



Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Lindholme

**For reporting year
1 February 2025 to 31 January 2026**

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Introductory sections 1 – 3

1. Statutory role of the IMB

The Prison Act 1952 requires every prison to be monitored by an independent board appointed by the Secretary of State from members of the community in which the prison is situated.

Under the National Monitoring Framework agreed with ministers, the Board is required to:

- satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody within its prison and the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release
- inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom authority has been delegated as it judges appropriate, any concern it has
- report annually to the Secretary of State on how well the prison has met the standards and requirements placed on it and what impact these have on those in its custody.

To enable the Board to carry out these duties effectively, its members have right of access to every prisoner and every part of the prison and also to the prison's records.

The Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT) is an international human rights treaty designed to strengthen protection for people deprived of their liberty. The protocol recognises that such people are particularly vulnerable and aims to prevent their ill-treatment through establishing a system of visits or inspections to all places of detention. OPCAT requires that states designate a National Preventive Mechanism to carry out visits to places of detention, to monitor the treatment of and conditions for detainees and to make recommendations for the prevention of ill-treatment. The IMB is part of the United Kingdom's National Preventive Mechanism.

2. Description of the establishment

HMP Lindholme is a category C male prison. It is designated as a training prison and was opened in 1985 on the site of a former RAF station, originally built in the late 1930s. It occupies a very large area of approximately 128 acres, close to the village of Hatfield Woodhouse, 10 miles to the east of Doncaster, South Yorkshire. It has a certified normal accommodation, or CNA (the number of prisoners a prison can hold without being overcrowded), of 924¹, and currently has an operational capacity, or OC (the maximum number of prisoners that can be held without serious risk to safety, security, good order and the proper running of the planned regime), of 1010.

The establishment is a combination of buildings. Six former RAF buildings have been converted into residential accommodation. Other former RAF buildings house:

- administration, including the offender management unit (OMU) and security
- prisoners' reception
- industrial workshops
- education
- healthcare
- chaplaincy
- library
- bistro for staff.

More modern units were built when the prison was opened for:

- additional cellular residential accommodation, which is a mixture of single and double occupancy cells on two or three storeys
- Segregation unit with 20 cells
- visits' centre
- gymnasium

A modern reception area for prisoners' visitors is located outside the main gate. The prisoner accommodation has had a fire safety upgrade and shower refurbishment, this required the rolling closure of some accommodation spaces and is now complete. The prison is in the public sector and the Prison Service is responsible for the operation of the establishment. There are three main service providers:

- Novus, for learning and skills
- Practice Group Plus, for healthcare and mental healthcare
- AMEY, for the provision of facilities management and site maintenance.

¹ Figures included in this report are local management information. They reflect the prison's position at the time of reporting, but may be subject to change following further validation and therefore may not always tally with Official Statistics later published by the Ministry of Justice

3. Key points

IMB prisoner survey: in December 2025 the IMB carried out a prisoner survey to better understand prisoner experiences in custody. Out of a possible 1010, 691 prisoners responded to the survey, a response rate of 68%. Outcomes from the survey will be referred to in the report, and the survey questions can be found in Annex A.

3.1 Main findings

Safety

- During the reporting year, the Board has observed persistent high levels of self-harm, although there was a notable and sustained decline towards the end of the period.
- Five deaths in custody occurred, each subject to internal review and ongoing monitoring of associated action plans.
- Violence has reduced since peaks in April and September 2025, although still linked to debt, bullying and illicit substances. Assaults on staff have reduced during the reporting period.
- The use of force in the prison is broadly reflective of the overall violence profile.
- Despite considerable security efforts, the availability of illicit items – including drugs, mobile phones, hooch and weapons – remains a significant challenge, with fluctuations throughout the year.
- The Board acknowledges improvements in ACCT management, the work of safety intervention meetings, and enhanced casework with those repeatedly self-harming, all of which contributed to the safer custody improvements seen later in the year.

Fair and humane treatment

- The main concern about accommodation is the length of time taken to action repairs or general maintenance. Whilst the Board acknowledges that this is a complex task which has been outsourced, it must be stated that the delays regularly impact of the experience and wellbeing of prisoners.
- The Board continues to identify concerns regarding decency and living conditions, particularly inconsistent heating, stained and ageing toilets, recurring bedbug infestations, and long-standing failures in wing laundry provision. The widespread loss of courtesy keys has resulted in many prisoners being unable to secure their cells, increasing the risk of property theft.
- The practice of doubling up in single cells continues to raise concerns regarding basic standards of decency.
- The food offering at Lindholme is well received by prisoners. Any complaints are dealt with by the kitchen manager, whose endless enthusiasm continues to drive standards in the kitchen.
- In the segregation unit overall, the average population numbers have reduced to six and have been this low for some time. The Board welcomed the reduction in extended stays, although some prisoners subject to mental health assessment processes continued to remain there for extended periods. However, this occurs less frequently than previous years.

- Staff–prisoner relationships were observed to be generally constructive; however, staff visibility and the consistent application of basic standards require improvement.
- The Board also noted a significant decline in key worker engagement, with a majority of prisoners reporting no recent contact.

Health and wellbeing

- Healthcare provision remains under strain, with the Board observing long waits for some services, notably dentistry, alongside high cancellation and non-attendance rates that adversely affects access to care.
- The high number of emergency responses placed further pressure on the delivery of routine healthcare.
- The Board remains concerned about the limited oversight mechanisms for healthcare complaints due to confidentiality barriers.
- In mental health, the Board continues to be troubled by cases where prisoners were held in the segregation unit for prolonged periods awaiting gatekeeping assessments, including one case exceeding 280 days. This remains a serious and unacceptable risk.
- The Board acknowledges significant progress in substance misuse work during the reporting period. The prison implemented a range of measures that contributed to a sharp reduction in ‘under the influence’ (of illicit substances) incidents, the expansion of substance free living provision, and increased engagement with treatment.
- Nonetheless, staffing shortages and session cancellations limited the full impact of these improvements.
- The use of mobile MRI and CT scanning facilities enabled local diagnostic testing and better use of staff resources. The Board considers this is a positive development.

Progression and resettlement

- The reporting year was marked by reduced access to education, exacerbated by frequent class closures and substantial staffing cuts under the Prison Education System (PES) contract.
- The long-term closure of workshops, including hangars and the bakery, removed approximately 250 work opportunities, undermining the prison’s ability to function as a training establishment. Consequently, the progress and hard work in recent months by the team to attract employment opportunities within the prison has, in the Board’s opinion, been eroded further.
- Many prisoners continued to receive only part-time work, limiting their ability to complete accredited qualifications.
- The offender management unit operated under considerable pressure, with high caseloads, delays in OASys (offender assessment system, used to assess the risks and needs of prisoners) completion and low levels of prisoner contact contributing to reduced confidence in sentence progression.
- Resettlement planning remained significantly affected by wider estate pressures, resulting in many men remaining at Lindholme until the end of their sentence, rather than transferring to more suitable resettlement establishments.

- Although the Board recognises positive efforts from the employment hub and the introduction of new courses and employer engagement initiatives, prisoners consistently reported that they did not feel prepared for release.

3.2 Main areas for development

TO THE MINISTER

3.2.1 Education. The Board is concerned at the reduction in effective education funding. The national PES budget reductions have directly reduced staffing and course availability.

The Board considers that the prison will have great difficulty in delivering its role as a training prison without restored or reformulated funding.

The Board asks that in the light of the impact of these reductions on Lindholme, can the Minister reassure the Board that greater emphasis on funding for education is given a priority in the coming year?

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

3.2.2 Property handling system.

The Board continues to be concerned at the impact of the poor management of prisoners' property, including:

- Very high levels of lost property, especially during transfers.
- The current national systems for recording, sealing and tracking bags are not robust.

The Board asks when will the Prison Service reform the property handling system?

3.2.3 Prison workshop infrastructure defects

The Board is concerned at the impact of infrastructure defects on the role of HMP Lindholme as a training prison:

- Long-term failures to repair workshops, hangars, bakery
- This has resulted in a reduction of 250 workspaces.
- The infrastructure deficits inhibit Lindholme's function as a training establishment.

The Board asks will the Prison Service urgently allocate increased capital expenditure to improve opportunities for training and rehabilitation work for prisoners?

3.2.4 Preventing Illicit Items

The Board asks, given the uniqueness of the site at Lindholme and the vulnerabilities due to the length of its perimeter, will a more advanced drone detection system be implemented, which would enable the prison to build on the progress made in this area?

TO THE GOVERNOR

3.2.3 Complaints system review - the Board continues to be concerned at the lack of trust that prisoners have in the complaints process and asks that the prison work with the IMB to allow scrutiny of complaints processes and replies.

3.2.4 Prisoners' property – cell clearance – the Board asks that further sustained measures be taken to improve the handling of prisoner's property during internal cell movements.

3.3 Response to last report

TO THE MINISTER

Ingress of illicit substances into the prison:

Response – Recognition of the specific challenges facing Lindholme. Significant government funding to address these issues. Threats are regularly monitored.

Board – In the early part of the reporting year the prison continued to struggle with the ingress of illicit substances. However, behind the scenes new strategies were being developed which gathered pace on the appointment of a new Governor in June 2025. These strategies have had a significant positive impact on this issue, although it is too early to fully judge the impact of this work.

TO HMPPS

Prisoners with mental health concerns being held in segregation:

Response – This is a longstanding issue that involves complex coordination across multiple agencies.

Board – The Board welcomes the acknowledgement and the HMPPS response. Whilst the Board's concerns remain, there is evidence of a more coordinated approach and a willingness to recognise the individual at the heart of the issue.

TO THE GOVERNOR

Quality assurance of Segregation paperwork and procedures

Response – The prison is considering implementing a revised system whereby Governors, as well as stating the reasons for segregation of a prisoner, must also now state the exit strategy for the prisoner from segregated conditions. This proposal is currently being trialled at another establishment.

Board – The Board welcomes this proposal as it is a more responsible approach that offers the promise of a positive outcome; the Board will monitor this once it is implemented in the next reporting year.

Loss of property during internal moves:

Response – The prison reissued instructions to staff regarding completing cell clearance forms promptly.

Board – Lost property continues to be the highest reason for submitting a complaint and is a common reason for contacting the IMB. Over £5,000 has been paid out in

compensation. The Board is disappointed that dealing with a prisoners' property has not been given the importance that it deserves.

Review of COMP1 process:

Response – The prison has taken an important step forward by having the complaints boxes emptied by administration staff each day, thus ensuring that complaints reach the clerk daily.

Board – The overall issue concerning the complaints process is the prisoners lack of trust in the system. Whilst this new system should ensure that complaint forms reach the clerk, there is still much work to do to gain the trust of prisoners in this process.

Evidence sections 4 – 7

4.1 Safety

4.2 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody

During the reporting year self-harm incidents fluctuated month by month, but the overall picture is that the prison managed to stabilise and then reduce the numbers.

After a mid-year spike in June (81), incidents tailed off significantly from October onwards. This suggests that some of the safer custody interventions introduced mid-year, such as more structured ACCT reviews, safety meetings (support sessions for prisoners struggling with prison life) and targeted casework with prisoners who repeatedly self-harm, may be becoming established as effective processes (see Annex A.2).

Problem support mentors have been introduced and are having a positive impact in supporting prisoners (see 6.5 Wellbeing).

Prisoners still regularly report long waits for mental health support, although all men are seen by the mental health team. However, the reduction in numbers of men waiting for mental health support suggests staff persistence is having an effect (see Annex A.2).

The prison is housing many men with histories of trauma, challenges in managing stress, or substance misuse issues. What we see on the wings matches this: many prisoners struggle with relationships at home, debt on the wing, or with adjusting to transfers from other establishments.

Staff generally appear engaged with those on ACCTs when we visit, though case management can vary depending on wing pressures.

The Board was sad to hear that there were five deaths in custody during the reporting.

The prison's death in custody action plan is reviewed regularly and includes any learning points from all these tragic incidents.

General observations:

The drop in self-harm towards the end of the year is a positive sign, but the high levels earlier in the period highlight persistent vulnerabilities in the population.

4.3 Violence and violence reduction, self-isolation

The background to violence and violence reduction must be seen against the work carried out by the prison to reduce illicit/illegal substances entering the prison (see 4.4 Preventing Illicit Items). Much of this work was implemented from September.

During the reporting year the Board continued to see high levels of violence across the establishment, with incidents occurring on most wings and involving a mix of prisoner-on-prisoner assaults, attacks on staff, and episodes clearly linked to substance misuse and ongoing debt issues.

The prison has a regular weekly meeting process called the safety intervention meeting (SIM), which coordinates all aspects of prison safety affecting all prisoners.

The SIM provide regular oversight, but the volume and complexity of cases mean residential staff remain under intense pressure. The Board does note however, that staff assaults have reduced towards the end of the reporting year.

The general picture is that violence remains persistent and wide-ranging, with assaults happening across most wings. A significant number of cases are debt-related or linked to bullying, and a growing proportion appear tied to non-prescribed drugs and illicit drug use, as well as prisoners presenting as UTI (under the influence of illicit substances).

The Board's monitoring indicates assaults often involve spitting and biting and usually occur following refusals to comply with orders or when illicit items are discovered.

A few cases stood out due to seriousness or repeated behaviour:

- Multiple cases of staff being bitten or spat at, particularly during restraints or escort movements.
- Continued problems involving 'hooch' brewing (illicit, prison-brewed alcohol), with one serious incident escalating into assaults on four staff members when staff intervened to prevent illicit movement on the wing.
- Several prisoners found with unexplained injuries, suspected but unconfirmed assaults, often linked to intimidation and pressure to pay debts.

The establishment is consistently opening challenge, support and intervention plans (CSIPs) following violence and suspected violence. Outcomes typically include:

- Basic regime downgrades (for example, fewer opportunities for time out of cell and activities)
- Segregation moves for more serious or repeated violence
- CCTV review to confirm incidents
- Healthcare checks immediately following altercations.

Violence reduction efforts by the prison

The Board acknowledges several positive actions taken by the prison:

- The SIM is regular, well attended, and provide coordinated action planning.
- Staff briefings on known aggressors or individuals thought to be influencing or intimidating others are now routine.
- Separation and relocation are used frequently to defuse tensions, though available spaces remain limited.
- Substance misuse and mental health referrals are being made, albeit with mixed engagement from prisoners.

4.4 Use of force (UoF)

There were 792 recorded use of force incidents across the reporting year (February 2025 to January 2026), averaging 66 a month. The busiest months were April and September (both 89); the quietest was January (40). October was also high, at 86.

For context, recorded assaults on staff ranged from 4 to 20 a month over the same period, while prisoner-on-prisoner assaults ranged from 16 to 40. Peaks in UoF

tended to sit alongside higher general violence in the autumn months (see Annex A.2).

This year PAVA (an incapacitant spray, similar to pepper spray) was drawn and used 12 times and drawn and not used 17 times. The Board also wishes to note that they are not routinely informed when PAVA has been drawn, used or not. The prison has reviewed its systems for communicating with the IMB. The Board will monitor this in future.

Overall UoF is scrutinised regularly and learning points implemented where necessary. These may include improving individual training points for staff or escalating to the deputy governor for consideration of a formal investigation.

We received a small number of complaints alleging excessive force or assault by staff. These are all passed to the prison for investigation and prisoners were informed of this action taken by the Board.

4.5 Preventing illicit items

Early in the reporting year work was undertaken by the prison to address the prison's concerns regarding the ingress of illicit substances.

These included the following:

Multiple targeted operations to recover illicit items, mobile phones, SIM cards, weapons and other suspected controlled substances. For example, increased night-time patrols and improved surveillance capability to intercept throwovers. Furthermore, intelligence-led planning, in partnership with South Yorkshire Police and the Regional Intelligence Unit, both of which remain central to the prison's security strategy.

Over the reporting year, illicit items have continued to be a stubborn and recurring challenge across the establishment. While staff remain committed to tackling the problem, the figures show that Lindholme is still seeing significant fluctuations in finds related to drugs, mobile phones, weapons and hooch. These issues continue to have a knock-on effect on safety, prisoner wellbeing and overall stability on the wings.

Drug finds have remained high throughout the year, with a noticeable spike in August (87 incidents) and consistently elevated levels in several other months, often hovering between 30–50 incidents (see Annex A.2). Prisoners continue to report mixed views on drug availability, and IMB surveys (see Annex A.1 Q.8) reflect that many feel substances remain readily accessible. The Board remains concerned about the ongoing ease with which drugs seem to enter or circulate within the prison.

Hooch finds also varied sharply, peaking in December (31 incidents) and reaching similarly concerning highs in May (27) and June (23). This aligns with the Board's wider observations that hooch brewing tends to flourish during periods of reduced staff presence or when supervision is stretched.

The number of mobile phone finds corresponds with the significant action taken by the prison, with finds increasing throughout the year, notably, September (49) and October (56). These peaks suggest that phones remain a key contraband priority for organised groups inside the prison. The high numbers also raise concerns about

external criminal contact, bullying, and coordination of illicit activity from within the establishment.

Weapon finds fluctuated but reached worrying highs in June (23) and August (22), with another spike in September (27). While staff acted promptly on these finds, the Board remains concerned that the materials for weapons – and the motivation to make them – continue to be present in significant volume.

Overall, the year's data paints a picture of a prison still grappling with high levels of illicit contraband, despite sustained staff efforts and ongoing security initiatives. The Board recognises the work being done, including searches, intelligence-led operations, technology use and disruption tactics. However, the scale and regularity of the finds show that illicit items remain a core threat to safety and stability. Spikes across multiple categories indicate that smuggling routes and internal distribution networks remain active.

The Board wishes to commend the work being done to tackle and reduce illicit items entering the prison and encourages HMPPS to make further investment in drone detection systems to build on this progress.

5. Fair and humane treatment

5.1 Accommodation, clothing, food

Accommodation

- Accommodation at Lindholme consists of two large wings, six spurs and two dedicated wings, one for induction and the other for drug rehabilitation.
- There have been numerous applications (prisoners' written representations) to the IMB about cells being either too cold or too hot. Maintenance continues on a regular basis to improve ventilation and heating systems, nevertheless challenges remain.
- The lack of cleanliness and staining of the cell toilets continues to be a concern to the Board. Delays in sourcing suitable cleaning materials continue and the physical cleaning process is ongoing and slow. We will continue to monitor this in the coming year.
- The courtesy locking of prisoner cells continues to be a problem, as the majority of cells are fitted with a lock that allows the prisoner to lock their cell from the inside and also, using a courtesy key, lock their cell from the outside. The prison staff have keys that can override this in order to enter the cell. However, over time, the vast majority of these courtesy keys have become unavailable or lost. The consequence of this is that prisoners are unable to lock their cell when they leave it unattended, thus relying on staff, who are not always available, to lock them. The outcome of this is a prisoner's property is regularly stolen whilst they are elsewhere. Replacing these courtesy keys is costly and not something the prison is contemplating doing in the near future.
- Each year, IMBs across the country continue to report on the practice of putting two prisoners in prison cells designed for one, known as doubling up. HMP Lindholme reported 160 cells doubled up at the end of the reporting year, although this figure can vary each month. There are many reasons for the need to do this, and they are well recorded. We feel that this policy continues to breach human decency conditions.
- During the reporting year many prisons, including Lindholme, continue to have occasional seasonal infestations of bed bugs. Usually these occur on the larger wings. Whilst there is a policy to deal with these it is often slow to eradicate the recurring problem in its entirety.
- Washing and drying machines breaking down or being inoperative for long periods continues to be a theme of our monitoring. This issue creates more pressure on the clothing exchange store (prison laundry) and wing-based laundry equipment. This facility is key for prisoner's respect, decency and cleanliness. Long-term solutions to address this issue have been considered by prison management but have yet to be brought to fruition.

Food

The Board's observations regularly highlight the efforts and hard work to maintain high standards of cleanliness and food offerings to prisoners by the kitchen staff.

Improvements have been made at monitoring the standard of food at the point of delivery on the wings. There is still work to be done around food separation and maintaining food temperature.

Of note, however, is that the IMB receives limited applications throughout the year on food (see chart in section 8). Closer examination revealed that the kitchen manager closely engages with prisoners' issues and makes use of the prisoners' application system to resolve their concerns.

5.2 Segregation

The Board has continued to monitor the operation and use of the segregation unit throughout the reporting year. The overall number of prisoners located in the unit remained broadly consistent with the previous year, decreasing marginally from 303 to 296 men (see Annex A.5). This stability indicates that segregation continues to be used at a similar scale and for similar purposes to last year within the establishment.

As regards the length of stay, the Board welcomes the significant reduction in the number of men held in segregation for extended periods. Last year the average length of stay was 15 days; this reporting year, it has dropped to seven days. This is a significant, welcome improvement.

The number of prisoners remaining in the unit for more than 42 days has dropped from 32 to 15, demonstrating improved case management and closer attention to the appropriateness of continued segregation.

The Board remains concerned that many prisoners waiting for the results of a gatekeeping assessment are held in segregated conditions, often for extended periods over 42 days. Of particular note is one prisoner who was held for over 280 days. The Board will continue to monitor these cases to ensure that lengthy stays remain the exception and are fully justified (see mental health).

With regards to reasons for segregation, GOoD (good order or discipline) continues to be the predominant reason for location in segregation, with numbers rising from 240 to 268. Though this increase does not of itself indicate inappropriate use, the Board expects the establishment to ensure that alternatives are explored before resorting to segregation for behavioural management.

Use of Rule 53 (the prison rule that allows a person to be held apart from others pending an adjudication) fell significantly from 15 cases to just one, which the Board views as a positive development. Placements under Rule 45A (own protection) also reduced from 19 to 12, reflecting either a change in population profile or the increased use of alternative measures to safeguard vulnerable individuals.

The use of cellular confinement decreased from 29 to 15, a reduction the Board welcomes, as it suggests staff are applying disciplinary sanctions proportionately and with care.

The Board maintained a regular visiting presence in the segregation unit, undertaking 57 visits this year compared with 61 last year, ensuring independent oversight remained active and consistent.

Following the Board's decision to use more targeted attendance at segregation review boards, the Board's attendance has fallen from 217 to 91 during the reporting year.

The Board will continue to assess whether this level of attendance provides sufficient scrutiny of decision-making processes and welfare considerations.

The Board has again found staff in the segregation unit to be professional, communicative and cooperative with monitoring activities. Prisoners are generally able to raise concerns with the Board during visits, and staff facilitate timely access where appropriate.

The Board remains alert to the particular vulnerabilities of prisoners located in segregation and continues to place emphasis on ensuring access to healthcare, time out of cell, showers and progression planning back to normal location wherever possible. During the year, telephones were removed from all cells and an unintended consequence of this was the inability of prisoners to contact family for support or access the Samaritans if needed. Prison management responded positively to our concerns on this by reinstating a phone in one cell for communal use.

In conclusion, the overall pattern of segregation use at HMP Lindholme remains broadly stable, with a marked and welcome reduction in extended stays. The increase in GOoD placements, together with the reduction in the use of Rule 53 and cellular confinement, will be areas the Board continues to monitor closely.

The Board acknowledges the efforts of staff to maintain safety and order within the unit and welcomes the continued willingness of the establishment to work with the Board to ensure that segregation is used only when necessary, and with appropriate safeguards in place.

Over 500 adjudications were adjourned and waiting to be heard by around the middle of 2025. This undermines natural justice and discipline in the prison. A dedicated manager was put in place to deal with this and by late Autumn the backlog was cleared. Since then, a robust policy was implemented to ensure that there is no repetition.

5.3 Staff and prisoner relationships, key workers

As reported in previous years, staff and prisoner relationships remain generally good.

There was an increase in staff retention in that 71 staff out of 199 staff (35%) have fewer than three years or less the prison service. This is an improvement over last year when we saw that it was (158 of 209) 75%.

Whilst generally staff appear to have a good rapport with prisoners, Board members regularly observe staff not challenging prisoners on issues such as being correctly dressed whether on the wing or when collection food from the servery. Overall, there is often a lack of visibility of officers interacting with prisoners.

The need for more staff support was recognised by the prison and the standards coaching team were brought in to support staff between August and December; this was reviewed as a positive step by the Board.

The Board notes from its observations that there has been a noticeable drop in key worker sessions being delivered by the prison during the reporting year. The key worker scheme, introduced by HMPPS in 2018 as part of the offender management in custody (OMIC) model aims to facilitate regular, structured discussions between staff and prisoners focused on rehabilitation, safety and security. The prison aims for all key workers to meet with prisoners on a regular basis, thus giving the prisoner someone to talk to regarding their concerns.

The IMB survey also reflects that whilst many prisoners had a key worker, of those that responded to survey 65% (230) had not seen them in the last 14 days. Also, 49% (340 of 691 respondents) did not know or did not have a key worker (see Annex A.1).

The Board is disappointed at the lack engagement of the key worker system.

5.4 Equality and diversity

The Board continues to monitor equality and diversity issues closely. Staff and chaplaincy teams remain approachable and supportive.

DIRFs and complaints handling:

The Board remains concerned about prisoner confidence in the discrimination reporting process. Several issues persisted throughout the year:

- DIRFs and COMP1s going missing,
- complaints boxes left unsecured, unlabelled or empty,
- delays in collecting forms, and
- prisoners reporting that their discrimination-related complaints 'never get answered'.

However, we should also note that there was no equalities manager for the first six months of the reporting year. During this period the department continued to deal with DIRFs and little else. Since the appointment in the summer there has been a full review of the process and all replies to DIRFs are now being scrutinised before replies are sent. A selection of redacted DIRFs is now reviewed by prisoner peer mentors to improve standards of replies. Prison equalities action team (PEAT) meetings were suspended in the earlier part of the year but have since restarted. Although the DIRFs are externally audited by the Zahid Mubarak Trust, the prison has not yet received a report from the trust in this reporting year.

Such issues undermine the legitimacy of the system, particularly for prisoners from minority groups or those alleging discriminatory treatment. A positive development is that administrative staff have now taken over the collection of complaints forms; the Board will monitor whether this leads to improved reliability.

The Board also received applications relating to disability and medical-related equality needs, including inadequate access to mattresses, specialist diets, or appropriate equipment. Several men complained that their needs were not consistently understood by wing staff, and delays in healthcare responses often prolonged their difficulties. Broken disabled showers and inaccessible equipment were also noted in monitoring visits, and these issues took too long to resolve.

On a more positive note, chaplaincy engagement remained strong, and the Board heard no concerns about discriminatory treatment from faith representatives. Staff were visible, responsive and willing to mediate when tensions arose. However, the Board remains concerned that systemic issues – poor equipment, slow repairs, inconsistent staff practice and patchy communication – disproportionately affect particular groups, especially those with disabilities, older prisoners and practising members of minority faiths.

5.5 Faith and pastoral support

Faith and pastoral care at Lindholme continue to provide a strong provision within the provision and maintain a regular and visible presence across the establishment. All faiths are represented and offer spiritual, emotional and more practical support to prisoners as well as additional pastoral interventions. There is a comprehensive programme of worship and study groups each week, which covers services of the main faiths, as well as Islamic and Bible studies and prisoners can apply to attend these using their in-cell laptops.

All prisoners are supported at induction by trained peer mentors who provide prisoners with information, leaflets and copies of the Bible if required. The chaplaincy team and the peer mentors celebrate all religious festivals and work collaboratively with the kitchen to provide the necessary dietary requirements during religious festivals such as Ramadan, Vaisakhi, and Passover as well as remembrance services and Christmas carol services.

There is a choir and the peer mentors are trained to deliver 'take time' meditation, which is based on reading and discussing bible passages and stories.

Chaplaincy has a link with Prison Fellowship and facilitates the Angel Tree project, and with authorisation from security, prisoners can apply for a Christmas present to be posted to their children on their behalf. Bereavement support is provided to all and chaplaincy, in liaison with the prison, can help facilitate attendance at funerals for a close family member, or a video link if this is not suitable.

5.6 Incentives schemes

The Board continues to monitor the operation of the incentives scheme at HMP Lindholme throughout the reporting year. The incentives scheme framework remains an important element of prisoner behaviour management, a system of earned privileges aimed at encouraging positive behaviours and engagement with the regime.

A snapshot of the breakdown of incentives scheme levels across the establishment towards the end of the reporting year was as follows:

- Basic (the lowest level of privileges): 146 prisoners
- Standard: 369 prisoners
- Enhanced (the highest level): 480 prisoners

The overall proportion of prisoners on standard and enhanced levels remains broadly consistent with previous years, and it is positive to note that a sizeable number of prisoners continue to maintain enhanced status. The Board notes that efforts have been made to reduce the relatively high number of prisoners on basic level. The work resulted in a reduction to around 95 prisoners on the basic regime.

Throughout the year the Board received multiple applications relating to incentives scheme decisions, adjudications, or the conduct of incentives scheme reviews (for example, complaints of delayed reviews, missing paperwork, inconsistent explanations for downgrades, or allegations that reviews were not carried out in accordance with policy). While the Board recognises that staff often act within the required policy framework, the frequency of applications suggests ongoing issues

with communication, transparency, and the timeliness of incentives scheme-related decision-making.

The Board notes that some prisoners reported difficulty accessing necessary documentation to challenge incentives scheme outcomes, and in several cases the Board intervened to ensure that complaints and appeals were properly logged. These concerns mirror issues the Board has raised in previous reports, and we continue to encourage the prison to ensure:

- Incentives scheme reviews are undertaken within the required timescales,
- prisoners receive clear, written reasons for downgrades,
- all incentives scheme-related decisions are adequately recorded on NOMIS, and
- the scheme is applied consistently across all wings.

The Board welcomes the prison's commitment to promote positive behaviour but remains of the view that further attention is required to reduce the number of prisoners on basic and to ensure the process is experienced as fair, transparent, and timely.

5.7 Complaints

Over the reporting year, the Board monitored the prison's complaints system closely, as this system remains an important barometer of how well day-to-day issues are being picked up and dealt with.

The overall number of complaints has risen sharply (Annex A.4) from 2,089 last year to 2,455 this year – an increase which the Board notes. Some categories fluctuated predictably, but others saw significant spikes that are likely to need management attention.

- **Property – still the largest proportion of complaints:**

As in previous years, property dominates the complaints picture, and the increase this year was particularly striking. Complaints jumped from 298 to 513, making property easily the single largest area of prisoner dissatisfaction.

The Board continues to see repeated issues with property lost during transfers – both into Lindholme and between other establishments – which causes understandable frustration among prisoners and eats up unnecessary staff time. In addition, despite some work by the prison this year, property lost internally whilst prisoners are moved between wings is of concern.

- Residential and staff-related concerns:

Complaints linked to residential issues rose (from 261 in 2024 to 296 in 2025), and those about staff increased from 179 to 199. While not all of these suggest poor staff-prisoner relationships, they do point to ongoing tensions on the wings, particularly where minor day-to-day matters are not being ironed out early.

- Incentives scheme and offender management – an increase from last reporting year

The number of complaints on the incentives scheme rose markedly (from 197 to 250), echoing what the Board has picked up anecdotally: many prisoners feel unclear or dissatisfied with how their incentives scheme status is being managed.

Similarly, OASys/offender management complaints doubled (from 51 to 102), reflecting delays in sentence planning and communication – issues that have been a feature of the prison for several years.

- Healthcare complaints:

Healthcare-related issues indirectly appear across several categories. However, the Board does not have full access or insight into healthcare complaints/applications, due to GDPR and medical in confidence matters. The Board is concerned about this gap in the monitoring and observation of complaints and wishes to work with the prison and healthcare provider to develop a system of scrutiny whilst maintaining prisoner confidentiality.

A repeating concern for prisoners is lack of trust in the complaints system. Many prisoners report the COMP1 forms did not reach the complaints clerk. During the reporting year, the Governor addressed this by changing the collection process so that administration staff collect them each day, thereby ensuring that prison officers are not part of the process. This action is welcomed by the Board as an important step in restoring trust in the system.

- Timeliness is still broadly good:

Despite the rise in overall numbers, the prison answered 91.5% of complaints on time (2,246 of 2,455), with 8.5% (209) late replies. The Board welcomes this, though we remain alert to ongoing problems with complaints going missing, especially at wing-level collection – an issue repeatedly raised directly with members throughout the year. From our IMB applications records, 28 prisoners believe that their COMP 1 forms were or did not reach the complaints clerk and from our IMB prisoner survey, 51% (272 of 533 replies) did not receive a reply.

The Board recognises the efforts made by staff to stay on top of the growing volume of complaints. However, the substantial rise – particularly in property, offender management, and incentives – suggests deeper underlying problems in communication, process consistency, and basic prisoner confidence in the system.

The Board will continue to monitor these areas closely and will expect to see focused action from the prison to bring the numbers back down over the coming year.

5.8 Property

The issue of prisoner property has once again been of significant concern to the Board this year, being the highest area of complaint (Annex A.4).

The Board are still hearing the same themes from prisoners:

- Bags going missing on transfer
- Items not arriving with them
- Delays getting hold of what should already be here
- Disagreements over what has been logged or ‘signed for’

The annual IMB prisoner survey results underline what we see on the wings:

- Only 58% of prisoners said all their property arrived with them when they came into Lindholme, up slightly from 52% the year before. (see Annex A.1)

- Just under half of all prisoners arriving at Lindholme (42%) indicate that property was missing on arrival.
- In almost all cases (90%) missing property did not arrive within 28 days, almost unchanged from the previous year.

Although there has been a small improvement at the beginning of the process, the follow-up process is still failing most prisoners.

IMB applications support what we're hearing about property (see chart in section 8).

75 COMP1's were submitted to other establishments by prisoners at Lindholme concerning property missing during the transfer process from other establishments.

Lindholme has paid out over £5,000 in compensation for lost property.

Overall, property remains a long-running, unresolved problem. While staff do make efforts, the systems for tracking, securing, and transferring property simply aren't reliable enough, leading to confusion, frustration, and repeat complaints from prisoners. The problems occur both when a prisoner is transferred between prisons and when a prisoner is moved to another cell.

The Board believes the prison service must tighten its property handling procedures, particularly around inter-prison transfers, and ensure that bags are properly recorded, sealed, moved, and tracked. Without this, we'll keep seeing the same problems and the same high number of complaints.

6. Health and wellbeing

6.1 Healthcare general

Healthcare at Lindholme has remained busy throughout the reporting period, with the Board continuing to monitor the effectiveness of the service for prisoners and the pressures on staff, both of which have an impact on quality of care. As in previous years the service is doing its best under difficult conditions, but several long running issues continue to need attention.

There are a range of services including primary care, dentistry, optical, mental health services, psychology, and substance misuse and the board has no concerns about the quality of services. There is a dedicated outpatient facility but not 24/7; and no inpatient provision. Prisoners needing inpatient care are escorted to hospital or to another prison with inpatient facilities.

Prisoners can apply for help with healthcare via laptops in cells. All applications are triaged and sent to an appropriate professional, with a target of responding within 20 days.

Prisoners can make a complaint about healthcare via paper forms held on wings. Healthcare deals with all complaints as concerns in the first instance. In the reporting year there were 87 concerns. If the prisoner is unhappy with the response, the concern is upgraded to a Stage 1 complaint and escalated to the head of healthcare. There were two Stage 1 complaints this year. The Board is concerned that, accepting the need to protect patient confidentiality, there appears to be no mechanism for auditing and assurance associated with the healthcare complaints system. This will be an area of focus for the Board next year.

The IMB Board received 47 applications relating to healthcare this year, which is 18% of all 261 applications received. Two main themes were long waits for treatment, and medication issues.

There is a maximum six week wait target which was met for all but dentistry where the wait was about 15 weeks in the autumn quarter. Overall, the board has no concerns about wait times. However, urgent cases are seen without delay. Did not attend (DNA) rates are high as are cancellation rates for clinics and substance misuse sessions.

Emergency responses put the healthcare service under strain. In November alone, healthcare dealt with 18 code blues (urgent medical concerns) and three code reds (life threatening medical emergencies), and although only four of these required hospital transfer, the number of unplanned emergencies (33 in November) continues to disrupt planned clinics and escorts.

There were 72 hospital appointment escorts booked in November as well as the emergencies. Telemedicine is helping (five appointments in November), but not enough to significantly reduce demand. The IMB continues to question whether staffing at Lindholme is adequate for a population of about 1,000 men with such significant health needs.

Out of 351 prisoners offered the flu vaccine, only 142 accepted. Healthcare re-offered the vaccine to vulnerable groups. Despite these efforts, the Board remains concerned about health literacy and trust amongst prisoners.

There are no systematic annual surveys conducted by the healthcare team, but patients are asked for feedback after treatment, and a newly appointed patient engagement lead runs monthly healthcare forums based on wings.

In December mobile MRI and CT scanning facilities came to the prison for the first time enabling local diagnostic testing. The Board considers this is a positive development and would like to see it continued, and understands it will be expanded in future.

More generally, the Board is concerned that the model of care at Lindholme dates back 10 years and does not reflect the changing needs of the men it serves. The healthcare team shares this concern. Contract renewal is underway, and the Board anticipates that the new contract will better reflect current levels of need.

6.2 Mental health

During the reporting year, four prisoners were referred for a gatekeeping assessment, which determines if a referred patient requires care at a specialised mental health facility. Of these, two were declined and two were accepted.

The Board continues to be concerned that prisoners referred for a gatekeeping assessment are often held in the CSU until this is complete. This concern is reflected in Board monitoring reports. As set out in NHS England's good practice guidance, a transfer to a bed in a secure mental health unit should be facilitated within 28 days. At Lindholme this is not usually the case. One such prisoner remained in the CSU from 13 February 2025 until he left the establishment on 25 November 2025 (over 280 days). He was waiting for various assessments including gatekeeping. The Board considers that this is wholly unacceptable and presents a serious risk to those prisoners affected.

New guidance about the thresholds for moving prisoners to the CSU are going to be implemented in the next reporting year. The new approach is called TINA – 'there is no alternative' and will require that managers, in future, will need to make a defensible decision about moves to the CSU to justify that there are no other options available, and to identify a clear exit strategy when this is the case. The Board will be monitoring the effects of this more rigorous approach in the coming year.

A data snapshot for November shows that there were 43 referrals for mental health support. Of these, 19 urgent referrals were seen within 48 hours. 24 routine referrals were seen within five days. All ACCT reviews in November were attended by mental health staff. The learning disability nurse works alongside the neurodiversity lead to ensure correct diagnosis and reasonable adjustments are in place.

There are no peer support workers for mental health, but the newly appointed patient engagement lead is planning to set up a scheme in the year ahead.

6.3 Drug and alcohol rehabilitation

Last reporting year, the Board reported that the ingress of illicit drugs had a profoundly negative effect on the prison despite the best efforts of managers and staff. This year, a number of key actions were taken by the prison to address this problem and in the autumn quarter the outcome of the new approach appears to be bearing fruit. This has involved expanding access to in-prison drug rehabilitation alongside taking action against the ingress and use of illicit substances.

The number of 'under the influence' (of illicit substances) incidents dropped from a peak of 161 in September to 30 in December. The Board will be monitoring whether this decrease is sustained in future. Responses to the 2025 IMB prisoner survey about availability of illicit substances suggests that from the prisoners' perspective, this was about the same over the past six months. It may take more time for the effect of the new initiatives to better manage ingress and support prisoners to feed through

Mandatory drug test outcomes have remained consistent throughout the year, and drug related detections remain steady. Top substances detected were synthetic cannabinoids (spice) and cannabis. These are the most sought after and most frequently detected within the prison. The trend is consistent month-on-month, showing no reduction in demand or availability and emphasising the need for continued proactive measures.

There has been a marked increase in referrals to the substance misuse team which has offered the opportunity to better support these prisoners.

Two wings (L and D) are designated for incentivised substance free living. D wing was adapted for this purpose in the middle of the reporting year. It provides an additional 64 places, bringing the total to 128.

In general, these facilities have worked well but demand outstrips capacity with a waiting list of 100 prisoners wanting to go on D wing. Plans are in place to provide an additional 64 places on E wing soon.

The prison recognises that prisoners under the influence (UTI) are responsible for the majority of violence and assaults in the prison. There are plans to offer dedicated support to all UTI prisoners on one half of G wing (70 places), where they will undertake a 12-week recovery programme including expert substance misuse interventions, peer support, and a dedicated workshop. After this they will potentially progress to L wing, then D or E.

There is currently only one peer mentor for substance misuse, but plans are in place to identify and support five more in the year ahead.

The Board is concerned that progress is hampered by staffing shortages. In November, 165 substance misuse sessions were cancelled because substance misuse staff had to cover medication rounds and staff sickness. Also, the substance misuse team is waiting for the newly appointed prescriber to start, putting pressure on the team and requiring them to seek prescribing help from other sites temporarily.

In summary, huge progress has been made in this regard over the reporting year but continued proactive action is required to stem supply of illicit substances and to reduce demand. It is encouraging that systematic plans are in place to both sustain and develop the progress made.

6.4 Exercise, gym

There has been an increase in the numbers of men accessing the gym and getting involved in physical exercise during the reporting year, as more sessions have been made available. 45% of the prison population is making regular use of the gym. There is a target of 2.5 hours per week physical education for each prison place. This target is being exceeded - with 3.32 hours being achieved. The gym is open at

weekends and evenings for full time workers. One of the newly established incentivised substance free living wings (D wing) has had a small but well used range of gym equipment installed on the wing.

Each wing has a daily regime which provides time out of cell for work, education, exercise, gym, and other activities. Planned regime curtailment due to staff shortages is almost a daily occurrence. The prison has an agreed rota for reducing the regime on a rotating basis across the residential and functional site so that men are not disadvantaged unfairly. Prisoners are notified in advance of these curtailments.

In addition to the planned curtailments, there are unplanned regime curtailments, for example due to incidents or short notice staff sickness, these curtailments are done in a similar way. However overall, these regime curtailments can result in additional time in cell and if one particular day of the week is regularly short staffed, then this group of prisoners will unfairly lose out.

The IMB has requested trend statistics relating to the extent of regime curtailment but these are not routinely collected or monitored by the prison.

6.5 Wellbeing

This year, 47 problem support mentors have been trained and appointed as part of a research project run by the University of York. The wing-based mentors support fellow prisoners both reactively and proactively and there is positive anecdotal evidence that the project is delivering benefits for the mentees and mentors. 434 peer contacts have been made since the scheme started 15 months ago.

University of York evaluation criteria include measuring impact on incidents of self-harm, mental health, wellbeing, the quality of the environment, and use of resources. The project has strong support from the prison itself and is a potentially highly positive development.

7. Progression and resettlement

7.1 Education and library

Education within the prison is delivered by NOVUS under the newly introduced PES (prison education system) contract. Work focuses on assessment, engagement and employability skills and based on the five core principles of teamwork, communication, self-management, problem solving and presentation.

All prisoners are assessed at induction to determine suitability for the courses available and twice weekly sequencing meetings are held by the amenities team alongside education and CIAG (careers information and guidance) to allocate prisoners appropriately.

Functional skills, for those who do not have a qualification in English and maths, are deemed mandatory.

However, whilst this does support prisoners to make a more effective reintegration into the world of work, it remains not always the suitable option, especially for those older prisoners who would prefer a learning environment that develops and supports a more practical skill set.

Over the past few months, partly due to the large number of class closures from NOVUS, education attendance has suffered a sharp decline. This, as well as lower than average course completion rates, is now a focus for the management team in the coming year.

The prison has an excellent library facility that works in conjunction with Doncaster council. It produces an excellent range of fiction, non-fiction and legal texts and prisoners are able to order books through the in-cell tech system and then make an appointment to collect them. This year is the national year of reading, and the staff are currently organising events and activities to support and encourage reading throughout the prison.

The Board, however, considers it important to acknowledge the severe reductions that have been imposed on education budgets in prisons nationally and the damage this is having on an already stretched limit provision.

HMP Lindholme has been severely impacted, with the loss of 13.4 education and support staff resulting in even more courses being reduced. This now means that an already limited 'offer' has been further diluted and despite the best efforts of the management team to minimise the damage, this can only serve to seriously impact further education, meaning more men will leave the prison system without the culture capital and skills required to reintegrate effectively into society and reduce reoffending.

7.2 Vocational training, work

HMP Lindholme is a training establishment aimed at providing meaningful work and training thus allowing the men to reintegrate into society more easily upon release. The Board has, over the past few years, reported on the problems faced by the prison to achieve this.

Lindholme is a large site suitable for a host of training opportunities but a historical lack of funding and repair by the Prison Service has led to the Hangars continuing to

be out of use and the bakery unable to function. This has resulted in a reduction of 250 workspaces which has contributed significantly to the number of prisoners engaged in purposeful activity. Consequently, the progress and hard work in recent months by the team to attract employment opportunities within the prison has, in the Board's opinion, been eroded further.

From the Board's observations little progress has been seen to be made following the HM Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) report in 2023 which highlighted that 'The prison was not adequately fulfilling its core function as a training establishment. The range, quantity and quality of education, skills and work were inadequate to meet the needs of prisoners.'

During the past reporting year, the Board has, whilst monitoring, identified that an increasing number of prisoners, due to these restraints, are only able to work on a part-time basis (roughly two hours a day) and approximately 50% of the available workplaces are now allocated to part-time working. In our recent prisoner survey, in which 68% of prisoners responded, 57% of those responses felt that the work and education on offer did not support them for release.

Other workshops do not have qualifications attached. Breakfast packs, for example, gets the prisoner out of his cell and promotes a good work ethic but does not support the skills needed for progression. This has, in the past year, been compounded by poor attendance and delays in removing those who do not wish to engage, which reduces the opportunities for those on waiting lists. The Board acknowledges, however, that in recent months attendance has been targeted and attendance levels are increasing.

The Board must also acknowledge the efforts made by senior management and the amenities team to increase and attract outside businesses to invest their time to help and support employment opportunities for those close to their release date, but without much success. This is partly due to Lindholme's rural location and also to the fact that as a category C prison, too few prisoners meet the criteria required and therefore it is not always an attractive proposition for businesses to invest in.

One success has been the opening of a call centre on site. Prisoners are trained in calling companies looking to renew their energy contracts. The Board, when visiting the centre were impressed with the professional and purposeful environment which will greatly support prisoners' confidence and skills on release.

7.3 Offender management, progression

In the current reporting year, it must be acknowledged that the offender management Unit (OMU) has been working under considerable pressure. This is partly due to the increased workload created by the government's early release schemes and, also a shortage of staff across all grades in OMU, including prison offender managers (POM). This has resulted in a heavy caseload of prisoners (1-65) and during the current reporting year, agency staff have been brought in for support.

The situation has been further exacerbated due to the high churn of prisoners coming from the (local) prisons to Lindholme who have not had their initial OASys processed. OASys is a tool used to evaluate the risks and needs of offenders in England and Wales which include a prisoner's sentence plan leading to backlogs in prisoners receiving this.

Our recent annual IMB prisoner survey shows that prisoner confidence remains low. Only 35% of prisoners who responded to the survey said that they had seen or spoken to their POM within the last 28 days with 15% citing no contact at all. A sizeable group, roughly one third, reported that their last contact has been between 3 – 12 months. This is reflected in more general complaints to the IMB during our monitoring concerning the delays and uncertainties around their progression. This is increasing stress, anxiety and a lack of clarity in how to move forward.

Imprisonment for public protection (IPP) prisoners:

During this reporting year, the Board has observed that much work has taken place at both national and regional level to improve opportunities for this unique group, such that they may be able to demonstrate a reduced risk to society and be better prepared for release. For instance, at HMP Lindholme, at the weekly SIM (safety intervention meeting), all IPP prisoners who are assessed as 'red', meaning they are making little or no progress towards release, with serious concerns about engagement with their sentence plan and prospects for progression, are discussed. In addition to this, monthly progression meetings (chaired by the regional director) take place over Microsoft Teams. This demonstrates the cross region work that is being done for this group of prisoners.

However, the Board has also noted the frustrations in dealing with individual IPP prisoners. There is very little to offer IPP prisoners at Lindholme in regard to sentence planning, as many of these prisoners have done significant offending behaviour course work, and yet are unable to be successful at the parole board.

This often leads to disengagement, lack of trust and a feeling of hopelessness. These feelings are common in the prisoners in the red rated group. Whilst prisoners who are assessed as being lower risk are slowly making their way through the prison system, the amount of time, effort and resources used to impact an individual prisoner in the red rated group is significant.

For example, one prisoner assessed as red had struggled to cope in custody and had limited prospects for progression. Over time, a range of staff and managers, including neurodiversity, psychology, safer custody, and the OMU, worked with him. Following sustained engagement, he began attending safety mornings, which support prisoners who need additional help. He was later able to demonstrate a period of stability leading to engagement with staff at the Hope unit at HMP Humber and a subsequent transfer. He is reported to be thriving in an environment better suited to his needs.

However, the Board can also report that similar efforts have been made with other red rated IPP prisoners with less successful results. The Board believes that the time, effort and resources for this group will continue to be significant whilst prisons are holding them in custody.

7.4 Family contact

Support to prisoners and their families is provided through PACT (Prison Advice and Care Trust). They are a national charity that supports prisoners and offer an inclusive service responsive to the diverse needs of prisoners and visitors. The prison has a family engagement team, which provides emotional and practical support before and

after a prisoner visit. There is also a PACT helpline, which is manned by volunteers on most days of the year.

The Board has observed a good atmosphere in the visits hall with a soft play area for young children and a shop where visitors can pre-purchase snacks and drinks.

There are nine family days organised at Lindholme throughout the year where families can spend quality time together in a more relaxed environment; this includes a sports day which is always well attended, a day for those with more sensory needs and Christmas activities, as well as two enrichment days for those prisoners who do not receive any visitors and where prisoners can interact, play games and quizzes. Lunch is provided free of charge. Prisoners can apply to attend these on their in-cell tech, but they do need to have no negative incentives scheme entries.

All cells have in-cell phones, which helps make it easier for prisoners to keep in touch with their family and friends.

7.5 Resettlement planning

The Board remains concerned that resettlement planning at Lindholme continues to be affected by population pressures across the wider prison estate. The ongoing inability to move prisoners through the system in accordance with sentence progression timelines has resulted in a growing number of men remaining at the prison until their (SED), sentence end date rather than transferring them to designated resettlement prisons better equipped to provide them in preparing them for release and therefore reduce reoffending. For example, at the end of the reporting year, there were 291 prisoners within their resettlement window awaiting a transfer (see Annex A.3).

Despite this, the Board must acknowledge the efforts made by the staff in the employment hub to ensure that those who are released are provided with support, and to identify and work with those prisoners who are identified as in most need. By working more closely with POMs, OMU, the neurodiversity team and healthcare, they continue to work hard to support prisoners in CV writing, job applications and interviews, as well as accommodation and support from the Growth Company to help prisoners with debt, finance and banking. In November last year, there was a successful 'pop up' departure lounge for those being released.

The team continue to explore local business opportunities and in the past few months have seen a number of courses being introduced designed to promote the skills needed on release. This includes a traffic management course and a course on entrepreneurship designed to focus on self-employment. They continue to forge links with companies, such as Iceland and Doncaster Chamber of Commerce, and a number of pilot schemes are on course for the coming year.

Despite these efforts, the Board can, from its monitoring, see that prisoner confidence in preparing them for release remains low. In our IMB prisoner survey, none of the prisoners who responded felt that they were being prepared for release and the Board has seen an increase in applications this year relating to concerns and frustration over sentence planning and progression.

The new Building Choices programme, following a delay, has now been introduced at the prison (this course is a recommended sentence-planning activity for some prisoners who meet eligibility criteria). Both the high and mid-intensity courses can

only accommodate small numbers of prisoners and currently there is a long list of prisoners waiting to complete the course – this again is leading to increased anxiety and stress for prisoners.

8. The work of the IMB

Board routine

Once again, the board has functioned with considerably fewer numbers than the full board complement. In order to do this, a careful balance has had to be struck between shallow or broad overview monitoring and in-depth concern-based monitoring.

The Board has continued to focus on in-depth, concern-based monitoring. Essentially this means following up on observed concerns rather than merely visiting a place each week in rotation. This is reflected in the annual report, specifically that not all sections are covered.

During the year, two Board members resigned (one to move abroad and the other after 10 years' service) and took on two new members (one of whom resigned during their induction period due to a change in circumstances). Nevertheless, the Board has maintained a weekly presence in the prison, including weekly rounds of the CSU, answering prisoner applications to the IMB and monitoring areas of concern. The main concern this year was the effectiveness of education, work and vocational training.

In November, once again, an IMB prisoner survey was conducted using laptop technology (see Annexes A1). The survey was completed by 691 prisoners (68% of the prison population), a significant increase on last year's 404 (44%). It included a mix of questions from previous surveys and a few new questions. However overall, the survey was short and simpler. This may possibly have influenced the increase in responses.

Whilst a crude indicator, data from the survey showed that, of those who answered, 448 (65%) were aware of the IMB in the prison and 59% indicated that they knew how to submit an application (a prisoner's written representation) to the IMB. These figures are broadly similar to previous years.

Board statistics

Total number of visits to the establishment 370 (356 previous year)

Recommended complement of Board members	15
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	7 (including one member on induction and one member on long term limited attendance)
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	6 (including one member on induction)
Total number of visits to the establishment	370

Applications to the IMB

Once again, the highest number of applications to the IMB are regarding healthcare. The Board will seek to form an agreement with the healthcare provider for more meaningful feedback from them regarding the outcome of the healthcare providers' enquiries, whilst acknowledging patient confidentiality.

The Board believes that the significant increase in applications is as a result of building prisoners trust in the IMB application process. The Board ensures that application forms are always available, the boxes are emptied regularly and that prisoners receive a prompt reply.

Code	Subject	Previous reporting year 2024/25	Current reporting year 2025/26
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	10	37
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives scheme, sanctions	12	34
C	Equality	7	10
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, time out of cell	7	8
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection, restrictions	9	11
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	1	6
F	Food and kitchens	3	4
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	33	47
H1	Property within the establishment	10	10
H2	Property during transfer or in another facility	19	30
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogues	3	4
I	Sentence management, including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-categorisation	13	25
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	18	27
K	Transfers	2	8
L	Miscellaneous	3	0
	Total number of applications	150	261

Annex A.1

IMB prisoner survey

Prison operational capacity, December 2025 – 1010 (Population in 2024 – 964).

Prisoners responded to survey – 691 (responses in 2024 – 404).

This gives a responses rate of 68 % in 2025 (responses rate in 2024 = 43%).

1. When you arrived at Lindholme did all your property arrive with you?

	2024	2025
Yes	210 (52%)	403(58%)
No	194 (48%)	288(42%)

1.1 If No did you receive your property within 28 days?

	2024	2025
Yes	15 (7%)	29(10%)
No	179 (93%)	259(90%)

2. Are you aware of the Listeners scheme for prisoners?

	2024	2025
Yes	334 (83%)	549(79%)
No	70 (17%)	142(21%)

2.1 If Yes – Do you know how to access a Listener if required?

	2024	2025
Yes	302 (90%)	491(89%)
No	32 (10%)	58(11%)

3. Do you have a Keyworker?

	2024	2025
Don't Know		193(28%)
Yes	341 (84%)	147(21%)
No	63 (16%)	351(51%)

If Yes – Have you spoken to Him/Her in the last 14 days?

	2024	2025
Yes	189 (55%)	121(34%)
No	152 (45%)	230(66%)

4. When did you last have contact with your Prison Offender Manager (POM)?

	2025
No Contact	103(15%)
Within 28 days	242(35%)
Within 3 months	224(32%)
Within 6 months	82(12%)
Within 12 months	40(6%)

5. Are you aware of your sentence plan and what work you need to do?

	2024	2025
Yes	221 (55%)	349(51%)
No	183 (45%)	342(49%)

6. Do you consider that your sentence plan is preparing you for your release?

	2024	2025
I am fully prepared	0	0
I am not prepared	80 (37%)	173(47%)
I am probably prepared	24 (11%)	124(34%)
I am unlikely to be prepared	111 (52%)	68(19%)

7. Do you think that the Work and/or Education being offered to you is adequately supporting you?

	2024	2025
Yes	162 (40%)	295(43%)
No	242 (60%)	396(57%)

8. In the last 6 months, in your opinion, what do you think about the availability of illicit substances?

	2025
Availability has increased	200(29%)

Availability has decreased	228(33%)
Availability is about the same	263(38%)

9. Do you feel safe in Lindholme?

	2025
Yes	414(60%)
No	277(40%)

10. Have you been subject to victimisation, racism or bullying by other prisoners?

	2025
Yes	215(31%)
No	476(69%)

11. Have you been subject to victimisation, racism or bullying by prison staff?

	2025
Yes	257(37%)
No	434(63%)

12. Are you aware of the IMB (Independent Monitoring Board) at Lindholme?

	2024	2025
Yes	263 (65%)	448(65%)
No	141 (35%)	243(35%)

13. Do you know how to make an application to the IMB?

	2024	2025
Yes	246 (61%)	408(59%)
No	158 (39%)	283(41%)

14. Do you know how to use the Prison Complaints procedure?

	2024	2025
Yes	317 (78%)	533(77%)
No	87 (22%)	158(23%)

15. If you have submitted a COMP1, did you get a reply?

	2025
Yes	261(49%)
No	272(51%)

Annex A.2

Safer Custody Data

Category	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26
Assault Prisoner on Prisoner	30	30	28	30	22	24	33	22	40	16	32	25
Assault Prisoner on Staff	12	9	20	13	14	9	13	15	16	4	7	10
Use of Force	50	74	89	56	74	76	68	89	86	44	46	40
UTI	90	87	120	81	64	76	74	159	100	50	22	103
Self- Harm	64	58	87	65	81	67	51	67	71	39	47	28
New ACCT	23	32	24	24	26	25	20	30	25	18	23	18
Hooch	12	2	8	27	23	28	13	14	16	10	31	14
Drugs find	23	23	32	36	45	49	44	87	48	33	54	29
Weapon find	9	8	13	15	23	6	22	27	21	16	15	19
Mobile phone find	19	37	28	49	33	25	15	49	56	24	41	26

Annex A.3

OCA Transfer Data



Monthly Figures 2025	Feb '25	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan '26
Total number of releases	9	27	24	19	31	20	11	31	33	36	15	16
HDC releases	3	7	4	10	16	3	3	4	2	5	2	1
Prisoners released at CRD	0	6	6	0	2	11	4	6	7	1	7	7
Prisoners released at SED	0	2	3	1	1	1	0	14	12	18	4	4
Prisoners released on Parole direction	6	12	11	8	12	6	4	7	12	12	2	3
Total number of transfers in	61	68	73	59	79	77	92	67	72	56	66	56
Total Prisoners transferred to Cat C	22	21	29	16	25	20	22	16	22	13	21	19
Prisoners on Cat C Resettlement Transfer	0	0	12	0	9	3	3	6	0	0	6	0
Total prisoners transferred to Cat D	13	14	29	19	22	23	13	14	21	17	16	21
TPRS Cat D transfer	0	1	15	3	3	13	6	7	13	12	5	12
Cat D waiting List	10	22	13	16	13	16	17	23	20	18	15	12
Number of Prisoners in their Resettlement window (10-24 months)	278	276	276	291	279	293	291	290	291	287	291	291
Number of prisoners with 16 months or less to serve	261	263	246	250	245	284	289	271	262	247	253	273



Annex A.4

Complaints data

	Feb 2024 to Jan 2025	Feb 2025 to Jan 2026
Total Complaints	2089	2455
Complaints answered on time	1909 (92%)	2246 (91.5%)
Complaints not answered on time	180 (8%)	209 (8.5%)
Adjudications	51	50
Bullying	5	8
Canteen	144	154
Confidential	96	162
Education	15	15
Finance/Cash	42	26
Food	32	47
Gym	8	7
Incentives Scheme	197	250
Letters/Censors	28	31
OASys/Offender Management	51	102
Offending Behaviour Programmes	7	10
Pre-Release/Release	2	9
Recategorisation	61	80
Property	298	513
Security	75	69
Residential	261	296
Staff	179	199
Transfer/Allocation	39	38
Violence	2	12
Visits	30	7
Work	119	109
Magazines/Newspapers	3	5
Other	149	172

Annex A.5

Segregation statistics

	2024-2025	2025-2026
Number of men placed in segregation unit	303	296
Number of men held in unit for more than 42 days	32	15
Number of IMB visits to men in segregation unit	61	57
Number of individual segregation reviews attended	217	91

	2024-2025	2025-2026
Number of men placed in segregation unit	303	296
Rule 53	15	1
GOoD	240	268
Rule 45A (own protection)	19	12
Cellular confinement	29	15



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