



Action Plan: HMP Northumberland

Action Plan Submitted: 19th December 2025

A Response to the HMIP Inspection: 27th August – 12th September 2025

Report Published: 2nd December 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: HMCIP REPORT

ESTABLISHMENT: HMP NORTHUMBERLAND

1. Rec No	2. Concerns	3. Response Action Taken/Planned	4. Responsible Owner	5. Target Date
	Priority concerns			
1	<p>There were not enough incentives to motivate prisoners to behave well or opportunities for them to develop a sense of progression.</p>	<p>HMP Northumberland will review and publish a new Incentives Policy (IP). The review will be informed by consultation with prisoners through User Voice Prison Council.</p> <p>The review and publication of the IP will coincide with redefining the purpose and function of some main residential units, particularly Houseblock 1-4. Considerations to be explored include increasing the capacity of Incentivised Substance Free Living (ISFL) unit, designated enhanced prisoners' unit and Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP)/Lifer unit.</p> <p>To promote good behaviour and highlight the advantages of positive behaviour, the prison will make prisoners aware of and embed "prisoner journey" from "settlement to resettlement" alongside the opening of the resettlement hub.</p>	Director	<p>March 2026</p> <p>March 2026</p> <p>April 2026</p>
2	<p>Support for those at risk of self-harm was too limited and leaders had not embedded learning from serious incidents.</p>	<p>Informed by consultation with prisoners through the User Voice Prison Council, an expanded menu of interventions based on needs and interests will be introduced to increase case coordinators' confidence and capability to address emotional well-being issues at the earliest opportunity.</p>	Director	April 2026



		<p>A revised staff structure has been implemented in the Safer Custody Team. An additional Senior Manager is in post to increase resource in the department.</p> <p>All instances of serious self-harm will continue to be thoroughly investigated using a “near miss” format. Learning will be shared with staff, actions identified will be monitored at the weekly Safety Intervention Meeting (SIM), chaired by Head of Safer Custody, to prevent similar occurrences.</p>		Completed Completed
3	Staff-prisoner relationships were not sufficiently meaningful. Key work delivery was intermittent and did not support sentence progression. Staff were not present on landings, particularly during association periods.	<p>To improve staff visibility on the landings, Senior Prison Custody Officers (SPCOs) will brief staff daily and monitor staff presence during association periods.</p> <p>A revised Key work delivery model will be introduced to ensure resources are focused on prisoners with the highest risk and greatest needs. Under this new allocation model, weekly keyworker sessions will be provided to the identified cohort, supporting engagement and the achievement of sentence planning milestones. Prisoners within these high-risk cohorts will be reviewed monthly to ensure dynamic assessment and appropriate selection.</p>	Director	Completed February 2026
4	Leaders had not given sufficient priority to the promotion of fair treatment and inclusion. Consultation, peer work and data analysis were not used well to understand the experiences of prisoners from minority groups.	<p>Informed by a needs analysis, a revised Diversity and Inclusion Policy has been introduced. The new policy consists of greater utilisation of data to help inform future strategic objectives.</p> <p>Senior Management Team Leads will be identified for each of the protected characteristic (PC) groups to help embed the policy. PC Leads will recruit suitable prisoner peer supporters to work collaboratively to address needs.</p>	Director	Completed March 2026



5	<p>Leaders did not have sufficient oversight of industries and work to ensure that prisoners in lower-skilled workshops continued to make sustained progress in developing their knowledge and skills.</p>	<p>A range of activities will be undertaken by management across education and work, including learning walks, deep dives, and classroom observations. Findings from these activities will feed directly into the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and inform future actions. These will be reviewed at the monthly Quality Improvement Group (QIG).</p> <p>Further development and support for workshop instructors is underway through Continuous Personal Development (CPD) and access to Learning and Assessment Apprenticeships. These measures will ensure instructors can better support prisoners' progression, particularly in lower-skilled workshops.</p>	Director	<p>February 2026</p> <p>March 2026</p>
6	<p>Offence-related monitoring of prisoners' mail and telephone calls was not robust. Too often telephone monitoring was subject to lengthy delays and mail monitoring was not sufficiently rigorous.</p>	<p>Public Protection Monitoring will be relocated from the Security Department to the Offender Management Unit. This will ensure that a dedicated staff group will undertake this role.</p> <p>Assurance activity in Public Protection Monitoring will be classed into two sections moving forward.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Details of outstanding call volumes will be reported to the Public Protection Steering Group. This currently occurs monthly to ensure oversight, however, will revert to quarterly once improvements are achieved. 2. Details of quality of monitoring and fulfilment of follow-up actions relating to risk and public protection will be reported to the Public Protection Steering Group. 	Director	<p>February 2026</p> <p>February 2026</p>
	Key Concerns			



7	<p>The availability of illicit drugs was linked to a significant increase in violence.</p>	<p>The weekly Safety Intervention Meeting will continue to explore trends and intervention plans which addresses spikes in violence. Using evidence through relevant data and intelligence, will enable a focus on the identification of "hot spots" of drug activity and/or violence. An agreed multi-disciplinary response involving drug and alcohol recovery teams, security and residential colleagues will then be actioned.</p> <p>Leaders will continue to enhance the offer of Incentivised Substance Free Living (ISFL) residential places. This will focus on developing consistent and well understood pathways prior to and following Gateway focused on recovery and rehabilitation.</p>	Director	<p>February 2026</p> <p>April 2026</p>
8	<p>There were too few places available for offending behaviour programmes to meet demand.</p>	<p>In November 2025, delivery of Building Choices was launched to replace the former suite of accredited programmes. Whilst the content of the new generation programme better meets the criminogenic need of the prisoner population, the volume remains insufficient. HMP Northumberland will approach HMPPS to request additional contractual investment to increase the volume over the forthcoming year.</p>	Director	April 2026
9	<p>The closure of the departure lounge meant that prisoners received limited practical support on the day of their release. This contributed to prisoners' anxiety about attending their initial appointments in the community.</p>	<p>The departure lounge provision will be relaunched in partnership with Commissioned Rehabilitative Services (CRS) provider, Ingeus, on a temporary and limited basis to offer practical support such as clothing, travel information, and phone charging points. This arrangement will remain in place until a permanent service can be commissioned, and efforts to identify a permanent provider are ongoing. Currently, Ingeus can only deliver the service one day per week under existing contractual terms. On other release days, reception staff will provide</p>	Director	Completed



	<p>practical support, including clothing, travel information, and phone charging facilities.</p> <p>The launch of the new resettlement hub will help alleviate prisoners' concerns about release by providing a coordinated, multi-disciplinary forum to address all pre-release matters. Designed as a 'one-stop' shop, the hub will ensure that all pre-release needs linked to criminogenic pathways are planned collaboratively between Prison Offender Managers (POMs), Community Offender Managers (COMs), and CRS providers. This model replaces the current fragmented approach, where CRS staff visit prisoners on wings or in work, by offering a single location for consistent and streamlined support for all prisoners.</p>		April 2026
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