



Ministry  
of Justice

**Lord Timpson**  
Minister of State for  
Justice

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

**MoJ Ref:** SUB132458

13 March 2026

Dear Chair,

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

Thank you for providing your Board's annual report on HMP Wayland. I am very grateful for the considerable effort you and your colleagues have put into producing such an extensive report and survey of prisoner views, particularly as you have continued to have a shortage of members throughout the reporting period.

I was very saddened to read two prisoners died in custody during the reporting year and I offer my heartfelt condolences to all their friends and family. Whilst the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman investigations are ongoing I can provide assurance that any recommendations made will be taken very seriously and lessons learned.

I fully understand your concerns about the challenges that illicit items present in our prisons. Effective prison security is essential to provide the safe and stable regimes needed to promote a rehabilitative culture. I hope you understand that we cannot share all our counter measures as making these public would undermine our security. However, prisons have a range of physical security countermeasures and specialist equipment to reduce the conveyance of illicit items. These measures include but are not limited to, x-ray scanners, airport-style Enhanced Gate Security and trace detection equipment. During 2025/26 we have also been making further investments of over £40 million in physical security measures within 34 prisons, including £10 million on anti-drone measures, such as window replacements, external window grilles and specialist netting across 15 priority prisons. In addition, there is close working with law enforcement to tackle the problem of contraband in prisons, and the Director General of the National Crime Agency has recently directed police chiefs to work with HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) to jointly tackle the threat drones pose. Locally, staff across HMP Wayland are working together to reduce demand and restrict supply. Local security meetings enable staff to identify and act on issues with processes being tightened in all areas following recent finds of throw overs and staff intercepting illicit items on bed watches.

Regarding the education budget, I can provide assurance that there have been no cuts to the national prison education budget. The change is the result of reduced buying power for the new Prisoner Education Service contracts which started after your report period in October 2025. Although the budget was increased it is recognised that this has not been able to keep pace with the significant rise in the cost of delivering high-quality education in recent years. This has resulted in some reduction in the volume of Core Education being delivered in the new contracts, but this does not affect other education services such as libraries, careers advice, distance learning or vocational training delivered through industries and workshops. The Spending Review allocations process for the Ministry of Justice also remains ongoing,

which involves careful consideration of the pressures faced by HMPPS and prioritisation of competing requirements. We remain committed to education and its importance in the role of reducing reoffending and are currently developing a strategy to evaluate prison education. This will inform future delivery decisions to ensure we can drive the best educational outcomes for prisoners within the allocated budget. Please be assured we know how critical education is and will be seeking to maximise the use of the available provision in the most efficient way to accommodate learners needs.

I appreciate your frustrations about the progress of Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) prisoners. We are not standing still on this important issue and remain determined to support those serving IPP sentences to progress towards a future release through a refreshed IPP Action Plan. This was published in the IPP Annual Report on 17 July 2025 which sets measurable targets to ensure transparency and accountability of how we intend to make progress. The action plan places an important emphasis on frontline delivery to ensure those serving IPP sentences have an effective sentence plan and are in the prison most appropriate to their needs. This is the most effective way to help IPP prisoners to reduce their risk so that they can progress towards safe release from custody. HMP Wayland is taking steps locally to support IPP prisoners via a Lifer and IPP Unit, with a progressive regime that is part of the Positive Pathways within the prison. The Unit is linking up with the Offender Management Unit to help IPP prisoners to prepare for release. In addition, the Victims and Prisoners Act 2024, which received Royal Assent on 24 May 2024, introduced significant reforms during your reporting period, such as reducing the point where licence termination is considered and enabling the Secretary of State to re-release an IPP prisoner recalled to custody. These changes have resulted in significant numbers of IPP licence terminations - so far, the number of people serving an IPP sentence in the community has fallen by two-thirds. However, we have not stopped there as the Sentencing Act 2026, which received Royal Assent on 22 January 2026, also includes measures on IPP licence termination. An implementation date will be confirmed in due course, but this is part of our ongoing commitment to provide every opportunity to those serving the IPP sentence to demonstrate reduced risk to the point that their licence and therefore their sentence can be terminated.

Despite the prison's ongoing challenges, I was encouraged that the Board reported the prison feeling cleaner, receiving swifter repairs and prison grounds being well tended which have all been recognised in the prison's positive external living conditions audit. It was pleasing to read the atmosphere and cooperation between prisoners and staff has been maintained and that the regime and time out of cell is now more predictable. I was also encouraged by the development of the library into more of a community hub and the increase in peer roles into a variety of areas to allowing prisoners to take responsibility and make a positive contribution.

I note you have raised various 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. I note you raise concerns around cell sharing and hope the capacity pressures that have necessitated this will ease with the significant reforms contained in the Sentencing Act.

The Deputy Prime Minister and I really value the contribution of Independent Monitoring Board members in improving our prisons. We are very grateful for your ongoing dedication on behalf of HMP Wayland.

Yours sincerely,



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

## HMP WAYLAND: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 JUNE 2024 – 31 MAY 2025

### HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

#### **Staffing**

As an update to last year, staffing at HMP Wayland is profiled to the set benchmark. However, following a reprofiling exercise that took place to ensure staff resources follow the identified risks, staff from the 'old build' wings are tasked to workshops following movement to work. When prisoners return from work so do the staff which ensures the staffing level in the 'old build' wings increases beyond the set benchmark.

#### **Cell Sharing**

The Board can be assured that the safety and decency of our prisoners is paramount. While most single cells in the prison estate could physically hold two people, the maximum crowded capacity of a prison is a matter of operational judgement via the cell certification process. This provides a formal assessment to consider the risks to safety, decency and stability to ensure that prisoners are accommodated safely even when held in crowded conditions. Every prisoner sharing a cell at HMP Wayland has gone through a robust cell sharing risk assessment to determine whether it is safe for them to share a cell with someone else, which considers matters such as previous offending and violent incidents. In addition, HMPPS continually monitors prison conditions, and takes places on and offline depending on safety, stability, staffing levels and maintenance needs. Decisions that create unacceptable risks to prison safety will not be taken, but it is right that every measure to deal with capacity pressures is explored, as the public would expect, while continuing to deliver new prison places.

#### **Cell Observation Panels**

As a contingency arrangement for fire safety, it should be possible to break the glass in the observation panel in a cell door to insert a fire hose. However, another technical standard has been developed providing a removable cassette-style observation panel with toughened glazing. This alternative option is focussed primarily on cell doors in Care and Separation Units, as these are subject to higher attack rates. The alteration must be introduced across the whole unit at once, as there cannot be a mismatch of legacy observation panels and cassette versions due to the fire safety protocols. HMPPS will therefore be focusing delivery in areas which are identified for other refurbishment works.

#### **Noise Levels in Care and Separation Unit (CSU)**

The latest update from the Prison and Probation Health, Safety & Fire Evaluation for HMP Wayland in January 2025 identified no specific issues had been raised or noted for noise and therefore no noise assessments has been undertaken. The design of the CSU provides an atrium space that is light and open giving a calming environment. The atrium design is in place to provide fire safety through high ceiling spaces with fans fitted. This in turn though means that the acoustics of the building are different of smaller spaces. Any retrofitting of this could compromise the fire safety of the Unit.

#### **Food Budget**

To enable full and effective use of the HMPPS budget, prisons are delegated their whole budget as soon as possible, including the share of allocated inflation funding. As a result, no funding is held back centrally to provide further increases during the year. Funding allocated to prisons for prisoner food has increased incrementally in recent years, rising from £2.18 per prisoner per day in 2022–2023 to £3.01 in 2024–2025. Funding for 2025–2026 has also increased and it remains the case that the Governor in public prisons have the flexibility to manage their overall non-pay budget according to the specific needs of their population. It is recognised that food costs can be a challenge when providing healthy food, as is the availability of ingredients, but the Catering Manager at HMP Wayland is working hard to comply with the new *Food in Prisons* Policy Framework. As a result, it may not always be possible to provide the food options prisoners wish to see despite a varied menu still being available with a minimum four weekly cycle with five meal options for both lunch and dinner.

## **Staff Training**

Training for prison staff is being transformed under the Enable Programme by taking a psychologically and operationally informed approach with a strong focus on relational practice. This approach will ensure that staff feel safe, supported, valued, and become confident in their skills and ability to make a difference. Work is currently taking place to develop the current foundation training for new entry prison officers into a 12-month modular package that supports ongoing development. This will allow new prison officers the opportunities to apply new knowledge and skills in a live working environment before being required to fulfil all aspects of the role. The Enable Team is working with subject matter experts, such as the Offender Management in Custody & Pre-release Team, to ensure this foundation training fully explores what is needed to support Key Work. Locally, HMP Wayland has a priority around 'the development and support of staff to enhance their skills, wellbeing and resilience'. Training plans are in place for all staff, with regular Tuesday afternoon shutdowns taking place to support development within roles. Recent changes have provided clearer expectations for Key Work sessions and entries, which is enabling staff to focus on delivering purposeful and effective Key Working to prisoner.

## **Property Facility List**

The *Prisoners' Property* Policy Framework provides guidance where prisoners arrive with items which are not permitted under the receiving prisons Facility List but were previously permitted at the sending prison. Governors must consider these items on a case-by-case basis and decide whether they should be allowed. Unless the item is considered a risk to good order, discipline, security, safety and/or exceeds volumetric control limits, the expectation will be that the prisoner should be allowed to retain it in possession. This is in recognition that the prisoner may have spent money and been permitted the item previously. However, the fact that an item was allowed on this basis does not give the prisoner the right to replace it 'like for like' as any replacement must then comply with the local Facility List. HMP Wayland adheres to this national Framework and publishes the local Facility List to prisoners on the digital platform. On reception only items on the national prohibited items list are restricted and placed in stored property until the prisoner is released or transferred.

## **Prisoners' Property**

HMPPS has now carefully considered the IMB national thematic report on the impact of property loss on prisoners, and the thematic review by the Independent Prisoner Complaint Investigations. In considering the reports, consultation with prison staff took place and a revised version of the *Prisoners' Property Policy* Framework was published on 17 November 2025. This includes additional guidance on sending excess property, the handling of prisoners' laundry and the correct completion of the cell clearance certificate, as these were identified as common areas of difficulty. In addition, HMPPS has reminded Governors and other senior leaders of key points about handling property, such as the importance of prisoners complying with volumetric limits, since property within those limits will be moved with the prisoner when they are transferred. The *Prisoners' Property* Policy Framework also mandates that, on transfer, excess property must be sent on as quickly as possible and within the existing four-week period after a prisoner transfers. It is encouraging that the Board recognised within its report that prisoners still waiting for their property two weeks after transfer has reduced and HMP Wayland remains committed to ensure that wherever possible prisoners will transfer with all their property during transfer. Where this is not possible, property is forwarded on at the earliest opportunity using approved couriers or the prison's own minibus to prisons in the local proximity.

## **Drug Strategy**

Further to the Minister's response about the challenges that illicit items can present in our prisons, HMP Wayland remains committed to reducing substance misuse. Tripartite meetings with Security, Operations and the Drug Strategy Lead continue to make positive steps to restrict supply through proactive searching and tightening of processes within reception, visits and the mail room. Demand is being reduced through positive pathway units to support prisoners, such as the Recovery Unit and Incentivised Substance Free Living Unit and the prison will continue to work in partnership with the Phoenix Futures Service. The Safer Prisons team also regularly review the drivers of violence and self-harm given the intrinsic links these can have with drugs and strategies have been introduced to counter this.

## **Lift Provision**

There will be a visitors' lift provided as part of the Accelerated Houseblocks Delivery Programme. However, the programme has been carefully developed to ensure sufficient resources are allocated to each phase and that key items are procured at the appropriate time. Making significant changes to the programme could have a knock-on effect on resourcing and subsequent activities in the wider programme schedule and would only take place where it is essential. The work on the lift is due to start in April 2026 and will be handed over to the prison for immediate use on completion which is planned for October 2026.

## **Prisoner Bank Account**

HMPPS and the New Futures Network have worked with the banking industry to ensure that some major banks will allow a prisoner where they are six months prior to release to be supported to open a bank account for rehabilitation and resettlement purposes. A prisoner can apply earlier than six months to their release, however there is no onus on the bank to provide an account. The section the Board referred to in *Prison Service Instruction (PSI) 1/2012 Manage Prisoner Finance*, is intended to allow a prisoner, who may receive an unexpected amount of money, to hold it within their prison account. If the prisoner's account is above the £900 limit, it can remain so at the Governor's discretion. However, members of the public would be unable to add to the prisoner's account via the 'Send Money to Someone in Prison' government portal. It must be recognised that all possible checks must be carried out to ensure that funds prisoners are receiving are for a legitimate purpose and from legitimate means and HMP Wayland will continue to follow the national guidance and PSI regarding the provision of bank accounts to prisoners.

## **Accumulated Visits**

Accumulated Visits are still active and prisoners are able to apply as per *PSI 16/2011 Providing Visits and Services to Visitors* which provides details for Governors on the process and procedures around accumulated visits. HMP Wayland adheres to this national policy by providing information to prisoners about accumulated visits and the Assisted Visits Scheme. All applications are individually reviewed and processed accordingly. However, it should be noted that transferring for the purpose of accumulated visits may be denied for a variety of reasons, such as the receiving prison Governor refusing the request on grounds of risk to security, safety or good order. It is also recognised that there may be logistical reasons for not allowing the request to go ahead such as population pressures at the receiving prison the prisoner has requested.