



Chair, Independent Monitoring Board  
HMP Dartmoor  
Princetown  
Yelverton,  
Devon  
PL20 6RR

1 February 2023

Dear Chair,

**HMP DARTMOOR: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT  
FOR 1 OCTOBER 2021 – 30 SEPTEMBER 2022**

Thank you for your Board's report for the year ending 30 September 2022. I am very much aware of the amount of effort that goes into producing annual reports and thank you for providing a comprehensive picture of HMP Dartmoor over the reporting period, especially as you had several vacancies.

I was saddened to hear there were four deaths in custody during the reporting year. As you are aware the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) carry out independent investigations into deaths in custody and I would like to assure the Board my officials take recommendations from the PPO very seriously. I address below the specific points you have raised for my attention.

I understand the Board's concerns about the levels of investment being made at HMP Dartmoor compared with other prisons in the estate. Whilst requests for funding from prisons will be considered, it should be noted that demands for maintenance across the HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) estate are much greater than the available funding, even with the significant increases achieved in the last two Spending Reviews. Bids are subject to a careful prioritisation process that is used to make the best use of the available funding, which focuses on risk to life and risk to capacity, decency and sustainability. A project to refurbish all eight shower areas at the prison began in August 2022 and is due for completion by the end of 2023. It is acknowledged that the prison does suffer from water ingress and previous remedial works have been unsuccessful. The prison has taken the decision that the most affected cells (currently five cells) are not occupied during the winter months. It is recognised that the prison requires significant investment to line the cells with specialist dimple lining and render together with water drainage. Now that a new lease has been signed to occupy the site, Ministry of Justice (MoJ) Property are exploring funding streams to invest in the affected cells.

A reduction in bandwidth signal has led to TV system failures and a full digital upgrade is required with an expected cost of £10,000 per wing which includes exploring ways of improving the infrastructure of the prison's TV system and the TV signal across the prison. The installation of in-cell telephony could not proceed last year due insufficient funding for all the identified prison sites. New funding has now been secured which will initially focus on the Long-term and High Security Estate before further prison sites are considered. In the meantime, HMP Dartmoor is reviewing its core day to improve access to PIN telephones to those prisoners who are in off-wing activities. Laundry issues with kit being cleaned by HMP Channings Wood have now been resolved and the service is now satisfactory. Options are being considered to reintroduce HMP Dartmoor's own laundry should capital investment be available. It is acknowledged that delays can be experienced when parts are required to repair kitchen equipment or if

funding is required to replace items. A recent exercise took place to identify catering equipment over the value of £10,000 which requires replacement and is now procured by MoJ Property. The facilities contractor, Government Facility Services Ltd (GFSL), has stopped procuring Serviceline to maintain equipment which is under an Asset Replacement Plan (ARP) and GFSL have recruited a new maintenance company to maintain out of warranty items which are not under an ARP. Serviceline will continue to respond to equipment within warranty.

The need to improve Body Worn Video Cameras used by staff was recognised and the prison received new cameras and equipment in November 2022 as part of a national programme to completely overhaul the provision. There is now sufficient capacity to enable every operational Band 3-5 to wear one and new assurance processes are in place to ensure incidents are appropriately captured.

Staffing and workforce planning has been devolved to governors who now have greater responsibility for determining the number of prison officers required to deliver services within their allocated budget. HMP Dartmoor is above its target staffing figure for Band 3 prison officers and has been for some time. There is a healthy recruitment pipeline of candidates for Prison Officers and Operational Support Grades (OSGs). Staff retention is good compared to the wider prison estate and exit interviews are held with those leaving to understand the reasons why. Where vacancies occur, these are advertised and filled at the earliest opportunity, however, delays can be experienced whilst successful candidates go through the vetting process. Overall resourcing levels are monitored through a number of processes which provide the appropriate level of information for staffing decisions to be made and MoJ Resourcing continues to work closely with HMPPS to take appropriate action when forecasts highlight future staffing requirements.

Since April 2022, we have invested in several new initiatives to improve the experience of our new joiners and increase retention of our employees. These include a new peer-to-peer learning scheme, the introduction of mentors for new employees, a supervision pilot in two prisons, and new leadership training in prisons facing retention challenges. In addition, the 2022/23 pay award has delivered an increase in base pay of at least 4% for all staff between Bands 2 to 11, alongside further targeted pay rises for our lowest paid staff of up to £3,000. HMPPS and MoJ Resourcing are also exploring further flexible working offers which aims to recruit a more diverse workforce and make the role more attractive.

I understand the Board's continued concerns for prisoners who are serving indeterminate sentences for public protection (IPP). The latest published figures of the number of IPP prisoners who have never been released stood at 1,394 at the end of December 2022, a reduction from 1,602 as at the end of December 2021. In December 2022 there were 34 IPP prisoners at HMP Dartmoor, fourteen of which had never been released. Whilst the main priority must always be to protect the public, rehabilitating offenders is critical to reducing recidivism and therefore protecting the public and preventing further victims. I would like to reassure you that HMPPS remains committed to doing all it can to support their progression towards a safe release. The Justice Select Committee (JSC) published their report into the IPP sentence on 28 September 2022 after a year-long inquiry and have made a number of recommendations that the Government is considering in full. The Deputy Prime Minister has informed the JSC that a formal response to the report will be provided in early 2023. Whilst the current IPP Action Plan already includes a broad range of work streams aimed at progression towards a safe and sustainable release, in light of the JSC report, this provides HMPPS with the opportunity to review the action plan further.

It was encouraging to receive your comments about the hard work and flexibility of staff and contractors within a challenging environment. I was further encouraged to note the Governor's drive to increase the number and quality of key worker sessions, the prisoner decorating working party initiative, the work of the activity hub in providing meaningful activity and attainable goals for prisoners, and the continued use of iPads to enable live streaming of funerals where possible.

I note you have raised some local issues of concern in your report which the Governor will continue to keep you aware of as work continues. HMPPS comments in response to other issues raised in your report are set out in the attached annex.

The Justice Secretary and I appreciate the valuable role played by members of Independent Monitoring Boards throughout the estate and we are very grateful for your continued hard work on behalf of HMP Dartmoor.

Tom  
Damian Hinds

**Damian Hinds**  
**Minister for Prisons and Probation**

## **HMP DARTMOOR: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 OCTOBER 2021 – 30 SEPTEMBER 2022**

### **HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report**

#### **Purposeful Activity**

HMP Dartmoor has reviewed its available activity spaces and is rolling out a programme of part-time employment to give every prisoner the opportunity to be in a form of paid activity. Several new initiatives are being introduced to provide further opportunities including the Twinning Project, an industrial cleaning course and a chocolatier course. Discussions are also taking place to introduce a scaffolding course.

New Futures Network, the specialist employment team in HMPPS, has a network of regional employment brokers who broker partnerships between prisons and employers in England and Wales. These partnerships help businesses fill skills gaps and prison leavers find employment. HMP Dartmoor already works with its employment broker to identify opportunities to enhance the skills of serving prisoners and provide job opportunities for prisoners on release. The prison is also able to access funding for purchasing ID documentation for prisoners to support them to evidence their right to work in the UK.

#### **Staff Reprofiting**

HMP Dartmoor is awaiting the outcome of a recently commissioned review of the resourcing within the Category C Training estate before carrying out a local reprofiling exercise. It is recognised that resourcing pressures can vary depending on the number of 'bed-watches' that are required and this can impact on the regime that the prison can deliver. Volunteers among staff are always sought before taking staff from rostered shifts and mutual aid is requested and provided to ensure that the prison has never been in a situation whereby a bed-watch or life critical prison escort could not be staffed.

#### **Resettlement Provision**

The nationally directed model of operational delivery reconfigured HMP Dartmoor as a 100% Category C Training prison and there are no current plans to change that designation. However, due to national population pressures the prison does receive prisoners in their resettlement window and ensured the individual needs of around 200 prisoners released in the last year were met. Whilst this does place a strain on resources the prison continues to work closely with HMPPS Population Management Unit to transfer prisoners where capacity allows. In order to support those being released, HMP Dartmoor has established an employment hub and has held two recruitment fairs. The prison also holds regular discharge boards and collaborates with the Probation Service to achieve best outcomes for resettlement. Under the new resettlement approach, all prisons, including Category C prisons like HMP Dartmoor, will have a resettlement provision managed by or linked to a Probation Delivery Unit with key interventions delivered by Commissioned Rehabilitative Service (CRS) providers. For HMP Dartmoor, an in-reach pre-release service is provided to support the work of community-based probation practitioners (CPP), with a specific focus on providing a point of contact for the CPP and CRS.

#### **Leadership**

It is acknowledged that there were challenges providing a stable Senior Leadership Team (SLT) at HMP Dartmoor during the reporting year due to long-term sickness, retirement and promotion. Support from within the Devon and North Dorset Prison Group ensured that posts were not left vacant and were advertised at the earliest opportunity, including the use of temporary promotion of appropriately qualified staff. The SLT is now fully staffed to provide continuity.



Prisoner forums have also recommenced across many of the protected characteristics with SLT Strand Leads identified who will be supported by the Prison Group Equalities Lead. The services of a Community Interest Company have also been secured to assist with diversity and inclusion engagement and to carry out independent scrutiny of discrimination incident reporting forms.

### **Prisoner Part-Time Employment**

HMP Dartmoor implemented part-time working alongside full-time activities following a national HMPPS directive in returning to full regimes following the Covid-19 pandemic whilst giving consideration to the Future Regimes Design. HMPPS is developing a National Regime Model that will guide prisons through their local regime delivery planning. This will include tools to help to determine the most effective ways of providing activities and engaging the population. Regimes will be expected to deliver a range of full and part time activities, based on individual's needs with any part time working providing a balance between quality and quantity as it is important that any decisions meet the test of sufficiency, evidencing the efficient use of all available activity places.

### **Older Prisoners**

HMPPS is currently producing an ageing population strategy with the aim of ensuring that older prisoners are held in the most appropriate physical environments, can access purposeful and rehabilitative activities as well as healthcare that is equivalent to what is received in the community, and are prepared for release and resettled effectively. This strategy will be published during 2023.

HMP Dartmoor does not have 24-hour healthcare and is reliant on the 111 service for out of hours service, as is the case for all Category C prisons. It is acknowledged that some areas of the prison are not accessible by those with severe mobility restrictions and therefore they are catered for by an in-cell provision. To support prisoners with accessibility needs, funding for a bespoke cell has been agreed and a business case has been submitted for the widening of six cell doorways on F wing to aid wheelchair access.

### **Inpatient and Social Care**

Providing care at HMP Dartmoor that requires specialist equipment is challenging. NHS England and Devon Council co-commission social care service within Devon prisons and the main pathway for patients requiring overnight care packages was provided at HMP Exeter, on a bespoke health and social care wing. However, this has been offline since early 2022 owing to fire safety improvement works and is due to re-open in early 2023. The need to address the challenge faced with an increasingly older population is acknowledged and a task group has been set up to develop a long-term sustainable solution to provide equitable care for patients in a safe, secure clinical environment to meet their needs.

Where the environment allows, 24-hour care packages and other bespoke care pathways are commissioned on a needs basis but as noted it is acknowledged that facilities are not currently sufficient within the region. St Luke's Hospice provides in-reach end of life and palliative care, and support and training to staff.

### **Accessibility**

Following confirmation of the extension of the site lease, MoJ Property Directorate visited HMP Dartmoor to complete a review of the environment and needs. Funding has now been secured for an Equality Act compliant cell and, as mentioned above, a business case for widening the doorways on F wing has been submitted. Although there is an expectation on all prisons to make reasonable adjustments to support those with disabilities, there is no formal definition for the term 'reasonable', rather this is decided on a case-by-case basis determined by an individual's need and the circumstance around this (to include physical structures).