



Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring at HMP Wandsworth

**For reporting year
1 June 2025 to 31 May 2026**

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Dedicated to the memory of our clerk
Kieron O'Donovan
1966 - 2026

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Executive summary

This IMB annual report highlights a year of stability, recovery and progress

It is pleasing to report that HMP Wandsworth has maintained its recovery from the low point of 2023. Many initiatives were introduced to improve the way the prison operates and make life better for the prisoners. We understand that HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) and HM Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) no longer consider the prison to be “of concern”.

But prisoners were still housed in unacceptable conditions

Nevertheless, the prisoners were still housed in unsafe, overcrowded, unsanitary and squalid conditions. The severe physical limitations of the Victorian buildings remain, with inhumane living conditions.

Staffing remained an urgent issue

- Although numbers varied on a daily basis, on average around one third of staff were absent or unavailable every day. Reasons included: detached duty, long term sick, maternity leave, attendance at College, restricted duties, short term sickness, suspension, temporary cover out and, most worryingly, unauthorised absence.
- Staff absence impacted all aspects of prison life. Lack of staff escorts affected the number of prisoners participating in activities and education. On some occasions low staff numbers meant the daily regime was curtailed affecting exercise and also social and domestic time, thus increasing the hours spent locked in cells.

Overall violence levels fell

- There were five deaths in custody (four in 2024/2025)¹: one appeared to be from natural causes. The cause of death will be determined at each inquest.
- Incidents of self harm fell 27% to 530 (2024/25: 726).
- There were 222 (2024/25: 354) prisoner-on-staff assaults and 360 (2024/25: 360) prisoner-on-prisoner assaults.
- There were estimated to be 1,286 (2024/25: 1,705) instances of use of force, a 25% reduction.

New initiatives included

- The Nightingale healthcare building at last became operational and the Sunflower neurodiversity wing was opened.
- The number of activities and education classes was significantly increased. The employment advisory Board resumed its work following a fallow period.
- One wing was restructured to follow Scandinavian penal principles giving men more freedom and encouraging good behaviour.
- Projects were introduced to educate staff to better understand behavioural and cultural issues and consequently improve relations between staff and men.

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.

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 Wandsworth is a male reception prison with a secondary resettlement function, so therefore holds a remand population, those newly sentenced awaiting allocation into the wider estate, and category C resettlement prisoners with, typically, less than 16 months left to serve. It also holds a large number of men held under immigration powers who are awaiting Home Office Immigration Service processing.

The prison is situated on a compact site in the densely populated borough of Wandsworth in south west London. Prison walls are close to exercise areas, enabling banned substances to be thrown over the walls and drones to access windows on the residential blocks.

The prison, built in 1851, has two accommodation blocks: Heathfield and Trinity. The majority of prisoners share extremely cramped cells originally intended for single occupancy. The main accommodation block, Heathfield, has up to 1,200 prisoners sharing cells on five wings. One wing is just for vulnerable prisoners (VPs). The care and segregation unit (CSU) has 22 cells, plus two special accommodation cells (where items such as furniture, bedding and sanitation are removed in the interests of safety) and two holding cells.

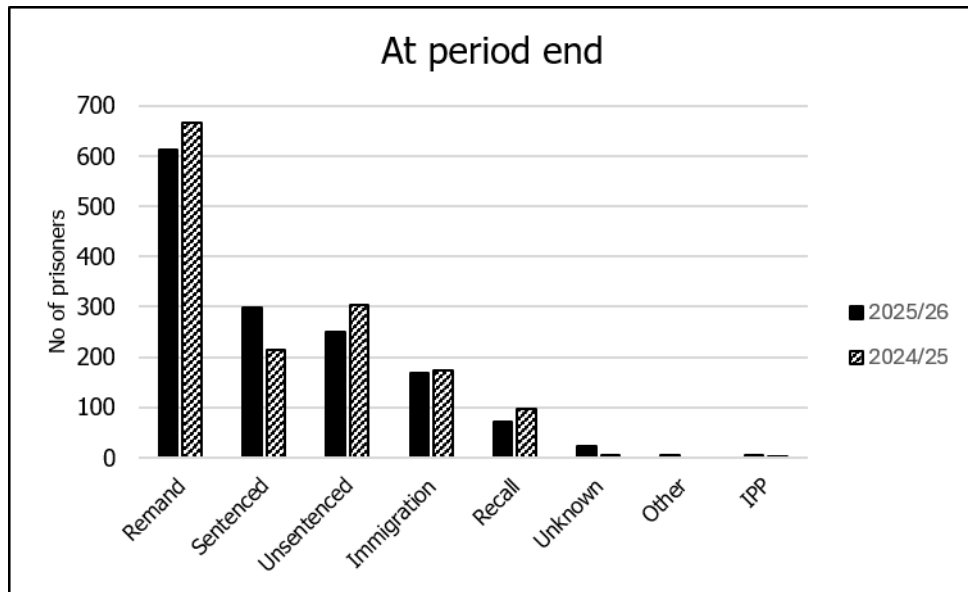
Trinity has capacity for up to 389 men on three wings and is a unit for prisoners who attend work, activities or education. A major refurbishment of each wing, in turn, began in October 2024, reducing Trinity's capacity to 271 while K wing was closed for the work to be carried out. Progress has been extremely slow and refurbishment of the first wing was still ongoing after 20 months.

Residential healthcare is provided in the Integrated Procedures Unit (IPU) comprising the six-bed Jones unit and the 12-bed Addison unit, which is for prisoners requiring treatment for mental health conditions or assessment for admission to outside mental health facilities. Administrative staff and most clinics were based in the new Nightingale building, which opened four years late.

The operational capacity of 1,466 (2024/25:1,478) is set by HMPPS and is the maximum number of prisoners that can be held. The certified normal accommodation, or number of prisoners a prison can hold without being crowded, remained at 963. There were 1,434 (2024/25: 1,461) prisoners at the end of the reporting year, including 661 foreign nationals from 79 countries; 31 had no nationality recorded. The largest numbers, in descending order, came from Poland, Romania, Algeria, the Republic of Ireland and Albania.

At period end	2025/26		2024/25	
Remand	613	43%	666	46%
Sentenced	299	21%	215	15%
Unsentenced	250	17%	303	21%
Immigration	167	12%	174	12%
Recall	71	5%	96	7%
Unknown	24	2%	5	0%
Other	6	0%	0	0%
IPP	4	0%	2	0%
Total	1,434		1,461	

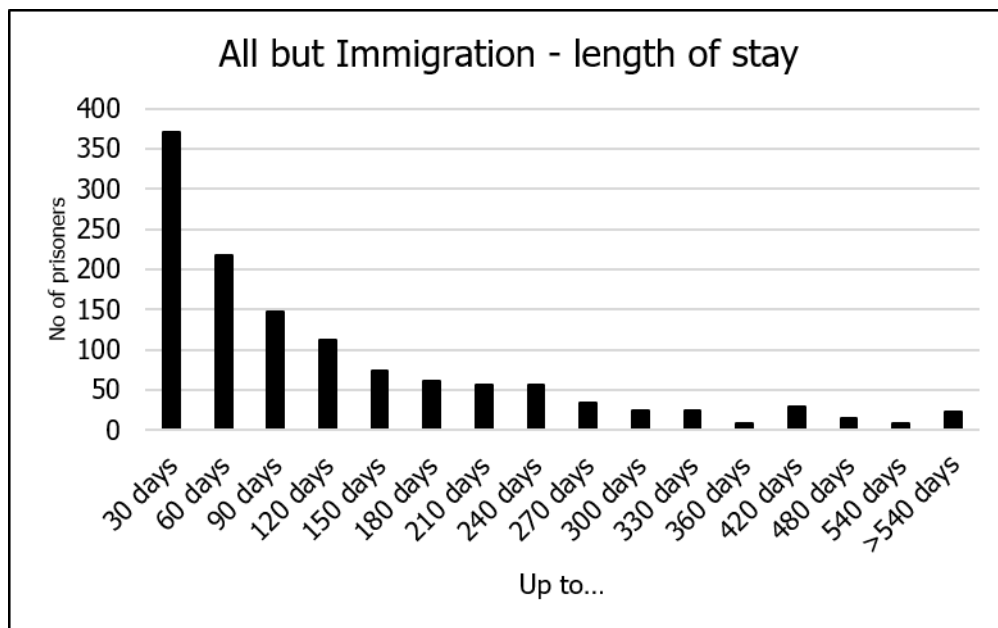
Source: HMP Wandsworth



Source: HMP Wandsworth

Length of stay excluding immigration

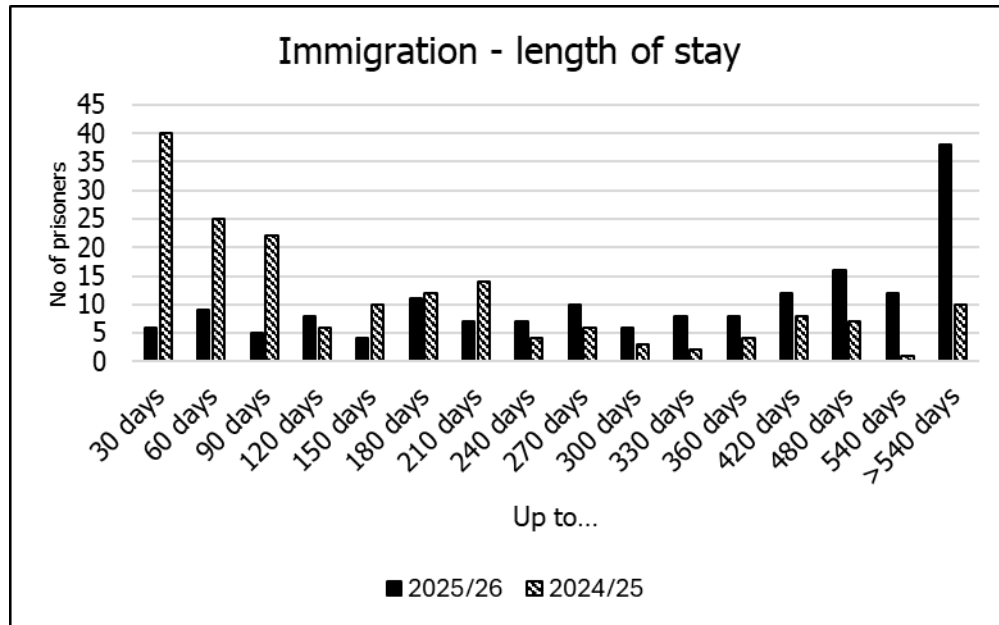
As in previous periods, most of the 1,267 (2024/25: 1,287) prisoners not on an immigration hold have been in the establishment for fewer than 90 days – at the end of this reporting period it was 58% (2024/25: 51%).



Source: HMP Wandsworth

Immigration

The majority of prisoners on immigration hold in previous periods have tended to remain for much longer than 90 days, although for the 2025/26 reporting period this was not the case. The number who have been in the establishment for more than a year has increased to 78 (2024/25: 26), despite the overall number on immigration hold remaining broadly similar to the previous period.



Source: HMP Wandsworth

3. Key points

The Board was encouraged that the management team built on the improvements reported last year and also introduced new initiatives. Incidents of violence and self harm fell significantly while the number of ACCTs (assessment, care in custody and teamwork) also reduced. ACCTs are the prison service's process for supporting and managing prisoners who are considered to be at risk of self harm or suicide.

The new healthcare building at last became fully operational and a neurodiversity wing was opened. A new drug strategy was introduced. The number of activities and education classes was significantly increased. The employment advisory board resumed its work following a fallow period. G wing in Trinity was restructured to follow Scandinavian penal principles giving men more freedom and encouraging good behaviour. This was a year of relative continuity and stability in the senior leadership team. Projects were introduced to educate staff to better understand behavioural and cultural issues and consequently improve relationships between them and prisoners.

Staffing remained a serious constraint on offering a full regime. Although numbers varied on a daily basis, around one third of staff were unavailable for front line duty every day.

High staff turnover meant that young, inexperienced officers, after minimal training and lacking "jail craft" had to "go live" with a lack of supervising officers (SOs) to provide the vital mentoring they needed on their early days on the wings.

While there were many positive initiatives the prisoners were still housed in unsafe, overcrowded, unsanitary and squalid conditions. The severe physical limitations of the Victorian buildings remain, with unacceptable and inhumane living conditions.

3.1 Main findings

Safety – further improvement

- 37% drop in prisoner-on-staff assaults, to 222
- 27% fall in incidents of self-harm, to 530
- 11% reduction in the number of ACCT plans opened, which help manage and support those at risk of self-harm and suicide.

Fair and humane treatment – accommodation remains inhumane

- Most cells housed two prisoners in cramped and unsanitary conditions
- The prison was fully staffed, yet on average, for a variety of reasons, one third of officers were not on duty. This often led to the regime being curtailed and men being locked in their cells for up to 22 hours a day.
- Various initiatives were introduced to improve conditions for prisoners. These included a wing with a more relaxed regime based on Scandinavian principles and a course for officers to help them better understand cultural differences and improve relations with prisoners.
- The unreliability and age of the prison's infrastructure was again reflected in numerous boiler and water circulation failures. These will continue until the plumbing and heating systems are replaced in their entirety, rather than patched up in a piecemeal manner.

Health and wellbeing

- The new Nightingale healthcare unit was operational throughout the period but still lacked a dental unit as a result of poor contract design.
- The frequent absence of officers at medical hatches on the wings resulted in prisoners being unable to access their medication.
- The average number of patients failing to attend booked clinic appointments increased to 32% (2024/25: 28%). The average waiting time for a clinic appointment improved to 18 days (2024/25: 28).
- The six-bed Jones ward was far too small for the size of the prison population. The 12-bed Addison ward remained unfit for purpose, with insufficient beds, and cells frequently out of use for long periods while awaiting repair.
- The Sunflower unit for neurodivergent individuals was opened.

Progression and resettlement – lack of funding remains a major problem

- The number of men held for over one year on immigration matters rose significantly to 78 (2024/2025: 26).
- Too many men remained in their cells for much of the day with no purposeful activity, with nearly 40% allocated to no activity.
- Library attendance improved significantly as staff were made available to escort prisoners. Over 7,000 books were borrowed during the year and approximately 3,500 men visited the library.
- During the year 684 men engaged with the prison's employment hub and 63 were assisted into employment post release.

3.2 Main areas for development

TO THE MINISTER

- What further action is being taken to recognise the particular challenges facing foreign national prisoners (FNP) who comprise around half the prison population?
- What action is being taken to accelerate the repatriation and extradition of FNPs, particularly those who have served their sentences or who have been found not guilty?
- This reporting year has seen a number of innovative and successful new initiatives in HMP Wandsworth prison. What other initiatives have been successful in other prisons which could be introduced in HMP Wandsworth?
- A number of prisoners with severe mental health problems were released from the prison, in some cases against the specific recommendation of the prison governors. What can be done to ensure that courts are more aware of the potential consequences of such releases?

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

Again, the Board did not receive responses to the questions it put to HMPPS in this section of its annual report last year. The Board will actively pursue responses to its questions from this year and previous years.

- The Nightingale healthcare building finally came into service, four years later than its target date. It still lacks a dental facility as a result of poor design and contract management. The repairs on K Wing are already running months behind schedule – and presumably therefore over budget. Nor are we optimistic that the repairs to the Chapel will be delivered on time. What lessons have been learnt and have they been put into practice to avoid further failures?

- The Board is concerned about the state of fire safety in the prison. There are two different fire protection systems in place. What urgent steps are being taken to remedy this potentially extremely dangerous situation?
- What is being done to reduce the heavy load of bureaucracy and delay caused by centralised contracts, specifically involving kitchen machinery repairs and BT in cell telephone faults?
- Staffing levels and the calibre of newly-recruited staff in particular remain concerns for the Board. What more is HMPPS doing to ensure that suitable staff are being recruited?

TO THE GOVERNOR

- The Board recognises the emphasis that the senior management team has placed on recruitment and dealing with unauthorised absences in the last year. However, far too often, staffing levels have been dangerously inadequate. Often these shortages are at predictable times – public holidays, school holidays, periods of extreme hot weather in the summer. What more can be done to anticipate, and therefore prevent, such shortages in future?
- The Board has noted the introduction of a number of positive new initiatives in the course of the year such as the Sunflower Neurodiverse Unit and G wing run on Scandinavian principles. This has been a significant factor in starting to restore the previously very negative reputation of HMP Wandsworth. What further initiatives do you have in mind to help further restore the damaged reputation of the prison?
- You have announced that you are leaving the position of governing governor at the end of 2026. A deputy governor is also due to be appointed early in the current reporting year. A number of members of the senior leadership team are on secondments which expire during the next year. Are plans in place to mitigate the impact of the high turnover of senior staff?
- Despite the many positive developments this year, Board members are still struck by the number of complaints from prisoners about basic regime, equipment, clothing and the state of their cells. What can be done about this?

3.3 Responses to the 2024/2025 annual report

Issue raised with the Minister	Response received on 1 December 2025	Progress at 31 May 2026
1. Following the UN, you advised that the Government was redirecting £100m from across the Prison Service, to deliver urgent improvements. How much has actually been spent and on what?	As of 20 October 2025, £37.6 million has been committed to improvement work. This investment will support a programme of window replacements, major fire safety improvements, shower expansion and refurbishments as well as developing projects to replace the chapel roof and rebuild the recycling centre.	Further investments in fire safety improvements, shower refurbishment and window replacement are planned. These are all areas in which the Board still has concerns.
2. Around half the men in HMP Wandsworth are foreign national prisoners,	National policies ensure FNPs' needs are met, including free five-minute calls for prisoners	Two new FNP specialists were appointed. While this

yet they received inadequate support. What can be done by the Ministry of Justice to improve services available to these men?	without visits, flexible phone access for time zone differences, and essential information in multiple formats and languages during early days in custody.	is positive the Board considers it is still inadequate.
3. The quality of new staff recruited centrally was often poor and training was inadequate. What steps are being taken to improve training and reject unsuitable candidates?	HMPPS operates a centralised recruitment model for prison officers to ensure consistent standards, meet high-volume demand. HMP Wandsworth has introduced “taster tours”, offering applicants an insight into prison helping candidates make informed decisions about continuing their application.	The Enable project, to build staff capability, is being piloted in Wandsworth. The Board acknowledges this initiative but there is still much work to be done.
4. In your letter of 5 December 2024, you wrote that HMP Berwyn has been piloting a local delivery model of the recruitment process, with the purpose of testing the hypothesis that increased engagement locally will deliver better results. What was the result of the pilot?	While the pilot enhanced candidate understanding and experience, it proved resource-intensive, delayed completion, and lacked robustness due to the omission of interactive assessments such as role play. It was concluded that the tested local models were unsustainable alongside operational duties.	The Board remains concerned about the staff recruitment process and HMP Wandsworth’s lack of autonomy.

Prison Service/HMPPS	Response received on 1 December 2025	Progress as of 31 May 2026
1. Are you satisfied with the progress HMP Wandsworth has made following the UN and subsequent IRP?	Progress has been made with improvements in all areas, notably reducing violence, self-harm, and drug access. Progress is monitored monthly by a Local Improvement Board chaired by the Governor.	HMPPS has not provided us with any further information in response to this question.
2. What is being done to identify ways of making sure prisoners’ property is dealt with more efficiently and not delayed, mislaid or lost in transit?	HMP Wandsworth says that it has implemented several measures to strengthen property management.	Property remains an area of concern to the Board. In particular, we are not seeing any improvement in the handling of complaints concerning the transfer of property between prisons.
3. Support to prisoners from	While complex procurements	Many major contracts

service providers has been adversely affected by delays in tendering and length and quality of contracts. What is being done to rectify this serious issue?	remain reliant on internal processes, MoJ Commercial says it has introduced a streamlined governance framework to reduce delays.	are due for review including those with BT and GFSL.
4. The number of ACCTs opened increased by over 20% during the reporting period, reflecting the severity of the mental health crisis and inadequacy of support. How is the Prison Service addressing this major issue?	While the increase in ACCT cases is concerning, it reflects improved awareness, early identification, and proactive intervention for individuals in distress. Efforts remain focused on strengthening early support and reducing repeat ACCT openings through enhanced multidisciplinary collaboration.	The Board was encouraged that the number of ACCTs fell by 11% compared with the previous period.

Governor	Response	Progress at 31 May 2026
1. Although the prison was fully staffed, every day around one-third of staff were not available. What is being done to address this chronic issue and the impact it has on the regime?	The Governor chairs a People Support Meeting to ensure that staff who are absent are supported and the correct management processes are followed A monthly workforce planning meeting is held in addition to weekly Regime Management Plan meetings Where staffing is exceptionally short, a business case is put to HMPPS to request additional staff or detached duty. On occasions, staff from Wandsworth have been seconded to other prisons with significant shortfalls Staff profiles are being reviewed to align with current working practices Staff sickness rate is on target to reduce by 2 days per officer per year	The Governor has placed great emphasis on managing staff absenteeism and unauthorised absenteeism. On many days, regime had to be curtailed owing to staff shortages.

2. Foreign national prisoner comprised close to half the population at HMP Wandsworth, yet their support remained worryingly inadequate. How can this be improved?	Catch22, which has provided significant support for foreign nationals (FNPs), is having its funding withdrawn at the end of 2026. This will place further pressure on the Home Office team and the two FNP specialist staff who are in place. The employment of these 2 staff has been extended for another 12 months There has been investment in translation services and in software which can translate video messaging to FNPs. The Equalities team holds forums for FNPs each month The Governor remains concerned about delays in notification of immigration status and intent to deport, albeit these have reduced slightly	Despite the appointment of two FNP specialists during the year, support for FNP remained inadequate. Problems mentioned to the Board included: the cost of international telephone calls; the lack of translation facilities (and the reluctance to use those facilities which exist).
3. On most days, no prisoners were brought to the library. What is being done to improve this?	Attendance at the library had suffered during the first half of our reporting year as pressures on regime brought about by staffing shortages inevitably led to a reduction in the number of staff who could escort prisoners to the library. However, in January the Governor introduced mandatory staffing for access to the library, which was positively received by the Librarian.	By the year end, the prison had appointed an officer to have specific responsibility for ensuring that men were able to visit the library.
4. What new initiatives are planned to improve rehabilitation?	A greater proportion of part-time activities is being introduced to enable a greater number of men (the vast majority of whom are on remand) to access some form of activity The Employment Advisory Board is actively looking to increase the number of employers coming to the prison The Independent Substance Free Living programme is being reintroduced with a focus on a non-punitive approach to	A number of charities – particularly the highly-regarded Stand Out programme - provided excellent services in preparing men for leaving prison. In an establishment where there is such a rapid turnover of men, it is difficult to provide rehabilitation services or prepare them for leaving prison

	addiction Wandsworth is part of an HMPPS pilot to work with men who are at particularly high risk on release – including support on substance misuse, coordination with probation and victim support. MOJ and the prison worked together during the reporting year to introduce a new workshop complex which would be scheduled to open in 2027.	
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Evidence sections 4 – 7

4. Safety

4.1 Reception and induction

The Board monitored reception and induction closely. The evidence showed a mixed picture. There were some positive observations, including occasions when induction was well attended by key partners, orderlies (trusted prisoners) supported the process effectively and the atmosphere was calm and constructive. However, these examples were not consistent, and **the Board remained concerned that the overall induction offer was unreliable and too dependent on staff availability, agency attendance and local workarounds.**

Reception pressures had a direct impact on the experience of newly arrived prisoners. On several occasions, late arrivals, limited staffing and difficulties identifying cell availability meant that prisoners were not processed until past midnight. The Board considered this neither decent nor conducive to a safe and settled first night in custody. Staff also reported that reception had for some time relied on goodwill, including staff starting early and working through breaks, rather than a sustainable staffing model.

The Board was particularly concerned about the inconsistency of the third-day induction process. Observations recorded repeated occasions when partner agencies were absent, including Catch 22 (a social business providing justice services), probation and other support services. At times only staff from chaplaincy and the offender management unit (OMU) were present, and on some days no agencies attended despite having been notified. Staff and prisoners told Board members that some agencies did not attend regularly or respond consistently. This limited the extent to which new arrivals could access information and support at the point when they were most likely to need it.

There were also concerns about the quality and accessibility of information provided to prisoners. The Board noted that the induction video was unavailable for weeks, foreign-language leaflets were limited, and copies of the induction magazine had run out in several languages. Where translated material was available, some important sections remained in English. These issues were significant because prisoners arriving at the establishment may be anxious, unfamiliar with prison processes and dependent on clear information to understand what will happen next, how to access support and how to maintain contact with family or legal representatives.

Overall, the Board found that reception and induction remained under pressure throughout the year. While individual staff were often committed and there were examples of good practice, the process was not consistently delivered to the standard required. **The Board considered that induction should be reviewed as a whole, with a clearer statement of purpose, reliable partner attendance, appropriate translated material, and a staffing model that enabled reception to operate safely and decently without reliance on informal goodwill.**

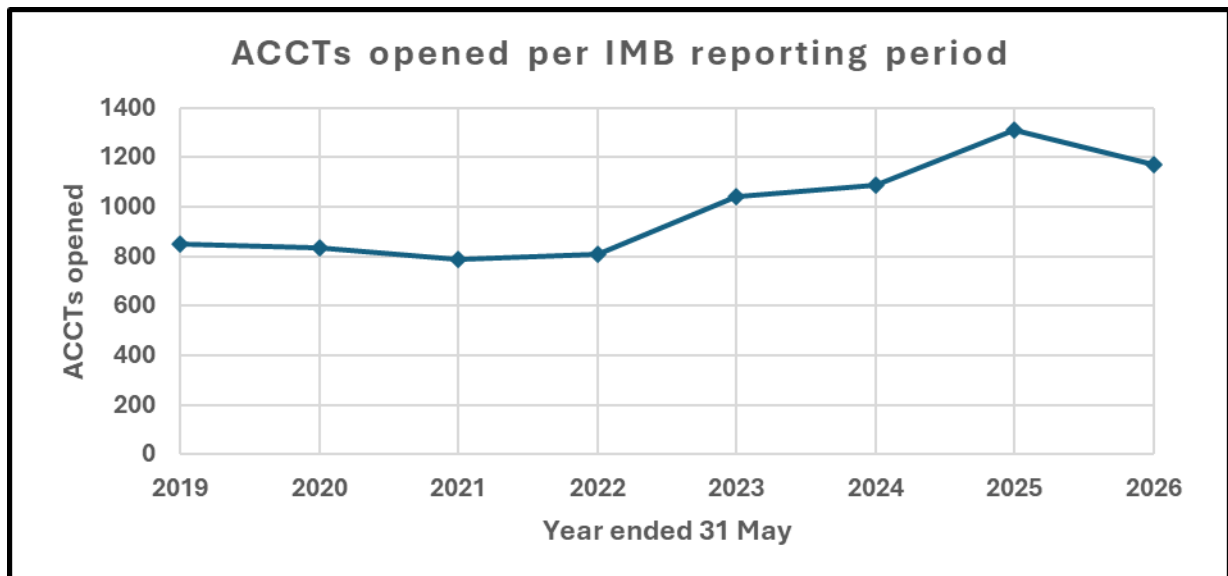
4.2 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody

There were five deaths (2024/2025: four) during the reporting period. One (2024/25: two) occurred outside the prison within 14 days of the deceased's release and was investigated by the Prison and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) as a death in custody.

Three men were FNPs and two were on ACCTs. The prison recorded two of the deaths as self-inflicted, one from natural causes and one from an unknown cause. The actual cause of death in each case will be determined at an inquest, which usually takes place a number of years after an individual's death.

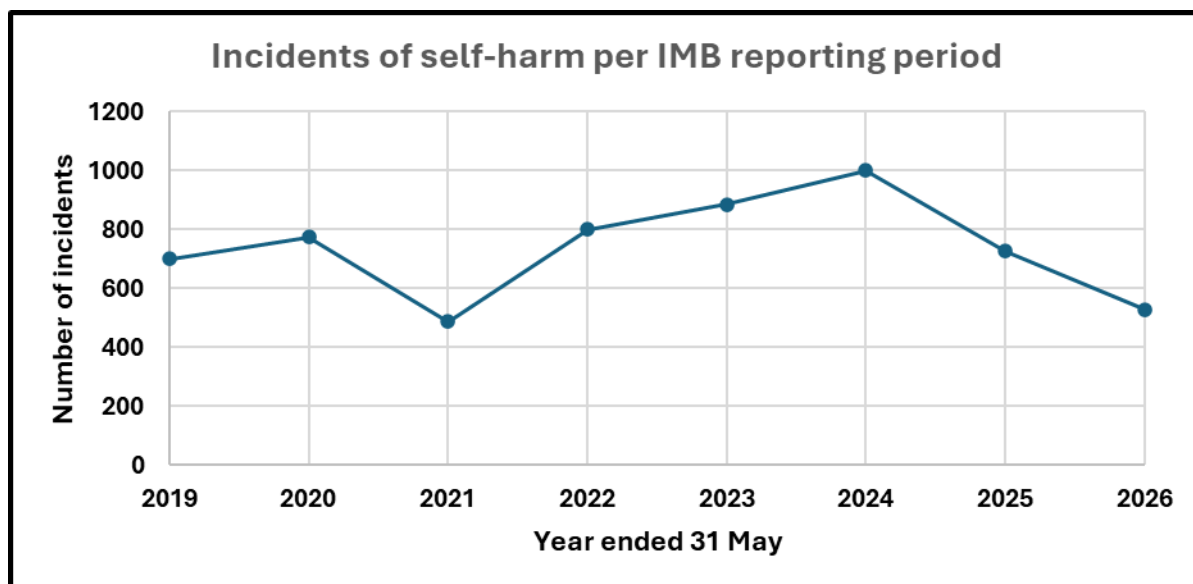
Deaths in custody are investigated by the PPO as normal procedure. PPO reports are not published until after the inquest. Consequently, the IMB cannot include in its annual report observations on the PPO's conclusions or recommendations related to any of the deaths within the reporting period.

There were 1,170 (2024/2025: 1,312) ACCTs opened during the period, a decrease of 11%. Some 54% of ACCTs (2024/2025: 57%) were opened in reception, FNIC (First Night in Custody) or E wing, the reception wing. This was not unexpected given that reception was a particularly difficult period for many prisoners, notably those who were vulnerable and/or in prison for the first time. Senior leadership expressed the view that ACCTs were kept open for too long and hence the number of open ACCTs at any one time was too high.



As in previous years, **there were no fixed times or locations for ACCT reviews so Board members were unable to monitor them on a systematic basis**, but rather attended randomly. They found the reviews they observed mostly to have been handled sensitively and with care, but with a few exceptions. During the reporting period three 'floor walker' roles were created for officers; the main aim was to educate staff in the good conduct of ACCT reviews.

There were 530 (2024/2025: 726) self-harm incidents during the reporting period, involving 332 men (2024/2025: 261). The 27% fall in the number of incidents represented a continuation of the downward trend.



Board members observed self-harm and safety matters generally being monitored closely by prison management. There were weekly and monthly safety review meetings (all generally well attended, including by residential staff) and also through CSIPs (challenge, support and intervention plans) used to support and manage prisoners who posed an increased risk of violence. The proper completion of ACCT documentation, including when an ACCT was opened, was a consistent issue identified at these meetings and the introduction of a new ACCT database as well as the floor walkers were steps taken to improve this. Missed ACCT reviews and response times to emergency cell bells were data tracked and discussed at these meetings.

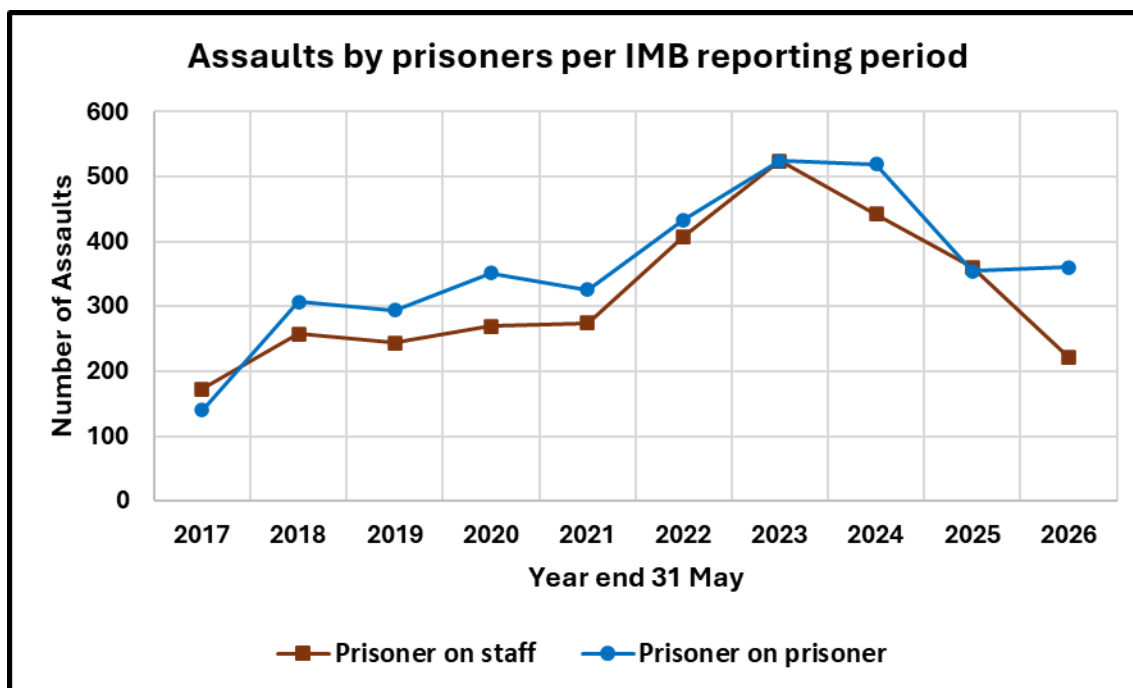
The Board also noted that the access of prisoners to 'listeners' – fellow prisoners trained by the Samaritans to listen to and support those in need of someone to talk to – was often compromised. Reasons included the prison having fewer than the target number of listeners available (which the prison attributed mainly to the high turnover of prisoners), delays in the listeners being unlocked from their cells and too many engagements being through cell doors rather than in private spaces such as listener suites.

4.3 Violence and violence reduction

The Board was concerned that the MOPAC (The Mayor's office for policing and crime) funding for the Prison Violence Reduction Service (PVRS) operated by Catch 22 ceased at the end of the reporting period. **Catch 22 had made important contributions to prisoners' and staff safety at HMP Wandsworth, helping to maintain an effective regime.** There were 222 (2024/25: 354) prisoner-on-staff assaults, 66 were referred to the police with 42 accepted for further investigation/ charged. There were 360 (2024/25: 360) prisoner-on-prisoner assaults with 38 referred to the police and 21 accepted for further investigation/ charged.

During the reporting period, there were 331 incidents of disorder (2024/25: 491), a reduction of 33% (2024/25: 45%). Incidents at height numbered 237 (2023/24: 314) and remained the main category.

These improvements were achieved through careful relationship building and engagement with the men through a variety of interventions, including: mediation, anger management, one to one advocacy and peer mentoring (specifically helping to embed a culture of safety within the prison).



Source: HMP Wandsworth

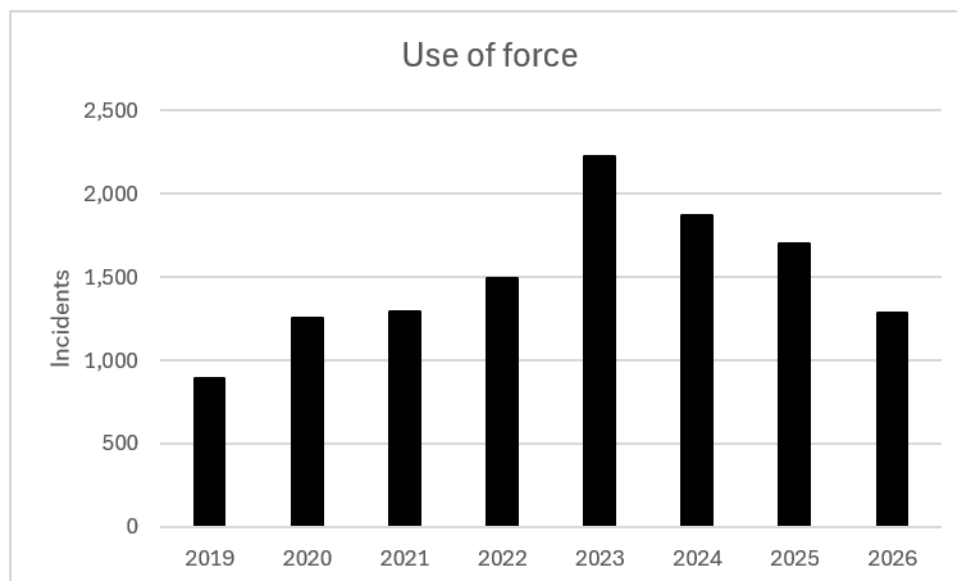
From the Board's observations, Catch22 staff and volunteers, through sustained, trusted engagement, developed an in-depth understanding of the men they worked with, including their motivations, risk factors, and the triggers most likely to lead to disruptive or violent behaviour. Using this insight, the Catch22 team made regular, high-impact contributions that directly supported stability, safety, and operational efficiency, including:

- **Supporting gang integration**, enabling rival gang members to be safely accommodated on the same wings, improving capacity management and maintaining a workable regime;
- **Identifying non-associations**, preventing violence before it occurred and reducing reactive interventions;
- **Assisting counter-corruption teams**, providing intelligence that strengthened institutional integrity;
- **Contributing to violence management and adjudications**, ensuring scarce resources were targeted where they had the greatest impact and that the most challenging individuals were managed in the most informed and effective way; and
- **Supporting negotiations**, working alongside staff to de-escalate incidents involving prisoners who disrupted the regime by climbing onto netting.

4.4 Use of force (UoF)

There was very little oversight of UoF by prison staff for most of the reporting year. Only cases where staff had been assaulted, or PAVA (an incapacitant spray) or batons were involved, were reviewed. The Board was told this was due to staff shortages. This changed towards the end of the period when new management for this area was appointed. **A weekly review of individual instances of UoF was initiated. Good practice and development needs for individual staff were noted and followed up by the team, and there were monthly assessments of patterns and trends across the prison.**

The prison was only able to supply five months of data from January for the items discussed below. Where figures were large enough, they have been pro-rated to 12 months to enable a comparison with 2024/25's information.



Source: HMP Wandsworth

There were estimated to be 1,286 (2024/25: 1,705) instances of UoF during the reporting period. Body-worn video cameras captured 73% (2024/25: 76%) of the incidents. There were 79 (2024/25: 108) planned events that involved use of force. The prison was confident that almost all incidents of UoF were recorded. The Board welcomed the reduction in UoF.

Reasons for UoF included:

- non-compliance with an instruction or lawful order: 37% (2024/25: 45%)
- assault and fighting: 26% (2024/25: 23%)
- threatening or abusive behaviour: 7% (2024/25: 6%)

Prisoners aged 18-29 were involved in 50% (2024/25: 59%) of the incidents; this cohort represented only 30% (2024/25: 33%) of the prison's population.

In the five months since January, PAVA was used 11 times, more than in the whole of 2024/25, where it was used seven times. Batons were used twice, as they were in the whole of 2024/25. There was one staff injury (and hospital visit) in the five-month period, a considerable improvement on 2024/25, when there were 42 staff injuries, and 14 hospital visits.

4.5 Preventing illicit items

The number of finds of illicit items recorded during the reporting period was 1,460 (2024/25: 1,328). This included 522 found in the enhanced gate security (EGS), where everyone arriving was subject to a rigorous airport style search. The remaining 938 were recovered from within the prison or from prisoners themselves. The prison only started recording finds at the EGS accurately in February, so it was likely that there has been a reduction in the number of illicit items found on prisoners since last year.

The main categories and number of finds were:

- mobile phones 237 (2024/25: 558)
- drugs 233 (2024/25: 384)

- tobacco 119 (2024/25: n/a)
- weapons 62 (2024/25: 163)
- fermenting liquid 22 (2024/25: 53)

The prison and police managed to reduce the overall number of drone incidents in the period to 96 (2024/25: 138). Nevertheless, **drones remained the biggest known way in which illicit items came into the prison.** The majority of the site was not covered by netting.

Drugs continued to be readily available in the prison mostly via drone. Random drug testing took place with a target of testing 70 men (5% of the total) each month. Over the year there were 887 tests of which:

- 28% were positive
- of the positive tests, 79% were for cannabis; 6% for cocaine; 2% for opiates: 13% others
- other substances included amphetamines, benzodiazepines, buprenorphine and methadone

There has been a drugs strategy in place since February, and an incentivised substance free living wing (ISFL) since November. The men on the ISFL liked being out of their cell for longer, but logistics were sometimes difficult (eg coordinating unlock times and methadone treatment with the other wings). Board members have observed a rehabilitative approach during adjudications, with punishments including incentives to improve behaviour. A drug strategy custodial manager has now been appointed. While this has not increased overall resource or the number of managers on D wing, the wing where drug users were housed, it has strengthened oversight and accountability for delivery of the strategy.

Change Grow Live (CGL), a health and social care charity, was contracted to provide support programmes to help reduce addiction within the prison. During the reporting year CGL had 2,767 referrals into structured psychosocial drug and alcohol treatments. Over this period, 363 group interventions were facilitated, with 2,866 attendees. Courses included:

- Foundations of rehabilitation programme, focussed on exploring values, identifying offending and substance misuse triggers, developing coping strategies, building motivation to change.
- Alcohol programme, giving the tools to change problematic behaviour and thinking patterns.
- Drug and alcohol groups, to increase understanding of drugs and/or alcohol.
- Health and wellbeing, covering a range of holistic topics to support recovery.

5. Fair and Humane Treatment

5.1 Accommodation, clothing, food

Prison living conditions remained inhumane. The wing-by-wing refurbishment project, managed by HMPPS, made little progress. As a result, K wing on Trinity remained closed (at a time when pressure on prison spaces across the estate was very high) and overall living conditions across the prison were unacceptably poor. One of the fundamental upgrades to K wing was to improve fire safety, which was a concern across the prison. The majority of cells did not have automatic smoke detectors inside the cell, but rather relied on domestic, battery-operated smoke detectors outside above the cell door. The prison was served with a pre-action letter from the Howard League for Penal Reform in October 2025, in relation to its failure to take the necessary steps to address the required fire safety legislation. Despite this, the prison continued to house men in cells that did not meet legal standards for fire safety.

In November 2025, **G wing in Trinity became a pilot residential unit designed to test a new way of running a prison wing** with a population randomised directly from E wing. It drew on national and international best practice, with strong inspiration from Scandinavian prisons, known for their positive safety outcomes, lower reoffending rates and better staff morale. Focussing on improving relations between prisoners and officers, men were also offered more time outside their cells and more communal spaces to reinforce the principles of autonomy, normality and community. **Early indications suggested that the wing was operating very effectively, especially when it was considered that prisoners were randomly allocated to the unit.** Data from the wing shows incidents since it opened.

Incidents rate November to May per 100 prisoners	G wing	Prison-wide
Prisoner-on-prisoner violence	0.39	2.16
Violence against staff	0.19	1.34
Self-harm	0.88	2.84

In January, **the Sunflower unit, was established with capacity for up to 20 men who had diagnosed or suspected cognitive and neurodevelopmental differences**, including autism, ADHD, and learning difficulties. Since opening, 156 referrals have been made to the unit. Referrals can be submitted by any member of staff and were reviewed at a weekly triage meeting, where decisions were made about admissions. To date 45 men have spent time on the unit, with stays ranging from a few days to longer-term placements.

Regime and time out of cell

The prison continued to struggle to deliver a reliable regime, particularly on the Heathfield centre. This was due to **ongoing staffing issues, with unacceptably high levels of sickness and unauthorised absence**. There were often insufficient staff to operate the regime. New shift patterns and a new management plan were introduced during the reporting period in the hope of improving the situation. However, continued staffing issues and poor communication between staff undermined delivery, which continued to fall below what was acceptable on Heathfield. Trinity showed a more positive picture.

Decency

Last year's focus on making the prison cleaner and tidier has been maintained. A decency competition was introduced to try and improve cleanliness - particularly of individual cells (communal areas in general were reported as being cleaner). Towards the end of the reporting period, a new clean and decency process went live. Wing cleaners were required to sign off completed tasks which were then checked by the cleaning officers. SOs also signed off the records daily and carried out spot checks to verify that tasks had been completed.

The challenging target for accommodation fabric checks (AFCs), covering doors and locks, windows and bars, walls, floors and ceilings was to inspect 50% of cells each day. This meant that every cell was checked regularly, often when prisoners were out on exercise, as that was the time of day when staff have the scope to carry out checks. Officers have had some successful finds of illicit items during AFCs. Decency checks on each cell (cell furniture and fittings, TVs, phones etc) were carried out once a month.

Showers and heating

The condition of many showers remained very poor, with mould and broken doors being observed by Board members. In addition, shower drains became blocked leading to flooding. Although there was an ongoing shower refurbishment programme, a number of the shower room ventilation systems were not upgraded, even in those units which were otherwise refurbished. This resulted in the rapid deterioration of the upgraded units, to the point where a number needed to be refurbished again.

The Board has previously reported how boiler failures resulted in the winter temperature in some cells dropping to 12 degrees centigrade. Considerable upgrades were made in the last reporting period, including installing replacement and temporary boilers. **However, the supply of heating and hot water continued to be inconsistent. The issue became so serious in November that it was reported as a 'Loss of Service' issue to HMPPS.**

This resulted in the command suite being opened and an additional 1,500 coats, 1,000 blankets, 2,000 instant noodles and soups being ordered for the men. Hot water issues persisted however, and in January it was agreed by the senior leadership team that any hot water outage that lasted for longer than 30 minutes would be reported to the national incident management unit, the operational coordination and crisis response hub within HMPPS. It serves as a central reporting point for emergencies, severe incidents, and critical operational challenges across the custodial and probation estate in England and Wales.

Kit (clothes, bedding and other basic items provided by the prison)

There were kit meetings every month and, in general, the weekly supply and exchange had become more reliable over the last year. Dirty kit, including prison issue clothing and bedding, was sent to HMP Bullingdon for washing. The kit returned was not necessarily the kit sent to HMP Bullingdon and men were finding that occasionally they received stained items in return. This was completely unacceptable and was being investigated. Staff carried out random checks on returned kit to ensure it was up to standard. Some men hoarded items in case the prison had insufficient to swap at kit change, an action which caused the very shortages they were trying to avoid. Items were misused, sometimes as floor mops or decency curtains and occasionally as currency. Officers have been told to remove any surplus kit found during cell checks. **Prisoners complained that there was not enough clean kit available and consequently HMP Wandsworth spent over £20k per month on replacement kit.**

Phones

When arriving in prison many men were anxious to contact family and friends, as well as banks, landlords etc. However, to do so they needed to access their mobile phone to retrieve numbers and in addition required prison approval to make the calls.

Mobile phones were held securely in reception where prisoners were generally asked to identify and write down key numbers. However, the Board found that often this did not happen, and in such cases, it could take over a week for prisoners to access their phone to record numbers. They had to be accompanied by an officer and the phone might also need to be charged. There were additional delays in obtaining contact details in cases where mobile phones had been retained as evidence by the police.

The prison carried out checks before permitting a prisoner to call any number and the Board received complaints from prisoners concerned that approval had not been given. Numbers were usually approved within a few days, and where they were not, there was a legitimate security, safety or witness protection reason, or an individual had not given consent to receiving calls.

Email and correspondence

The use of e-mails was a very effective way of communicating with prisoners, with messages delivered to and collected from prisoners daily. Correspondence into the prison was much slower, mainly because of the checks needed to ensure the letter did not contain illicit materials. **Royal Mail often failed to deliver mail promptly** and on one occasion, a Board member observed pallets of mail being delivered but to the wrong establishment.

Internally, the prison relied heavily on communicating with prisoners using the electronic kiosks located on the wings. In most cases this was a quick system. However, many important personal messages, such as details of a sentence calculation, or release dates still needed to be sent in hard copy through the internal mail. **The Board had to frequently draw staff's attention to the unnecessary delays in collecting and delivering internal mail.**

Canteen

Canteen is a facility where prisoners can buy snacks, toiletries, stationery and other essentials using their allocated funds. DHL, the canteen supply company, delivered on Wednesdays for distribution to prisoners on Fridays. After many complaints, fresh produce orders were now delivered to prisoners immediately, to prevent deterioration, especially in warm weather. Orders were delivered in sealed bags and deliveries to each door should have been supervised to prevent theft or error but often bags were left unattended. DHL had agreed to deliver to prisoners in person but that process ended after a few weeks. Incomplete orders or missing items were of frequent concern and prisoners required written confirmation from wing staff before receiving a refund. If a prisoner ordered canteen and was transferred or released before it was delivered, obtaining a credit could be a lengthy process. Stock lines were reviewed quarterly, with new items added and others removed. Sugar was no longer available as it can be used for brewing alcoholic drinks.

Food

The daily food budget remained at £3.12 per head throughout the period. The catering manager introduced a new menu reducing the amount of processed foods and providing healthier choices with more protein and less carbohydrate and greater choice of breakfast items. The menu commenced in May and the general response was favourable, although some were disappointed at the loss of burgers and chips. The reliability of kitchen

equipment and long delays in completing repairs was a constant problem. In April, four of seven large cooking pots were out of use and another eight pieces of equipment were awaiting repair. **The highly bureaucratic process for arranging repairs (requiring head office approval) and spare parts meant that three months was typically the shortest wait time and more usually up to six months.** The kitchen had two dishwashers and one was out of action for six months.

Laundry

The prison laundry has 45 semi-industrial washing machines and 45 dryers to handle prisoners' personal clothing. Laundry was kept separate so each machine or dryer only handled one prisoner's clothing at a time. Sometimes prison kit and bedding, which should be sent to HMP Bullingdon through kit change, was included with personal clothing. Laundry staff said this was because prisoners did not want to risk losing their (sometimes adapted) bedding etc to the central system, and so included it with personal kit. As a reception prison the majority of men can wear their own clothes, However, relatively few prisoners used the laundry for personal clothing, with many opting to wear prison-issued kit instead. This increased demand for prison clothing, adding to costs and prompting questions about the long-term sustainability and value for money of the laundry operation.

5.2 Segregation, special accommodation, adjudications

There was a total of 601 (2024/2025: 585) instances of prisoners being segregated in the CSU in the reporting period (with some prisoners having multiple stays). The average length of stay was 14 days. There were 11 instances where men were held in the CSU for longer than 42 consecutive days (the limit allowed without external authorisation), in comparison to three in the previous reporting year. Special accommodation (where items such as furniture, bedding and sanitation are removed in the interests of safety) was not used in the reporting period.

There were 5,137 (2024/2025: 6,860) adjudications (disciplinary hearings when a prisoner is suspected to have broken prison rules), a decrease of 25%. The number of adjudications found proven increased to 44.5% (2024/2025: 42.6%). The number referred to the police was 300 (2024/25: 493) and 148 (2024/25: 91) were passed to the independent adjudicator (IA), a judge, because of the seriousness of the offence.

The profile of the most frequent charges was very similar to the previous reporting period:

- possession of an unauthorised item, drugs or alcohol (35% - 2024/25: 35%),
- assault, violence or endangering safety (22% - 2024/25: 19%) and
- disobeying a lawful order (20% - 2024/25: 21%).

Board members observed adjudications regularly and on almost every occasion regarded them as thoughtfully and fairly handled by governors, notwithstanding that the number of adjudications in any single sitting was often very large and sometimes the supporting paperwork was poorly completed. Governors occasionally commented that there were too many adjudications and that sometimes charges were brought by inexperienced officers when better management of the situation on the wing would have resolved the matter.

5.3 Staff and prisoner relationships

Although HMP Wandsworth was fully staffed, the number who were absent continued to mean that shortages on the wings were a dominant theme throughout the year, often leading to a restricted regime. A mixture of too many new inexperienced staff and some supervising officers (SOs) who, through necessity, were promoted before they were ready for the added management responsibility, led to several complaints raised at prison council

meetings. The IMB received complaints about the behaviour and attitude of some staff towards the men in their care. **There was serious concern at the beginning of the reporting period about the dominant culture and attitude of some staff and there has been a concerted effort to improve that culture.** A wellbeing lead was appointed as part of the Governing governor's programme to invest in staff and demonstrate how important they were. A Hidden Heroes day in September and a staff wellbeing day in October were early examples of this. **During the year a significant number of initiatives were introduced to address the pressing need for cultural change and more engaged, motivated staff.** These included:

- **Enable**, started in January and its purpose was to ensure that officers with less than two years' experience received continuous formal training. 160 officers (47% of the cohort) fell into that category and were entitled to 12 protected training days over a 15 month period. The six to eight week modules delivered were relational practice, procedural justice and professional standards with an 83% attendance rate.
- **Growth project** was a three year programme across five London prisons to improve culture and relationships. Announced in June, by October its three staff champions had begun the first phase of the project - a cultural analysis of HMP Wandsworth. The team interviewed 85 staff and 56 prisoners, held focus groups and in March presented their report to the senior management team. It listed many areas of hope within the prison but the areas of most concern were poor communications between departments and from senior leaders, new officers feeling unsupported and unprepared with unclear and insufficient training and blurred work expectations.
- **StandOut** (a charity that empowered prisoners to rebuild their lives), ran a two-week personal and professional development programme in May. This was an encouraging development bringing together officers and prisoners in the same classroom. Participants consisted of five men and six officers. The aim was to invest in the development of both the officers and the prisoners through group and one to one coaching and to upskill them in communication, as well as exploring tools around empathy, mindsets and conflict management. All participants said they would recommend it to other colleagues and inmates.
- **New colleague mentoring** - One operational staff member was appointed in November with two non-operational from January to provide support to new staff.
- **The Scandinavian wing** opened in the Trinity unit in November with an invested staff, most of whom had gone to Sweden for training. Prisoners were randomly selected and were out of their cell for most of the day. The relationship between staff and the men has been much improved with staff feeling empowered by the new system and their responsibility within it. Prison staff from Sweden have subsequently visited HMP Wandsworth to learn new skills.

Prison council (PCM) and wing consultation meetings

PCMs continue to be a regular monthly occurrence as were the meetings in the preceding week when three topics to be discussed at the PCM were agreed. A lead prisoner managed the PCM, which was recorded and broadcast on Radio Wanno (the prison's internal radio station). Wing consultation meetings, an important opportunity for men to talk directly to senior wing staff about wing issues, were held much more regularly than last year.

5.4 Equality and diversity

The number of discrimination incident report forms (DIRFs) submitted by prisoners in the reporting period was 33 (2024/25: 43). Three relating to religion were upheld, as were two

relating to gender reassignment and one to sexuality. The rest were dismissed. The prison was selected to be part of a pilot for a new DIRF training package, aimed at upskilling DIRF investigators to ensure fairer assessment of cases.

Focus groups, where staff met prisoners to discuss their experiences of different protected characteristics under the Equality Act (2010) were continued, although at a reduced frequency when compared with last year.

There were seven wheelchair users in the prison at the end of the reporting period and eight wheelchair adapted cells, one of which was on E-wing - the induction wing. Consequently, any new prisoner who was a wheelchair user would either have to use a standard cell or remain on the induction wing for an extended period.

The Board was pleased by the improvement in the prison's recognition of the size and impact of the FNP population and that staff had undergone cultural awareness training. Nevertheless, some critical difficulties remained in meeting the needs of this diverse and complex population.

Catch 22 was reduced to a single representative for most of the year. Its contract to provide support to FNPs has now been extended by two years and includes two staff members. While the prison tried to maintain FNP representatives on each wing, this was difficult given the turnover of the FNP population.

Communication remained a challenge. The Big Word telephone translation service was not always operational and there were occasional concerns that some interpreters were not working in secure locations. The Board welcomed the possible introduction of computer supported interpretation.

5.5 Faith and pastoral support

The chaplaincy team has throughout the year been at the heart of the prison both spiritually and physically. There were 19 full or part-time chaplains covering upward of eleven faiths, plus seven prison visitors, who came under the chaplaincy umbrella. In addition, there was a large number of volunteers, who provided assistance when from time to time the team was not at full strength.

The chaplaincy supports men separated from their families through several parenting groups. It also provides bereavement support to between 13-15 men a month and its prison visitors reach out to many of the more vulnerable men. During the year, educational sessions and communal study opportunities have been reintroduced on the wings and multi-faith spaces. These included philosophy, bible study, Islamic study and Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, and Sikh classes.

Contacting the chaplaincy team was usually via the kiosk, with over 400 applications a month. Chaplains visited the CSU daily and regularly attend ACCT reviews, which put some pressure on their staff resources. On a typical day chaplaincy could be asked to attend far more ACCT reviews than those that had a spiritual need for their presence. Chaplaincy was also a consistent presence in the new prisoners' induction process.

Eight years after it was closed because of safety concerns, the chapel was still out of use so all services, apart from Muslim prayers, were held in the former upper visits hall in Heathfield which, since September, has been fully airconditioned. There were designated mosques in Heathfield and Trinity. Services were well attended with regularly over 200 Muslim worshippers at Friday prayers. Over 100 worshippers attended Christian services on Saturday (Roman Catholic) and Sunday (Church of England).

The chaplaincy team also extended its support to staff members. Understanding the challenges operational staff faced, the chaplains offered assistance and counselling. Chaplains have been actively involved in HMP Wandsworth's 175th anniversary

celebrations including arranging a very moving Thanksgiving Service at Southwark Cathedral in March. They also played an active part in staff wellbeing days. During the year the Governor awarded the Hidden Heroes Team award and the Team of the Year award to chaplaincy.

5.6 Complaints

There were 676 (2024/25: 980) applications (prisoners' written representations to the Board). This was 31% fewer than in the previous year and on average 13 applications were received each week (2024/2025: 19). The reasons for this significant fall, the first for five years, were not clear. The decrease applied to each of the 14 categories; the data are shown in section 8 on p33.

Staff/prisoner concerns was the largest category with 103 (2024/25: 125) applications accounting for 15% (2024/25:13%) of the total. This category included prisoners' concerns about the actions of, or their treatment by, staff. Accommodation, which was the largest category last year, nearly halved from 148 to 77. The Board considered that the fall was unlikely to be attributable to prisoners being satisfied with their living conditions as, in the opinion of the Board, they have not improved to any material extent since last year. Other categories with high numbers were property (internal) and health.

5.7 Property

The Board received a total of 121 (2024/25: 149) applications from prisoners about property both internal and external. The most common complaints included the time taken for items sent or handed in to reach prisoners; property lost when moving cells or establishments and personal clothing sent to the laundry but not returned. The time taken to resolve these issues caused considerable frustration to prisoners.

The Board welcomed improvements in staff training on property management and that clearer guidance was given to families and prisoners regarding what property prisoners were allowed. The staffing of the property department continued to be a matter of concern with delays of up to a month in delivering property to prisoners when experienced staff were not available. In 35 (2024/25: 28) cases the prison compensated prisoners for the loss of property.

6. Health and wellbeing

6.1 Healthcare general

The Board remained concerned that the prison did not give sufficient priority to the health, safety, and wellbeing of prisoners. Issues included:

- Frequent absence of officers at medical hatches on the wings resulted in patients being unable to access medication
- Lack of in-cell safety lockers for time-critical medication
- Inconsistent attendance by prison managers at the monthly local delivery Board strategy and policy meetings resulted in healthcare and other stakeholder managers being unable to raise and discuss concerns.

Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust, the healthcare provider, undertook a deep clean of the Addison and Jones inpatient units. The Board was, however, still concerned about the long waiting times for repairs to equipment and cell damage. The Board was told, for example, that the flooring in Jones unit was not compliant with the infection control standard.

The Nightingale unit was designed without healthcare input and this created problems, for example the dental suite was unusable because its door was too narrow so the dentist's chair could not be moved in. Dental clinics did not transfer to the new site in the reporting year.

The open plan nature of offices in Nightingale meant that confidential conversations regarding patients' medical needs were sometimes made difficult, thus affecting good practice and timely attention.

The absence of residential space resulted in the most vulnerable patients remaining housed in the in-patient unit, a considerable distance from Nightingale. Consequently, managers spent time moving between sites, thus reducing the amount of time spent following up concerns.

6.2 Physical healthcare

The Board continued to be very concerned that the six-bed Jones unit was far too small for the size of the prison population. This inadequacy was aggravated by the lack of wheelchair-accessible cells on the wings, resulting in beds in the Jones unit being occupied from time to time by otherwise healthy wheelchair users.

All prisoners undertook first day screening within seven days of arrival). Healthcare staff ensured that the small number of prisoners not seen in the secondary screening was identified, and ACCTs were opened for anyone refusing to engage, or presenting challenging behaviour.

The average number of patients failing to attend booked clinic appointments increased to 32% (2024/25: 28%). In some cases (10%) non-attendance was due to patients choosing not to attend or having been transferred or released. The use of multiple clinic locations and staffing shortages reduced the availability of escorts, as designated healthcare officers were often redeployed to other duties.

Staff reported to the Board that there were incidents of patients arriving for their appointments without their ACCT documentation. The Board was concerned that, in some cases, officers decided, independently, which patients would be seen when clinic time was limited.

The average waiting time for a clinic appointment improved to 18 days (2024/25: 28). Patients who did not attend their appointment were rescheduled, but their absence

resulted in longer waiting times in particular areas: psychology (42 days), optician (32 days) and physiotherapy (30 days).

6.3 Mental healthcare

The 12-bed Addison ward remained unfit for purpose, with insufficient beds, and cells frequently out of use for long periods while awaiting repair. The mental health operations manager continued to review and streamline assessment processes, leading to efficient triage and monitoring. The monthly caseload was lower at 104 (2024/25: 166) reflecting the more effective referral system.

Reflective practice sessions for officers and operational governors were effective in supporting referral procedures. The mental health weekly review meeting closely monitored patients into 'zones', so that those who could not be relocated to the Addison unit were supported.

An average of three patients per month were transferred to a secure hospital; waiting time was up to three months.

6.4 Social care

Social care assessment needs of prisoners were referred to Wandsworth adult social services, and CGL provided the service. Fifty-five referrals were made in the reporting period. Closer working reduced the waiting time from referral to assessment, and only two cases were outside the target time of 10 days. Fifteen clients received a social care package, and all reported receiving excellent service.

7. Progression and resettlement

7.1 Education, library

Over the reporting period **the prison increased the number of activity spaces from 778 to 985, with opportunities for work, learning and rehabilitation** (including prison jobs (404), industries (123), education (292), interventions (110)). The offer was advertised with posters, prospectuses and promoted on Radio Wanno as well as in the induction programme.

The prison extended the number of modular and short-term qualifications achievable within six weeks, enabling prisoners to complete units and courses before release or to take with them if transferred. By introducing more part-time spaces, the offer was available to more prisoners. The prison expanded its English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) provision and FNPs were also able to apply for any activity. Over the year, 1,171 prisoners successfully completed a course.

The proportion of prisoners allocated to purposeful activity for four sessions a week (classified as 'half-time') or more, rose from just over a fifth at the start of the period to a third by May. However, the Board was concerned that too many men remained in their cells for much of the day with no purposeful activity, with nearly 40% allocated to no activity.

The limited opportunities for VPs was an ongoing source of frustration for them, restricted to kitchen work and limited on-wing classroom activities. The prison was working to develop more vocational courses and in-cell activities for VPs and other restricted prisoners. Distance learning courses were offered by the Open University and Prisoners' Education Trust.

The high rate of inactivity contrasted with the availability of activity places. Of over 400 jobs advertised in May, 120 were unfilled. Many places on courses were empty; at the end of the reporting year, of the 299 education spaces available only 206 were allocated. Responsibility for allocating wing jobs moved from the activities team to the wings.

Prisoners could apply for activities only when they had completed induction and online assessment of basic skills. However, induction attendance was variable (from 40% to 76%) and completion rates low (typically between 30% and 40% of prisoners). The Board was concerned about these low rates and the impact they had on the number of prisoners with no access to purposeful activity. The prison tried to fill vacancies but staff shortages led to delays in processing applications for activities.

Attendance figures for prisoners allocated to education and industries was poor (as low as 57% and 71% respectively). There were many reasons given for non-attendance. Some were marked as 'acceptable' (clashes with other appointments or regime or staffing constraints). Unacceptable attendance rates were typically 10% or less for industries, but ranged from 19% to 32% for education. Reasons included prisoners not being motivated to attend and the prison looked at ways to incentivise attendance but had limited options with remand prisoners while consequences for non-attendance were limited.

Library attendance improved significantly during the year as staff were made available to escort prisoners. Outreach book trolleys were placed on the wings. Over 7,000 books were borrowed during the year and approximately 3,500 men visited the library. A 'debt pod' was installed in the library and provided confidential advice from the debt agency. It was used by 43 men since opening in March.

7.2 Vocational training, work

Vocational training courses were available offering qualifications including British industrial cleaning services (BICS), textiles, multi skills, catering, barista, radio production and health and safety. The BICS course proved particularly successful and was completed, or partly completed, by over 1,000 men.

A review of risk criteria meant more men became eligible to participate in training. The main barriers to running courses consistently remained insufficient classroom spaces and a difficulty in recruiting suitable trainers.

A new scheme, clean, rehabilitative, enabling and decent (CRED) was introduced inviting men with the appropriate skills to work with the Government Facility Services Ltd (GFSL) team carrying out decorating and minor repair jobs around the prison. The scheme proved very successful with men who enjoyed being able to work alongside the skilled prison workforce gaining experience and certification.

Work opportunities on and off the wing were in demand and generally well attended with jobs including painting, cleaning, gardens, laundry, recycling and kitchen. Over the year 8,532 men engaged in work.

Across the prison's three gyms, an average of 2,103 men attended each month, an increase of 2.3% over the same period the previous year. Gym remained a popular activity and the return to use of the astroturf was well received by prisoners and staff.

7.3 Offender management, progression

The OMU was involved in two widely reported releases in error during the reporting year, although neither was the fault of the prison or its staff. Subsequently a series of corrections was made to the release procedure, including trialling a digital tool to calculate sentences and forward warrants. Previously, reception staff had reported that release paperwork could take a long time to process, especially at night when they had other duties. The impact of these new tools has yet to be seen.

The Board observed that many prisoners' case notes were not being updated promptly: in one case a prisoner's notes had no updates for 110 days. FNPs' notes were more likely to have longer periods without any updates. The key worker system continued to be rolled out across the reporting period, although relatively few meetings (30-40 per week) were held relative to the large and transient population of the prison. The Board was concerned that there was insufficient support for prisoners.

7.4 Family contact

The Prison Advice and Care Trust (PACT) charity managed the visitor centre, provided food for sale in the visits hall and supervised the play area. Due to short staffing, the play area was only open sporadically. The food available was of poor quality, primarily crisps, instant noodles, sweets and soft drinks. PACT also provided activities during family days, where prisoners met their families in a relaxed, informal environment. **Family days were hosted throughout the year and provided a friendly and relaxed atmosphere for men and their families to enjoy time together.** Prison staff played a key role in ensuring the success of these events.

Staff and prisoners complained that registering visitors for virtual visits, which were managed centrally, was an overly complex process, often resulting in prisoners not being able to speak to friends and family abroad. This was compounded by the very expensive domestic and international call costs charged by BT phones through its centrally managed contract. BT was often slow to repair broken phones or other faults, which combined to limit contact with friends and family and was a possible driver of demand for illicit mobile phones among prisoners.

7.5 Resettlement planning

The local employment advisory board was successfully re-established with membership drawn from the prison, industry and supporting charities.

Within the prison, the employment hub provided support and guidance. **During the year 684 men engaged with the hub and 63 were assisted into employment post release.** Data on post-release employment was limited to those on post-release supervision (a relatively small number of the prison's population).

The remand project continued to offer support to prisoners pre-release, and over the reporting year provided advice, information and support to 563. The leavers lounge in the reception area gave support including clothing to 635 prisoners leaving custody. Staffing issues meant it was not able to be fully open Monday to Friday, and unfortunately was unavailable to help prisoners released late in the day.

8. The work of the IMB

Board members worked extremely well together as a team. Meetings were held every month, starting with a half-hour training session on a wide range of subjects.

Board members have an extensive knowledge of the workings of, and conditions in, the prison. They made 609 (2024/2025: 694) visits to the prison and responded to 676 (2024/2025: 980) applications from prisoners during the reporting period.

Recommended complement of Board members	18
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	17
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	14
Number of members joining within the reporting period	0
Number of members leaving within the reporting period	3
Total number of Board meetings during the reporting period	12
Total number of visits to the establishment	609

Applications to the IMB

Code	Subject	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
A	Accommodation	77	148	157	114	66
B	Discipline	17	31	20	33	21
C	Equality and diversity (inc. religion)	11	18	34	47	31
D	Purposeful activity	47	82	40	56	26
E 1	Family/visits (inc. mail and phone)	60	88	97	69	38
E 2	Finance/pay	42	60	53	29	24
F	Food/kitchen	10	16	29	10	7
G	Health	75	116	132	119	59
H 1	Property (within current establishment)	84	106	75	74	35
H 2	Property (external)	37	43	25	38	19
H 3	Canteen	28	37	57	22	20
I	Sentence related	59	86	81	72	64
J	Staff/prisoner concerns	103	125	90	71	52
K	Transfers	11	19	22	28	42
L	Miscellaneous	15	5	7	14	31
Total number of applications		676	980	919	796	535



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