



HM Prison &
Probation Service

Action Plan: HMP Forest Bank

Action Plan Submitted: 24 March 2025

A Response to the HMIP Inspection: 09 – 20 December 2024

Report Published: 24 March 2025

INTRODUCTION

HM Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) and HM Inspectorate of Probation for England and Wales are independent inspectorates which provide scrutiny of the conditions for, and treatment of prisoners and offenders. They report their findings for prisons, Young Offender Institutions, and effectiveness of the work of probation, and youth offending services across England and Wales to Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS). In response to the report HMPPS / MoJ are required to draft a robust and timely action plan to address the priority and key concerns. Action plans provide specific steps and actions to address the priority and key concerns, that are clear, outcome focussed, measurable, achievable, and relevant with the owner and timescale of each step clearly identified. Action plans are sent to HMIP and published on the GOV.UK website. Progress against the implementation and delivery of the action plans will also be monitored and reported on.



ACTION PLAN: HMIP REPORT

ESTABLISHMENT: HMP FOREST BANK

1. Rec No	2. Concerns	3. Response Action Taken/Planned	4. Responsible Owner	5. Target Date
	Priority concerns			
1	<p>Prisoners often spent too long in the bleak and unwelcoming reception unit, then arrived late to the induction unit where most cells were poorly equipped.</p> <p>Leaders had not done enough to understand and improve the prisoner experience in the early days of custody.</p>	<p>HMP Forest Bank will improve the reception environment, standard of first night cells and the Early Days in Custody (EDiC) experience by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Head of Residence (HoR) and the Reception Manager will undertake a task and finish group, inviting User Voice and key stakeholders, with the main objective of making the reception area a more welcoming environment, to include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Improving the amount of accessible key information available in reception waiting areas for new admissions, to relieve anxiety and pass the time. Ensuring trained Peer Mentors are located in reception, to provide information and advice about prison procedures, highlight gang violence and identify immediate risks. New receptions will be offered toiletries, food and a shower either in reception or on the first night unit. The EDiC Manager will employ additional wing cleaners/painters, supported by Peer Mentors, to clean/equip cells in readiness for new arrivals, ensuring available cells are checked so they are graffiti free and equipped with essential items, including a kettle, working television and telephone so they are able to contact their support network or the Samaritans. The EDiC Manager will be responsible for conducting and recording daily pre-occupancy assurance checks for cell ready effectiveness. 	Director	<p>June 2025</p> <p>May 2025</p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The HoR will review the reception pathway to ensure the process is streamlined, identifying and seeking to resolve any barriers to minimise the amount of time prisoners spend in reception. Data will be systemically analysed each month and monitored at the monthly Safer Prison meeting, where appropriate actions can be generated to reduce waiting times. The Head of Prisoner Safety (HoPS) and the HoR will expand the current Induction process, increasing capacity, to improve the process and help to better identify and respond to prisoners' individual needs and risks. This will include implementing a process that clearly identifies, tracks and reviews a prisoner's Induction journey, along with an exit survey, all of which will be monitored monthly by the HoR at the Safer Prison meeting. 		<p>June 2025</p> <p>June 2025</p>
2	Levels of violence were high, and too many prisoners felt unsafe.	<p>HMP Forest Bank will aim to reduce levels of violence and incentivise positive behaviour by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The HoPS will review, refresh and implement a revised Violence Reduction Strategy that will be data driven to identify and address the causes and drivers of violence. This will include a review of the Core Day to help reduce opportunities for spontaneous acts of violence at identified key points of the day. The HoR will review and publish the Incentives Policy (IP) scheme. There will be a focus on improving the offer available, to motivate prisoners to attend and engage in activities, rehabilitation, reducing reoffending work and to remain drug free. The review will be informed by consultation with prisoners and will include arrangements for those who may have a specific need and find it difficult to engage in the incentives scheme. 	Director	<p>June 2025</p> <p>September 2025</p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The HoPS and the Violence Reduction-Coordinator (VRC) will review the effectiveness of Challenge, Support and Intervention Plans (CSIP) by undertaking a learning review of violence from the previous 6 months, to include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Intelligence gathered from investigations and identifying gaps not addressed on the CSIP Plan. Learning will be shared via the weekly Safety Intervention Meeting (SIM) and Safer Prison meeting. Providing additional support to Case Managers in the completion of CSIP Plans, underpinned by assurance checks with feedback provided to the Case Manager, with good practice being discussed at the SIM. Sharing safety learning via the prison-wide Team Huddle newsletter. Ensuring the safety team collate and review all data relating to violence, including intelligence from investigations, to improve the understanding of causes and drivers of violence, for discussion at the multi-disciplinary Safer Prison meeting where appropriate actions to reduce violence will be generated and added to the consolidated safety action plan. The timescales, effectiveness and impact of all the actions will be monitored at the meeting. 		<p>October 2025</p> <p>Complete</p>
3	<p>The availability of illegal drugs posed a significant threat to the stability of the prison. Positive drug tests remained very high and not enough had been done to reduce the demand for illegal substances.</p>	<p>HMP Forest Bank will aim to reduce the availability of drugs and support those using illicit substances by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Drugs Strategy Lead (DSL) will review, refresh and implement the Drugs Strategy in partnership with the substance misuse treatment provider Change Grow Live (CGL). The DSL will ensure there is improved strategic oversight and attendance at the monthly drug strategy meeting, where data and trends will be discussed that generate actions to support the reduction in the supply and demand, and to monitor the effectiveness of the Drug Strategy. 	Director	September 2025



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The HoR and CGL will relaunch the Incentivised Substance Free Living (IFSL) unit to create a safe, supportive environment that encourages, motivates and incentivises those prisoners wishing to reduce dependency on illicit drugs and desist from involvement in acts of violence and/or self-harm linked to substance misuse. Voluntary urine testing will be reintroduced as part of the relaunch to support substance free living. The Deputy Director and Head of Security will explore the possibility of reintroducing regular support from HMPPS regional dog teams to assist with prisoner and staff searching. 		<p>July 2025</p> <p>May 2025</p>
4	<p>Patients were not able to access emergency care at outside hospitals within expected timeframes. The lack of prison officers allocated to escort duties created unacceptable delays for some acute and potentially life-threatening health conditions.</p>	<p>HMP Forest Bank and the Health Provider (Spectrum) will improve access to emergency care at outside hospitals within expected timeframes by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing the external escort staff provision by 20%, which will facilitate one additional unplanned escort during the core day Monday – Friday. The Head of Healthcare (HoH) has completed a clinical audit on escorts with the report shared with Sodexo to identify areas for learning with regards to management of unplanned urgent and emergency escorts, to improve access to secondary care. The HoH, Spectrum Director of Nursing and the Sodexo Senior Leadership team are reviewing the implementation of a virtual ward model with Salford Royal Foundation Trust to establish an effective line of communication with a view to preventing admission to hospital where appropriate. The HoH will introduce a suspected fracture pathway to reduce the time taken for diagnosis and treatment of suspected fractures. This will be shared with Spectrum colleagues and Sodexo. 	Director/ Health Provider	<p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>September 2025</p> <p>May 2025</p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commissioners quarterly Health Partnership Boards (PPB) quality and performance meetings will monitor the contract, including the provision of prisoner's access to emergency care. 		Complete
5	Leaders did not ensure that all prisoners had access to, and were engaged in, purposeful activities and that the personal development targets set were effective.	<p>HMP Forest Bank will improve prisoners access and engagement in purposeful activities and support effective development target setting by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In conjunction with the Deputy Director's review of the core-day (See concern 2), the Head of Reducing Reoffending (HoRR) and Head of Education Skills and Work (HoESW) will review the activity provision and available activity spaces, to allow more prisoners to access purposeful activity. Endeavouring to regularly have at least 80% of the eligible population allocated to an activity. The HoR will review and publish the IP scheme (See concern 2). There will be a focus on improving the offer available to motivate prisoners to attend and engage in activities, rehabilitation, and reducing reoffending work. The HoESW will review the Education Skills and Work (ESW) induction process to ensure it is effective and meets the needs and challenges of the population. The HoESW will moderate 10% of Digital Personal Learning Plans (DPLP), to ensure development targets and goals set are individualised and effective in their allocation of work pathways for prisoners. Individual feedback will be provided to the Careers Education and Initial Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) team member completing the DPLP, with assurance audits monitored at the monthly Quality Improvement Group (QIG) for monitoring of improvements. The HoR and HoESW will work collaboratively to ensure residential wing workers are effectively engaged in their jobs through the upskilling of staff. 	Director	<p>May 2025</p> <p>June 2025</p> <p>September 2025</p> <p>May 2025</p> <p>May 2025</p> <p>October 2025</p>



	Key concerns			
6	<p>Levels of self-harm remained high. Leaders did not use data well to identify and respond to emerging patterns of self-harm and had not identified clear, targeted actions to reduce it.</p>	<p>HMP Forest Bank will aim to reduce levels of self-harm by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The HoPS will implement the Safer Prison Template that supports the identification of drivers of self-harm, and conduct a review of current data sets for self-harm. Results will be considered at the SIM and Safer Prison meetings to ensure the data includes triggers, trends and emerging risks to generate clear and identifiable actions to reduce self-harm. • The HoPS will work closely with HMPPS Safer Prison Group to review current processes for improvements and shared learning from the prison estate. Feedback will be discussed at the SIM and Safer Prison meetings together with any actions. • The HoPS and HoESW will review safety data to ensure a co-ordinated approach for those requiring support, with clear targeted actions to reduce their level of self-harm, including encouraging prisoners supported by Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCTs) to engage in meaningful purposeful or recreational activity. • The HoPS and HoESW will review the Safer Prison Support booklet. The revised booklet will identify all support resources available to prisoners and will be published and communicated across the prison and used as a resource for ACCT Case Co-ordinators. • The HoPS will ensure all prisoners, including those identified as being vulnerable, have access to listeners/Samaritans whenever requested, with access being monitored via feedback from monthly Listeners' meetings. • The Deputy Director and the HoPS will explore the introduction of strategically placed listener suites across the prison, so conversations can be conducted in a safe and confidential environment. 	Director	<p>June 2025</p> <p>June 2025</p> <p>May 2025</p> <p>June 2025</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>September 2025</p>



7	Leaders were not sufficiently visible on residential units to support, mentor, and challenge staff, many of whom were inexperienced and struggled to manage the prisoners in their care.	<p>HMP Forest Bank will increase the visibility of Leaders on residential units to support, mentor, and challenge staff by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locating both Heads of Residence on the residential units for increased visibility and provide support to staff by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Providing opportunities for immediate coaching and mentoring of their junior colleagues. 2. Utilising the weekly Residential Managers' meeting to provide guidance, support and mentoring to Middle Managers, by sharing learning from good working practices. • The Human Resource Business Partner will refresh the mentor scheme, to provide a single point of contact, an experienced Prison Custody Officer (PCO), for each new PCO following their graduation. A Learner Coach is also assigned for a period of 12 months following graduation. The Learner coach will receive feedback from the PCO and will update their continuous development plan, where a learning need is identified. The Learner coach will either support or direct the mentor PCO to assist. • The HoR and Residential Managers will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remind all residential staff at meetings, handovers and briefings of the expected standards of prisoners, and how to challenge poor behaviour and rule breaking. 2. Conduct daily observations at key points in the core day, such as main movements, association periods and the serving of meals, to support staff in challenging negative behaviour. 	Director	<p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>May 2025</p>
8	Leaders had not been ambitious in their efforts to engage, motivate and meet the needs of the growing number of remanded prisoners, many of whom	<p>HMP Forest Bank will improve the offer available to remand prisoners by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The HoRR and HoESW will develop a Remand Strategy based on the recent needs analysis. They will embed the new strategy ensuring there is improved communication, collaboration and information sharing 	Director	August 2025



	spent long periods at the prison.	<p>between key stakeholders. The strategy will drive increased staff awareness through regular briefings and communications, around the importance of encouraging attendance at purposeful activity for all prisoners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The HoRR and HoESW will implement an action plan to support the Remand Strategy in line with the needs analysis. The action plan will be monitored at the quarterly Reducing Reoffending Meeting. • The review of the ESW induction process (see concern 5), will ensure it meets the needs of the whole population (including those on remand) to ensure progression, as some prisoners can spend a long time on remand. 		<p>August 2025</p> <p>May 2025</p>
9	Governance of the use of force was not sufficiently robust. Too few incidents were captured on body-worn video camera, and too few incidents were scrutinised by leaders.	<p>The HoPS will improve the governance of Use of Force (UoF) to processes by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring at least 10% of all spontaneous UoF incidents each month are reviewed at the weekly UoF committee scrutiny meeting. • Inviting all key stakeholders to the scrutiny meeting, including prisoner advocates such as the chaplaincy, to ensure there is independent oversight. • The HoPS will refresh the prison wide communication plan, focusing on the Use of Body Worn Video Cameras (BWVC) in accordance with the HMPPS BWVC Policy Framework. • Monitoring of timescales, effectiveness, and impact of all the actions will take place at the monthly UoF Meeting including any identified disproportionate UoF. 	Director	August 2025
10	Prisoners did not have confidence in the complaints process. There was often a	The Head of Performance will review and improve the complaints process by:	Director	



	<p>lack of investigation into the issues raised, including allegations about staff, and the quality of some responses was poor.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaking a review of the Complaints Assurance Checklist to include the key features of a good response, including being thoroughly investigated, the complainant spoken too, outcomes and responses being evidenced based and apologies provided when required. This will support the complaints auditor when assessing the quality of responses, along with providing feedback to coach/assist complaint investigators. • Updating the complaint response pro-forma to include prompts, advice, and guidance on 'What a Good Complaint Response' should include. • Scrutinising complaints data to identify concerns and any potential disproportionality, with results shared and discussed at the monthly performance meeting, where actions will be generated to improve outcomes. • Reviewing 10% of complaints issued on a sample basis by Senior Leaders for quality assurance checks. • Ensuring all complaints and concerns about low-level bullying are adequately investigated and reported. • The Deputy Director will quality assure 100% of all staff related complaints to monitor compliance and quality. 		<p>July 2025</p> <p>July 2025</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>July 2025</p> <p>July 2025</p> <p>May 2025</p>
11	<p>Wing staff lacked awareness of the additional needs of prisoners in some protected groups. As a result, prisoners with disabilities, neurodiversity or limited English often struggled to have their day-to-day needs met.</p>	<p>HMP Forest Bank will improve staffs' awareness to support prisoners with Protected Characteristics (PC) by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Equalities Team will ensure: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The daily briefing sheet identifies those individuals identified with a PC or having additional needs who require additional support by wing staff, so they can be discussed at handovers and briefings to support them appropriately. 	<p>Director/ Education Provider/ Health Provider</p>	<p>July 2025</p>



		<p>2. Additional guidance through communications and or training, to increase staff understanding of individuals with a PC or additional need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Foreign National co-ordinator will work with Induction staff to identify foreign national prisoners with limited English who may require access to interpretation services. They will communicate a 'User Friendly' guide on how and when wing staff should access the service. • The HoH and the Equalities Team will implement a formal 'buddy' system of peer support for prisoners with disabilities, including formal peer support arrangements. Additional training will be supplied to Diversity representatives to support their peers with disabilities. • Personalised Support Plans for neurodivergent prisoners will be shared with residential staff to help them engage and support these prisoners. • The HoR will work with the Equality Team in a review of Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans to provide staff additional information, to support the additional needs of identified prisoners. The action will be monitored at the bi-monthly Diversity Inclusion Action Team meeting. 		<p>June 2025</p> <p>August 2025</p> <p>April 2025</p> <p>July 2025</p>
12	<p>Leaders had not ensured that vulnerable prisoners had access to an appropriate variety of education and skills sessions that would help prepare them for their next steps. Nor did they make sure that prisoners who are neurodivergent or who need extra support received the help that they needed to remove barriers to education, skills or work.</p>	<p>The Deputy Director and the HoESW will improve the access and support available to Vulnerable Prisoners (VP), including those requiring additional support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing the core day (See concern 2), regime and activity places review (See concern 5), to explore ways to increase the available activity provision and access to education provision. • Reviewing the education curriculum to ensure it is equitable for all prisoners, including those located on the VP units. • Investing in an additional teacher whose role will be to provide outreach support to prisoners who are neurodivergent, or who need extra support to remove barriers to accessing ESW. 	Director/ Education Provider	<p>May 2025</p> <p>May 2025</p> <p>May 2025</p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The HoESW will, as part of the ESW induction process review, implement a system to ensure all VP requiring the screening test to identify if they are neurodivergent, is completed within two weeks of arrival, so they can receive the necessary support to allow them to fully engage in prison life or ESW activities. The HoESW will introduce regular unemployment initiatives targeting the VP population. They will ensure that all VP are encouraged and enabled to access education and skills. Data will be collected for its effectiveness and reviewed at the QIG. 		<p>August 2025</p> <p>April 2025</p>
13	Leaders did not ensure that all workshop activities provided prisoners with a meaningful and productive learning experience.	<p>The HoESW will improve the learning experience in workshop activities by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commencing upskilling sessions with all workshop tutors on the completion of Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (S.M.A.R.T) development targets, to support a productive learning experience. Reviewing the effectiveness of work progress targets, to ensure upskilling sessions are embedded and the progression of prisoners is meaningful. Moderation checks will be completed, and individual feedback documented and provided to workshop tutors. Providing information to prisoners to aid their understanding of the skill set they are using within each workshop. Ensuring all peer mentors are appropriately qualified so they can fully support their peers in education and workshops. The delivery and impact of improvements will be monitored and reviewed at the QIG meeting. 	Director/ Education Provider	<p>May 2025</p> <p>May 2025</p> <p>May 2025</p> <p>May 2025</p> <p>May 2025</p>
14	Leaders did not ensure that prisoners were provided	The HoESW will ensure that prisoners are provided with teaching on radicalisation and extremism by:	Director/	



	with teaching on radicalisation and extremism.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing the Induction to Workshops and Education so all prisoners are provided with teaching on radicalisation and extremism, this will be repeated for those prisoners who are placed in workshops. • Reviewing the curriculum to incorporate learning about extremism and radicalisation, to help keep prisoners safe from this kind of cohesion as part of the teaching of fundamental democratic values, so teachers and tutors can incorporate them within their lessons. The HoESW will monitor its implementation and ongoing delivery as part of their quality assurance checks via teaching observations and learning walks. 	Education Provider	<p>June 2025</p> <p>August 2025</p>
15	Prisoners did not have sufficient opportunity to meet face-to-face with their prison offender manager (POM) to discuss their progress. Contact was not always regular or timely.	<p>The HoRR will improve the opportunities for prisoners to meet face to face with their Prison Offender Managers (POM) by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing the POM workload and priorities, identifying any barriers or support required to enable sufficient timely opportunities for prisoners to meet face to face with their POM to discuss their progress. The outcome of the review will be discussed at the Reducing Reoffending Meeting. • Monitoring the quality and frequency of offender manager sessions by POMs, identifying priorities to help drive sentence plans and prisoner progression, and to provide the POM with support and training as required. Face to face sessions will be delivered in accordance with national standards in the first three months of arrival and over a three-month period prior to release. Face to face appointments will also be delivered at key points in the prisoner journey such as parole and Category D reviews. • The Reducing Reoffending meeting will monitor and track progress for all sentence planning offending behaviour related work, ensuring the prison is providing the necessary support to allow all prisoners to progress with their sentences. 	Director	<p>September 2025</p> <p>October 2025</p> <p>October 2025</p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rolling out a revised Key Worker Strategy and action plan, including a new keyworker allocation process, that will include the upskilling and development of staff groups involved in Offender Management in Custody (OMiC) and Keyworker strategies. The quality and delivery of keywork, including frequency, purposeful and rehabilitative conversations will be monitored by the HoRR and reported at the Reducing Reoffending meeting. 		October 2025
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