

Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP Wayland
Griston
Thetford
IP25 6RL

MoJ ref: SUB124780

11 June 2025

Dear Chair,

**HMP WAYLAND: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 1 JUNE 2023 – 31 MAY 2024**

Thank you for your Board's annual report on HMP Wayland, which I have read with care and attention. I am grateful to you and your colleagues for your hard work, especially as you have continued to operate with several vacancies during the reporting period.

I was deeply saddened to read of the death of a prisoner during the reporting year, and I offer my condolences to all their family, friends and colleagues. I would like to reassure the Board that any recommendations made by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman are taken very seriously and will be actioned accordingly.

I was concerned to read about the Board's frustrations with previous responses to Annual Reports not being fully addressed. I am keen to reset our relationship with Independent Monitoring Boards (IMBs) so that we better address the important issues identified through your monitoring activity and hope this response demonstrates that. However, it is becoming increasingly clear to me that matters raised by IMBs often reflect system-wide issues across the prison estate, criminal justice system or wider Government services. These issues, and others, may not be straightforward to solve and require progressive and collaborative action over a period of time to make the necessary changes. I was though encouraged by the approach being taken by the Governor of HMP Wayland in giving all recommendations of scrutiny bodies equal weighting and ensuring that they are responded to in an open and transparent manner.

I acknowledge your concerns relating to double occupation of single cells and the ask to review the policy. The policy from which useable operational capacity of the estate is derived, was reviewed in 2022 and as such is not a priority given wider system pressures. I am content that there are sufficient safeguards in place given the HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) cell certification framework requires that cells are only shared where a Prison Group Director has assessed them to be of adequate size and condition and other considerations including adequate lighting, heating, ventilation, fittings, and access to water and sanitation are taken into account. This Government is though committed to addressing the crowded conditions in our prisons. For this reason, on 11 December, the Lord Chancellor announced our 10-year Prison Capacity Strategy, which sets out plans to deliver 14,000 additional prison places. Alongside this, we have commissioned an Independent Sentencing Review, chaired by the former Lord Chancellor, David Gauke. This is due to present its recommendations shortly.

In relation to the concerns that you have raised around training, I recognise the need to develop and support Prison Officers to carry out their roles. Prior to becoming a Minister, I oversaw an independent review of Prison Officer Foundation Training, and the recommendations are being used to improve the training offer. Findings from the review are being brought together with HMPPS's Enable Programme, which is considering both the 'what' and 'how' prison officers learn from the start of their career and develop throughout it. The programme is a long-term strategy aimed at transforming how HMPPS trains, develops, leads, and supports prison staff. Within this, there is a key focus on relational practice allowing staff to understand themselves, others and the interaction between the two enabling them to build the relationships that will aid rehabilitation. Locally, HMP Wayland has developed a Workforce Development Programme which encompasses effective training and outlines strategies to support operational grades to instil pride in their work and foster a commitment to their own continuous development. In addition to this, HMP Wayland has incorporated additional hours into their regime which will be set aside for staff capability and wellbeing.

I have long been an advocate of rehabilitation to help people turn their lives around so sympathise with your concerns in respect of ensuring a focus on rehabilitation in our training prisons. Work is currently ongoing with a small number of Category C prisons to understand how the working day can be extended to increase the work on offer in those prisons. The learning from this exercise, alongside feedback from targeted engagement events with businesses, will be shared across the Category C estate and used to inform practice to provide improved work opportunities both in prison and upon release. We have also invested in mobilising the Employment Advisory Boards, and now also the Employment Councils, working with the Department for Work and Pensions to look at how we can target activity to increase employment opportunities for prisoners on release. We will continue to drive this very important priority as part of plans moving forward.

Locally at HMP Wayland, a comprehensive needs analysis has been conducted in partnership with key stakeholders which will inform a review of purposeful activity places and the commissioning of educational courses to meet the needs of the population.

Whilst I recognise that your report outlines that there is work to do to improve experiences and outcomes at HMP Wayland, I was heartened to read about the improved responses in your 2024 survey on healthcare provision and that improved staffing and a more predictable regime has significantly improved time out of cell and created a healthier atmosphere.

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 Lord Chancellor and I appreciate the valuable role played by members of Independent Monitoring Boards throughout the estate and we are grateful for your continued hard work on behalf of HMP Wayland.

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

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HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Approach to IMB Concerns and Recommendations

As the Minister has outlined in his response, there is impetus to better address the important issues identified through IMB monitoring activity and give equal weight with those concerns raised by HMIP. We have reiterated with Executive Directors and establishments the importance of establishing constructive relationships at a local level with Board members and we welcome the good practice example of this at HMP Wayland. Concerns raised by IMBs feed into performance monitoring and the development of key policies. IMB intelligence is shared with ministers, policy teams and operations on a weekly basis, and is frequently used in tackling key thematic issues.

Violence Reduction

The use of de-escalation tactics and non-physical interventions are recognised as a pivotal part of achieving violence reduction and supporting the overall management of violence. During the course of their training, Prison Officers receive Use of Force training consisting of 8-hour physical training and 4 hours of digital learning which staff must complete as annual refresher training. Digital learning includes mandatory areas such as law and policy, managing and de-escalating conflict and medical considerations, all of which are weaved into physical training. Staff are taught the context in which force is used lawfully and ensuring it is used as a last resort. In addition, Officers are trained in Five Minute Intervention during their initial training, which aims to equip them with communication skills to identify prevent and manage violent situations. Other non-physical means such as mediation are used to prevent violence, and we continue to review our practices in order to provide a robust stance against violence in our prisons.

'Old Build' Staffing

The Governor has been proactive in reviewing staffing levels through a reprofile exercise which looks to increase staffing levels to address the concerns raised relating to resourcing of the 'Old Build' units.

Keyworker Approach and Resources

Delivery and quality of key work remains a priority for HMPPS. There will be a renewed emphasis on driving up delivery and quality of key work as part of Regime Planning for 2025/26. All male closed prisons and women's prisons have been resourced to deliver one key work session per week to eligible prisoners.

The positive impact of including a prisoner's family or significant others at key points within their sentence cannot be under-estimated. Prisons, in collaboration with key personnel and the prisoner will assess inclusion on a case-by-case basis. Despite a challenging operational picture, HMP Wayland continues to deliver keywork sessions with the number steadily increasing. In addition, the quality of keywork entries has also improved, although it is noted that further work is needed to drive consistency.

Bunk Beds

The bunk beds supplied by Prison Industries HQ have been specifically designed to meet stringent criteria which aim to balance comfort, health and safety, fire safety, security, space utilisation and aesthetics. They are also designed with the safety of our more vulnerable prisoners in mind and have as few ligature points as possible. The designs are tested in accordance with the MOJ Testing Process for Fixed

Furniture (STD/X/PT/063) for in-cell use and are approved by the MoJ Technical Standards Department within MoJ Property Group.

CSU Staffing and Training

Staff who work in Care and Separation Units (CSUs) are carefully selected for their ability to create and maintain a positive atmosphere within the unit, ensuring that all prisoners are treated lawfully, decently, fairly and with dignity. They must also demonstrate a range of inter-personal skills, such as being a good listener, assertively maintaining standards, and the ability to mediate and challenge where appropriate.

Whilst there is no specific training for CSU Staff, they must complete the mandatory training on Violence Reduction which includes the Challenge, Support, and Intervention Plan (the national case management model for managing individuals who are violent or pose a raised risk of harming others through violent behaviours), Suicide and Self-harm and Assessment, Care in Custody, and Teamwork training. All officers working in the CSUs must be competent and in date with Control and Restraint training, including de-escalation. In addition, they must also have completed Five-Minute Intervention training alongside training on the use of Body Worn Video Cameras, which they are required to wear whilst on duty. Other recommended courses are Adjudication Liaison (mentoring), Basic First Aid and Young Adult awareness training. All courses mentioned are delivered face-to-face.

Psychology Services offer some support within CSUs. This is often in relation to specific cases or cohorts of individuals rather than specifically to segregation. This is not a formally funded or baselined service as a standard Psychology activity nationally across the estate hence any response to segregation will be dependent on individual site and need. This may or may not include Psychology support depending on the requirements of the case.

Prison Governors do have the autonomy to review staffing levels within the CSU using their current resourcing envelope and Regime Management Plan. Locally, HMP Wayland have reviewed their staffing levels and increased by one Officer. In addition, staffing levels are increased based on the number of prisoners and compliance levels.

Training of Inexperienced Officers

Please refer to the Ministerial response on the approach being taken to equip officers with the relevant skills and training.

Property

The Board's concerns regarding the handling of prisoners' property are recognised. This is an area to which HMPPS is currently giving further attention. Careful consideration will be given to the findings in the IMB national thematic report on how property loss impacts on prisoners, as well as those received from Independent Prisoner Complaint Investigations following a thematic review of the property complaints they have received in the last five years.

As the Board identifies, a common area for problems is when excess prisoner property is forwarded on when a prisoner transfers. It is therefore key that prisoners comply with volumetric control limits, since anything within those limits will transfer with them in line with the current PECS contract. HMPPS is focusing on what more can be done to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Framework.

Local efforts at HMP Wayland to address concerns continue and additional resource has been identified to ensure that prisoners receive their property more swiftly. The necessity to police volumetric control limits is acknowledged and the prison will work collaboratively with staff and prisoners to ensure issues are managed and resolved.

Silo Working

The fundamental importance of multi-disciplinary input across grade, departments and specialisms is recognised and we strive to ensure that this shines through all our business-as-usual activities rather than an automated response to critical business. HMP Wayland have reviewed their staffing model, and the staffing strategy is aligned with the needs of a training prison offering a timely recalibration of resources before the new accommodation coming on board.

Dental Contracts

NHSE continues to work closely with the commissioned dental provider to ensure that there are sufficient dental sessions to meet the needs of the prison population. In year, clinical need can be reviewed and the number of sessions on offer adjusted to meet the demand. Future commissioning intentions for 2025 /2026 will be supported by an updated needs assessment. This will ensure the future commissioned dental service meets the increasing demands of the population.

Education Contract

The Board's recognition of HMP Wayland's use of the education provision is welcomed. Continual opportunities to improve provision are sought, evidenced by the reading rooms on all units and within workshops and the recruitment of a reading specialists to drive their reading strategy.

Alongside commissioning education suppliers to screen for reading, there is flexibility to meet local prisoner need within HMPPS's Prison Education Framework contracts via the Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS), HMP Wayland has over the past year commissioned reading support through a specialist lot level DPS contract.