

Chair, Independent Monitoring Board  
HMP/YOI Feltham  
Bedfont Road  
Feltham  
Middlesex  
TW13 4ND

MoJ ref: SUB124412

29 May 2025

Dear Chair,

**HMP/YOI FELTHAM: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT  
FOR 1 SEPTEMBER 2023 – 31 AUGUST 2024**

Thank you for providing your Board's annual report on HMP/YOI Feltham. I am grateful to you and your colleagues for your hard work that has been put into capturing your helpful observations, especially as you operated with a reduced complement throughout the reporting period. I noted that you ended the year with fewer members than at the start and I hope the recruitment position improves in the current period.

Youth knife crime and gang culture is a blight on our society and is severely impacting the future of our young people. The Government committed in its manifesto to halving knife crime over ten years and that 'every young person caught in possession of a knife is to be referred to a Youth Offending Team to draw up a mandatory plan to prevent reoffending'. We are working up delivery proposals through stakeholder engagement.

Another commitment in the Government's manifesto was to introduce a new offence of child criminal exploitation to go after the gangs who are luring children into violence and crime. This new offence in the Crime and Policing Bill, introduced to parliament on 25 February 2025, will seek to increase convictions against exploiters and deter gangs from enlisting children by criminalising adults who use a child to commit criminal activity.

We also recognise the importance of targeted early intervention. The Ministry of Justice's youth justice programme, Turnaround, is an early intervention programme that aims to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour while improving outcomes for children on the cusp of entering the youth justice system. The programme, costing approximately £71 million, provides multi-year grant funding to Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) across England and Wales and is scheduled to run until March 2026, enabling these specialist teams to intervene earlier. This additional funding enables YOTs to consistently support a cohort of children not currently on their statutory caseload, and work with up to 20,500 more children than otherwise would have been the case. Another programme, Young Futures, aims to identify young people who could be drawn into crime earlier and intervene via the Prevention Partnerships and by creating a network of hubs with youth workers, mental health support workers, and careers advisers to support young people's mental health and divert them from being drawn into crime.

I have noted a similar issue was raised for the office of The Mayor of London and their response is contained in the annex. Responses to issues addressed to the Youth Custody Service (YCS)/HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) are set out in the attached annex. Local issues of concern raised in your

report will be addressed locally by the respective Governors who will continue to keep you aware of progress as work continues.

Whilst there are no doubts there are issues to tackle at HMP/YOI Feltham, I was encouraged to receive your comments about the officers at Feltham who treat the prisoners and young people with respect and dignity despite working in difficult circumstances. I was further encouraged to read that the kitchen has a thriving and successful skills programme with graduates progressing to work in the staff café. I also noted that whilst there is some excellent provision in vocational subjects in Feltham A, there were insufficient places available and that you found educational and vocational provision in Feltham B to be unfit for purpose. I am therefore particularly pleased to see the HMPPS plans to expand provision.

The Lord Chancellor and I appreciate the invaluable role played by members of Independent Monitoring Boards throughout the estate and we are extremely grateful for your continued hard work and dedication on behalf of HMP/YOI Feltham.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James', written in a cursive style.

**Lord Timpson**  
**Minister for Prisons, Probation, and Reducing Reoffending**

## HMP/YOI FELTHAM: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 SEPTEMBER 2023 – 31 AUGUST 2024

### **Mayor's Office comments on matters raised in the report**

#### **Knife Crime and Gang Conflict in London**

Tackling violent crime remains a top priority for the Mayor. Since the Mayor's Knife Crime Strategy, a multitude of work has been underway to tackle violent crime. This includes the introduction of the London Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) in 2019, which is pioneering a prevention and early intervention approach to tackling violence, including investment in more than 400,000 positive opportunities for children and young adults. To ensure specialist support for children and young adults impacted by violence, the Mayor has committed £15.6 million for the London Children and Young People Violence & Exploitation Support Service.

The Mayor's Office Policing and Crime (MOPAC) has also worked with the London Prisons Group to formulate a London Violence Reduction Strategy. This includes a needs assessment of the key issues linked to prison violence and a workplan to address key areas. As part of this programme, several violence reduction interventions have been commissioned across three London pilot prisons, which includes Feltham B. The overall investment in commissioned services across the three prisons is over £2.1m. Specifically at Feltham this includes peer mentoring, enhanced purposeful activity, specialist support for prisoners impacted by exploitation, gangs and debt and now, in phase 2, a specialist therapeutic group work programme for those posing the highest risk of violence. Since 2019, there has been a 24 per cent reduction in homicides, and a 27 per cent fall in knife injury of a person under-25. The Mayor and MOPAC maintain a commitment to a 'Child First' approach, to ensure the best outcomes for children involved in violence.

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

#### **Enhanced Gate Security**

HMP/YOI Feltham are implementing enhanced gate security and are reviewing the processes used at other sites that are operating this system. HMP/YOI Feltham are also working towards building a new area for staff searches. The project is being led locally, including the reallocation of local resources and funds where possible. All elements of the project are due for completion by July 2025.

#### **Weapons in Custody**

The YCS has prioritised 'What makes a child or young person feel safe in custody' for upcoming research to better understand why children create, carry and use weapons, and whether there are factors such as neurodiversity which impact on this. Feltham A is being offered support through group safety leads, and the site is in the process of re-developing the local weapons strategy based on the most recent local data, information and analysis. This will include a consistent response to those children and young people who are making, holding, or using weapons, considering their risk, offence parallel behaviours and learning opportunities. The YCS central team is providing ongoing support to both Feltham A and Feltham B in improving analytical capabilities and coordinating tactical support to reduce availability of weapons and other illicit items within the sites.

#### **Laptop Design**

The YCS policy states that if a child/young person is suspected of having damaged, lost, tampered with a launchpad, or having acquired another child's launchpads, they will be placed on report (as per the adjudications policy). Launchpad bans are designed to limit the likelihood of further immediate losses and

to provide children and young people with the opportunity to pay off a minimum amount of the compensation requirement. If the adjudication that follows is dismissed or not proceeded with, a replacement can only be issued following a suitability review. If they are found suitable, the child should be provided with launchpad access within 28 days of the confiscation. For children, a proven adjudication will result in the initial 28-day ban. During this period, support teams will meet with the child and agree a management plan to guide the approach to the child's launchpad access. In all cases, a suitability review must be conducted by the digital team, wing manager, and (where relevant) a case manager before a replacement launchpad is given. If a child is deemed not suitable at a review, they will be reassessed after 28 days (and no longer than 35 days).

HMP/YOI Feltham has introduced seals on laptops to prevent prisoners/children from tampering with the launchpads. An alternative IT solution has been sought through the project team although there is no timeline for this at present as launchpads are not the only items used by children and young people to make weapons whilst they are in custody.

### **Enhanced Support Unit**

The Enhanced Support Unit (ESU) is now operational and is providing support to the most complex children. The Governor introduced a new Head of Integrated Care to support children on the unit.

### **Purposeful Activity (Feltham B)**

A review of current workshop spaces is underway to identify opportunities for expansion. A new carpentry workshop is being introduced, providing prisoners with skills in a trade with strong employment prospects. The recycling workshop is moving to a new compound, allowing the creation of an in-house recycling centre and increasing the number of available spaces. This will provide more prisoners with opportunities to develop skills in sustainability and environmental management. A new initiative will see prisoners servicing and repairing gardening equipment from other prisons, expanding skill-sets in mechanical repair and maintenance while contributing to the wider prison estate. Additional vocational training programmes are being introduced in high-demand industries, ensuring that prisoners gain skills aligned with the job market.

Higher-level qualifications are being introduced across the workshops to ensure prisoners gain advanced skills that improve their employability. All staff are now attending regular training to upskill, ensuring they are equipped to deliver high-quality instruction and delivery. A structured process is in place to gather all necessary information about each learner early in their custody journey allowing for a personalised learning plan. This ensures they get the most out of their time and are working at the correct level to maximise their potential. Partnerships with external employers and training providers are being strengthened to offer more accredited courses and apprenticeships.

Employer engagement events and job fairs are being organised within the facility to connect prisoners with potential job opportunities. Work placements and release-on-temporary-licence (ROTL) opportunities are being explored to provide applied practical work experience. All workshops are being linked with external employers who can provide up-to-date industry knowledge, ensuring training is relevant to current job market needs. These employers also offer potential job opportunities, as well as through-the-gate support to help prisoners transition into employment upon release. A structured pre-release support system is being developed to ensure prisoners have Curriculum Vitae's, interview preparation, and job application support. Feltham B are also working closely with charity/not-for-profit organisations to ensure all individuals have a mentor to support them following release from custody should they wish.

### **Site Improvements**

#### *Current works*

- The emergency lighting system is being changed.

- Dental suites on A and B sides will undergo a refurbishment.
- Alpine unit is now active providing a enhanced support unit to children. .
- Knotweed that has prevented use of certain areas of the site is being removed.
- Landscaping and gardening have been improved, and a project to bring back life to all the ponds on the site is being explored
- The control room and gate house are under refurbishment
- Ibis and Wren wings have had a new roof laid, and the new roof and peak erected on the visitors centre is expected to boost the life expectancy of the building
- Nightingale refurbishment work includes: roof replacement, fire safety improvements, window replacement, re-decorating all rooms, servery refurbishment and new showers

#### *Future works*

- A multi-sports court is to be constructed in the new year
- Fire safety improvements across the site (both Feltham A and B)
- Sustainability and feasibility studies being undertaken to upgrade/replace all boilers and roofs across the site
- Explore feasibility of improving lighting across the site (surveys currently underway)
- Consideration of relocating radiators to improve efficiency
- Consideration of installing anti-barricade doors in education units

#### **Feltham A Management Information System**

The YCS will be purchasing a new cloud-based management information system in due course that was designed for schools. The installation of this system will improve education data oversight and analysis across youth estate, providing improved data collection regarding children's need, progress, and outcomes.

#### **In-Cell Laptops and Remote Learning**

The Governor of Feltham B is pursuing in-cell laptop provision with the relevant teams at headquarters. The YCS is fully engaged with the Launchpad project to help direct and inform content decisions. Currently there is a suite of educational videos available on Feltham's Launchpad hub and three guidance documents to facilitate applications for Open University courses.

It is recognised that Launchpad currently has limited functionality and is not able to be interactive or perform basic tasks, such as word processing. Whilst this is impacting learning options, the YCS are striving for better educational provision for all learners, including high-level achievers.