Board received more applications from prisoners than in the previous reporting year. Areas that stand out are healthcare, canteen and transfers.

Board Membership	
Recommended complement of Board members	16
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	7
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	3 (total – breakdown below): 3 (trained and active) 1 (trained and on sabbatical) 1(not trained and on sabbatical) 0 (in training)
Total number of visits to the establishment	369

Applications (issues) raised with the IMB			
Code	Subject	Previous reporting year (2023)	Current reporting year (2024)
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	15	21
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentive schemes, sanctions	6	5
C	Equality	10	14
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, time out of cell	7	11
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection, restrictions	26	30
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	17	16
F	Food and kitchens	7	14
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	36	64
H1	Property within the establishment	15	10
H2	Property during transfer or in another facility	29	22
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogues	2	23
I	Sentence management, including HDC (home detention curfew), ROTL (release on temporary licence), parole, release dates, re-categorisation	38	35
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	27	14
K	Transfers	5	12
L	Miscellaneous	16	14
	Total number of applications	256	305

The Board received a total of 248 individual prisoner applications during the reporting year, with some individual applications requesting support in more than one area, which explains the 305 total figure.

Annex A

Service providers

Service	Provider
Education	Novus
Employment suitability advisors	IAG (The Growth Company)
Library services	Liverpool City Council
Healthcare	Spectrum
Mental Health	Mersey Care
Facilities	Amey
Advice and information on drugs, alcohol, homelessness, prison, health and wellbeing	Change, Grow, Live (CGL): a local voluntary organisation

Annex B

Table 1 Number of prisoners on roll at HMP Liverpool (month end)

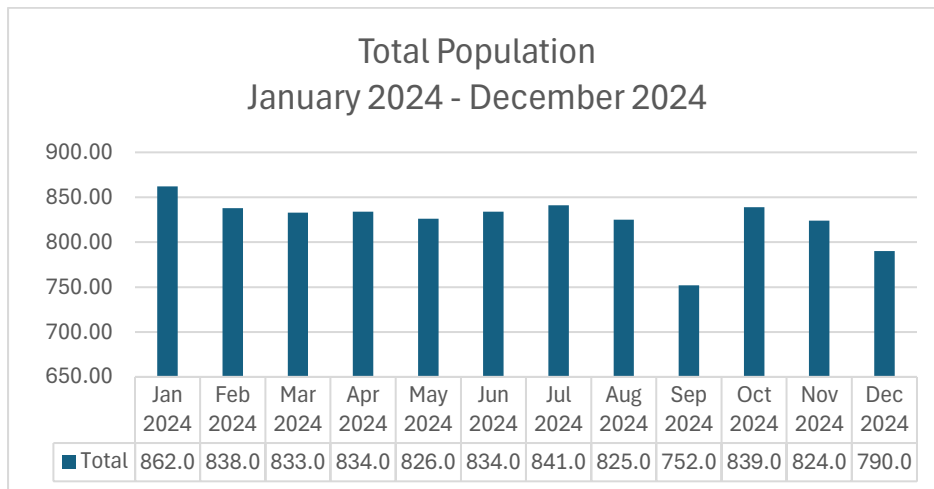


Table 2 Use of force (UoF) incidents

Monthly totals		PAVA use	
Use of Force			
January	32	January	0
February	33	February	2
March	20	March	0
April	28	April	0
May	33	May	0
June	33	June	0
July	47	July	1
August	39	August	0
September	52	September	4
October	59	October	0
November	58	November	0
December	67	December	1

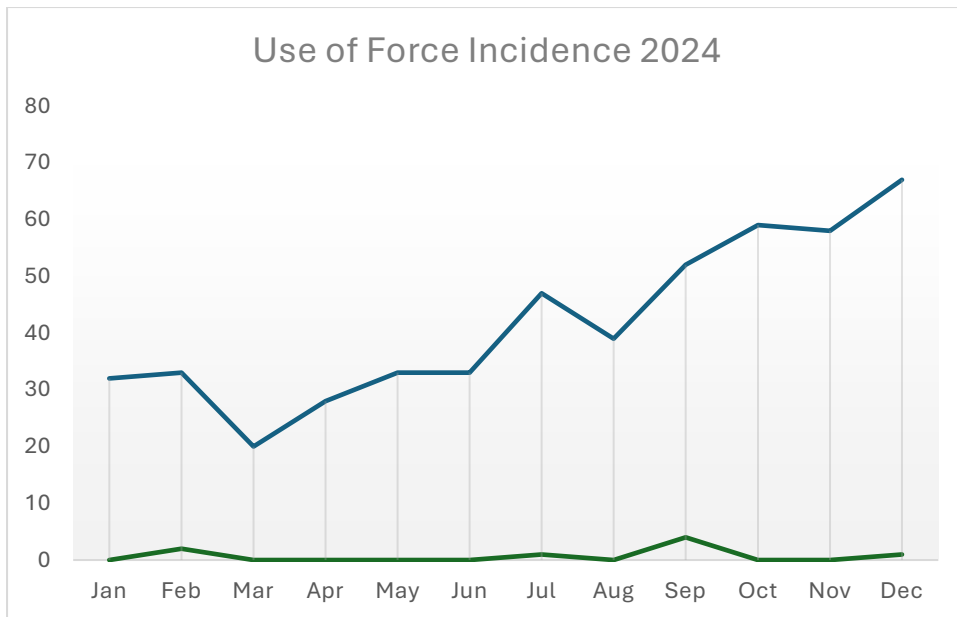


Table 3 Drone Sightings

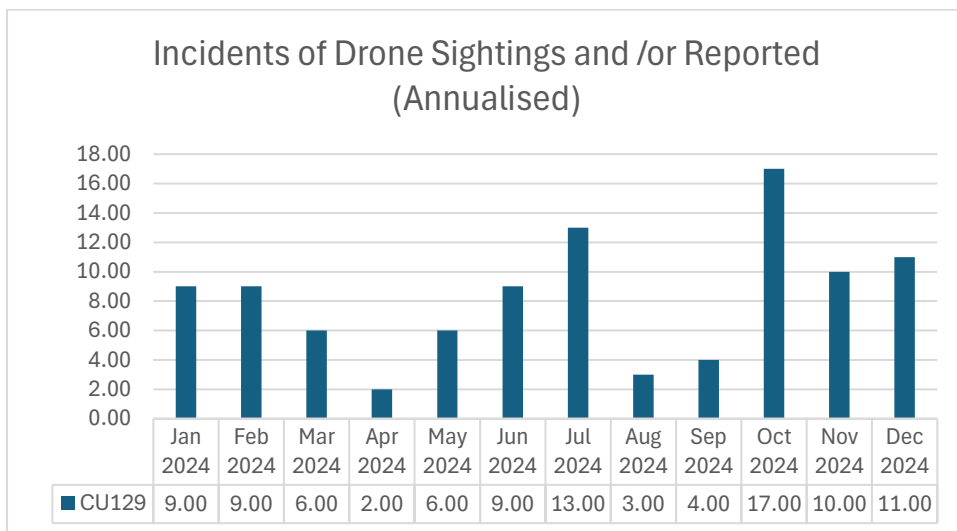


Table 4 Number of phones found

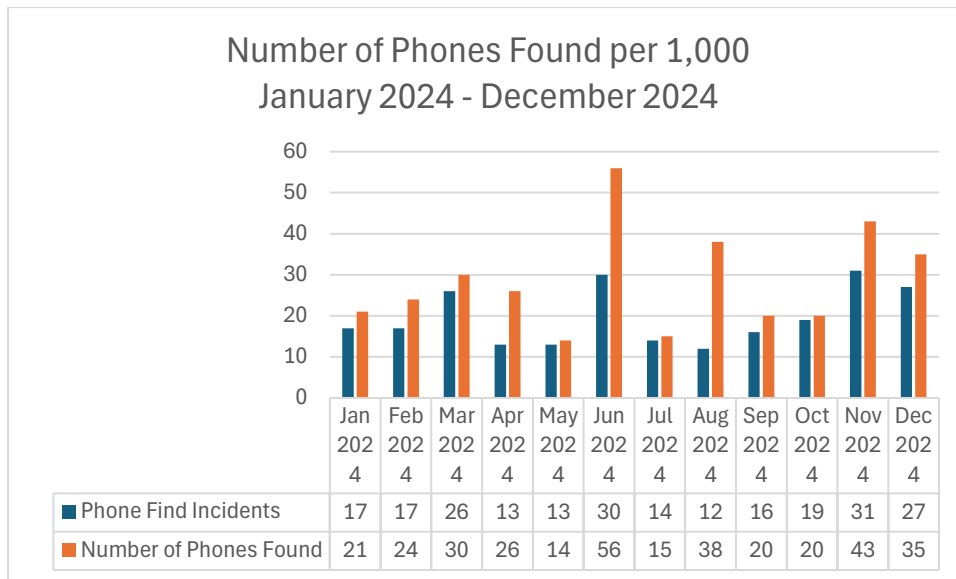
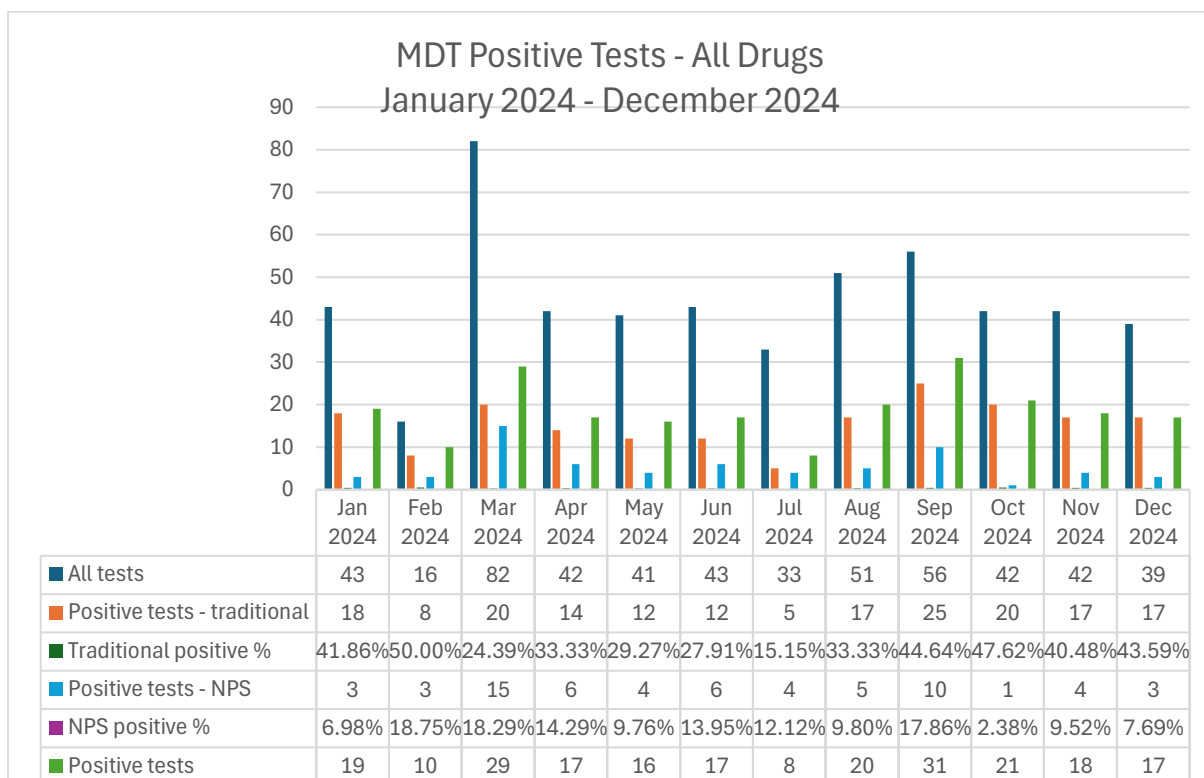


Table 5 Mandatory drug Tests (MDT)



Key: NPS= new psychoactive substances

Table 6 Arrivals in HMP Liverpool



Table 7 Numbers leaving HMP Liverpool

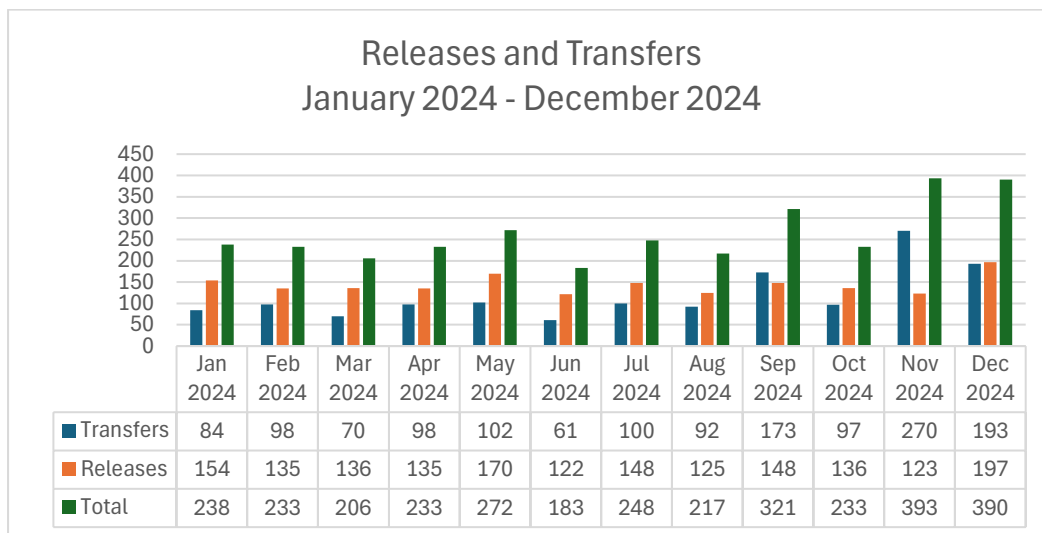


Table 8 Prisoner on prisoner assaults



Table 9 Prisoner on staff assaults

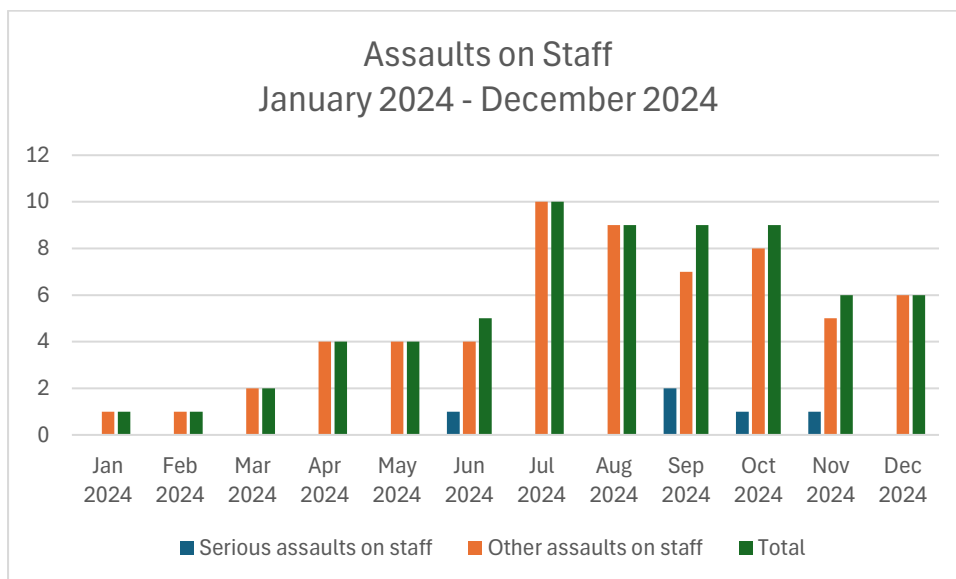


Table 10 Purposeful activity (sessions allocated to individuals)

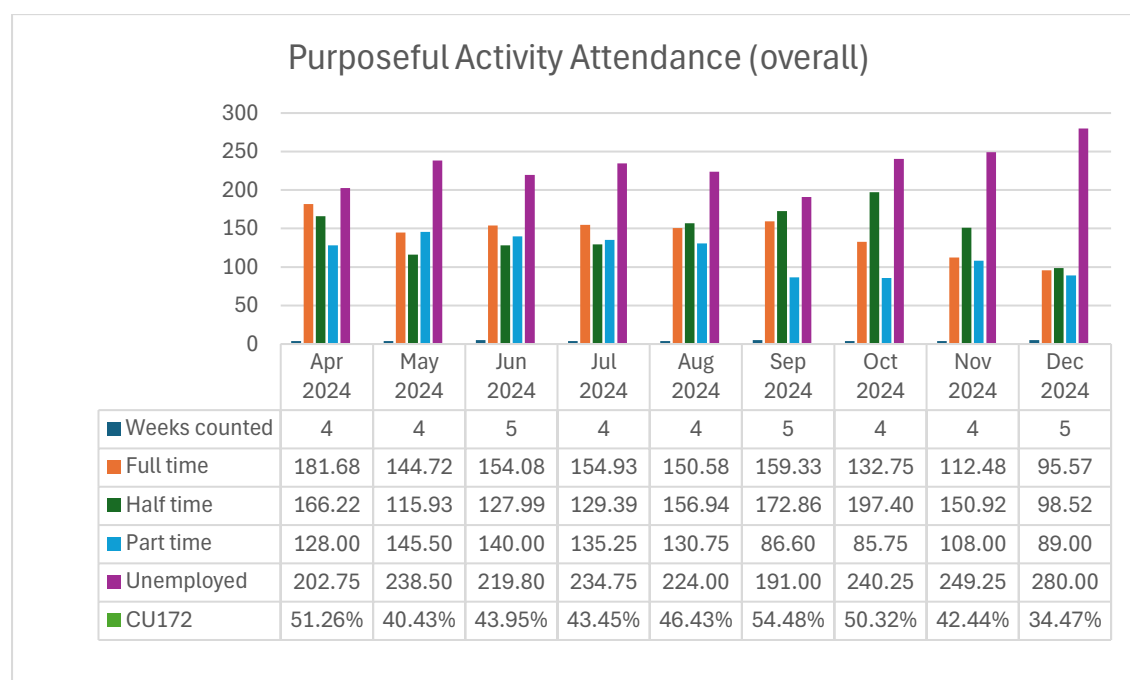


Table 11 Incidence of self-harm

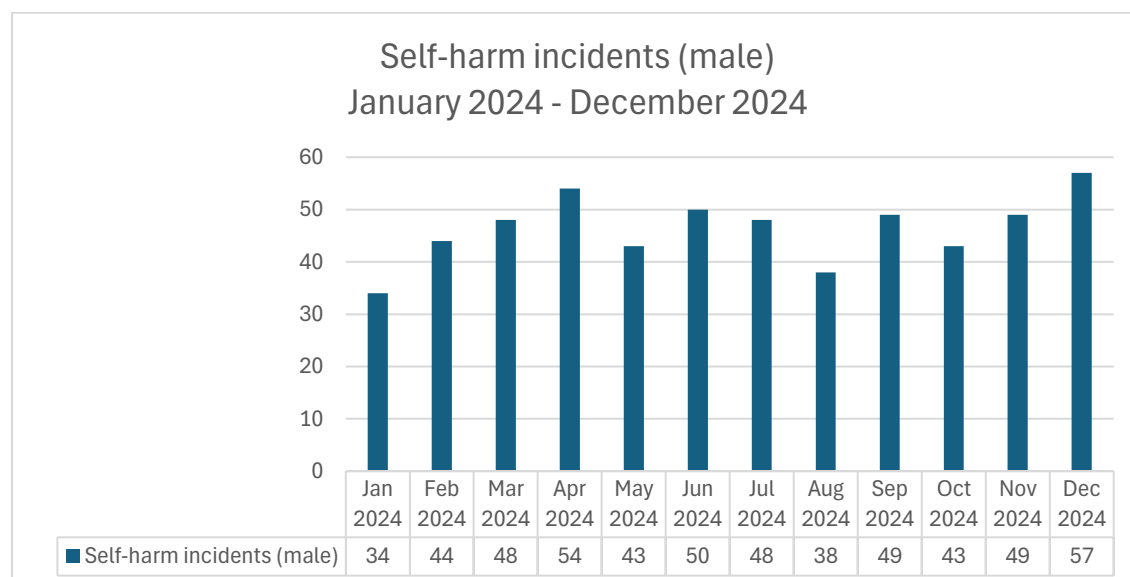


Table 12 Staff sickness

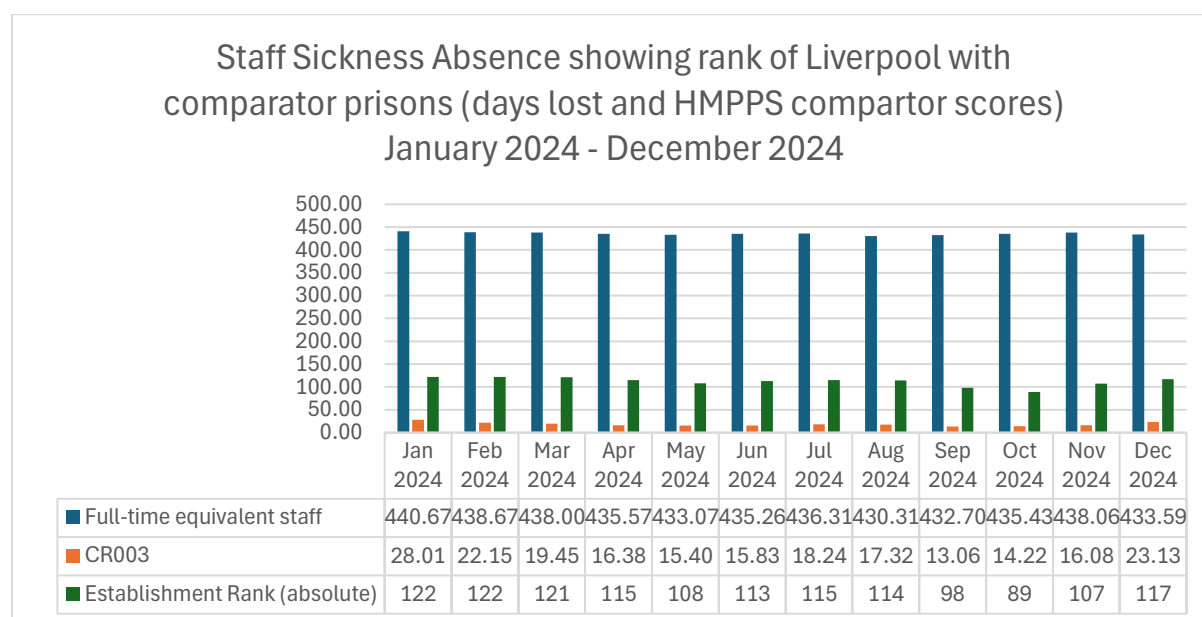


Table 13 Attendance at place of work

Of places allocated % attending in 2024		
Month	% attended (AM)	% attended (PM)
July	57	44
Aug	62	52
Sept	66	59
Oct	71	65
Nov	59	52
Dec	49	46

Table 14 Levels of unemployment within the prison in 2024:

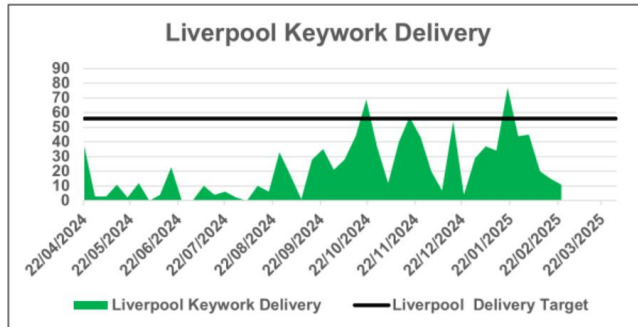
		Highest level of unemployed prisoners on any day in the month
Jan		198
Feb		183
Mar		171
Apr		161
May		175
June		179
July		204
Aug		171
Sept		172
Oct		225
Nov		281
Dec		352

The increase in numbers in the last three months of the year is likely to be the result of higher turnover of prisoners resulting in more awaiting assessment and placement.

Table 15

Key worker performance

Number of sessions to be delivered monthly as per a Green RMP state (minimum 2 sessions per prisoner every 4 weeks)	1680
Number of sessions to be delivered monthly as per an Amber Green RMP state (minimum 1 session per prisoner every 4 weeks)	840
Number of sessions to be delivered monthly as per an Amber Red RMP state (minimum 1 sessions to priority cohorts every 4 weeks)	200



Liverpool Key Work Quality GMMC QA (Taken from Cu146z on Nomis)				
Month	Invalid Entries	Poor Quality	Reasonable Quality	Good Quality
Jan-24	8	5	0	0
Feb-24	9	3	0	0
Mar-24	12	3	3	0
Apr-24	11	0	0	0
May-24	1	9	0	0
Jun-24	1	9	0	0
Jul-24	5	6	1	0
Aug-24	2	10	2	0
Sep-24	1	8	1	0
Oct-24	0	8	2	0
Nov-24	0	6	6	0
Dec-24				

Week Commencing	Key Work sessions Delivered	Target as reduced for Amber / Red Status
7/10	28	56
14/10	44	56
21/10	69	56
28/10	37	56
4/11	12	56
11/11	40	56
18/11	57	56
25/11	43	56
2/12	20	56
9/12	7	56
16/12	54	56
23/12	4	56
3/12	29	N/A



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