

**Prisons &
Probation**

Ombudsman
Independent Investigations

Independent investigation into the death of Mr Earl Johnson, a prisoner at HMP Birmingham, on 3 January 2025

A report by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman

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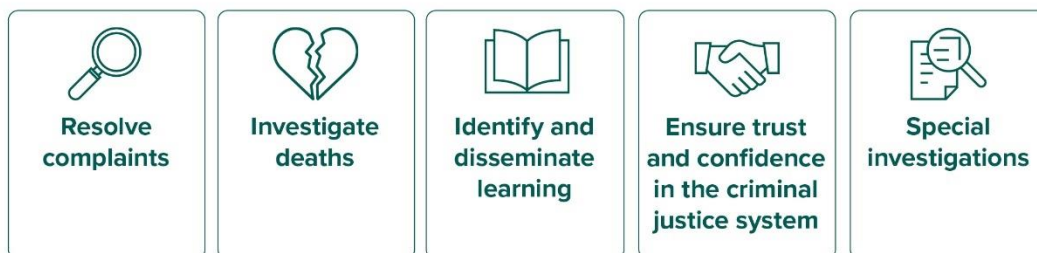
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OUR VISION

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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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. If my office is to best assist His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) in ensuring the standard of care received by those within service remit is appropriate, our recommendations should be focused, evidenced and viable. This is especially the case if there is evidence of systemic failure.
3. In 2006, Mr Earl Johnson was sentenced to life imprisonment for wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm. He was later released but was recalled to prison in December 2024. Mr Johnson died in hospital from a ruptured abdominal aortic aneurysm on 3 January 2025, while a prisoner at HMP Birmingham. He was 64 years old. We offer our condolences to Mr Johnson's family and friends.
4. The Ombudsman's office wrote to Mr Johnson's next of kin to explain the investigation and to ask if they had any matters they wanted us to consider. They did not respond.
5. NHS England commissioned an independent clinical reviewer to review Mr Johnson's clinical care at HMP Birmingham.
6. The clinical reviewer concluded that the clinical care Mr Johnson received at Birmingham was of a reasonable standard and at least equivalent to that which he could have expected to receive in the community. The clinical reviewer made recommendations around record keeping that the Head of Healthcare will wish to address.
7. The PPO investigator investigated the non-clinical issues relating to Mr Johnson's care.
8. We did not find any non-clinical issues of concern. We make no recommendations.
9. We shared our initial report with HMPPS and the prison's healthcare provider, Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust. They found no factual inaccuracies.

Adrian Usher
Prisons and Probation Ombudsman

May 2025

Inquest

At the inquest, held on 28 July 2025, the Coroner concluded that Mr Johnson died from natural causes.

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