# Inadequate food at Parc prison exacerbates violence amid wider crisis



A recent inspection report into Parc prison in Bridgend has revealed that inadequate food provision is contributing to outbreaks of violence among inmates, amid a broader crisis marked by drug-related deaths, self-harm, and deteriorating conditions. The findings were highlighted in a report published this week by Charlie Taylor, the chief inspector of prisons.

The inspection noted an “alarming” flow of illicit drugs into Parc, which last year experienced 17 inmate deaths—the highest among UK prisons. Of these, five were drug-related, three self-inflicted, eight due to natural causes, and one from unknown circumstances.

Inmates interviewed during the inspection described meals as insufficient in both quantity and quality. One prisoner’s family detailed afternoon meals consisting of “a jacket potato and a spoonful of beans,” followed by an evening meal of “a bread roll with a spoonful of tuna mayo” lacking vegetables. The prisoner, who had worked in the prison servery, purportedly apologised to fellow inmates for the small portions. On Fridays, when fish and chips were served, shortages sometimes left some inmates without food. Family members expressed frustration that complaints to G4S, the private security company managing the prison, were dismissed.

Mr Taylor's report confirmed that food served was "not always adequate" and criticised the lack of healthy options, particularly fresh fruit and vegetables. The inspectorate observed poor supervision during mealtimes, resulting in inconsistent portion sizes. There were also concerns about hygiene, with some prisoners handling food with gloved hands instead of utensils, raising the risk of cross-contamination.

Approximately 23% of prisoners surveyed said they had enough to eat. The prison shop sold limited healthy items, prompting inmates to rely heavily on less nutritious options such as pot noodles. Some prisoners experienced difficulties accessing food because their cells were in areas that received meals last.

G4S acknowledged criticisms of the food and confirmed collaboration with caterer Aramark and inmates to review food provision. The company stated it would expand the range of fresh fruit and vegetables available in the prison shop.

The inspection uncovered wider issues, including severe problems with self-harm, violence, and drug smuggling—exacerbated by cell windows that could be easily opened from the inside to allow contraband deliveries via drones. While work to replace windows is underway, the report stated standards at Parc had severely deteriorated since a generally positive inspection in 2022. That same year, G4S secured a 10-year contract worth £400 million to run the prison, which the report identified as “the root” of many current problems.

Dental care services at Parc were also criticised. Waiting times for routine dental treatment have lengthened from 18 months to only urgent cases being treated. Families recounted distressing delays, including one inmate who waited three days for a dental abscess to be addressed. The local health board, Cwm Taf Morgannwg, recognised the lack of space limited dental treatment capacity but said it was working “at pace” with the prison to improve provision.

Welsh Affairs Committee chair Ruth Jones commented on the report, saying: “Once again, Parc prison has generated alarming headlines. I have long been concerned about the situation for Parc’s inmates, and this report only compounds my worries. In the past I have been encouraged by the progress made at Parc; its director, Will Styles, is taking important steps forward. But clearly leaders at the prison need to go much further and faster. G4S must ensure that officials have the resources they need to actually deliver on their promising plans.” She intends to meet urgently with the head of the prison service in Wales to discuss responses and monitoring.

The UK Government told WalesOnline that it was working closely with G4S on new measures to prevent the smuggling of drugs and other illicit items into Parc prison but did not directly address questions about lengthy private contracts for prison management.

The inspection report paints a stark picture of a prison grappling with serious operational challenges, with food shortages and quality playing a significant role in inmates’ frustration and unrest. G4S and partner organisations face pressure to improve conditions and respond to the report’s findings.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.herald.wales/national-news/drugs-deaths-and-drones-damning-report-highlights-crisis-at-parc-prison/> - This article corroborates the report's finding of an alarming flow of illicit drugs into Parc prison, the occurrence of 17 inmate deaths last year including drug-related and self-inflicted deaths, and the widespread problems of drug use, violence, and self-harm within the prison.[3]
* <https://cloud-platform-e218f50a4812967ba1215eaecede923f.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/sites/19/2025/04/Parc-web-2025.pdf> - This official inspection report by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons details the deterioration of standards at Parc prison, including inadequate food provision, poor hygiene practices during mealtimes, insufficient portion sizes, and limited healthy food options, supporting the article's claims about food-related issues and their impact on inmate unrest.[1]
* <https://doingtime.co.uk/hmp-yoi-parc/hmip-reports-hmp-yoi-parc/> - This source provides background on the prison's management and inspection history and supports the assertion that Parc prison is a large category C prison in South Wales with a history of good reputation but recent deterioration following a change in management to G4S, including challenges like food quality and violence.[4]
* <https://www.herald.wales/national-news/drugs-deaths-and-drones-damning-report-highlights-crisis-at-parc-prison/> - This source corroborates the report's findings on serious problems with drug smuggling, the use of drones to deliver contraband through easily opened cell windows, and the ongoing efforts to replace windows to reduce contraband entry.[3]
* <https://cloud-platform-e218f50a4812967ba1215eaecede923f.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/sites/19/2025/04/Parc-web-2025.pdf> - The inspection report confirms the criticism of dental services at Parc prison, including lengthening waiting times for routine dental treatment, distressing delays for inmates with urgent needs such as dental abscesses, and the health board's acknowledgment of capacity issues.[1]
* <https://www.herald.wales/national-news/drugs-deaths-and-drones-damning-report-highlights-crisis-at-parc-prison/> - This source includes reactions from Welsh Affairs Committee chair Ruth Jones and statements from the UK Government regarding ongoing collaboration with G4S to address drug smuggling and the broader crisis at Parc, echoing the article's notes on political responses and plans to improve conditions.[3]
* <https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/tiny-meals-causing-riots-welsh-31503315> - Please view link - unable to able to access data