



# REMAND PRISONERS 2013



**14<sup>th</sup> Survey Bulletin**

**Research, Strategy and Innovation**

**Shirley McCoard, Róisín Broderick & James Carnie**

**December 2013**



## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### ***Atmosphere & Relationships***

The majority of remand prisoners (88%) reported the atmosphere in the hall/dormitory in positive terms. A particularly high percentage of remand prisoners described their relationship with prisoners in their hall/dormitory (96%) and officers in their hall (92%) in positive terms.

### ***Healthcare***

Prisoners were asked about their use of medical services while in their present prison. Significantly fewer remand prisoners reported accessing the dentist (10%) and the optician (4%) compared to convicted prisoners (44% and 21% respectively). Three quarters of remand and convicted prisoners attended the doctor (75% remand, 81% convicted) and/or nurse (74% remand, 82% convicted).

### ***Food***

Remand prisoners had mixed views on food in prison. On a positive note, the majority expressed satisfaction with the timing of meals (83%). In the region of six in ten were positive regarding the choice of menu (61%) and the condition of the food when they got it (58%). Around half were critical of the size of the portions (48%).

### ***Cleanliness***

The level of cleanliness in the majority of areas in the prison was rated highly by remand prisoners who described the cleanliness as 'ok', 'fairly good' or 'very good' in their hall (86%), the toilet area (76%) and the showers (78%). Fewer remand prisoners rated the cleanliness of their cell in positive terms (57%).

### ***Mental health & well-being***

Prisoners were asked questions on mental health by way of an instrument known as the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (WEMWBS). Over three quarters of

those reporting were 'able to make up my own mind about things' (79%) and around two thirds had 'been thinking clearly' (67%), 'had energy to spare' (65%), and had 'been dealing with problems well' (65%). On a less positive note, less than half of remand prisoners reported, 'feeling useful' (45%), 'feeling loved' (45%), 'feeling interested in other people' (49%), and 'feeling close to other people' (49%).

### ***Hepatitis C***

Around four in ten remand prisoners (36%) who responded to the Survey had been tested for Hepatitis C. Eight in ten (82%) reported that they would take a Hepatitis C test in prison and four in ten (42%) had been given information about Hepatitis C while in prison.

### ***Alcohol use***

Half of remand prisoners (50%) reported being drunk at the time of their offence, compared to 44% of convicted prisoners. Four in ten (45%) reported that drinking affected their relationship with family (compared to 32% of convicted prisoners). Almost half (48%) of remand prisoners said that if there were offered help on the outside for alcohol problems they would take it (compared to 37% of convicted prisoners).

### ***Smoking***

Eight in ten remand prisoners (80%) reported that they smoked, with half (54%) expressing a desire to give up smoking. Half (50%) reported sharing their cell with a smoker, down from two thirds (66%) in 2011.

### ***Drug use***

Almost three quarters of remand prisoners (72%) reported that they had used drugs in the 12 months prior to coming into prison and a third (32%) said that they had used legal highs. A third (35%) said that they had used illegal drugs in prison although 60% stated that their drug use had decreased in prison.

### ***Contact with family and friends***

Remand and convicted prisoners had regular contact with their friends and family by letter (remand prisoners 61%; convicted prisoners 69%), contact through visits (remand 54%; convicted 64%) and contact by telephone (remand 74%; convicted 84%).

### ***Bullying***

One in seven remand prisoners (14%) reported that they had been bullied in the month prior to the survey. Of these, the most common types of bullying were name calling (38%), physical abuse (38%) and property (21%). Of those who were bullied, 22% reported the incident.

### ***Safety***

One fifth (18%) of remand prisoners expressed fear for their safety in prison in the month before the survey. Of these, six in ten

were made to fear for their safety by another prisoner (60%) and four in ten by a group of prisoners (43%). The most commonly cited areas prisoners said they feared for their safety were the hall (51%), corridors/stairwells (33%), and at recreation (32%).

### ***Carrying a Knife***

Half (50%) of remand prisoners said that they have carried a knife, with the most commonly cited reason for doing so being self-defence (50%). Almost half (46%) said that they have been a victim of knife crime, 32% said they have used a knife to injure someone and 35% have been convicted of a knife crime. One in ten (12%) said that they were a gang member.

### ***In care as a child***

One third of remand prisoners (30%) reported they had been in care as a child, with one fifth (20%) in care at the age of sixteen.

## REMAND PRISONERS 2013

### *Introduction*

This Bulletin, which deals specifically with remand prisoners held by the Scottish Prison Service, is one of a number of thematic commentaries presenting the key findings from the 2013 Prisoner Survey. The Prisoner Survey was introduced to the Scottish Prison Service in 1990 as a mechanism to inform and support the Service's business planning process. The focus of the Survey has expanded over the years.

The Survey continues to focus upon the core elements of prison life: living conditions, family contact, healthcare, relationships, atmosphere and perceived safety. This year's questionnaire also introduced new topics on engagement with programmes, in care as a child, military service and accessing Prison Rules. The Survey informs and shapes change by contributing to establishment and corporate business plans.

The Survey was carried out between May and July 2013 on an establishment-by-establishment basis. Prisoners' views were collected by means of a self-completion questionnaire, which was distributed and collected personally by the members of the Survey team or by local staff. The Survey involves all prisoners and all establishments.

The Fourteenth Survey achieved an overall prisoner response rate of 60%. A total of 602 remand prisoners participated in this Survey. Of those, 95% were male and 5% were female.

Respondents' remand and custodial sentence history is outlined in Table 1. This shows that remand prisoners were most likely to report having been on remand between 1 and 5 times (44%), followed by 'never' previously been on remand (27%) and been on remand over ten times (17%). Fewest respondents had been on remand between 6-10 times (12%).

One third of remand prisoners (32%) had 'never' previously served a prison sentence, four in ten (43%) had served between 1 and 5 sentences and a quarter (24%) of remand prisoners had served more than 5 sentences.

**Table 1 Remand prisoners' prison history**

	Never	1-5	6-10 times	Over 10
Number of times previously on remand	27	44	12	17
Number of times previously on a sentence	32	43	11	13

Half of remand prisoners had a served sentence in the community (50%) compared to four in ten (42%) of convicted prisoners. Over a quarter of remand (28%) and convicted prisoners (28%) had received a custodial sentence as a result of breaching a community sentence.

### *Atmosphere & Relationships*

The majority of remand prisoners (88%) reported the atmosphere in the hall/dormitory in positive terms. A particularly high percentage of remand prisoners described their relationship with prisoners in their hall/dormitory (96%) and officers in their hall (92%) in positive terms.

### ***Healthcare***

Prisoners were asked about their use of medical services while in their present prison. Around three quarters of remand and convicted prisoners attended the doctor (75% remand, 81% convicted) and/or nurse (74% remand, 82%). One in ten remand prisoners reported accessing the dentist (10%) compared to four in ten convicted prisoners (44%). Similarly, significantly fewer remand prisoners accessed the optician (4%) compared to convicted prisoners (21%).

### ***Cleanliness***

The level of cleanliness in the majority of areas in the prison was rated highly by remand prisoners who described the cleanliness as 'ok', 'fairly good' or 'very good' in their hall (86%), the toilet area (76%) and the showers (78%). Fewer remand prisoners rated the cleanliness of their cell in positive terms (57%).

The majority of remand prisoners reported receiving clean bedding on a weekly basis (89%).

### ***Food***

Remand prisoners had mixed views on food in prison. On a positive note, the majority expressed satisfaction with the timing of meals (83%). In the region of six in ten remand prisoners were positive regarding the choice of menu (61%) and the condition of the food when they got it (58%). Around half of remand prisoners were critical of the size of the portions (48%). Convicted prisoners held similar views to remand prisoners in relation to food.

### ***Mental health & well-being***

Prisoners were asked questions on mental health by way of an instrument known as the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (WEMWBS) (see Table 3). Over three quarters of those reporting were 'able to make up my own mind about things' (79%) and around two thirds had 'been thinking clearly' (67%), 'had energy to spare' (65%), and had 'been dealing with problems well' (65%).

On a less positive note, less than half of remand prisoners reported, 'feeling useful' (45%), 'feeling loved' (45%), 'feeling interested in other people' (49%), and 'feeling close to other people' (49%).

Also worth noting is the clear difference in the percentage of remand and convicted prisoners responding positively to these questions on mental health. In all instances, percentages for remand prisoners were lower than those of convicted prisoners.

**Table 2 Prisoners' Mental Health & Well-being**

	<b>% of remand prisoners reporting positively</b>	<b>% of convicted prisoners reporting positively</b>
I've been feeling optimistic about the future	<b>62</b>	<b>72</b>
I've been feeling useful	<b>45</b>	<b>66</b>
I've been feeling relaxed	<b>60</b>	<b>74</b>
I've been feeling interested in other people	49	58
I've had energy to spare	65	71
I've been dealing with problems well	65	81
I've been thinking clearly	67	82
I've been feeling good about myself	<b>54</b>	<b>74</b>
I've been feeling close to other people	49	58
I've been feeling confident	<b>59</b>	<b>73</b>
I've been able to make up my own mind about things	79	87
I've been feeling loved	<b>45</b>	<b>55</b>
I've been interested in new things	<b>59</b>	<b>70</b>
I've been feeling cheerful	<b>55</b>	<b>73</b>

***Hepatitis C***

Around four in ten remand prisoners (36%) who responded to the Survey had been tested for Hepatitis C. Eight in ten (82%) reported that they would take a Hepatitis C test in prison and four in ten (42%) had been given information about Hepatitis C while in prison.

***Alcohol use***

As shown in Table 4, prisoners were asked a number of questions about alcohol use inside and outside prison. Half of remand prisoners (50%) reported being drunk at the time of their offence, compared to 44% of convicted prisoners.

Around four in ten (45%) reported that drinking affected their relationship with family (compared to 32% of convicted prisoners). Almost half (48%) of remand prisoners said that if there were offered help on the outside for alcohol problems they would take it (compared to 37% of convicted prisoners).

A quarter (23%) of remand prisoners had been given the chance to receive treatment for alcohol problems during their sentence in comparison with a third (33%) of convicted prisoners.

**Table 3 Prisoners views on alcohol**

	% of remand prisoners reporting	% of convicted prisoners reporting
I was drunk at the time of my offence	50	44
My drinking affected my ability to hold down a job	26	19
My drinking affected my relationship with my family	<b>45</b>	<b>32</b>
If I was offered help in prison for alcohol problem I would take it	47	40
If I was offered help on the outside for alcohol problems I would take it	<b>48</b>	<b>37</b>
I am worried that alcohol will be a problem for me when I get out	28	19
Have you used alcohol in prison in the last month	5	4
I was assessed for alcohol use on my admission to prison	34	33
I have been given the chance to receive treatment for alcohol problems during my sentence	<b>23</b>	<b>33</b>
I have received help/treatment for alcohol problems during my sentence	13	22

***Smoking***

Eight in ten remand prisoners (80%) reported they smoked, with half (54%) expressing a desire to give up smoking, and a third (34%) stating they had tried to do so in the last 12 months. Half of remand prisoners (50%) reported sharing their cell with a smoker, down from two thirds (66%) in the 2011 survey and compared to 30% of convicted prisoners.

***Drug use***

Almost three quarters of remand prisoners (72%) reported that they had used drugs in the 12 months prior to coming into prison compared to 60% of convicted prisoners. A third (32%) of remand prisoners said they have previously used other drugs known as legal highs, with 22% of convicted prisoners stating this.

Table 5 shows that around four in ten (37%) remand prisoners said drug taking was a problem for them on the outside, with the same number (37%) stating they were under the influence of drugs at the time of their offence. Almost half (47%) of remand prisoners said if they were offered help for their drug problem on the outside they would take it (compared to 37% of convicted prisoners).

**Table 4 Drug use at time of offence**

	% of remand prisoners reporting	% of convicted prisoners reporting
My drug taking was a problem for me on the outside	37	34
I was under the influence of drugs at the time of my offence	37	39
I committed my offence to get money for drugs	16	16
I was receiving treatment for my drug use before prison	22	19
If I was offered help for my drug problem on the outside I would take it	<b>47</b>	<b>37</b>
If I was offered help for my drug problem in prison I would take it	46	40
I am worried that my drug problem will be a problem when I get out	27	19
I was assessed for drug use upon my admission to prison	49	45
I have been given the chance to receive treatment for drug use during my sentence	29	33
I have received help/treatment for drug use during my sentence	25	28

***Drug use in present prison in the last month***

A third (35%) of remand prisoners had used illegal drugs in prison, with a similar number (30%) having used illegal drugs in prison in the last month. Over half (54%) of remand prisoners reported their drug use had changed during their current period in prison, with 60% stating their drug use had decreased, 13% indicating it had increased and 19% having the same use but different drugs. Nine per cent had only started using in prison.

***Contact with family and friends***

Contact with friends and family in the community is of vital importance to the majority of prisoners and impacts on quality of life and mental welfare.

Table 6 illustrates that remand and convicted prisoners had regular contact with their friends and family by letter (remand prisoners 61%; convicted prisoners 69%), contact through visits (remand prisoners 54%; convicted prisoners 64%) and contact by telephone (remand prisoners 74%, convicted prisoners 84%). Convicted prisoners were slightly more likely to have contact by telephone and visits.

**Table 5 Contact with family & friends**

	% of remand prisoners reporting	% of convicted prisoners reporting
No regular contact	15	9
Contact by letter	61	69
Contact by telephone	<b>74</b>	<b>84</b>
Contact by visits	<b>54</b>	<b>64</b>
Contact by home leave	1	6

Table 7 illustrates remand and convicted prisoners reported similarly on the visit experience, which was generally viewed in positive terms. The most noticeable difference between remand and convicted prisoners was satisfaction with the length of the visit, with remand prisoners (61%) responding less positively than convicted prisoners (74%).

**Table 6 Prisoners views on visits**

	% of remand prisoners reporting	% of convicted prisoners reporting
Access to family and friends	80	85
Access to FCO in this prison	70	72
The length of visit	<b>61</b>	<b>74</b>
Ability to arrange visits	82	85
Facilities for children at visits	75	76
Facilities for disabled visitors	82	81
Timing of visits	77	80
The quality of the visits	77	79
Respectful behaviour shown by staff in relation to visits	78	76

### ***Bullying***

One in seven remand prisoners (14%) reported they had been bullied in the month prior to the survey (15% of convicted prisoners). Of those remand prisoners who indicated they had been bullied, the most common types of bullying were name calling (38% remand; 51% convicted), physical abuse (38% remand; 30% convicted) and property (21% remand; 21% convicted). Of those who were bullied 22% of remand, compared to 20% of convicted, reported the incident.

### ***Safety***

One fifth (18%) of remand prisoners expressed fear for their safety in prison in the month before the survey (17% of convicted prisoners). Of those remand prisoners who did fear for their safety, six in ten were made to fear for their safety by another prisoner (60%) and four in ten by a group of prisoners (43%). One fifth (20%) had feared for their safety from a prison officer and 15% from a group of prison officers. The most commonly cited areas where remand prisoners said they feared for their safety were the hall (51%), corridors/stairwells (33%) and at recreation (32%).

### ***Carrying a Knife***

Half (50%) of remand prisoners had carried a knife, with 29% saying they did so 12 months before coming to prison. Almost half (46%) said they had been a victim of knife crime, 32% had used a knife to injure someone and 35% had been convicted of a knife crime. The most commonly cited reason for carrying a knife was self-defence (50%), followed by previously been threatened (24%), don't feel safe where I live (23%) and because other people do (22%).

Four in ten remand prisoners (39%) had been cautioned by the police for carrying a knife, and half (50%) said if they were cautioned for carrying a knife this would stop them from doing so. One in ten (12%) remand prisoners said they were a gang member.

### ***In care as a child***

One third of remand prisoners (30%) had been in care as a child compared to a quarter of convicted prisoners (26%). Of the remand prisoners, one fifth (20%) were in care at the age of sixteen compared to 16% of convicted prisoners.

### ***Comment***

In most areas of prison life, remand prisoners have very similar views to convicted prisoners. Atmosphere, relationships and cleanliness all receive high ratings while the quality of food and choice of menu traditionally receive low satisfaction ratings from both the remand and convicted population.

Around three quarters of remand and convicted prisoners attended the doctor (75% remand, 81% convicted) and/or nurse (74% remand, 82% convicted). Fewer remand prisoners reported accessing the dentist (10% remand, 44% convicted) and the optician (4% remand, 21% convicted). This is probably due to the comparatively short time prisoners spend in custodial remand, with dental health needs and eye care not being deemed a priority (by them) given the context of their circumstances.

The reported trends in increased alcohol consumption in Scotland in recent years appear to be accentuated in the remand population. Slightly more remand prisoners (50%) reported being drunk at the time of their offence compared to convicted prisoners (45%). More remands reported that drinking affected their relationship with family (45% remand; 32% convicted) and more (28%) were worried that alcohol would be a problem for them upon their release (28% remand; 19% convicted).

A quarter (23%) of remand prisoners had been given the chance to receive treatment for alcohol problems during their sentence in comparison with a third (33%) of convicted prisoners. Almost half (48%) of remand prisoners said that if they were offered help on the outside for alcohol problems they would take it compared to 37% of convicted prisoners. The reported trends in increased alcohol consumption in Scotland appear to be reflected among the remand population.

Almost three quarters of remand prisoners (72%) reported that they had used drugs in the 12 months prior to coming into prison compared to 60% of convicted prisoners. A third (32%) of remand prisoners had previously used other drugs known as legal highs (22% of convicted) reflecting the growing availability and use of such substances in the wider community.

Knife use was common in the remand population with a half (50%) carrying a knife, almost half (46%) being a victim of knife crime and a third (32%) using a knife to injure someone.

On all items on the mental wellbeing scale, remand prisoners continued to report lower levels of functioning than convicted prisoners. It is not clear why this should be so, but it may be connected to the 'shock' of incarceration and the uncertainty hanging over a remand prisoner's personal circumstances in terms of a court appearance and possible conviction, with the unsettling consequences of a custodial sentence which may result in loss of work, changes to accommodation arrangements and general disruption to family life and stability.