

NINTH EDITION November 2025

Over 87,500 people are in jail right now and last year over 400 people died there in a 30% increase on 2024 - 86 of whom took their own lives. When you add to that 41,000 violent assaults, nigh on 80,000 acts of self-harm, prison wings that are awash with deadly psychoactive drugs and a growing problem with gangs, it's brutally clear that our prisons are less safe right now than at any time since records began; all at a time when our crumbling, vermin-infested jails are dangerously overcrowded too.

Surviving a prison sentence is what **The Cell Companion** is all about. It is informed by those who have been there, providing answers to questions that other 'experts' can only guess at; from reception to release it covers transfers, protection, healthcare, and difficult issues like sex in prison, self-harm, avoiding extremism, it highlights the deadly dangers of *Spice*, advises how to avoid debt, bullying and it covers the 2026 prison disciplinary system, its punishments, and prison law rules and regulations too.

There's priceless advice on making applications to just get basic things done, keeping in touch by way of letters, emails, visits, voicemail, phone calls & much more. So If you're going to prison, or are already there, it's the book for you - and your loved ones.



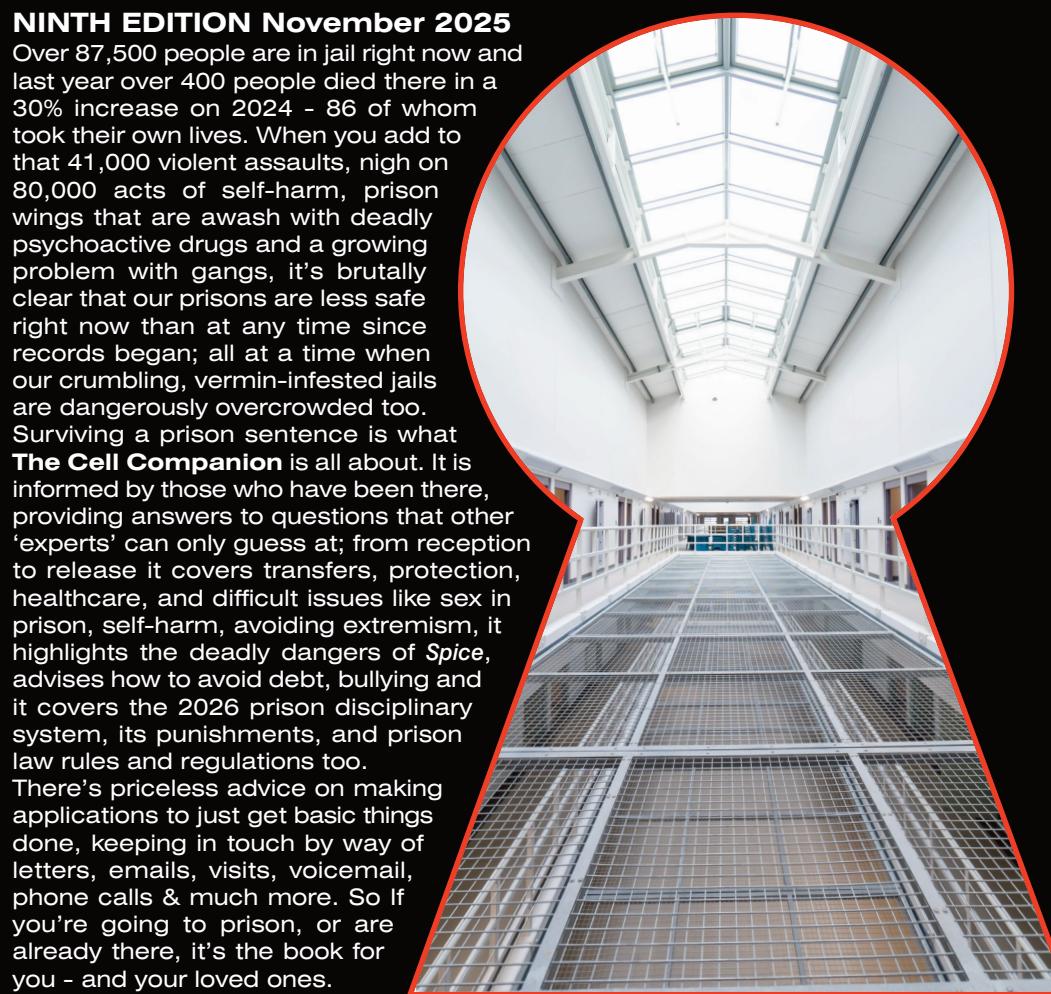
MARK LEECH From prison strip-cells and roof-top protests at one end of the scale to being Editor of all the definitive annual reference books on the prison system of England and Wales at the other, Mark Leech has travelled quite a journey.

He served almost 20 years in 62 of Britain's jails and since his release in 1995 he has risen to become the country's foremost ex-offender expert on the policy and practice of the penal system. He is the Founder and former Chief Executive of UNLOCK, the national ex-offenders' charity, Editor of Converse the national monthly prisons newspaper and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. Outside of work his interests are in aviation; Mark is a qualified Helicopter Pilot.

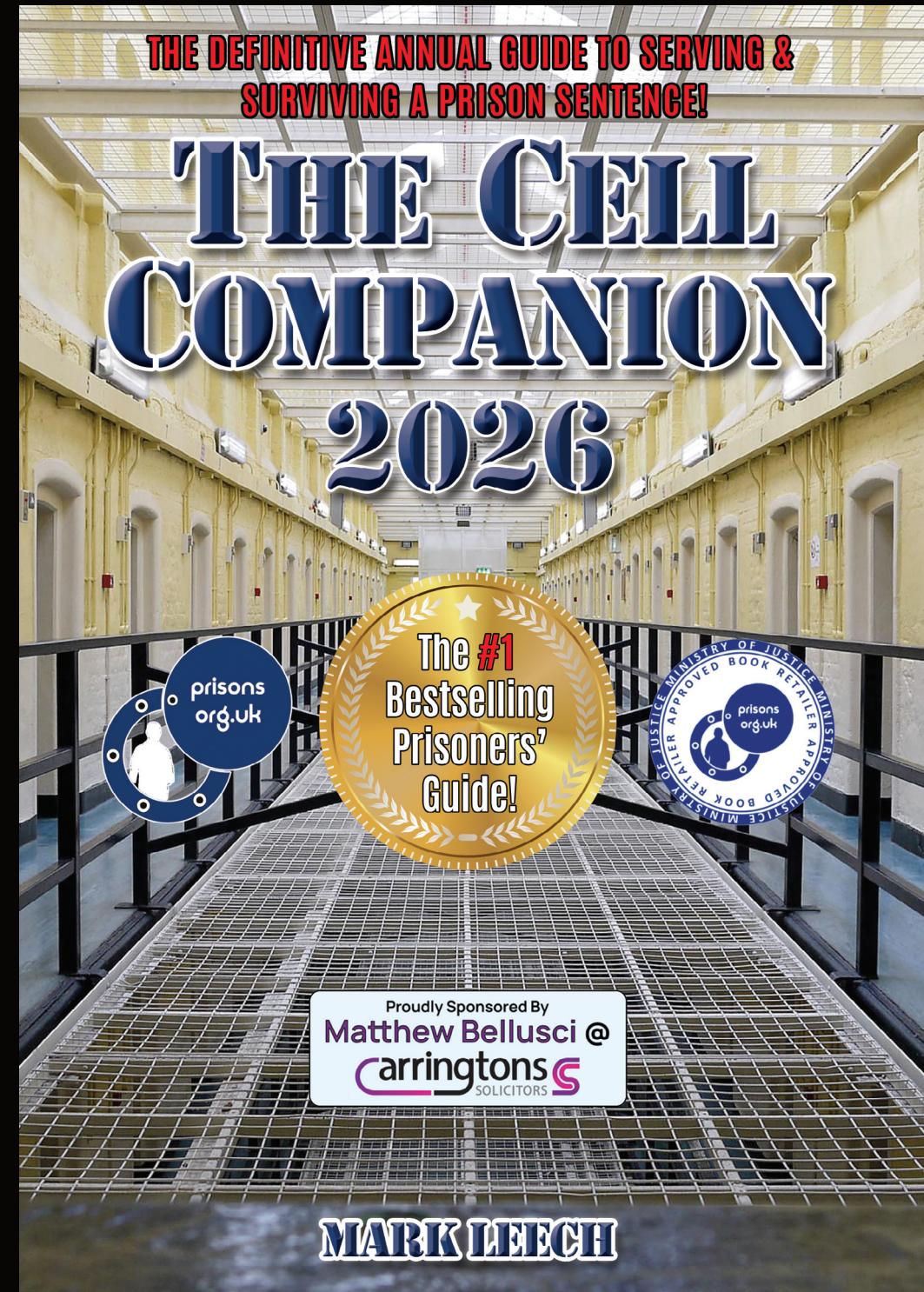
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Opening up the Closed World of Prisons



The Cell Companion 2026 Mark Leech



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Legal Aid may be available

How Legal Aid Works

Legal aid (public funding) means you do not have to pay for help in most prison law matters, as long as:

- The issue has enough legal merit
- You don't have significant private funds
- Solicitor Matthew Bellusci will guide you through the application—it's simple and confidential.

Matthew understands the stress and uncertainty you face. He is here to guide you at every step, making sure your rights are protected and your case receives expert care.

Why Choose Matthew?

- Years of specialist experience
- Free advice & representation (subject to means and merits test)

Legal Aid for Prisoners: Your Rights & Support

Prison Law protects your rights while in custody. If you are worried about your treatment, privileges, or future, you do not have to face it alone. Specialist Solicitor Matthew Bellusci is here to help you.

Prison Law Services

Dedicated Solicitor Matthew Bellusci can advise and represent you in areas including:

At the Start of Your Sentence

- Explaining your rights and entitlements on arrival
- Challenging your conviction or sentence, including appeals
- Advice regarding categories and sentence plans

While You Are Serving Your Sentence

- **Transfers:** Help moving to a prison closer to family or for sentence progression
- **Re-categorisation:** Advocacy to ensure your category reflects your progress
- **Complaints & Rights:** Help with complaints about prison conditions, access to healthcare, or regime
- **Foreign Nationals:** Advice on deportation risk, status, and conditions

Disciplinary Hearings (Adjudications)

- Representation if you are charged with disciplinary ('nicking') offences in prison, which can add extra days to your sentence
- Experienced advocacy to make sure your voice is heard

Towards the End of Your Sentence

- **Parole:** Expert support for parole reviews and oral hearings—including complex lifer/fixed term cases
- **Release on licence:** Ensuring fair conditions and advice on your rights
- **HDC (Home Detention Curfew):** Early release support where eligible

After Release

- **Licence Recall:** Immediate support if you are recalled to prison—preparing representations and acting at oral hearings

Legal Support & Advice for Prisoners

Are you in need of legal assistance while in prison?

Get expert help from **Solicitor Matthew Bellusci**, specialising in supporting prisoners and their families across England.

Matthew Assists With:

- Appeals against conviction
- Appeals against sentence
- Independent adjudications
- Parole review for IPP and lifers
- Parole reviews for recall
- Prison transfers
- Proceeds of Crime Act/confiscation orders
- Fraud, money laundering, drugs, conspiracy offences, serious assaults, murder or terrorism
- Parole Review – Determinate sentence / Extended sentence

Contact:

Solicitor Matthew Bellusci
**Carringtons Solicitors,
1 Arkwright Street,
Nottingham NG2 2JR**
Office: 0115 986 0983
Mobile 07834 630847

Matthew is here to help – expert, committed legal support, wherever you are in England.

What Clients Say About Matthew:

- “Fantastic outcome”
- “Friendly, warm and professional”
- “He got the case dismissed”

Why Choose Matthew Bellusci for Prison Law Help?

When your future is on the line, you need a solicitor who knows the prison law system inside out and will fight for you at every stage. Matthew represents indeterminate sentence prisoners before the Parole Board and supports offenders facing licence recall. He also defends clients accused of breaching prison discipline and has acted in numerous high-profile Judicial Review cases, including those involving breaches of Human Rights.

With an impressive track record — from securing early releases and winning damages for parole delays, to holding the Ministry of Justice to account when offenders are denied a meaningful review of their detention — Matthew delivers results. He is also experienced in Criminal Appeals, including serious matters such as murder convictions. Covering all aspects of General Crime, Matthew is a determined and skilled advocate who will stand firmly in your corner, no matter how serious the allegations.

