



Ministry
of Justice

Lord Timpson
Minister of State for Justice

Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP Fosse Way
1 Tigers Road
Glen Parva
Wigston
LE18 4WS

MoJ ref: SUB130544

9 January 2026

Dear Chair,

**HMP FOSSE WAY: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 1 JUNE 2024 – 31 MAY 2025**

Thank you for sharing the Board's annual report on HMP Fosse Way. I am grateful for the time and commitment your members have given to monitoring the prison and for the detailed observations you have shared. This is especially commendable given that the year began and ended with the Board operating below full complement.

I was deeply saddened to learn that ten prisoners died during this reporting year. Each death in custody is a tragedy and I extend my heartfelt condolences to the families and friends affected. I am pleased that recommendations arising from two of the cases have been implemented promptly and acknowledge that outcomes relating to the other seven inquests are yet to be reported.

I note the Board's disappointment that I have not yet visited HMP Fosse Way. I fully recognise the importance of seeing first hand both the challenges and the successes at one of the newest and largest prisons in the estate. I am committed to arranging a visit at the earliest opportunity and welcome the chance to meet with you and hear directly from staff and prisoners about the work being done, including GRAVITY, a prisoner-led initiative that provides advice, guidance and peer support.

The Board has raised concerns about value for money and design shortcomings. Lessons learned from operational challenges at HMP Fosse Way and HMP Five Wells have informed improvements to future builds. For example, at HMP Fosse Way we introduced 84 additional interview rooms, seven large group rooms and air-conditioning in staff training spaces. At HMP Millsike, the first all-electric prison, the central services building has been redesigned to include an enclosed library and IT space to improve usability. We remain committed to ongoing design reviews and evaluations to ensure that future prisons meet operational needs and deliver value for money.

I also note your comments on facilities. Serco has invested in industrial washing machines and dryers on landings to mitigate the absence of a central laundry and is working with HMPPS to scope retrofitting a central laundry in the industries building. Two heavy workshops have been repurposed into gym spaces accommodating up to 80 prisoners, and we recommend that future prison designs include dedicated gym facilities. These changes demonstrate our commitment to improving the regime and addressing concerns raised by the Board.

The Board is right to highlight the challenge of prisoners with severe mental health needs remaining in custody instead of secure hospitals. This is a national issue and action is being taken. The Mental Health Act 2025 introduces a statutory 28-day transfer limit to reduce delays. NHS England and its Provider Collaboratives have developed strategic plans to accelerate transfers, including remodelling bed capacity and improving care pathways. Locally, the prison works closely with its healthcare provider to manage individuals safely while awaiting transfer, often in the Care and Separation Unit where enhanced support can be provided. While this is not an ideal solution, reducing transfer times remains a priority.

On healthcare, I regret the cancellations of hospital appointments and understand the impact this has on prisoners' wellbeing. Serco has introduced new processes to meet escort requirements, including proactive monitoring by senior managers. These measures have cleared the backlog of x-ray appointments and improved scheduling. The transition to Practice Plus Group in July 2025 is expected to stabilise healthcare provision and introduce overnight nursing cover, reducing reliance on hospital transfers for urgent care. We will continue to monitor performance closely to ensure timely access to treatment.

I am encouraged by the improvements highlighted in your report. The prison has made significant strides in expanding purposeful activity with workshops and vocational training now offering a wide range of opportunities, from traditional trades such as bricklaying and carpentry to innovative programmes like barista training and music production. These initiatives are equipping prisoners with skills that will support their rehabilitation and reintegration into society. Education provision has also strengthened, despite recruitment challenge and the Care and Separation Unit continues to operate effectively with strong staff engagement. While self-harm incidents peaked mid-year, numbers have since reduced, reflecting the efforts of staff and the introduction of enhanced support measures.

I note you have raised some local issues of concern in your report which the Director will continue to keep you aware of as work continues. HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) comments in response to other issues raised in your report are set out in the attached annex.

The Deputy Prime Minister 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 Fosse Way.

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

Prisoner Property

HMPPS published a revised Prisoner Property Policy Framework on 17 November 2025, which includes clearer guidance on sending excess property, handling laundry and completing cell clearance certificates. Compliance with volumetric limits remains essential, as property within these limits will move with prisoners when they transfer.

To improve accountability, the introduction of digitally recorded Prisoner Escort Records now provides an accurate record of property handover between stakeholders. This process has significantly reduced disputes and assists investigations when property is reported missing. The Prisoner Escort and Custody Services contract, renewed in 2020, increased vehicle capacity to allow additional property weight and includes monthly reviews of complaints with the supplier. At HMP Fosse Way, property cards are transferred into a digital format upon arrival, reducing reliance on handwritten records. Local processes ensure that complaints about missing property are escalated promptly to the sending establishment for resolution.

Building and Fabric Design Faults

Private prisons operate with an on-site Facilities Management team responsible for maintenance and repairs, supported by MoJ Property Services for major capital works. During the two-year post-completion period, defects were covered by warranty, and ongoing maintenance is managed through contractual performance measures.