

## EMAIL NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2021



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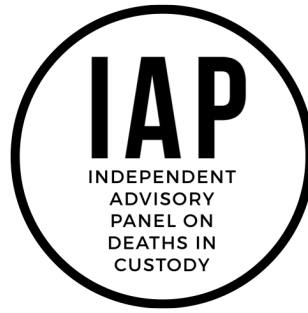
Ministerial Board on Deaths in Custody

Forward Look



### A WORD FROM THE CHAIR

Juliet to add text here.



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## 2020: A LOOK BACK

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### KEEP TALKING **STAY SAFE**

#### A RAPID REVIEW OF PRISONERS' EXPERIENCE UNDER COVID-19

The IAP published an unusual report giving a unique insight into the experiences of those detained in prisons during the Covid-19 crisis. Drawing on radio messages from over 200 prisoners across 55 prisons, almost half the prison estate, the IAP presented voices, usually unheard, and views, usually unsought, of people in prison in unprecedented times. What is helping them to keep safe? What is making a bad situation worse? Through a partnership with National Prison Radio, over a four week period the IAP received and reviewed 223 prisoner phone messages from across 55 prisons, with the findings leading to ten recommendations grouped under the following five themes which can be found in the report.

**"We are humans who have families."**

**"Keeping us safe day in, day out."**

**"This is taking it's toll."**

#### COVID-19 INFORMATION HUB

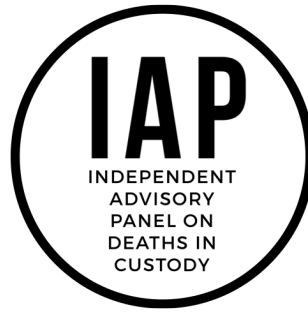
In response to COVID-19, we launched a hub where you will find the latest information and responses from the IAP and other national and international sources on protecting the lives of people in state custody during the pandemic.

#### JUST ONE THING

This briefing drew on prisoner responses to an IAP specific request distributed via National Prison Radio, played during the height of the initial lockdown between Monday 29 June to Friday 31 July, which asked prisoners to propose 'just one thing' that would make prison safer. We received over 40 carefully considered recorded messages drawn from people's experiences of the COVID-19 period and beyond. Conclusions drawn included that meaningful and productive and stimulating activity improves mental wellbeing; prisoner safety is enhanced by staff who listen and prioritise acts of kindness; and ensuring contact with families remain in place is vital.

#### PREVENTING NATURAL DEATHS IN PRISONS

The IAP published a report in collaboration with the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) setting out clear proposals to reduce the number of preventable natural deaths in prisons. The report, 'Avoidable natural deaths in prison custody: putting things right', identifies how natural deaths occurring in prison might be prevented, where possible, and end of life care managed with dignity and compassion. The challenges posed by COVID-19 have thrown these issues into sharp relief.



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## 2020 SPOTLIGHT

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### COMMUNITY SENTENCES WITH TREATMENT REQUIREMENTS (CSTR)

The Panel is seeking to accelerate plans for increased provision and availability of community sentences with treatment requirements (CSTRs) in order to improve health, reduce crime and save lives. In partnership with the Magistrates Association (MA), we are building on the publication of a joint report assessing the views of magistrates on sentencing powers and practice in relation to offenders with mental health conditions and substance misuse needs.

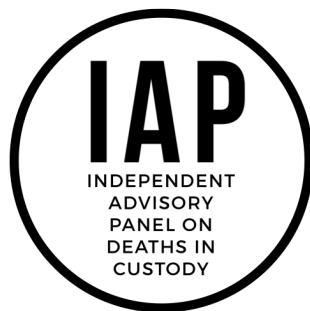
Last year we published articles in *MAGISTRATE* and *Probation Quarterly*, and sent advisory letters to the Chief Secretary to the Treasury and the Secretary of State to the Department of Health and Social Care to call for increased provision as part of the Spending Review. Take-up remains disappointingly low – and in coming months the IAP and the MA will continue to press for greater nationwide availability. This work sits alongside planned work with the Prison Governors' Association, independent monitors and other partners to interrogate and challenge the use of prison custody as a place of safety.

### IMMIGRATION DETENTION

The IAP was asked by the Home Office to provide advice on issues pertaining to deaths, 'near misses', and incidents of serious self-harm in immigration detention in support of three recommendations relating to deaths in detention made by Stephen Shaw. In October the Panel presented the resulting advice, 'Priorities for a prevention of deaths strategy in Immigration Removal Centres', to the Home Office's Immigration Detention Reform Board.

This led the Board to agree to integrate findings into their future reform work, make action plans in collaboration with the IAP for closer integration with the prison service on joint learning and priorities, and ensure read across of its conclusions to wider Home Office work, including on Windrush. This follows previous IAP advice around the publication of more transparent data around IRC deaths which we are pleased has been implemented.

The IAP will now support formalising links between HMPPS and Immigration Enforcement and produce a guide note on the role of independent facilitation of lessons learned exercises following a death in an immigration removal centre.



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## **KEEPING SAFE CONFERENCE 2020**

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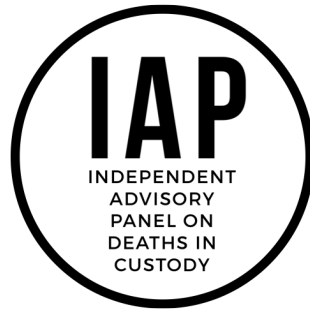
On 25 February 2020, the IAP, in conjunction with Inside time, Samaritans and Prison Radio Association, hosted the inaugural Keeping Safe conference. Taking place at The Abbey Centre in Westminster, the event was rallying point for suicide prevention. It brought together over 200 delegates and speakers, Samaritan Listeners, Ministers, practitioners, policy makers and prisoners' families. It covered a range of subjects and discussions from supporting prisoners, learning from families, preventing future deaths and preventing self-harm. We were extremely grateful to Minister Nadine Dorries MP and the Lord Chancellor Robert Buckland QC, who presented the keynote speech.

**“Any death in custody isn’t a statistic,  
it is a tragedy.”**

**Rt. Hon. Robert Buckland QC, Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice**



***Clockwise: Juliet Lyon CBE, IAP Chair; Rt. Hon. Robert Buckland QC, Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice; Conference delegates; Minister Nadine Dorries MP, Minister of State for Mental Health, Suicide Prevention and Patient Safety.***



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## NEW DEVELOPMENTS

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### **PRACTITIONER AND STAKEHOLDER GROUP**

The Ministerial Council on Deaths in Custody is made up of a Ministerial Board on Deaths in Custody, the Independent Advisory Panel on Deaths in Custody, and a Practitioner and Stakeholder Group (PSG). This group is drawn from inspectorate and investigative bodies, lawyers, third sector organisations, families, academics and practitioners from the custodial sectors. The Panel would like to encourage practitioners from a range of organisations, particularly mental health settings, to join the group.

As a member of the group you can expect to receive regular communication with links to relevant news and publications from across the sectors; updates from the IAP website and invitations to events. To be added to the IAP Stakeholder and Practitioner list, please click [here](#), where you can submit your information, giving us an idea of your area of interest and/or expertise.



# Learning Library

We have re-launched our Learning Library. This hub is a collection of reports, research articles and statistics that cover the areas of focus of the IAP. Spanning prisons, police custody, immigration detention and secure health, these resources have been collected from several sources including the CQC, IOPC and other organisations.

**[Head over to our Learning Library now!](#)**



## MEDIA APPEARANCES

Here are some of the IAP's media appearances in 2020.

**The Telegraph** Coronavirus News Politics Sport Business Money Opinion Tech Life Style Travel Culture

UK news World news Royals Health Defence Science Education Investigations Global Health Security

### Fewer than 80 prisoners have been released early to combat the spread of coronavirus

Just 79 of 4,000 'low level' offenders have been freed early

[coronavirus](#) despite Government claims they would have to free up to 4,000, watchdogs have revealed.

They blamed the “complexity” of the scheme and “risk aversion” by the Ministry of Justice for just 79 of the 4,000 “low level” offenders being freed early as well as only 22 of 70 pregnant women and mothers and babies and seven of the [1,500 vulnerable inmates also offered the prospect of release](#).

“Eligibility criteria and the convoluted process of early release are mired in complexity and risk aversion,” said the report by the Independent Advisory Panel on Deaths in Custody.

“The schemes are hard to understand, difficult to explain and close to impossible to deliver, even for a disciplined service like the prison service.”

Its chair Juliet Lyon said the prisons had [successfully avoided a major outbreak of coronavirus by quarantining new arrivals](#) for 14 days, shielding the most vulnerable and isolating those with symptoms. They had been helped by a fall of 3,000 in prison numbers as courts closed down, so reducing overcrowding.

But she said the numbers being sent to jail would increase as the courts returned after lockdown and that would raise the risk of a coronavirus outbreak as overcrowding increased. She said half of the inmates had not been able to follow



More stories

-  What is an air bridge and when will they be announced?
-  The Leicester lockdown is nothing short of a self-made disaster
-  Keir Starmer is setting a trend in wriggling out of his show of support for Black Lives Matter
-  Coronavirus latest news: Leicester mayor 'very, very concerned' about impact of new lockdown as row with Government deepens


**Prisons and probation** This article is more than 1 month old

### Prison release schemes almost impossible to deliver, says watchdog

**Exclusive: plans to release thousands in England and Wales to stem Covid-19 have so far freed fewer than 100**

- Coronavirus - latest updates
- See all our coronavirus coverage

**Jamie Grierson** Home affairs correspondent  
@JamieGrierson  
Sun 31 May 2020 13:59 BST



Prisoners in England and Wales have been left confused by high-profile government announcements that led them to believe thousands of inmates would be temporarily released to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus behind bars, a prison deaths watchdog has said.

The Independent Advisory Panel on Deaths in Custody (IAPDC) concluded the early release schemes were “hard to understand, difficult to explain and close to impossible to deliver”, following a review of hundreds of messages sent by inmates to prison radio.


On 4 April, the Ministry of Justice said up to 4,000 prisoners would be eligible for the end of custody temporary release (ECTR) scheme, in addition to freeing pregnant women and mothers of babies. The government also committed to releasing vulnerable prisoners, of whom there are about 1,200, through compassionate release.

Seventy-nine people have been released under the ECTR scheme, while about 22 pregnant women and mothers of babies have been freed and fewer than 10 vulnerable prisoners released.





The IAPDC analysed more than 200 messages sent to prison radio at 55 prisons for its review.

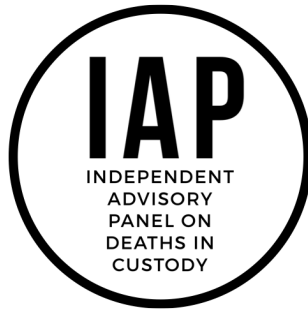
Launching the review, Juliet Lyon, the chair of the IAPDC, said: “Eligibility criteria and the convoluted process of early release are mired in complexity and risk aversion.”

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most viewed

-  China vows to grant Hong Kong residency
-  Leicester inf driven by un workers, say
-  'Mummy, w expert's dau BBC interview
-  Boz the Blus hammered i a-mole' John Crace



## MEDIA APPEARANCES

The weekly online and monthly printed national newspaper for prisoners and detainees

**insidetime**  
The National Newspaper for Prisoners & Detainees

Home > \*Comment > Keeping safe: agenda for change

Juliet Lyon - Independent Advisory Panel 20th July 2020

### 'Keep talking - keep safe'

As prisons edge, or are steered, out of lockdown and people begin to emerge from the extremes of imprisonment and isolation, is anyone taking any notice of what people in prison say or what they want to see changed to keep them safe?

On 1<sup>st</sup> June, drawing on over 200 Prison Radio messages across 55 prisons, the Independent Advisory Panel on Deaths in Custody, (IAP), published a rapid review of prisoners' experience of the pandemic and came up with ten clear recommendations

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### 'Significant' link between homelessness and reoffending, watchdog warns

Flora Thompson, PA Home Affairs Correspondent  
PA Media: UK News 08 July 2020

Criminals are "significantly more likely" to reoffend if they are homeless when they are freed from jail, a watchdog has warned.

Chief inspector of probation Justin Russell said "widespread homelessness" and a lack of suitable housing was "jeopardising" chances for rehabilitation.

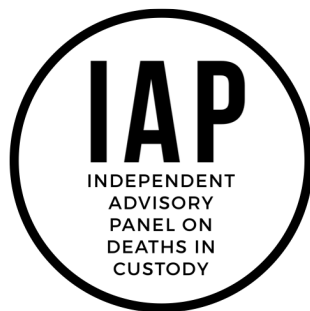
An inspection of services in England in February and March found offenders released from prison into "unstable" accommodation were "significantly more likely to reoffend, be sentenced for another crime or be back behind bars".

## Effective community sentences: the role of treatment requirements

Juliet Lyon, Chair of the Independent Advisory Panel on Deaths in Custody, and John Bache JP, National Chair of the Magistrates Association argue for a greater use of Community Sentence Treatment Requirements.

PROBATION QUARTERLY ISSUE 17

**The August 2020 issue of Probation Quarterly featured an article from Magistrates Association Chair John Bache and IAP chair, Juliet Lyon, on effective community sentences and the role of treatment requirements**



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## 2020 SPOTLIGHT

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### MINISTERIAL BOARD IN DEATHS IN CUSTODY

The Panel welcomed the convening of two July 2020 sub-meetings of the Ministerial Board on Deaths in Custody in response to the outbreak of COVID-19. These meetings presented a good opportunity to recognise strong leadership and success, critically examine and learn from the emergency response, and look ahead to how life would be preserved during the necessarily slow and challenging recovery phase. The Board met to discuss prisons, police custody and immigration removal centres on 7 July and secure mental health settings on 24 July.

The Board was convened fully on 18 November, where the IAP supported conclusions that more effective steps must be taken to ensure the most effective use of Coroners' Prevention of Future Deaths reports (PFDs). The Panel supports plans to review the effective working and structure of the Ministerial Board and will work with Ministers, officials and other Board members to make full use of the Board's unique role in bringing together leaders and experts to address the complex causes of, and prevent future, deaths in custody.

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## 2021: A FORWARD LOOK

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### UPCOMING PRIORITIES

- A range of work to prevent deaths in police custody and during or following police contact, including a leadership initiative in partnership with the Policing Minister.
- A project to track the receipt, use and implementation of Prevention of Future Deaths reports issued following a death in state custody when the coroner believes action could be taken to avoid similar future deaths. This will be a cross-cutting project covering all places of state detention.
- Work to explore the causes of drug-related deaths in prison and the use of prison as a place of safety.