



HM Prison &
Probation Service

Action Plan: HMP Exeter

Action Plan Submitted: 14 April 2026

A Response to the HMIP Inspection: 18 November to 4 December 2025

Report Published: 09 March 2026

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, which 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 EXETER

1. Rec No	2. Concerns	3. Response Action Taken/Planned	4. Responsible Owner	5. Target Date
	PRIORITY CONCERNS			
1	Prisoners self-isolating through fear of others was a recurring theme in several of the self-inflicted deaths. The systems leaders had put in place to increase contact and offer support to this group were not sufficiently robust.	Oversight of prisoners who are self-isolating has been strengthened. Residential Officers will continue to hold daily conversations with isolating prisoners with a mandated requirement to record these as part of daily isolation checks on Digital Prison Services (DPS) evidencing that quality and meaningful interactions have taken place. In addition to this, the Head of Safety has now introduced daily welfare-check assurance conducted by the Violence Reduction Custodial Manager. HMP Exeter have updated the Safety Strategy reflecting the requirement for the Head of Safety to conduct, as a minimum, weekly Isolation Management Checks. These are recorded on DPS as case notes, discussed at the weekly Safety Intervention Meeting, and subject to further assurance by the Head of Safety. Custodial Managers (CMs) and Supervising Officers (SOs) have completed targeted upskilling to improve the quality of plans for individuals in isolation. This has been formally recorded in local training records and is subject to ongoing monitoring through the training meeting.	Governor Governor Governor	Complete Complete Complete



		Daily healthcare reviews will be embedded within the duty nurse's mandated task list and recorded on the 'SystmOne' clinical database. Assurance will be provided through the Safety Intervention Meeting (SIM), with oversight from a healthcare representative. A debt-risk identification tool will be used at HMP Exeter to proactively identify individuals at risk of debt and trigger a structured risk assessment. This will ensure the timely implementation of debt-reduction interventions and appropriate support. The tool and assessment process will continue to be strengthened through ongoing collaboration and evaluation with relevant departments. HMP Exeter will develop and implement a specific Prisoner Violence Reduction (VR) Representative role to be delivered in collaboration with the national team. This will both align with, and exceed, the forthcoming national VR representative model. This will include clear role definition, enhanced training, and VR representative attendance at Challenge Support and Intervention Plan (CSIP) reviews, with delivery overseen by the Violence Reduction CM.	Governor	May 2026
			Governor	June 2026
			Governor	May 2026
2	Handovers between staff responsible for the care of newly arrived prisoners were inadequate and some prisoners did not receive a	First-night roll boards have now been implemented to support the clear identification of newly received prisoners on the wing. HMP Exeter have expanded early-days quality assurance processes. A monthly report of findings is now produced and	Governor	Complete
			Governor	Complete



	complete induction during their first few days.	scrutinised at the Safer Custody Meeting, chaired by the Head of Safety.		
		Early days paperwork has been amended to clearly articulate details of the handover to ensure prisoners receive a full induction. This will now become embedded as 'business-as-usual' through the introduction of regular assurance checks by HMP Exeter secretariat.	Governor	July 2026
		A review will be conducted into adopting a more 'mixed media' approach to the early stages of induction. This will include showing informative videos, such as a presentation explaining the induction process, in reception and via 'WayOutTV.'	Governor	September 2026
		A comprehensive review of the reception and induction process will be undertaken, with consideration given to establishing clear ownership and accountability within a single department, and to identify opportunities for the full induction to be completed in a timelier manner.	Governor	September 2026
		Leaders will ensure strengthened Clean and Decency assurance on first night cells so that all essential in-cell facilities such as phones, kettles and TVs are present and working. Compliance with the mandatory check of all cells, which is already completed by residential officers, will be further strengthened through new assurance measures, whereby the reinstated full-time Clean and Decency Manager, working with the Early Days in Custody Manager, will personally check 25% of all first night cells.	Governor	June 2026



		The early days process will be strengthened through the introduction of 100% enhanced monitoring for prisoners placed on alternative wings during their first night due to capacity pressures, ensuring that regime access and induction delivery are not adversely impacted.	Governor	May 2026
3	Use of force had increased and was now high and rising. Staff did not routinely draw or switch on their body-worn cameras and leaders did not have adequate oversight.	HMP Exeter has strengthened scrutiny of body-worn video camera (BWVC) usage through enhanced daily reporting and governance. During the morning meeting, the Head of Safety now verbally presents the previous day's available staffing numbers and BWVC draw rates. This provides clear visibility of performance and enables discussion of any legitimate reasons for non-draws, such as technical issues or equipment faults. Draw-rate trends are monitored in a way that allows the Head of Safety to track progress over time, and where concerns arise, the Head of Safety investigates the causes and implements any necessary remedial action. HMP Exeter has revised its BWVC processes. A mandated requirement is now in place whereby any member of staff identified as not activating their BWVC is formally written to and required to provide an explanation. This process is fully embedded, routinely recorded within meeting minutes, and actively operating. As an early priority, to strengthen senior-level scrutiny the Governor will commission a comprehensive review of all recorded Use of Force since April 2025	Governor Governor Governor	Complete Complete June 2026



		Targeted communications will be delivered to staff to reinforce the importance of consistently drawing and activating body-worn cameras. In addition to this, activation figures will be shared monthly via the written leaders' lines staff briefing.	Governor	May 2026
		HMP Exeter will implement routine compliance checking, with a minimum of five staff per week being subject to unannounced spot checks to confirm compliance with body-worn camera requirements, including pre-record activation. To support effective governance and continuous improvement, findings will be recorded on the assurance tool and reviewed monthly at the Safety Meeting, chaired by the Head of Safety,	Governor	May 2026
		HMP Exeter will run a targeted staff-engagement campaign to embed the Five-Minute Intervention (FMI) as a core de-escalation tool, supported by a rolling upskilling programme for all operational Band 3–5 staff covering FMI, Procedural Justice, Legitimate Authority and Neuro-Diverse Needs, with progress tracked through training records and Safer Custody.	Governor	March 2027
4	Attendance at activities remained too low. This was in part because many prisoners were allocated to more than one activity in each session.	Since the inspection, the role of a Regime Driver has been restored. This role provides a better understanding of reasons for non-attendance and supports increased engagement and attendance at activities.	Governor	Complete
		HMP Exeter will establish Senior Leaders Strategic Allocations and Attendance Board, chaired by the Governor, to provide cross-functional, high-level scrutiny of the appropriacy,	Governor	May 2026



		purposefulness and impact of activities. The current Allocations Board's terms of reference and agenda will be revised to strengthen allocation quality, enhance purposeful work and education, and ensure appointment and activity clashes are eliminated. Daily meetings between the Head of Education, Skills and Work and the Regime Driver will be introduced. This will strengthen the monitoring of improved engagement of prisoners and staff. To ensure key-work sessions are appropriately informed by Careers Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG) goals, the Key Work Custodial Manager, in conjunction with the Head of Offender Management Delivery (HOMD), will implement assurance checks of delivery. Findings will be reported through the Key Work Strategy Meeting to provide clear oversight and assurance. The Key Work CM will deliver training to keyworkers, raising awareness of goal-setting methods and the importance of using these within key-work sessions. The Head of Education, Skills and Work will undertake a comprehensive needs analysis and review the current curriculum to ensure it is aligned to the needs of the population. This will identify any required changes to improve the effectiveness of allocations and maximise attendance and engagement. A fully revised curriculum, aligned to the prisoner needs analysis, will be implemented through the 2027–28 Annual Delivery Plan.	Governor Governor Governor Governor Governor	May 2026 May 2026 June 2026 September 2026 April 2027
--	--	---	---	--



5	Leaders and managers had not ensured that prisoners working on the wings or in work parties received sufficient training or guidance to carry out their roles effectively.	HMP Exeter will embed the use of Progress in Work booklets. Supervisors will be appropriately trained and supported to ensure the effective use of these booklets, including the setting of clear, meaningful targets. This will ensure each prisoner has a formal and consistent record of their training, HMP Exeter will implement face-to-face Health and Safety and Food Hygiene training, delivered by Milton Keynes College. HMP Exeter will strengthen the quality of wing work delivery by implementing structured training packs and robust quality-assurance processes. This will ensure staff and prisoners are fully trained and operate with a clear and consistent understanding of expectations. Processes will be amended to ensure that information on additional support needs is readily available to all relevant staff. In addition to this, staff working with prisoners will receive training to enable them to access, understand, and appropriately use the information relating to prisoners' neurodivergence.	Governor Governor Governor Governor	September 2026 September 2026 October 2026 September 2026
	KEY CONCERNS			
6	Weaknesses in searching at the main gate and inconsistent commissioned cell searches and suspicion drug tests	Since the inspection, HMP Exeter has introduced a weekly cell-search planning meeting to prioritise searches using current intelligence and emerging risks. A security representative now attends the weekly Regime Management Planning (RMP) meeting to ensure searching is properly resourced. As a quality assurance	Governor	Complete



	undermined overall security at the prison.	measure all cells commissioned for search at the weekly cell-search planning meeting will be raised at the following weeks meeting to monitor completion.		
		Enhanced scrutiny of pre-custody prescribed medication use has been implemented to ensure proportionate and appropriate decision-making. Where use is verified as legitimate, disciplinary action is not taken.	Governor	Complete
		Oversight and compliance within Enhanced Gate Security (EGS) operations will be strengthened through the allocation of an additional SO, ensuring clear management oversight and adherence to required processes and policy.	Governor	May 2026
		A training schedule will be maintained to ensure all EGS staff complete mandatory Rub Down Search training (Levels A and B), with compliance tracked by the People Hub.	Governor	June 2026
		The Head of Operations will align the Local Searching Policy with the EGS Policy to address any discrepancies identified during the security audit.	Governor	September 2026
		Training will be provided for Operational Support Grades and all staff working within EGS to ensure they are fully competent in their roles including use of the X-Ray baggage scanner.	Governor	September 2026
		EGS staffing levels will be reviewed as part of the ongoing re-profiling exercise to ensure sufficient and appropriate operational coverage.	Governor	September 2026



		A programme of staff upskilling will be undertaken to ensure all relevant personnel complete accurate and compliant documentation for intelligence-led cell searches. This will support full alignment with the National Security Framework. Compliance will be reviewed at the weekly Target Search Meeting to maintain oversight, identify gaps, and inform the security action plan.	Governor	November 2026
		Staff guidance on requesting suspicion MDTs has been issued and will be kept under regular review by the Head of Drug Strategy. Processes for requesting suspicion MDTs will be streamlined to improve clarity, consistency, and timeliness of submissions, with required resource identified through the weekly RMP meeting.	Governor	July 2026
7	Work to identify and address unfair treatment of prisoners from minority groups was limited.	HMP Exeter has revised the format of the Diversity Inclusion Action Team (DIAT) meeting to strengthen scrutiny and engagement. The revised format now includes structured deep-dive discussions on data disparity, forum findings, and celebration events. Mandatory attendance will be introduced for all DIAT meeting invitees, with an expectation that an appropriate representative is nominated where attendance is not possible. This requirement will also apply to all Protected Characteristic Leads. Attendance will be formally recorded to provide assurance. To ensure Discrimination Incident Report Form (DIRF) concerns are adequately investigated and responded to appropriately, HMP Exeter will introduce and deliver DIRF training for managers.	Governor Governor Governor	Complete June 2026 July 2026



		HMP Exeter will introduce a local DIRF scrutiny panel involving managers, officers, and Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) representatives. The panel will use local data to identify emerging themes and collectively review all DIRFs to ensure concerns have been thoroughly investigated and addressed to an appropriate standard. Findings and learning will be shared with the Equalities Lead and used to inform future learning and development opportunities.	Governor	July 2026
		HMP Exeter will introduce an Equality Liaison Officer for each residential wing as a named point of contact for prisoners to escalate Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity concerns.	Governor	June 2026
		HMP Exeter will extend the partnership with the B-the-Change charity. This will strengthen independent scrutiny of DIRFs as part of the scrutiny panel, as well as increasing opportunities for prisoner engagement through race forums, 1-2-1s, fishbowl exercises and focus groups.	Governor	May 2026
		HMP Exeter will run a scheduled programme of celebratory events, maintained on a SharePoint calendar and promoted through noticeboards, morning meetings, and electronic updates to ensure consistent engagement.	Governor	July 2026
8	The prison remained very overcrowded with 84% of prisoners sharing cells	HMP Exeter has increased the Clean and Decency Custodial Manager role to a full-time position, doubling the management	Governor	Complete



	designed for one person. The standard of cells on C and D wings was poor: many had broken or missing window glass and some were affected by mould.	resource for this function which is strengthening oversight and drive for sustained improvement. The Clean and Decency Manager will issue and promote 'What Good Looks Like' guidance to residential and induction staff. This will ensure consistency of Accommodation Fabric and Decency checks and reinforce expected cell cleanliness standards. Standards will be embedded through staff briefings and decency inspections, with effectiveness monitored through monthly assurance and reviewed at the Decency Meeting.	Governor	July 2026
		A structured upskilling programme will be implemented to strengthen residential staff capability. This will include the Clean and Decency Manager issuing guidance which will be reinforced through Leaders' Lines and wing briefings to help staff identify and escalate structural cell issues via the 'PlanetFM' reporting system.	Governor	July 2026
		The Clean and Decency Manager will introduce scrutiny checks for at least 10% of jobs raised via PlanetFM. Incomplete or delayed work will be escalated to the Head of Residence and reviewed through tri-partite meetings to drive timely resolution and sustained improvement.	Governor	July 2026
		The Clean and Decency Manager will coordinate a full check of residential cells to identify which cells do not have cupboards or toilet screens. Remedial work will be coordinated between the Clean and Decency Manager and Gov Facility Services Limited (GFSL). Progress will be monitored by the weekly tripartite meeting.	Governor	May 2026



		The HMP Exeter Secretariat Team will increase leader-led cell decency checks by 25% by broadening the scope of checks and extending responsibility to Specialist Officers alongside Managers and Senior Leaders. Peer inspections will support this, with findings reported to the Governor each Wednesday via the morning Managers Meeting.	Governor	May 2026
9	The education induction focused too heavily on completion of initial assessments and did not provide prisoners with sufficient information to make informed choices about the options available to them.	HMP Exeter will conduct a full review of the current 1-week Induction Programme and implement a new 2-week Induction Programme with a focus on stabilisation, regime information, and motivation in the first week, followed by more in-depth information and assessment in the second week. The Head of Education Skills and Work will identify the most effective way for prisoners to receive CIAG, Maths, English, and Neurodiversity screeners within the revised induction. HMP Exeter will improve the information provided to prisoners by producing an Education, Skills and Work handbook which will also include details of enrichment activities. In addition to this, and to further promote the opportunities available, new 'WayOutTV' material will be created and broadcast.	Governor Governor Governor	May 2026 June 2026 June 2026

