



Imprisonment in Wales: A Factfile

Dr Robert Jones

Wales Governance Centre at Cardiff University
& University of South Wales

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ABOUT US

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CONTACT DETAILS

Wales Governance Centre at Cardiff University, Pierhead Building, Cardiff Bay, CF99 1NA

Web: <http://sites.cardiff.ac.uk/wgc/>

Centre for Criminology, University of South Wales, Ferndale Building, Treforest Campus, Pontypridd, CF37 1DL

Web: <http://criminology.research.southwales.ac.uk>

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Robert Jones is a Lecturer in Criminology at the University of South Wales and Honorary Research Fellow at the Wales Governance Centre at Cardiff University. His research focuses upon devolution and criminal justice in Wales.

Email: jonesrd7@cardiff.ac.uk

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There are five male prisons in Wales that each hold a mixture of convicted, unconvicted, sentenced and unsentenced prisoners. Prison capacity in Wales has steadily increased since 2010; the prison population in Wales was 4,291 at the end of April 2018. (Chapter 2)

Prisons in Wales are performing less well than prisons in England on a range of prison safety measures. The number of recorded self-harm incidents and prison assaults in Wales has increased at a higher rate than prisons in England since 2010. There were more prison disturbances at HMP Parc in 2016 and 2017 than at any other prison in England and Wales. (Chapter 3)

Despite an increase in prison capacity in Wales, 39% of all Welsh prisoners were being held in English prisons in 2017. In a large number of cases, Welsh prisoners are placed in establishments far away from home; Welsh prisoners were held in 108 different prisons in 2017. (Chapter 4)

The recent opening of HMP Berwyn has resulted in a significant rise in the number of English prisoners held in Wales. The English prison population in Wales more than doubled in 2017. More than a quarter of all prisoners held in Wales were from England at the end of March 2018. (Chapter 4)

The number of Welsh women handed immediate custodial sentences has increased by almost a fifth since 2011. Due to the fact that there are no female prisons in Wales, all Welsh women in prison are held in prisons in England. The distances from home facing Welsh women are often considerably higher than those facing Welsh adult males and female prisoners from England. (Chapter 5)

The majority of Welsh women sentenced to immediate custody have been convicted of non-violent offences. Three quarters of all Welsh women receiving immediate custodial sentences in 2016 were given sentences of less than 6 months; this rate is higher than the England and Wales total. (Chapter 5)

The number of Welsh children in custody has fallen by 72% since 2010. 109 custodial sentences were handed to children in Wales in 2017, a rate that was marginally higher than the level in England. (Chapter Six)

45% of all Welsh children in custody were being held in establishments in England during 2017. The distances facing children in prison have been shown to reduce the number of family visits, hinder 'through the gate' support services, and increase the sense of alienation and isolation that children experience in prison. (Chapter Six)

Recent evidence suggests that prisons across England and Wales are failing to meet the needs of Welsh-speaking prisoners. Despite recent signs of improvement in Wales, concerns remain about the state of Welsh language provision in establishments in England and in Wales. (Chapter Seven)

2. INTRODUCTION

In January 2018, the House of Commons Welsh Affairs Committee announced its second inquiry in four years into imprisonment in Wales. The Committee's recent interest lies in growing concerns over prison safety as well as the UK Government's decisions to build new prisons in Wales. In a Welsh context, recent concerns have focused particularly on the rising levels of violence in Welsh prisons (e.g. HMIP, 2018a), and, just 23 days after the opening of HMP Berwyn, the Ministry of Justice's announcement in March 2017 that it is seeking to build a second 'super prison' in Wales at a site in Port Talbot.

These recent controversies over prison safety and capacity highlight the importance of disaggregated 'Welsh-only' data in understanding justice policy and practice. 'Welsh-only' imprisonment data has shown that the UK Government's plans for additional prison places will eventually result in Wales becoming a net-importer of prisoners from England (Jones, 2013; Wales Governance Centre, 2017). Together with increasing concerns over prison safety (HMIP, 2018a), this information has fuelled and informed discussions over the development of an alternative Welsh penal policy (see Bulman, 2018).¹ Indeed, since the establishment of the Commission on Justice in Wales², the Welsh Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Public Services announced in April 2018 that the Welsh Government had withdrawn its support for a new 'super' prison in south Wales as it considers options for a "different and distinct" approach to penal policy in Wales (NAW Deb, 6 April 2018).

These concerns are not unique to Welsh policy makers: a recent report by the Ministry of Justice acknowledged the need to improve the way in which 'Welsh-only' data is gathered and published. This included a pledge to ensure that 'Welsh-only' information is made more easily available to the public on the Ministry's website (Ministry of Justice, 2017). Despite this commitment, access to 'Welsh-only' imprisonment data remains poor and, in a number of areas, disaggregated data held by the Ministry of Justice has only become available by means of requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.³

Given these longstanding deficiencies in accessible information about the justice system in Wales, Imprisonment in Wales: A Factfile has been produced to make 'Welsh-only' imprisonment data more accessible to a wide audience for the first time. With a particular focus upon prison safety, this report provides the most up-to-date information on a range of

1 The Independent – 'How a £250m super prison has made a North Wales industrial estate into UK's 'centre of incarceration'. 6th February 2018. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/wrexham-super-prison-north-wales-industrial-estate-justice-ministry-plaid-cymru-liz-saville-roberts-a8197171.html>

Member Debate under Standing Order 11.21(iv): Criminal Justice, National Assembly for Wales. 7th March 2018. <http://record.assembly.wales/Plenary/4911#A42156>

2 The Commission on Justice in Wales was established by the Welsh Government's First Minister, Carwyn Jones AM, in September 2017 to examine the justice arrangements that exist in post-devolution Wales. <https://beta.gov.wales/commission-justice-wales>

3 Rather ironically, the Ministry of Justice's Report of the Justice in Wales Working Group was only released after a Freedom of Information request had been submitted. The full report can be accessed here – <http://sites.cardiff.ac.uk/wgc/files/2017/09/Justice-in-Wales-Working-Group-Report-Final-2.pdf>

challenges facing prisons in Wales and Welsh prisoners held across the English and Welsh prison estate. In its six chapters on prisons in Wales, prison safety in Wales, male prisoners, female prisoners, children in prison and the Welsh language, this report aims to contribute to debates over the current and future penal landscape in Wales. As well as the Welsh Affairs Committee's latest inquiry, this includes the Commission on Justice in Wales' attempts to explore the problems facing individuals involved or affected by the criminal justice system in Wales.⁴

⁴ See Question 3 of the Commission on Justice in Wales' call for written evidence.
<https://beta.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-02/180227-commission-justice-wales-call-for-evidence.pdf>

3. PRISONS IN WALES

3.1 The prison estate in Wales is comprised of five different establishments.

- **HMP Berwyn** is set to become the largest prison in the United Kingdom. Opened in February 2017, the prison is expected to hold sentenced category C adult males and category B adult males on remand. At the end of April 2018, the prison held a total of 999 prisoners.⁵ Once the prison is fully operational Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) expects the prison's capacity to reach 2,100 places.
- **HMP/YOI Cardiff** is a category B local resettlement prison that holds adult males served by courts in the local area. The prison holds a mixture of remanded, unsentenced, sentenced and recalled prisoners. At the end of April 2018, the population at HMP Cardiff was 716.
- **HMP/ YOI Parc** is a category B local prison that holds convicted adult men, young adults (18-20), and young people (16-17) remanded and convicted. Currently operating as Wales' only privately run prison,⁶ HMP Parc was the very first prison to be built in England and Wales under the Private Finance Initiative (PFI). Following the construction of a new 'house-block' on the existing site in 2015, HMP Parc is one of the largest prisons in England and Wales. In April 2018, there were a total of 1,665 prisoners being held there.⁷
- **HMP Swansea** is a category B local resettlement prison for adult males and serves local courts in south Wales. The prison population is a mixture of remanded, unsentenced, sentenced and recalled prisoners. At the end of April 2018, a total of 384 prisoners were being held there.
- **HMP Usk** and **HMP Prescoed** are two separate prisons located on different sites that are managed as a "single entity" by HMPPS (HMIP, 2013a: 5). HMP Prescoed is an adult male open prison that manages category D prisoners. HMP Usk operates as a small category C training prison which largely deals with offenders convicted of offences under the Sex Offenders Act 1997. At the end of April 2018, HMP Usk and HMP Prescoed had a combined population of 527 prisoners.

⁵ All prison population figures presented here are taken from the Ministry of Justice's Prison Population Statistics – Monthly Bulletin (April 2018) – <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/prison-population-figures-2018>

⁶ The prison is operated and run by G4S Care and Justice Ltd.

⁷ This figure includes all prisoners held there, in both the adult units and the young people's units.

4. PRISON SAFETY IN WALES

- 4.1 In 2016, a review by the House of Commons Justice Committee (2016: 3) raised concerns about the “ongoing and rapid deterioration” of prison safety across England and Wales. The following year, within his annual report for 2016/2017, HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, Peter Clarke, highlighted concerns over declining prison safety across England and Wales.⁸
- 4.2 The main areas of concern raised by HM Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) were increasing levels of assault and violence as well as the “alarming rate” at which self-harm incidents and self-inflicted deaths have continued to rise across England and Wales (HMIP, 2017a: 20). In the 12 months to December 2017, the number of self-harm incidents across England and Wales had increased by 11%, to a record high of 44,651 incidents.⁹
- 4.3 Throughout 2016/17, only five prisons visited by HMIP across England and Wales had demonstrated any improvements in safety since its previous inspection. HMIP discovered that safety levels within 15 adult male prisons had actually worsened. In total, within all adult male prisons inspected throughout 2016/17 only 43% of previous recommendations on safety had been achieved in full (HMIP, 2017a).
- 4.4 Between November 2015 and October 2017, HMIP carried out inspections across all four adult prisons in south Wales.¹⁰
- 4.5 While previous inspections by HMIP have shown that Welsh prisons tend to score higher than establishments in England (HMIP, 2015), the most recent round of inspections revealed a deterioration in performance across Wales.

Figure 4.1 – Recommendations achieved in inspection reports carried out in Wales between 2015-2017

	Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved	Total
Cardiff	20	11	24	55
Parc	25	8	8	41
Swansea	8	9	40	57
Usk and Prescoed	24	15	20	59
Total	77	43	92	212

Source: HM Inspectorate of Prisons

8 Safety forms one of the four ‘healthy prison’ tests carried out by HMIP across England and Wales. The safety test looks to determine if prisoners, particularly those considered vulnerable, are held in safe environment.

9 This includes incidents recorded in ‘Escort areas’. Table 2.1 – ‘Safety Statistics in Custody update to December 2017’.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-december-2017>

10 HMP Cardiff (March 2013), HMP Parc (adult) (July 2013), HMP Swansea (October 2014) and HMP Usk and Prescoed (May 2013).

- 4.6 Having set out a total of 212 recommendations within its previous inspections in Wales,¹¹ HMIP's most recent findings reported that only 77 had been fully achieved. In total, 36.3% of HMIP's recommendations were achieved in full, 20.3% were partially achieved and 43.4% had not been achieved.
- 4.7 Within the area of prison safety, HMIP found that just 36% of recommendations at Welsh prisons had been achieved. Of the 58 recommendations made in relation to safety, 21 were achieved in full, 14 were partially achieved and 23 were not achieved.
- 4.8 Despite praise for the "good support" offered by staff to prisoners in crisis, during an inspection of HMP Cardiff in August 2016, HMIP (2017b: 11) found that there had been three self-inflicted deaths since their last inspection in 2013. HMIP also reported an increase in the number of self-harm incidents at the prison since its last visit.
- 4.9 At HMP Parc in January 2016, prison inspectors also found an increase in the number of self-harm incidents reported since its previous inspection. This included evidence that 234 prisoners had been involved in 386 self-harm incidents – a rate that was higher than prisons similar to HMP Parc across England and Wales (HMIP, 2016a). Since its last inspection in July 2013, HMIP reported that there had been two self-inflicted deaths at the prison (HMIP, 2016a).
- 4.10 In its most recent inspection carried out in Wales – at HMP Usk and Prescoed in October 2017 – HMIP (2018b: 13) reported a "very low" level of recorded self-harm incidents and found that there had been no self-inflicted deaths since its last inspection in 2013. Inspectors did, however, highlight the need for improvements to the "strategic management" of suicide and self-harm prevention at the prison (HMIP, 2018b: 23). This included setting recommendations to develop a more enhanced understanding of the different needs of prisoners held at HMP Usk and HMP Prescoed given the diverse population at each prison.
- 4.11 During an unannounced inspection at HMP Swansea in August 2017, HMIP found that there had been four self-inflicted deaths at the prison since its previous visit in October 2014. Inspectors reported that each of these deaths had "occurred within the first seven days" of prisoners arriving at HMP Swansea (HMIP, 2018a: 21). Despite being given a number of "highly relevant" recommendations by the Prison and Probation Ombudsman, HMIP (2018a: 5) found that prison staff had failed to implement them. This included recommendations relating directly to "early days procedures" for new prisoners arriving at HMP Swansea (HMIP, 2018a: 11).

11 This number includes 'main recommendations' and 'recommendations'. Those classed as 'no longer relevant' by HMIP are discounted.

4.12 Many of the failings uncovered by inspectors at HMP Swansea were reflected upon more widely within HMIP's annual report for 2016/17. This included identifying "major weaknesses" in the assessment and care processes for new prisoners (HMIP, 2017a: 20). Of the total 120 self-inflicted deaths in 2016¹², HMIP reported that 22% (26) had taken place within the first month of a prisoner's reception.

Figure 4.2 – Self-inflicted deaths by establishment in Wales since 2010¹³

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Cardiff	1	0	4	1	1	1	1	1
Parc ¹⁴	1	0	0	0	2	0	3	0
Swansea	2	0	1	0	1	1	3	0
Usk and Prescoed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	4	0	5	1	4	2	7	1

Source: Ministry of Justice

- 4.13 Between 2010 and 2017 there were 24 self-inflicted deaths in Welsh prisons.¹⁵ The recorded figures show that, on average, a prisoner in Wales takes their own life every four months.¹⁶
- 4.14 All deaths in custody in Wales are subject to a clinical review by Health Inspectorate Wales. This review is completed on behalf of the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) as part of their investigations into deaths in Welsh prisons.
- 4.15 While the number of prisoners held in Wales rose by 23% from 2010 to 2017, the level of recorded self-harm incidents in Wales increased by 358% during the same period.¹⁷
- 4.16 In 2017 there were 2,132 self-harm incidents in prisons in Wales. This figure equates to five separate incidents of self-harm taking place in Welsh prisons every day.

12 The confirmed number of self-inflicted deaths in England and Wales for 2016 increased to 122 following the publication of HMIP's report. See Table 1.16 - Safety Statistics in Custody update to December 2017.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-december-2017>

13 This does not include HMP Berwyn – the prison opened in February 2017. There were no self-inflicted deaths at HMP Berwyn in 2017. Table 1.16 - Safety Statistics in Custody update to December 2017.

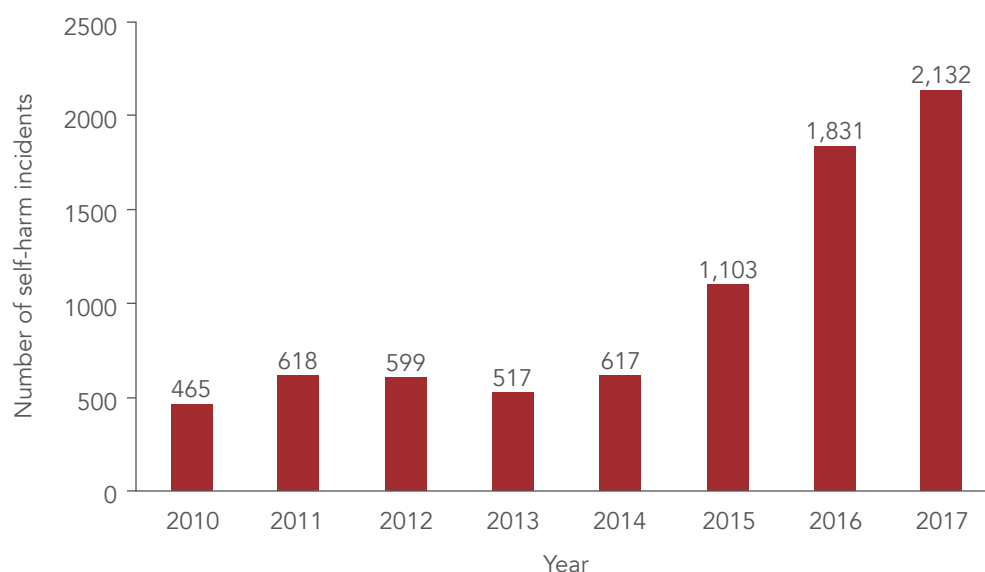
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-december-2017>

14 All data relating to 'Safety Statistics in Custody' at HMP Parc include incidents within the adult facility and the Young Persons' Unit. The Ministry of Justice has confirmed that they do not currently have a mechanism for "separating incidents involving under-18s from those involving adults" at the prison.

15 HMP Berwyn will be treated separately in this section due to the fact that the prison was not operational for the whole of 2017.

16 There has been one further suspected self-inflicted death in Wales since the end of 2017. The death of a prisoner at HMP Swansea in January 2018 is currently awaiting classification.

17 Based on an average of 2,790 in 2010 and 3,441 in 2017. The figure for 2017 does not include prisoners held at HMP Berwyn.

Figure 4.3 – The number of self-harm incidents in Welsh prisons between 2010 and 2017¹⁸

Source: Ministry of Justice

4.17 Based on figures from the previous year, the number of recorded self-harm incidents in Welsh prisons increased during 2017 by 16%, compared to a 10% increase across England.¹⁹

4.18 HMP Parc recorded the highest rate (91 incidents per 100 prisoners) of self-harm in Wales in 2017.²⁰ The second highest rate was at HMP Swansea (68 per 100 prisoners) followed by HMP Cardiff (33 per 100 prisoners) and HMP Usk and Prescoed (2 per 100 prisoners).²¹

4.19 There were 231 self-harm incidents recorded at HMP Berwyn during the 308 days it was operational in 2017.²²

Figure 4.4 – Prisoner-on-prisoner assaults by establishment in Wales between 2007 and 2017²³

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Cardiff	17	14	13	26	62	112	129	167
Parc ²⁴	339	338	256	239	264	483	641	688
Swansea	23	32	16	29	19	41	96	127
Usk and Prescoed	9	3	0	2	6	11	17	10
Total	388	387	285	296	351	647	883	992

Source: Ministry of Justice

18 This does not include HMP Berwyn. Table 2.13 – Safety Statistics in Custody update to December 2017.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-december-2017>

19 There were 37,734 incidents in English prisons in 2016 and 41,626 during 2017. Table 2.13 - Safety Statistics in Custody update to December 2017. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-december-2017>

20 HMP Cardiff (243), HMP Parc (1,576), HMP Swansea (300), HMP Usk and Prescoed (13).

21 The average populations were worked out using population levels from March, June, September and December 2017. HMP Cardiff (745), HMP Parc (1,726), HMP Swansea (442) and HMP Usk and Prescoed (528).

22 Table 2.13 – Safety Statistics in Custody update to December 2017.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-december-2017>

23 Table 3.16 – Safety Statistics in Custody update to December 2017.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-december-2017>

24 All data relating to 'Safety Statistics in Custody' at HMP Parc include incidents within the adult facility and the Young Persons' Unit. The Ministry of Justice have confirmed that they do not currently have a mechanism for "separating incidents involving under-18s from those involving adults" at the prison.

4.20 Since 2010, the total number of prisoner-on-prisoner assaults in Wales has increased by 156%, compared to an 86% rise in the number of incidents in English prisons.²⁵

4.21 The rate of prisoner-on-prisoner assaults in 2017 was highest at HMP Parc with 40 incidents per 100 prisoners. The second highest level was recorded at HMP Swansea (29 per 100 prisoners) followed by HMP Cardiff (22 per 100 prisoners) and HMP Usk and Prescoed (2 per 100 prisoners).²⁶

4.22 At HMP Berwyn, there were 50 prisoner-on-prisoner assaults recorded during its first ten months.

Figure 4.5 – Assaults on staff by establishment in Wales between 2007 and 2016²⁷

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Cardiff	9	6	0	7	18	33	86	99
Parc ²⁸	63	66	50	54	67	135	245	260
Swansea	5	7	8	6	10	15	50	59
Usk and Prescoed	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
Total	77	79	58	67	96	184	382	419

Source: Ministry of Justice

4.23 Assaults on staff in Wales also reached its highest level in 2017. On average, there was more than one assault a day on prison staff in Wales during 2017.²⁹

4.24 The total number of assaults on prison staff in Wales was five times greater in 2017 than in 2010. Incidents in England increased at a lower rate with assaults on staff almost three times higher in 2017.³⁰

4.25 The number of recorded assaults on staff in Wales was highest at HMP Parc (15 incidents per 100 prisoners) in 2017. The recorded rate was 13 per 100 prisoners at HMP Swansea, 13 per 100 prisoners at HMP Cardiff, and 0.19 per 100 prisoners at HMP Usk and Prescoed.³¹

4.26 There were 40 assaults on staff recorded at HMP Berwyn in 2017.

25 There were 10,852 incidents recorded in English prisons in 2010 and 20,212 during 2017. Table 3.16 – Safety Statistics in Custody update to December 2017. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-december-2017>

26 The average populations were worked out using population levels from March, June, September and December 2017. HMP Cardiff (745), HMP Parc (1,726), HMP Swansea (442) and HMP Usk and Prescoed (528).

27 Table 3.15 – Safety Statistics in Custody update to December 2017. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-december-2017>

28 All data relating to ‘Safety Statistics in Custody’ at HMP Parc include incidents within the adult facility and the Young Persons’ Unit. The Ministry of Justice have confirmed that they do not currently have a mechanism for “separating incidents involving under-18s from those involving adults” at the prison.

29 Table 3.15 – Safety Statistics in Custody update to December 2017. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-december-2017>

30 There were 2,688 incidents in English prisons in 2010 and 7,676 during 2017. Table 3.15 – Safety Statistics in Custody update to December 2017. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-december-2017>

31 The average populations were worked out using population levels from March, June, September and December 2017. HMP Cardiff (745), HMP Parc (1,726), HMP Swansea (442) and HMP Usk and Prescoed (528).

- 4.27 In 2017, there were 232 prison disturbances in England and Wales. Despite holding just 2% of the overall prison population, 7.6% of all prison disturbances in England and Wales were recorded at HMP Parc.³²
- 4.28 HMP Parc recorded the highest number of prison disturbances in England and Wales in 2016 (27) and 2017 (18). There were 1.6 prison disturbances per 100 prisoners at HMP Parc in 2016; this was the highest recorded rate across England and Wales.
- 4.29 In 2016, two prison disturbances took place at HMP Cardiff and three incidents were recorded at HMP Swansea. In 2017, there were disturbances recorded at HMP Berywn (1) and HMP Swansea (1).³³

³² A 'recorded disturbance' is defined by the Ministry of Justice as 'a serious incident of disorder involving 3 or more prisoners'. Data was obtained from the Ministry of Justice via the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

³³ Data was obtained from the Ministry of Justice via the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

5. MALE PRISONERS

- 5.1 Between 1990 and 2017, the prison population in England and Wales increased by 91%. This represents a rise from 44,975 prisoners in 1990 to 85,997 in 2017.³⁴
- 5.2 In December 2006, the prison population of England and Wales surpassed 80,000 for the first time. By June 2010, it had climbed to 85,000 and in November 2011 reached its highest level of 88,000 (Allen and Watson, 2017).
- 5.3 The rise in prisoner numbers across England and Wales has contributed to decades of prison overcrowding. The prison system as a whole has been overcrowded every year since 1994 (Prison Reform Trust, 2017).
- 5.4 Since 2011, however, the total number of people in prison has steadily fallen. At the end of April 2018 there were 83,673 people in prison across England and Wales; 1,538 fewer than the year before (85,211).³⁵
- 5.5 In contrast to the recent decline across England and Wales, the number of people held in prisons in Wales has gradually increased since 2010.
- 5.6 Between 2010 and 2016, the prison population in Wales increased by 23%. This is a rise from an average of 2,790 prisoners in 2010 to 3,428 in 2016.³⁶
- 5.7 The number of people held in Welsh prisons was 4,291 at the end of April 2018. This represents an increase of 16% on the previous year (3,684).³⁷
- 5.8 The recent surge in prisoner numbers in Wales can largely be attributed to the opening of HMP Berwyn in February 2017. At the end of April 2018, the new prison in Wrexham had a total population of 999 prisoners.³⁸
- 5.9 In February 2018, the Ministry of Justice told the Welsh Affairs Committee that it is “currently ramping up” prisoner numbers at HMP Berwyn (Ministry of Justice, 2018: 6). Despite this claim, the population at the new prison in Wrexham actually decreased in the month before the Ministry of Justice’s written evidence submission. Between December 2017 and January 2018 the number of prisoners held at HMP Berwyn fell from 887 to 857.

34 Based on an average of monthly totals (up to September 2017). House of Commons Library: Social Indicator 2620 (November 2017) – <http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN02620>

35 Prison Population Statistics – Monthly Bulletin (April 2018) – <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/prison-population-figures-2018>

36 Population in Custody: Jan 2009 to August 2010 – <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/population-in-custody>
Prison Population Figures – 2016 – <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/prison-population-figures-2016>

37 Prison Population Statistics – Monthly Bulletin (April 2017) – <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/prison-population-figures-2017>

38 Prison Population Statistics – Monthly Bulletin (April 2018) – <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/prison-population-figures-2018>

Figure 5.1 – First prison receptions by establishment in Wales in 2017³⁹

	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Total
Berwyn	0	0	0	0	0
Cardiff	747	753	769	733	3,002
Parc	92	87	79	95	353
Prescoed	0	0	0	0	0
Swansea	433	434	441	389	1,697
Usk	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1,272	1,274	1,289	1,219	5,052

Source: Ministry of Justice

- 5.10 In 2017, 5,052 men across Wales arrived in prison having been remanded or sentenced by the courts.⁴⁰ The majority of prisoners were received at HMP Cardiff (3,002) followed by HMP Swansea (1,697) and HMP Parc (353). There were no first prison receptions at HMP Berwyn, HMP Usk or HMP Prescoed throughout 2017.
- 5.11 In 2017, 61% (2919) of all Welsh prisoners were being held in prisons in Wales.⁴¹ Half of all Welsh prisoners located in Wales were being held at HMP Parc in Bridgend.⁴²
- 5.12 The decision on where to locate prisoners across England and Wales is informed by a number of factors. According to the Ministry of Justice (2013), the type of offence committed can “dictate location” as prisoners may be sent to establishments that offer “specialist treatment” or dedicated training programmes (Ministry of Justice, 2018: 5).
- 5.13 The length of time left to serve can often mean that longer-term prisoners are moved to establishments outside of their home areas (Ministry of Justice, 2013a).
- 5.14 At the end March 2018, there were 298 Welsh prisoners serving a life sentence and, despite being abolished by the UK Government in 2012, 141 Welsh prisoners serving imprisonment for public protection (IPP) sentences.⁴³
- 5.15 The categorisation of prisoners can also determine prison location. Due to the fact that there are no category A prison places in Wales, all sentenced category A Welsh prisoners are sent to any one of five high security prisons in England.⁴⁴
- 5.16 There were 31 Welsh prisoners being held as Category A at the end of March 2018.⁴⁵

39 Table 2.3 – Offender management statistics quarterly: October to December 2017.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/offender-management-statistics-quarterly-october-to-december-2017>

40 A first reception is a measure which counts a prisoner's first movement into custody following a court hearing for a particular set of offences committed, and therefore gives the best indication of the number of new prisoners in the reporting period.

41 The Ministry of Justice's definition of a 'Welsh prisoner' is based on home address prior to entering custody. The address of committal court is used to determine the origin of prisoners entering custody with No Fixed Abode.

42 Of the 2919 Welsh prisoners held in Wales: HMP Berwyn – 112; HMP Cardiff – 574; HMP Parc – 1474; HMP Prescoed – 157; HMP Swansea – 404; HMP Usk – 198.

43 There were a total of 2,884 IPP prisoners across England and Wales at the end of March.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/702297/omsq-q4-2017.pdf

44 HMP Belmarsh, HMP Manchester and HMP Woodhill are High Security core locals that can hold category A prisoners who are on remand. Once sentenced, category A prisoners will be moved to one of five High Security dispersal prisons in England (HMP Frankland, HMP Full Sutton, HMP Long Lartin, HMP Wakefield and HMP Whitemoor).

45 Data was obtained from the Ministry of Justice via the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

- 5.17 High levels of prison overcrowding are also responsible for the displacement of prisoners across England and Wales. In 2012, the former Director General of the National Offender Management Service, Phil Wheatley, told members of the Justice Committee that prison overcrowding will often lead to the dispersal of prisoners to “far distant” parts of the prison estate in England and Wales (Justice Committee, 2012, Ev26).
- 5.18 At the end of April 2018, all prisons in south Wales were operating at a level above their Certified Normal Accommodation.⁴⁶ HMP Swansea (143%) was the most overcrowded prison in Wales followed by HMP Usk and Prescoed (139%), HMP Cardiff (138%) and HMP Parc (107%).
- 5.19 Welsh prison places are often used to hold prisoners from outside of Wales. In 2017, there were, on average, 590 prisoners from England serving sentences in prisons in south Wales.

Figure 5.2 – English prisoners by establishment in Wales in 2017⁴⁷

	March	June	September	December
Berwyn	113	345	521	644
Cardiff	168	113	149	158
Parc	211	260	242	248
Prescoed	100	99	88	99
Swansea	48	21	33	28
Usk	74	73	75	73
Total	714	911	1,108	1,250

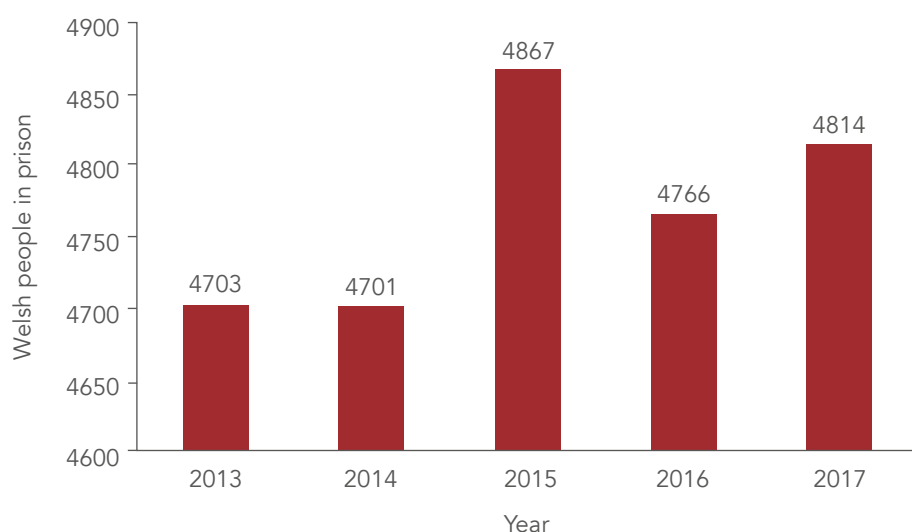
Source: Ministry of Justice

- 5.20 Since HMP Berwyn opened in February 2017, the number of English prisoners held in Wales has increased significantly. In the 12 months up to December 2017, the figure more than doubled from 714 to 1,250.
- 5.21 At the end of March 2018, more than a quarter (30%) of all prisoners held in Wales were from England.⁴⁸

46 Certified Normal Accommodation (CNA) is defined within Prison Service Instruction 17/2012 as “the good, decent standard of accommodation that the Service aspires to provide all prisoners”.

47 This data was obtained from the Ministry of Justice via the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

48 There were 1,286 English prisoners held in Wales at the end of March 2018.

Figure 5.3 – The total number of Welsh people in prison between 2013 and 2017⁴⁹

Source: Ministry of Justice

5.22 The average number of Welsh people in prison throughout 2017 was 4,814. At the end of March 2018, there were 4,653 Welsh prisoners in England and Wales.⁵⁰

5.23 During 2017, 39% of all Welsh prisoners were being held in prisons outside of Wales.

Figure 5.4 – The location of Welsh prisoners in 2017⁵¹

	March	June	September	December	Average
Wales	2,817	2,959	2,958	2,942	2,919
England	1,970	1,947	1,864	1,797	1,895
Total	4,787	4,906	4,822	4,739	4,814

Source: Ministry of Justice

5.24 Welsh prisoners could be found within 108 different prisons in England during 2017.⁵²

5.25 In a large number of cases, Welsh prisoners held in England are placed in prisons far away from home. In March 2018, twenty-six Welsh adult male prisoners were being held on the Isle of Wight.⁵³ This included prisoners from the local authority areas of Caerphilly, Cardiff, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Denbighshire, Monmouthshire, Newport, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Swansea, Torfaen and Wrexham.

49 Data obtained from the Ministry of Justice via the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

50 These figures include Welsh children held at Young Offender Institutions.

51 Data obtained from the Ministry of Justice via the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

52 This is an average based on the number of prisons Welsh prisoners were being held during March, June, September and December 2017.

53 HMP Isle of Wight is a category B training prison which holds just over 1000 prisoners, "almost all of whom" have been convicted of sex offences (HMIP, 2015a: 5).

- 5.26 At the end of March 2018, seventeen Welsh adult male prisoners were also being held at HMP Northumberland.⁵⁴ This number included prisoners from Anglesey, Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend, Cardiff, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Swansea⁵⁵ and the Vale of Glamorgan.
- 5.27 Research into the effects of distance show that it can be a major impediment to the maintenance of family contact. In separate surveys carried out by Murray (2003) and the Scottish Prison Service (2013), distance from home was cited as the biggest barrier to prisoners receiving visits from family and friends. A study by Hudson (2007:112) also found that the “main challenge” facing prison visitors was the geographical location of prisons across England and Wales.
- 5.28 The “distance problems” that confront prison visitors (Jorgensen and Hernandez, 1986: 52) often affect the frequency of prison visits.⁵⁶ A study by Cochran et al. (2015: 243-244) found that prisoners held further away from home “were substantially less likely to be visited”. Research carried out in Wales has shown that distances from home can result in a reduction or a complete loss of visits from family and friends (Jones, 2017).
- 5.29 The impact that distances have on visiting levels should be viewed alongside research conducted into the relationship between visits and post-release resettlement outcomes. A survey by the Home Office found that prisoners who had failed to receive visits were far less likely to have any kind of education, training or employment places arranged for them upon release (Niven and Stewart, 2005). The study found that prisoners who had received family visits were three times more likely to have accommodation arranged for them upon release when compared to those who had not received prison visits (Niven and Stewart, 2005). A recent joint inspection of adult resettlement services identified a prisoner’s family as “the most effective resettlement agency” available to them (HMIP et al., 2014: 5).
- 5.30 Distances from home can also impact upon prisoners’ chances of receiving resettlement support prior to their release into the community. While research has shown that immediate ‘through the gate’ support can help prisoners to make the transition from prison to the community (Clancy et al., 2006; Maguire et al., 2010), distances from home can often present “practical problems” to outside service providers (Hedderman, 2007: 17), often resulting in prisoners held many miles away from home being “missed” by outside support agencies (Hucklesby and Wincup, 2007: 51).

54 HMP Northumberland is a category C training prison. The prison holds over 1300 prisoners.

55 The distance between Swansea City Centre and HMP Northumberland is 369.8 miles (6h 24m). The average ‘distance from home’ for adult men across England and Wales is 50 miles (see Hansard HC, 7 January 2010, c548W).

56 The problems facing visitors often include the financial costs associated with travelling long distances as well as spending long periods of time completing prison visits.

- 5.31 The withdrawal of ‘through the gate’ support may also result in prisoners losing out on release day services, such as ‘gate pickups’. In such instances, prisoners are forced to navigate long and difficult journeys back to their home communities with minimal support or assistance in place. A lack of immediate support can often increase the likelihood that prisoners suffering from addiction will re-engage with substance misuse, often before they have even arrived back in their home communities (Jones, 2017).
- 5.32 The significant impact that distances have were reported by the Welsh Affairs Committee following an inquiry into imprisonment in Wales in 2006/07. The Committee found that the difficulties presented to Welsh service providers by distance often mean that ‘through the gate’ services are “limited” to those who are held in prisons closer to home (Welsh Affairs Committee, 2007: 50)
- 5.33 In 2013, the Ministry of Justice (2013: 4) unveiled plans for the introduction of “local resettlement prisons” in a move to try and address these problems. As part of its broader scheme to improve ‘through the gate’ services, prisoners across England and Wales are, at least in theory, now placed within their home areas’ local resettlement prison prior to their release to aid their resettlement back into the community.
- 5.34 The Ministry of Justice announced a list of establishments intended to be used as designated resettlement prisons in August 2014.⁵⁷ For Welsh prisoners, the list included all establishments in Wales as well as four prisons in England.⁵⁸ This included HMP Eastwood Park and HMP Styal for women and HMP Altcourse and HMP Stoke Heath for male prisoners.
- 5.35 The introduction of resettlement prisons was responsible for an immediate rise in the number of Welsh prisoners held at HMP Stoke Heath in Shropshire. Between September and December 2014, the number of Welsh prisoners held there increased by 123% from 147 to 328.
- 5.36 At its peak in March 2015, HMP Stoke Heath (436) held more Welsh prisoners than HMP Swansea (393).⁵⁹ More than half of this number was made up of prisoners from local authority areas across south Wales.⁶⁰
- 5.37 In February 2017, HMP Berwyn unofficially replaced HMP Stoke Heath to become a Welsh resettlement prison.⁶¹

57 For a full list of resettlement prisons across England and Wales see –

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/387197/resettlement-prison-list.pdf

58 With the exception of HMP Usk.

59 HMP Stoke Heath has an operational capacity of 782.

60 There were 222 prisoners from south Wales at HMP Stoke Heath in March 2015. This total figure does not include prisoners from Carmarthenshire because the Ministry of Justice could not provide an exact figure as fewer than five prisoners from the area were being held there.

61 HMIP’s inspection report on HMP Stoke Heath in 2015 indicated that HMP Berwyn would replace Stoke Heath as a Welsh resettlement prison once the prison became operational (HMIP, 2015c). There are currently some Welsh resettlement prisoners in HMP Stoke Heath; this function should be regarded as ‘residual’ as it is unlikely to be maintained indefinitely.

- 5.38 At the end March 2018, more than a quarter of all Welsh prisoners held at HMP Berwyn were drawn from local authority areas in south Wales.⁶² This number included prisoners from Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend, Caerphilly, Cardiff (20), Carmarthenshire, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Neath Port Talbot (9), Newport (10), Pembrokeshire, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Swansea (16), and the Vale of Glamorgan.
- 5.39 Despite being introduced as part of the Ministry of Justice’s strategy to improve ‘through the gate’ support by holding prisoners ‘locally’, the large number of adult male prisoners from south Wales held at HMP Berwyn, and previously at HMP Stoke Heath, still face distances that far exceed the England and Wales average of 50 miles from home.
- 5.40 The distance separating Cardiff from HMP Stoke Heath and HMP Berwyn is 128 miles and 143 miles respectively. It is unknown how many Welsh prisoners have been released into the community from both prisons since the UK Government introduced resettlement prisons in 2014, or since HMP Berwyn opened in February 2017.⁶³

Figure 5.5 – Releases from determinate and indeterminate sentences by establishment in Wales between in 2017⁶⁴

	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Total
Berwyn	0	0	3	19	22
Cardiff	425	437	431	477	1,770
Parc	299	268	281	302	1,150
Prescoed	49	63	69	74	255
Swansea	262	257	312	283	1,114
Usk	2	12	8	7	29
Total	1,037	1,037	1,104	1,162	4,340

Source: Ministry of Justice

- 5.41 In 2017, a total of 4,340 people were released from prisons in Wales.
- 5.42 On average, 83 prisoners a week were released from Welsh prisons during this period. At HMP Cardiff, six people a day were released from the prison in 2017.⁶⁵
- 5.43 It is unknown how many Welsh prisoners were released from Welsh prisons during this period.⁶⁶

62 There were 69 prisoners from south Wales held at HMP Berwyn out of a total Welsh population of 236.

63 A Freedom of Information request seeking this information was sent to the Ministry of Justice in May 2016. The request was rejected because the expected costs associated with determining whether the Ministry of Justice holds the information “would exceed the limit set by the FOI Act”.

64 Table 3.3 - Offender Management Statistics quarterly: October to December 2017.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/offender-management-statistics-quarterly-october-to-december-2017>

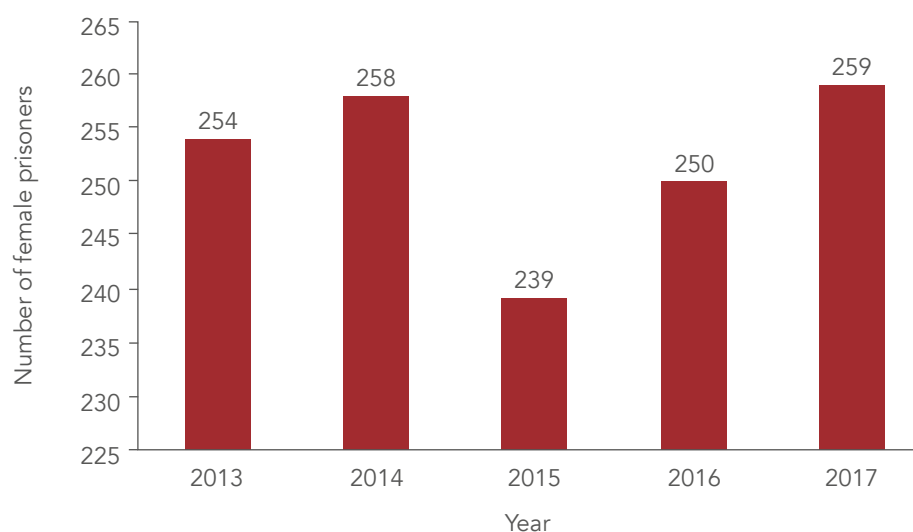
65 This figure is based on 260 working days in a year. HMP Cardiff only releases prisoners between Monday and Friday.

66 A request for this information was submitted to the Ministry of Justice under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in May 2016. The request was rejected because the expected costs associated with determining whether the Ministry of Justice holds the information “would exceed the limit set by the FOI Act”.

6. FEMALE PRISONERS

- 6.1 Since 1990 the number of women in prison across England and Wales has more than doubled. The population has grown by 148% from an average of 1,597 in 1990 to 3,957 in 2017 (Allen, 2017).
- 6.2 The female prison population across England and Wales was 3,865 at the end of April 2018.⁶⁷
- 6.3 On average, the Welsh female prison population was 259 in 2017. At the end of March 2018, this number had fallen to 248.⁶⁸
- 6.4 Due to the fact that there are no women's prisons in Wales, all Welsh women in prison are held in establishments in England.

Figure 6.1 – The average number of Welsh female prisoners between 2013 and 2017⁶⁹



Source: Ministry of Justice

- 6.5 The majority of women in prison have committed offences of “lesser seriousness” than men (Justice Committee, 2013: 7). In 2017, 83% of sentenced women entering custody across England and Wales had committed non-violent offences. This figure compares to a rate of 69% for men.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Prison Population Statistics – Monthly Bulletin (April 2018) – <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/prison-population-figures-2018>

⁶⁸ Data obtained from the Ministry of Justice via the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

⁶⁹ Data obtained from the Ministry of Justice via the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

⁷⁰ The figures in 2016 were 84% for women and 70% for men. Table 2.5b - Offender Management Statistics quarterly: October to December 2017. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/offender-management-statistics-quarterly-october-to-december-2017>

Figure 6.2 – Female offenders in Wales receiving an immediate custodial sentence by offence and sentence length in 2016⁷¹

Offence group	Less than 6 months	6 months and over	Total
Violence against the person	24	38	62
Sexual offences	0	4	4
Robbery	0	8	8
Theft Offences	246	31	277
Criminal damage and arson	0	6	6
Drug offences	11	38	49
Possession of weapons	5	3	8
Public order offences	39	6	45
Miscellaneous crimes against society	23	17	40
Fraud Offences	6	13	19
Summary non-motoring	91	1	92
Summary motoring	13	0	13
Total	458	165	623

Source: Ministry of Justice

- 6.6 In Wales, 623 women were sentenced to immediate custody in 2016. 86% of Welsh women sentenced to immediate custody were convicted of non-violent offences.⁷²
- 6.7 The most common offence category amongst Welsh women sentenced to immediate custody was theft. In total, 44% of all female offenders given immediate custody in 2016 were convicted of this offence.
- 6.8 When both categories are combined, theft and drug related offences comprised more than half (52%) of all Welsh women sentenced to immediate custody in 2016.
- 6.9 Due to the less serious nature of women's offending, females entering the prison system are often more likely to serve shorter custodial sentences. Throughout 2016, 62% of sentenced women entering prison across England and Wales were serving sentences of six months or less. The comparable figure was 45% for men.⁷³
- 6.10 In Wales, this number was higher: 74% of all women sentenced to immediate custody in 2016 were handed sentences of less than 6 months. The remaining 26% were given terms of six months and above (see Figure 6.3).
- 6.11 Between 2011 and 2016, the number of females given immediate custodial sentences in Wales increased by 18%.

71 Data obtained from the Ministry of Justice via the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/640113/foi-112108-female-offenders-receiving-an-immediate-sentence-by-duration-tables.xlsx

72 Data obtained from the Ministry of Justice via the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/640113/foi-112108-female-offenders-receiving-an-immediate-sentence-by-duration-tables.xlsx

73 Table 2.4a – Offender Management Statistics quarterly: October to December 2016.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/offender-management-statistics-quarterly-october-to-december-2016>

6.12 While the number of longer term sentences handed to Welsh women decreased by more than a fifth between 2011 and 2016, the use of sentences of less than six months increased by 43% during this period.⁷⁴

Figure 6.3 – Female offenders in Wales receiving an immediate custodial sentence, 2011-2016, by sentence length⁷⁵

Year	Less than 6 months	6 months and over	Total
2011	320	210	530
2012	335	189	524
2013	377	195	572
2014	382	184	566
2015	392	158	550
2016	458	165	623

Source: Ministry of Justice

- 6.12 All women sentenced to custody in Wales are forced to serve their entire sentences in prisons in England. Following the closure of HMP Holloway in 2016, there are now 12 female prisons across England.⁷⁶
- 6.13 The average distance that a prisoner is held away from home is higher for women than men across England and Wales. The average distance from home for women is 64 miles compared to 50 miles for men (Women in Prison, 2015).
- 6.14 Since the closure of HMP Holloway in May 2016, the distances facing many women in prison have increased. This was reported by HMIP within recent inspections at HMP Foston Hall (HMIP, 2016c) and HMP Drake Hall (HMIP, 2016d) in 2016.
- 6.15 The distances facing Welsh women are often considerably higher than those facing women from England. In 2007, the Welsh Affairs Committee (2007) reported that the average distance from home for Welsh adult women was 101 miles. This compared to an average of 53 miles for Welsh adult males.⁷⁷

74 Data made available by the Ministry of Justice through the Freedom of Information Act 2000. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/640113/foi-112108-female-offenders-receiving-an-immediate-sentence-by-duration-tables.xlsx

75 Data obtained from the Ministry of Justice via the Freedom of Information Act 2000. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/640113/foi-112108-female-offenders-receiving-an-immediate-sentence-by-duration-tables.xlsx

76 The decision to close HMP Holloway led to the re-opening of HMP Downview in May 2016. HMP Downview was closed by the Ministry of Justice in October 2013 and was initially intended to be re-opened and used a male prison.

77 The figures presented here and in 5.14 had been calculated before recent prison closures across England and Wales.

Figure 6.4 – Welsh female prisoners by establishment in 2017⁷⁸

	Mar-17	Jun-17	Sep-17	Dec-17
Askham Grange	≤5	≤5	≤5	<5
Bronzefield	≤5	7	≤5	<5
Downview	12	15	17	13
Drake Hall	16	16	24	26
East Sutton Park	≤5	0	0	0
Eastwood Park	160	146	148	146
Foston Hall	6	≤5	≤5	6
Low Newton	≤5	≤5	≤5	<5
New Hall	≤5	≤5	6	6
Peterborough	≤5	≤5	≤5	<5
Send	13	14	10	10
Styal	47	44	36	42
Total	270	255	255	257

Source: The Ministry of Justice

- 6.16 In 2017, three-quarters (74%) of all Welsh female prisoners were held at HMP Eastwood Park in Gloucestershire and HMP Styal in Cheshire. These establishments were listed as Welsh resettlement prisons by the Ministry of Justice in 2014.⁷⁹
- 6.17 HMP Eastwood Park is a female resettlement prison that holds remanded and sentenced adult and young females (18-21). The prison serves 72 'local' courts across the south west of England, the Midlands and south Wales. The prison has an operational capacity of 442 prisoners and approximately 40% of its prisoners come from Wales (Independent Monitoring Board, 2018).
- 6.18 HMP Styal is a female resettlement prison that holds a mixture of remanded, short term, long term and indeterminate sentenced prisoners. The prison has an operational capacity of 460 and approximately 10% of its prisoners come from Wales (HMIP, 2015b). The prison, along with HMP Eastwood Park, has a mother and baby unit to accommodate mothers and their children.
- 6.19 The remaining 26% of Welsh women in prison in 2017 were held across ten different prisons in England.⁸⁰
- 6.20 Although resettlement prisons were introduced as part of the Ministry of Justice's pledge to hold as many prisoners as close to their 'home' communities as possible, HMP Eastwood Park and HMP Styal are a considerable distance away from many Welsh communities.

⁷⁸ Data obtained from the Ministry of Justice via the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

⁷⁹ Both prisons already held a large number of Welsh women prior to the introduction of resettlement prisons. Throughout 2013, HMP Eastwood Park held 128 women from Wales and HMP Styal 29.

⁸⁰ This became nine prisons from June 2017. There were no Welsh women held at HMP East Sutton Park from March 2017 onwards.

- 6.21 In March 2018, women were held at HMP Eastwood Park from local authority areas right across Wales including Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend, Caerphilly, Cardiff, Carmarthenshire, Flintshire, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Neath Port Talbot, Newport, Pembrokeshire, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Swansea, Torfaen and the Vale of Glamorgan.⁸¹
- 6.22 At HMP Styal, women were held at the prison from Anglesey, Cardiff, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Neath Port Talbot, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Swansea and Wrexham.⁸²
- 6.23 The above average distances facing Welsh women in prison mean that they disproportionately experience many of the ‘distance problems’ faced by Welsh adult males (see 5.27 – 5.32).
- 6.24 The ‘distance issues’ facing women in prison often add to an existing set of wide-ranging problems. The “particular vulnerabilities” faced by women within the criminal justice system include previous experiences of violence or abuse, mental illness, substance misuse and childcare issues (Corston, 2007: 14).
- 6.25 The separation of women from children is often the issue most likely to affect the mental health and well-being of female prisoners. Throughout her review of women within the criminal justice system, Baroness Corston (2007: 30) was told that separation from children was emotional “torture” for mothers in prison.
- 6.26 The Corston review (2007) found that 18,000 children a year are separated from their mothers by imprisonment. Only 9% of children affected by maternal imprisonment will be cared for by their fathers.
- 6.27 In only 5% of all cases will children remain in their home once their mother has been sent to prison (Corston, 2007).
- 6.28 A report by the Social Exclusion Unit (2002) found that only half of women who had been in contact with their children prior to their imprisonment had received a visit from them since entering prison.
- 6.29 There are six female prisons in England with a mother and baby unit. These units provide separate areas of living accommodation to enable mothers to have their children with them in custody up until the age of 18 months.
- 6.30 During its inspection of HMP Eastwood Park in November 2016, HMIP (2016b: 5) discovered that the prison’s mother and baby unit was “temporarily closed”.⁸³ Although inspectors were told that the unit would be reopened in January 2017, the mother and baby unit at the prison remains closed as of June 2018.

81 Data obtained from the Ministry of Justice via the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

82 Data obtained from the Ministry of Justice via the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

83 The unit was closed in September 2016 due to a burst water pipe.

See – <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-10-25/109775/>

- 6.31 The temporary closure of the mother and baby unit means that pregnant women who apply and are accepted for a mother and baby unit place now require a transfer to another prison in order to give birth or care for their baby. The nearest mother and baby unit to HMP Eastwood Park is 115 miles away at HMP Bronzefield in Surrey.⁸⁴ It is unknown how many Welsh women have been affected by the closure of the unit since 2016.⁸⁵
- 6.32 The difficulties faced by mothers and women in prison are often worse than those experienced by fathers and men (Baldwin, 2017). A survey carried out by the Ministry of Justice found that just under half of female prisoners were assessed as suffering from anxiety and depression, compared to 23% of male prisoners. When considered separately, female prisoners were also more likely to suffer from anxiety (61% compared to 33%) and from depression (65% compared to 37%) (Light et al., 2013).
- 6.33 Throughout all HMIP inspections in 2016/17, 83% of female prisoners reported problems upon arrival at prison, compared to 70% of men. Female prisoners were also less likely to report feeling safe on their first night in prison compared to men (HMIP, 2017a).
- 6.34 Within the most recently published inspection of a female prison in England and Wales, HMIP (2018c) reported that 89% of women arrived at HMP Peterborough with problems. Inspectors found that 65% of women said they felt depressed and over a quarter reported feeling suicidal. Two-thirds of the women surveyed by HMIP reported having mental health problems (HMIP, 2018c).
- 6.35 In 2017, the number of self-harm incidents in female prisons reached its highest level since 2011.⁸⁶
- 6.36 The rate of self-harm within the female prison estate is considerably higher than the level within male prisons. In 2017, there were 445 incidents of self-harm per 1,000 male prisoners compared to 2,093 incidents per 1,000 in the women's estate.⁸⁷
- 6.37 There were 12 self-inflicted deaths in women's prisons during 2016. This was the highest number recorded within the female prison estate since 2004.⁸⁸
- 6.38 Despite comprising just 4.5% of the total prison population in England and Wales, 9.8% of all self-inflicted deaths took place within the female prison estate in 2016. The rate of self-inflicted deaths for female prisoners was 3.11 per 1,000 prisoners compared to 1.35 per 1,000 for men.⁸⁹

84 BBC News – 'Prison mothers could face transfer after baby unit closure'. 29th January 2018.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-42857014>

85 There were 166 Welsh women being held at HMP Eastwood Park at the time of the mother and baby unit's closure.

86 Table 2.1 – Safety Statistics in Custody update to December 2017.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-december-2017>

87 Table 2.1 – Safety Statistics in Custody update to December 2017.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-december-2017>

88 Table 1.16 - Safety Statistics in Custody update to September 2017.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-september-2017>

89 Table 1.5 – Safety Statistics in Custody update to September 2016.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-september-2017>

- 6.39 The number of self-inflicted deaths in women's prisons fell during 2017. In total, there were two self-inflicted deaths across the female estate in England and Wales.⁹⁰
- 6.40 In 2017, recorded assault incidents in female prisons reached its highest ever level. On average, there were more than three incidents of assault per day in women's prisons in 2017.⁹¹
- 6.41 Women recently surveyed by HMIP at HMP Peterborough raised numerous concerns over prison safety. 60% of women who responded to HMIP's survey said that they had felt unsafe at some time since arriving at the prison and 28% reported feeling unsafe at the time of the survey (HMIP, 2018c).
- 6.42 During HMIP's most recent inspections at HMP Eastwood Park and HMP Styal, inspectors found that only 56% of its 39 previous recommendations on safety had been achieved in both prisons. At HMP Eastwood Park, inspectors found that only one of its seven recommendations on prison safety were achieved in full (HMIP, 2016b).⁹²
- 6.43 Throughout 2017 there were a total of 2,883 self-harm incidents at HMP Eastwood Park and HMP Styal. During this period there were, on average, 192 women from Wales held across both prisons.⁹³
- 6.44 The rate of self-harm at HMP Eastwood Park was 449 incidents per 100 prisoners. At HMP Styal, there were 238 incidents per 100 prisoners throughout 2017.⁹⁴

Figure 6.5 – Self-harm incidents at HMP Eastwood Park and HMP Styal between 2010 and 2017⁹⁵

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Eastwood Park	1,439	1,409	756	1,003	810	1,389	1,935	1,770
Styal	767	542	494	634	462	980	1,026	1,113
Total	2,206	1,951	1,250	1,637	1,272	2,369	2,961	2,883

Source: Ministry of Justice

- 6.45 In total, there were more self-harm incidents at HMP Eastwood Park and HMP Styal in 2017 than the combined total number of incidents across all five male prisons in Wales.
- 6.46 On average, there were four incidents of self-harm a day at HMP Eastwood Park in 2017.

90 Table 1.5 - Safety Statistics in Custody update to December 2017.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-december-2017>

91 Table 3.1 – Safety Statistics in Custody update to December 2017.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-december-2017>

92 This recommendation related to the monitoring of adjudications, use of force and segregation by protected characteristics.

93 Table 2.13 – Safety Statistics in Custody update to December 2017 -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-december-2017>

94 Table 2.13 – Safety Statistics in Custody update to December 2017 -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-december-2017>

95 Table 2.13 – Safety Statistics in Custody update to December 2017 -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-december-2017>

- 6.47 In 2017 there were no self-inflicted deaths recorded at HMP Eastwood Park or HMP Styal. During 2016 there had been four self-inflicted deaths at Welsh female resettlement prisons.⁹⁶ This number accounted for a third of all self-inflicted deaths across the female prison estate throughout the year.⁹⁷
- 6.48 The number of assault incidents at Welsh female resettlement prisons reached its highest ever level in 2017.⁹⁸
- 6.49 At HMP Eastwood Park, the number of assaults on staff increased by 31%, while the number of prisoner-on-prisoner assaults climbed from 115 incidents in 2016 to 121 in 2017.⁹⁹
- 6.50 Between 2016 and 2017, the number of assaults on staff at HMP Styal fell by 20%, while the prisoner-on-prisoner assaults increased from 69 incidents in 2016 to 84 in 2017.¹⁰⁰
- 6.51 Although 74% of all Welsh women were held at HMP Eastwood Park and HMP Styal throughout 2017, the exact number of Welsh women involved or affected by many of the issues outlined here is unknown.

96 Table 1.16 - Safety Statistics in Custody update to September 2017.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-september-2017>

97 Three self-inflicted deaths were recorded at HMP Eastwood Park and one was recorded at HMP Styal in 2016. None of these women were from Wales.

98 Table 3.14 – Safety Statistics in Custody update to December 2017.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-december-2017>

99 Table 3.15 and Table 3.16 – Safety Statistics in Custody update to December 2017.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-december-2017>

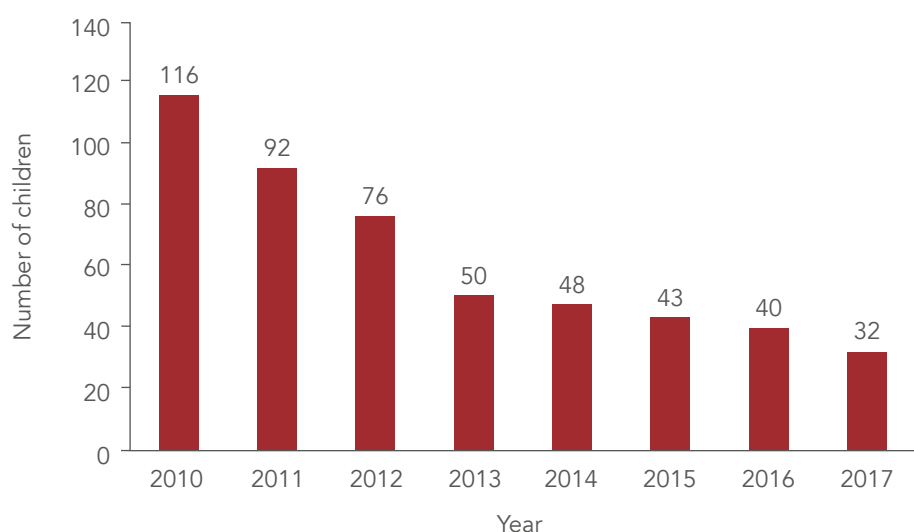
100 Table 3.15 and Table 3.16 – Safety Statistics in Custody update to December 2017.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-december-2017>

7. CHILDREN IN PRISON

- 7.1 The number of children in prison in England and Wales has fallen by 69% over the last decade.¹⁰¹
- 7.2 In March 2018, there were 2,078 fewer children in prison than in February 2008. The total number of children in prison in March 2018 was 870.¹⁰²

Figure 7.1 – The average number of Welsh children in custody from 2010 to 2017¹⁰³



Source: Youth Justice Board

- 7.3 There were 30 Welsh children in prison in England and Wales at the end of March 2018.¹⁰⁴
- 7.4 Between 2010 and 2017 the number of Welsh children in prison fell by 72%, compared with a 57% reduction in the total number across England and Wales.¹⁰⁵
- 7.5 In the year ending March 2017, 2197 youth cautions and court sentences were handed to children from Wales. 4.96% of all court sentences given to Welsh children were immediate custodial sentences. This figure was marginally higher than the rate for England (4.9%).¹⁰⁶
- 7.6 Of the 109 custodial sentences given to Welsh children in the year ending March 2017, 95 were Detention and Training Orders (87%), 12 were Section 90-91 Detention (11%) and two were under Section 226b (2%).¹⁰⁷

101 'Children' is defined here by the Youth Justice Board as persons under the age of 18 and does not include 18 year olds. Table 2.1 – Youth Custody Data: March 2018. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/youth-custody-data>

102 Table 2.1 – Youth Custody Data: March 2018. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/youth-custody-data>

103 Table 2.9 – Youth Custody Data: March 2018. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/youth-custody-data>

104 'Welsh children' is defined here by the Youth Justice Board as a young person in custody with a Youth Offending Team based in Wales. Table 2.9 – Youth Custody Data: March 2018. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/youth-custody-data>

105 Table 2.1 and 2.9 – Youth Custody Data: March 2018. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/youth-custody-data>

106 Table 2 – (Regional Level Tables) Youth Justice annual statistics: 2016 to 2017.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/youth-justice-annual-statistics-2016-to-2017>

107 Table 2 – (Regional Level Tables) Youth Justice annual statistics: 2016 to 2017.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/youth-justice-annual-statistics-2016-to-2017>

7.7 The majority of children in prison across England and Wales were being held in Young Offender Institutions (YOIs) in the year ending March 2017. In total, 630 children (73%) were held in YOIs, 131 (15%) in Secure Training Centres (STCs) and 107 (12%) in Secure Children's Homes (SCHs).¹⁰⁸

7.8 Across England and Wales there are 14 custodial establishments for children: four YOIs, three STCs and seven SCHs.

Figure 7.2 – Welsh children in custody by establishment¹⁰⁹

	Mar-17	Jun-17	Sep-17	Dec-17
Adel Beck	1	0	1	0
Aycliffe	0	0	0	0
Barton Moss	0	1	1	0
Clayfields	0	0	0	0
Feltham	1	0	0	1
Hillside	3	4	4	3
Lincolnshire	1	1	0	0
Medway	0	0	0	0
Oakhill	0	1	1	2
Parc	11	16	17	13
Rainsbrook	2	2	4	3
Vinney Green	4	2	1	1
Werrington	2	5	8	8
Wetherby	0	1	0	2
Total	25	33	37	33

Source: Youth Justice Board

7.9 There are two custodial establishments for children in Wales – Hillside Secure Children's Home in Neath and HMYOI Parc in Bridgend. There are no Secure Training Centres in Wales.

7.10 Hillside Secure Children's Home provides accommodation for children aged 12 to 17. In April 2016, the Youth Justice Board (YJB) reduced the number of beds contracted at Hillside from ten to six.¹¹⁰

7.11 First opened in 2002, the Young Persons' Unit at HMYOI Parc is a facility managed by G4S on the same site as HMP Parc in Bridgend. The Unit holds boys under the age of 18 and has a Certified Normal Accommodation of 64. In October 2017, the unit held 43 children (HMIP, 2018d).

108 Table 7.3 – (Supplementary Tables) Youth Justice annual statistics: 2016 to 2017.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/youth-justice-annual-statistics-2016-to-2017>

109 Data obtained from the Youth Justice Board via the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

110 The total number of YJB beds contracted at SCH's across England and Wales fell from 138 to 117 in April 2016.

See – <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/yjb-extends-secure-childrens-home-contracts>.

In September 2017 the Ministry of Justice took over the commissioning of secure beds for children from the Youth Justice Board.

- 7.12 The declining number of children in prison has led to the closure of a number of custodial facilities for children across England and Wales. Since 2009, the YJB has decommissioned more than 2,000 places in YOIs and closed twelve separate establishments. During the same period the YJB has closed a STC and decommissioned a further 81 places within SCHs across England and Wales (Ministry of Justice, 2016).
- 7.13 The decision to close custodial facilities has resulted in an increasing number of children being sent to distant places across the youth secure estate (HMIP, 2016).
- 7.14 In Wales, 45% of all Welsh children in custody in 2017 were sent to establishments in England. The remaining 55% of children were being held in custodial institutions in Wales.¹¹¹
- 7.15 The majority of Welsh children held outside Wales are placed at HMYOI Werrington in Staffordshire. The number of children from Wales held at HMYOI Werrington has increased following the decision to decommission HMYOI Hindley in Greater Manchester. At the time of the YJBs decision in October 2014, four children from north Wales were being held at HMYOI Hindley (Welsh Affairs Committee, 2015).¹¹²
- 7.16 HMYOI Werrington is now the closest YOI for children from north Wales. During its most recent inspection in 2017, HMIP found that a designated caseworker had been given specific responsibility for working with Welsh children (HMIP, 2017c).
- 7.17 Welsh custodial establishments have also been affected by the decommissioning of prison places in England. In 2013, the court catchment area for the Young Persons' Unit at HMYOI Parc was extended beyond Wales to include parts of south west England. The catchment area for the unit was extended further in 2014 to include Bristol, Swindon and Wiltshire (HMIP, 2018d). The decision to re-role HMP Ashfield in Bristol to an adult-only facility in 2013 has increased the likelihood that children from south west England are now sent to HMYOI Parc.
- 7.18 The majority of children held at HMYOI Parc in 2017 were drawn from Youth Offending Team (YOT) regions outside of Wales. On average, 14 Welsh children, less than a quarter of the unit's full operational capacity, were held at the Young Persons' Unit in 2017.¹¹³
- 7.19 During an inspection at HMYOI Parc in October 2017, HMIP discovered that twenty children were being held more than 50 miles from home. Of this figure, eight children were being held at a distance greater than 100 miles (HMIP, 2018d).
- 7.20 In 2016, HMIP was commissioned by the YJB to assess the impact that distances from home have upon children in custody. The inquiry was triggered by the closure of custodial establishments and the loss of a large number of children's places across England and Wales.

111 Data obtained from the Youth Justice Board via the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

112 See written transcript of oral evidence given by Dusty Kennedy, Director of the Youth Justice Board Wales, to the Welsh Affairs Committee in October 2014 (Q1-59) – <http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/welsh-affairs-committee/prisons-in-wales-and-treatment-of-welsh-offenders/oral/14987.html>

113 Data obtained from the Youth Justice Board via the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

- 7.21 HMIP's (2016e) review found that children held in establishments further away from home received fewer visits than children held closer to their home communities. In some cases, children reported not receiving a single visit since being transferred to a prison far from home.
- 7.22 HMIP (2016e) found that each 25-mile interval that a child was held from home was associated with one less visit from a family member or friend.
- 7.23 Distances from home mean that children also receive "significantly fewer" visits from community-based professionals (HMIP, 2016e: 42). In total, each 26-mile interval from home was associated with one fewer visit from a professional responsible for the care of children in the community (HMIP, 2016e).
- 7.24 HMIP (2016e: 9) found that the delivery of 'through the gate' services becomes "more difficult" when significant distances separate professionals from children held in custody (see 5.30). The review also showed that caseworkers often find it "harder" to put together a "suitable" support package upon release for children being held and released from establishments many miles from home (HMIP, 2016e: 9).
- 7.25 At HMYOI Parc, HMIP's review team heard from children who had been transferred to Wales from England. Researchers were told by one child that, despite receiving regular visits from their caseworker when held in England, they had failed to receive a single visit since being transferred to a facility in Wales. HMIP (2016e: 26) also heard from one child who recalled their surprise at being transferred to "a different country" when moved to a unit in Wales.
- 7.26 Distances will often add to the problems that children experience in custody. HMIP (2016e: 19) discovered that placing children in units many miles away from home has the potential to exacerbate any "feelings of isolation, loneliness and vulnerability" that children are already likely to face.
- 7.27 Research into the experiences of Welsh children in custody has shown that distal placement can add to the problems that Welsh-speaking children face when held in an "unfamiliar linguistic environment" (Hughes and Madoc-Jones, 2005: 378). The study found that Welsh-speaking children can often feel "isolated and under threat" and can experience bullying and intimidation from other children because of their distinct identity within an English prison (Hughes and Madoc-Jones, 2005: 378).
- 7.28 A study on Welsh girls in custody showed that "isolation from their home country" is a major problem for children held in England (Hughes et al., 2012: 523). The research found that Welsh-speaking children can often find themselves "discriminated against" by other children and may struggle to access key services, including education, through the medium of Welsh (Hughes et al., 2012: 525).

- 7.29 Within evidence to the Welsh Affairs Committee in 2003, Keith Towler, then of NACRO, told MPs that any suggestion that the Welsh curriculum is taken forward in the children's secure estate in England "is a myth" (Welsh Affairs Committee, 2004: 30). In 2010, a report by the National Assembly's Culture and Communities Committee (2010: 98) concluded that there is often "no capacity" to deliver classes in Welsh to children held in the secure estate.
- 7.30 The sense of isolation and vulnerability felt by those affected by distance will often add to the complex issues that children already face in custody. Research by Chitsabesan et al. (2006) found that almost a third of all children in contact with the youth justice system have mental health needs. One in ten children taking part in the study reported symptoms of anxiety or post-traumatic stress and almost 20% suffered from symptoms of depression. In the month leading up to the research, approximately one in ten children taking part in the study had self-harmed.
- 7.31 Serious concerns were raised in HMIP's annual report for 2016/17 about the safety levels within custodial institutions for children across England and Wales. These concerns followed allegations about the mistreatment of children at Medway Secure Training Centre in January 2016 (BBC News, 2016). Following a number of "very troubling" inspections carried out at STCs and YOIs, HMIP (2017a: 9) concluded that they had not visited a single establishment "in which it was safe to hold children and young people".
- 7.32 The most up-to-date figures show that rates of self-harm have marginally increased since HMIP conducted the majority of its inspections during 2016/17. In the year ending March 2017, YJB statistics showed that the rate of self-harm (9 per 100 children) and proven assault (19.5 per 100 children) had reached its highest level in the youth secure estate since 2012.¹¹⁴
- 7.33 At HMYOI Parc in December 2016, inspectors found that a third of all boys felt unsafe and that outcomes for children were "not sufficiently good" when set against the 'healthy prison' test (HMIP, 2017d: 9).
- 7.34 Within its most recent inspection at HMYOI Parc, inspectors discovered that over half (54%) of its previous recommendations had not been achieved. In total, 46% of recommendations had been achieved, 26% were partially achieved and 28% were not achieved. HMIP (2018d: 20) found that reported incidents of self-harm at the Young Persons' Unit "remained high" and that 23 boys had carried out 35 acts of self-harm in the six months to September 2017.
- 7.35 In 2016, amidst growing concern about the state of custodial institutions for children, the Chair of the Youth Justice Board, Charlie Taylor, unveiled plans to 'reform' the youth justice system across England and Wales. Among his 36 recommendations, Taylor (2016) called for the development of 'secure schools' to replace YOIs and STCs across England and Wales.

114 Table 8.3 – (Supplementary Tables) Youth Justice annual statistics: 2016 to 2017.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/youth-justice-annual-statistics-2016-to-2017>

7.36 While the UK Government (2016) committed itself to the development of two 'secure schools' across England, the Welsh Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children immediately rejected Taylor's proposals and declared that the Welsh Government would seek to find "Welsh solutions" to the problems facing young people in the secure estate across Wales (NAW Debate, 14 December 2016).

8. THE WELSH LANGUAGE

- 8.1 In 2007, the Welsh Affairs Committee's (2007: 38) report, *Welsh Prisoners in the Prison Estate*, called for a "more proactive approach to the collection of data on Welsh speakers" held across the prison estate in England and Wales. This point was outlined again more recently by the Welsh Language Commissioner, Meri Huws, within written evidence to the Welsh Affairs Committee's *Prisons in Wales and the treatment of Welsh offenders inquiry in 2014/15*.
- 8.2 Eleven years on from the Welsh Affairs Committee's original inquiry and there remains a lack of data on the number of Welsh-speaking prisoners across England and Wales. This includes very little information on the number of Welsh-speaking staff working across the prison estate (Welsh Language Commissioner, 2018).
- 8.3 As part of its inquiry in 2006/07, Michael Spurr, then Deputy Director General of HM Prison Service, told MPs that in order to help Welsh-speaking prisoners "address their offending behaviour" they must "be able to access information" in Welsh throughout the course of their imprisonment (Welsh Affairs Committee, 2007: Ev85). In 2014, Nick Hardwick, then Chief Inspector of Prisons, told the Committee's second inquiry that "not nearly enough" was being done by prison officials in England to provide opportunities to Welsh-speaking prisoners (Welsh Affairs Committee, 2015: Q35).
- 8.4 Recent evidence suggests that many of the issues raised within the Welsh Affairs Committee's previous inquiries persist. During an inspection of HMP Stoke Heath in September 2015, a recently designated Welsh resettlement prison, HMIP were told that there was no one at the prison who spoke Welsh as a first language (HMIP, 2015c). This was identified as a problem by inspectors in light of the fact that HMP Stoke Heath held 436 Welsh prisoners at the time of their inspection.¹¹⁵
- 8.5 Since 2016 concerns have also been raised about the recruitment of Welsh-speaking staff at HMP Berwyn. A recent investigation by the Welsh Language Commissioner found that Welsh-speaking skills had not been "identified as an essential or desirable component" for any of the positions advertised by the National Offender Management Service at HMP Berwyn (Welsh Language Commissioner, 2017: 4). In 2013, then Welsh Secretary, David Jones MP, claimed that the new prison at Wrexham would "benefit prisoner welfare" by giving Welsh-speaking prisoners "more opportunity to speak the language in an environment where its cultural significance is understood" (Ministry of Justice, 2013b).

¹¹⁵ This included 44 prisoners from Gwynedd where almost two-thirds of the population are able to speak Welsh.
<https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Welsh-Language/WelshSpeakers-by-LocalAuthority-Gender-DetailedAgeGroups-2011Census>

- 8.6 Welsh language provision in prisons across south Wales remains variable and inconsistent. Inspections within all four prisons across south Wales in 2013 and 2014 identified many areas of concern. At HMP Swansea in October 2014, inspectors found that there was “not enough support” to help Welsh-speaking prisoners use the language (HMIP, 2015d: 14). A similar discovery was made at HMP Parc in 2013 where inspectors found insufficient support in place for more advanced Welsh-speaking prisoners to develop their language skills (HMIP, 2013b).
- 8.7 In 2013, inspectors at HMP Cardiff concluded that “more attention” should be paid to providing information to prisoners in Welsh and that prisoners “needed more encouragement” from staff to see “the value” of Welsh language skills to their future employment prospects (HMIP, 2013c: 6). At HMP Usk and Prescoed, HMIP described the “poor range” of Welsh language materials in the prison library and found that a “clear strategy” to promote use of the Welsh language had yet to be developed at the prison (HMIP, 2013a: 14-43).
- 8.8 Following its most recent inspections, however, HMIP were far more positive about some of the practices found in Welsh prisons. At HMP Cardiff, inspectors identified that “clear strategies” to better promote the use of Welsh, and its importance to prisoners’ skills and employment chances, had been introduced (HMIP, 2017b: 65). Following an inspection of HMP Parc in 2016, HMIP found that Welsh-speaking prisoners were being encouraged to “use conversational Welsh on the wings” and that a Welsh-speakers forum had been developed to help staff take account of Welsh-speaking prisoners’ experiences (HMIP 2016a: 46-7).
- 8.9 In 2017, inspectors visiting HMP Usk and Prescoed noted an improvement in the provision of Welsh language materials and found that the number of prisoners engaging with the language had improved since its previous visit (HMIP, 2018b). At HMP Swansea in November 2017, although little attention was given to the Welsh language within its final report, HMIP (2018a: 45) did find that a “broad range of Welsh-medium books” were made available to prisoners held there.

9. CONCLUSION

The findings presented within this factfile reveal the specific and unique imprisonment problems facing people in and from Wales. From record levels of self-harm and assaults in prison, to above average distances for Welsh adult men, women and children in custody, this report offers a Welsh dimension to the many challenges and problems that are currently subject to fervent debate across England and Wales.

The issues that emerge throughout this report raise a number of important and wide-ranging questions about imprisonment in Wales. First, it remains the case that many sources of 'Welsh-only' justice data can only be accessed by Freedom of Information requests, a route that, while useful, limits the accessibility of such data to public debate at the broader level. But the stark evidence of specific Welsh challenges presented throughout this report highlight the importance of gathering and analysing up-to-date and accessible 'Welsh-only' imprisonment data. This report should, therefore, further convince the Ministry of Justice to fulfil its 2017 commitment to make 'Welsh-only' justice data more easily available to a wider audience.

Second, the many problems discussed throughout this report raise important questions about political accountability for imprisonment in post-devolution Wales. While responsibility for tackling many of the issues outlined here undoubtedly lies with UK Government ministers in Whitehall, the influence that Welsh ministers have over offender healthcare, tackling substance misuse, safeguarding children, prison education and promoting the Welsh language mean that remedies can - and should - originate in Wales.

At the very least, a much clearer understanding of the problems that exist within the Welsh justice system and an appreciation of the Welsh Government's extensive responsibilities in this area should help to kick-start a more critically informed debate over Wales' current and future penal landscape.

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