



# **Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Humber**

**For reporting year  
1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024**

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## Introductory sections 1 – 3

### 1. Statutory role of the IMB

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

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

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

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

The Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT) is an international human rights treaty designed to strengthen protection for people deprived of their liberty. The protocol recognizes 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 Humber is a large, category C resettlement prison (which holds prisoners whose escape risk is considered low but who cannot be trusted in an open prison) in east Yorkshire, holding up to 1,079 adult men<sup>1</sup>. It was formed from a merger in 2014 of the formerly privately run HMP Wolds and HMP Everthorpe, operated by HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS), which were on adjacent sites and ran independently of each other.

The original HMP Wolds (now called zone 1) opened in 1992 as the first privately run prison in Europe. Originally, it was a remand prison, and in 1993 it re-roled to become a category B prison (for those considered a risk to public safety but not categorised as a maximum security threat). It was again re-roled in 2001 to a category C training prison.

The original HMP Everthorpe (now called zone 2) was built in 1958 as a borstal (a type of youth detention centre, now defunct), converted to house male prisoners in 1991 and operated as a category C training prison.

In November 2012 it was announced that the contract to run HMP Wolds would not be renewed, therefore by default in July 2013 HMP Wolds would be merged into HM Prison Service. HMP Wolds and Everthorpe would be joined to form one prison, which was renamed HMP Humber, managed by one Governor and senior management team.

In January 2014, the two sites were united by means of a connecting walkway and became operational on 1 May 2015, officially running as one prison. Since then, there has been an extensive rationalisation of several functions and use of buildings to operate more efficiently. In September 2022, HMP Humber became the only 100% category C resettlement prison in Yorkshire. During the reporting year 2024, the operational capacity, or OpCap (the maximum number of prisoners that can be held without serious risk to safety, security, good order and the proper running of the planned regime), was increased to 1079.

The large, sprawling site now consists of a varied mix of accommodation types, encompassing 14 residential wings, one of which is the Hope unit ('Humber offering progressive environments') progression regime. The site operates with one kitchen, together with a bakery, two libraries, one visitors' centre, one chaplaincy, two gyms, two healthcare units (one primary care and one mental healthcare), with capacity to offer clinics, and one large segregation unit with accommodation for 14 prisoners. Provision for many workshops and an employment hub was formed more recently, in 2022.

Due to increased population pressures across the overall prison estate, two new secure house blocks are under construction, with an anticipated completion date of late 2025.

At the end of the reporting year of 2024, the prison held 1034 adult male prisoners, 27 more than at the end of 2023.

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

### 3. Key points

#### Background

The designation of the establishment changed from a training and resettlement prison to a category C resettlement prison during 2022. Due to population pressures over the entire prison estate, this has resulted in a greatly increased prisoner 'churn' (the number of prisoners arriving and leaving across a period) and, as such, has impacted processes and regime throughout the establishment. The Board acknowledges the pressures faced by the Prison Service but notes the additional demands it creates. As a Board, we continue to admire the professionalism and resilience of the Governor and senior management team and commend them on their continued perseverance in progress planning within such limited constraints.

HM Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) carried out an unannounced inspection of HMP Humber between 27 November and 15 December 2023, with its findings officially published in April of 2024, where it identified 12 concerns, six of which are of priority:

- Patients with long-term conditions did not always receive the care and treatment they needed.
- There were not enough education, skills or workplaces to meet the needs of a quarter of the prison population.
- Too many prisoners were released to no fixed abode or to unsustainable accommodation.
- Attendance was low in education, skills and work, particularly in prison industries.
- Too few prisoners gained qualifications in Maths, particularly at Level 1.
- In too many of the prison industry workshops, tasks lacked challenge and did not need prisoners to develop new technical skills or knowledge.

And six key concerns:

- The prison was not doing enough to tackle the behaviour of perpetrators of violence.
- Violence and self-harm were often related to prisoners being in debt to others.
- Body-worn video cameras (BWVCs) were not activated early enough to capture incidents in full.
- Some areas of medicines' management were weak.
- Some clinical areas did not meet infection-control standards, creating unnecessary risk.
- There were gaps in the provision for prisoners with disabilities.

The IMB at HMP Humber has only had four fully active members over the majority of the last 12 months, with an additional three new members being mentored, even though it has a recommended complement of 16. Hopefully, further additional members will be in position for the next reporting year.

The scope of the Board's monitoring has been largely maintained over the last year. However, due to training and the progress of new members, it has been somewhat limited due to the small number of existing members.

### **3.1 Main findings**

The Board is gravely concerned that the high level of 'short time to release' prisoners, has created significant 'churn' pressure on all functions within the prison, in some way. It has greatly impacted its ability to offer prisoners the structure, regime and support required for their care and subsequent transition back into the community. The time and resource involved in managing additional short-term residents, who often demonstrate very challenging behaviour, has had a knock-on effect for other prisoners and staff, who have suffered as a result in, for example, a curtailing of regime at short notice, although the frequency of these disruptions reduced markedly during the reporting year.

#### **Safety**

- From its observations, the Board believes that, despite an increase in the number of self-harm incidents, violence between men and use of force incidents, compared with the previous reporting year, the prison has generally continued to be a safe place for prisoners. As a result of a serious assault on a member of staff, HMP Humber is now one of 31 closed adult male sites planning to be razor free, hopefully commencing in January 2025.
- In the Board's view, the Governor and SMT work tirelessly to prioritise safety, continually giving all possible consideration to progressing, with their constant planning of a revised alternative regime in order to maintain the safety of everyone within the establishment – both staff and prisoners – while, at the same time, trying to attain a higher level of purposeful activity for prisoners.
- The main issues in regard to safety in the prison are population pressure, i.e. 'churn' of prisoners, resulting in limited time to work with men; the threat of illicit drugs; and limited purposeful activity. Due to the short sentences, men are unable to access work and/or education, as there is insufficient time to obtain the necessary qualifications or to arrange an appropriate placement.
- The Board was pleased to note the HMIP report's conclusion, that outcomes for prisoners in the area against the healthy prisons' test were reasonably good. The outcomes in the monitoring of this area by the Board over the reporting year would concur with this judgement, and the Board is of the opinion that this is a well-managed area of the prison.

#### **Fair and humane treatment**

- The Board considers positive work has continued regarding property issues. However, with the increase in population pressure, issues relating to property transfer from other prison establishments are now of a greater problem, which is reflected in the compensation being paid to prisoners when property cannot be located.
- While HMP Humber has successfully substantially reduced the amount of compensation it is required to pay, this is not the case elsewhere, as the Board still receives complaints from men transferring in who have not received their property from their previous establishment.
- The Board is seriously concerned that 256 prisoners were sharing cells at the end of the reporting year, some of which are designated for single occupancy. We view this area as unsatisfactory or not decent.
- Even though the key worker figures have improved since the last reporting year, they have been low for most of the year. This is because staffing pressures often dictate that staff must be redeployed to other duties of a higher priority, due to the behaviour of prisoners, the need for escorts and restricted duties or staff sickness.

The Board understands that there is the possibility of having a dedicated ley worker team over the next year.

### **Health and wellbeing**

- The Board acknowledge the continued level of service referred to in our previous report, together with improved staffing levels. However, additional workload has impacted on the healthcare providers, with the increased population turnover and the number of men under the possible influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Issues of mental health are continually raised by men who are not fully occupied. There are only 850 work placements available and, as stated previously, the rate of churn often does not allow adequate time to complete assessments or for men to obtain the required qualifications.

### **Progression and resettlement**

- Reducing reoffending and resettlement planning continues to be a major focus for staff at HMP Humber during 2024, and we welcome the positive work we have observed in this area. However, we are concerned that the high level of 'short time to release' prisoners creates significant pressure on all elements of the resettlement process, including the work of the offender management unit (OMU) and has an impact on prisoners looking to gain qualifications and develop skills. The Board is aware that attendance on many courses is too low and needs to be improved, but it is difficult to manage due to prisoners' short-term stays. With the proposed additional cell capacity at HMP Humber, this pressure is expected to continue into 2025.
- The Board remains concerned that too many prisoners can be released with either no fixed abode or with unsustainable accommodation. The strategic housing specialist (SHS), which works between HMPs Hull and Humber, provides support to the housing charity, Shelter, and has set up pre-release panels with local stakeholders and local authorities. The aim is to ensure that arrangements are put in place for each prisoner's release and to highlight those who are vulnerable and need support.
- Positive collaboration with the Hull City Council's homelessness prevention and options team, for whom the prison has arranged vetting to enable them to draw keys and meet with men on their wings, seems to assist greatly with preparation for release.

## **3.2 Main areas for development**

### ***TO THE MINISTER***

- In our 2023 report, we stated that the prison's designation was changed from training and resettlement to just resettlement. The Board is still unable to find any statutory or other definition of a purely resettlement prison and has concluded that our stated concerns of some of the effects of the changed designation have been absolutely valid.

The most obvious change has been the substantial increase in turnover, or 'churn', of prisoners arriving and leaving the prison, and the significant increase in prisoners arriving with a short time to serve, often as little as anything over 14 days. This leaves no time at all to carry out meaningful work with these prisoners before they leave the prison.

At the end of October, 51% of prisoners had less than six months to serve and 26% had 6-12 months to serve.

The change in designation has affected every function within the prison, limiting its ability to assess and provide meaningful education and employment which, in turn, impacts on the level of protesting behaviour, leading to increased adjudications.

The change results in a significant increase in the demand for the services of the OMU. Although the prison is to be commended for its innovative approaches in giving focus to resettlement preparation and support, the Board eagerly awaits HMP Humber's return to being a training and resettlement prison. When will the Minister consider this return?

- Additionally, the Board looks forward to considering the proposed sentencing review and hopes there will be a greater emphasis on non-custodial sentences. Can the Minister provide a timeline for the review?

### ***TO THE PRISON SERVICE***

- Again, regrettably the issue of prisoner property has not improved with regard to prisoners transferring into HMP Humber. Levels of property loss between prisons still continue to be unacceptable. It causes stress to the individuals affected and also significant additional work for the prison staff, together with unnecessary costs to the taxpayer in compensation payments. It has been greatly exacerbated by the 'churn' of prisoners, moving around the estate, over the past year.

Vague promises of digital changes in the long term are not helping with an immediate and longstanding daily problem. It appears to the Board that a significant cause of these losses is the result of poor contract strategy, which places insufficient onus on the transport provider and ineffective enforcement of performance standards. How and when will the Prison Service address this serious issue?

- The Board is strongly of the opinion that detaining prisoners in shared cells designed for single occupancy for long periods of time is not fair or decent. What steps will the Prison Service take to prevent this happening wherever possible?
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### ***TO THE GOVERNOR***

- The Board acknowledges the 12 key concerns identified by HMIP in its report and through our monitoring over the reporting year and feels the concerns have been actioned and are addressed continually.
- The Board commends the continued excellent and challenging work by the Governor and SMT in their ongoing commitment to improving the regime, so allowing prisoners greater time out of their cells, as well as meaningful activity, whilst maintaining the stability of HMP Humber for everyone who works and resides there. The overall stability of the prison has generally been maintained because of good relationships between prisoners and staff, a great deal of whom are new and inexperienced, which demonstrates strong leadership.
- We wish to raise the following concerns:



- Key workers: whilst we appreciate that the effectiveness of the key worker process has been severely compromised, due to the significant turnover of prisoners, we would hope to see a substantial increase in the number and quality of sessions and the possibility of a dedicated team.
- Employment: we appreciate that some work has been lost through no fault of the prison; however, it is a continuous process to ensure sufficient training and employment opportunities are available. The Board observes good work in workshops and hopes this can be expanded on over the coming year.
- We sincerely hope that the Governor and SMT are given all necessary support to progress the initiatives they believe will improve the wellbeing of prisoners within HMP Humber.

### **3.3 Response to last report**

We are pleased to see that the prison has actioned and continues to address the points raised by HMIP and the Board in its previous report.

## Evidence sections 4 – 7

### 4. Safety

Since the Board's previous report, the designation of the establishment changed from a training and resettlement prison to a category C resettlement prison. This has resulted in a greatly increased churn of prisoners and, therefore, increased pressure on all staff but particularly those in the offender management unit (OMU). As stated in the latest HMIP report, 18% of new arrivals had less than 12 weeks remaining on their sentence.

The churn of prisoners, as of 31 October 2024:

Prisoner sentence length	Number	% of population
Less than 6 months to serve	533	51%
Between 6 and 12 months to serve	275	26%

A Prison Strategy White Paper was published in 2021, whereby a commitment was given to look at alternatives to wet-shave razors in prisons, which were used in serious assaults against both prisoners and staff. As a result of a serious assault on a member of staff, HMP Humber is one of 31 closed adult male prisons that plans to be made razor free in 2025 (the only exception being for religious reasons).

#### 4.1 Reception and induction

There were 2,372 new receptions during the reporting year, an increase of 36% on the previous year. With an OpCap of 1,079 (increased from 1,019 at the beginning of the previous year – also allowing for completion of works in the establishment), the number of new receptions continues to represent a very high proportion of the total prison population.

There were 1,637 new receptions in 2021 and 1,848 in 2022, so even with a slight decrease, to 1,750 in 2023, the increase in 2024 is significant and reflects the overall pressure on prison places across the country.

As population pressure increases over the whole prison estate, inevitably more prisoners are arriving and/or being transferred, which subsequently presents a range of operational challenges for the prison and the staff.

The Board was pleased to note that, towards the end of 2023, the induction wing was relocated closer to reception in order to ease the process and facilitate any late arrivals.

The majority of new prisoners are transferred from HMP Hull, HMP Doncaster and some cohorts from HMP Leeds.

On arrival, staff seemed to ensure that the reception process was well managed and carried out as safely, efficiently and decently as possible, in sometimes very challenging periods, due to the high numbers of men arriving and/or the late arrival of escort vehicles. Prisoners have access to an 'emergency shop,' where they can purchase essentials up to a value of £10 by means of a loan from the prison, which is then repaid on a weekly basis.

The primary healthcare team sees new arrivals, identifying any vulnerabilities and risks as prisoners enter the establishment and arranging any necessary onward referrals. This is

followed by a full health assessment within 72 hours of arrival.

All new prisoners have access to a Listener (a peer support scheme, whereby prisoners are trained by the Samaritans to provide confidential emotional support) on arrival, as well as access to the Samaritans, if not face-to-face, then via in-cell telephony directly on the Samaritans line.

The body scanner in reception continues to be invaluable, with all new arrivals being scanned, which helps to prevent prohibited items entering the prison.

GeoAmey transport allows each prisoner three bags of property and one oversized item to be carried on transfer, with each bag not exceeding 15kg. On arrival at HMP Humber, the prisoner's property card (an official record of a prisoner's items of property) is checked, cross-referenced and must conform to the volumetric control checks. If a prisoner's property does not fit in the two volumetric control boxes, it remains in stored property. The prisoner is given the opportunity to send their excess property out of the establishment via social visits from friends and/or family or by post.

From the Board's observations, the first night on the induction wing is well managed, with the new arrivals staying in this location for approximately five days, before being moved on to a residential wing. On occasion, this timescale has been reduced due to subsequent new reception pressures.

A full and formal induction programme is provided by staff. During a prisoner's stay on the wing, presentations, including an introduction to the IMB and various 'surgeries', take place, e.g. equality and inclusion, chaplaincy, substance misuse services and the gym. Safer custody works especially closely with prisoners who are serving their first custodial sentence to help guide them in the appropriate direction, with a particular focus on issues with debt in prison.

Contact with family and friends is maintained via the use of the in-cell telephones, letters, 'email a prisoner', social visits and social video calls.

Prisoner escorts to and from hospital continued, as required, during the year, even with the population pressure.

As stated previously, following the change of designation of the prison, the population churn increased significantly. As a result, a 'ready for release' unit was created, enabling those with 12 weeks or less to serve to be located together, to continue the overall stability of the establishment.

## **4.2 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody**

In the Board's view, the senior management team (SMT) prioritises making HMP Humber a safer prison and, as such, takes a positive, analytical and progressive stance in respect of safety. There was a particular focus on reducing self-harm early in the reporting year, as incidents were seen to be increasing, from 725 in 2023 to 1175 in 2024. The monthly figures are generally less than 100, although spikes were seen in March, August, September and October, with the October figure being 149, but with 26% of these being attributed to two individuals. The figures for November and December again fell to below 100. The most frequently used method for self-harm continues to be cutting.

As stated previously, the prison is progressing to battery operated razors, resulting in a fall in the use of manual razors for self-harm or harming others. This has resulted in plastic now being the main cutting tool. Men who self-harm identify a range of reasons as to why they do this, including mental health, debt, regime issues and anxiety about release. However, some prisoners say they self-harm due to psychological reasons and

view it as a coping mechanism.

In the reporting period, the number of assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) documents opened (used to manage prisoners who are at risk of self-harm and suicide) each month fluctuated between 36 and 65, with a total for the year of 600, which is higher than the previous two years – 459 in 2023 and 358 in 2022. The number of ACCTs being opened each month largely mirrors the number of self-harming men and shares a similar trend. Most ACCTs were opened because of self-injury or the prisoner stated an intention to self-injure.

There is a high level of quality assurance carried out by the safer custody team, with the documentation focusing, to a greater extent, on risks, triggers and preventative factors, which clearly continues to be successfully managed.

The Board believes that prisoners with the most complex needs, including prolific self-harmers, receive good, multi-disciplinary care and support. A safety intervention management (SIM) meeting is held weekly, which Board members have been able to observe occasionally.

There were six deaths in custody during the reporting period, four of which were after release from the prison but are still considered to be deaths in custody. Of the remaining two, one was due to natural causes. The prison was briefly classed as a cluster death site because of two deaths in eight weeks. However, the prison continues to hold quarterly death in custody meetings to review any recommendations. The Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) report of March 2024, in relation to a prisoner who died in custody the previous year, contained no recommendations for the prison.

At the beginning of the year, there were 19 Samaritans-trained Listeners in the prison. However, this number fell when several of Listeners left through the early release scheme (ERS), creating a significant challenge and leaving only 12 at the end of the year. Prisoners have access to the Listeners on arrival in reception and can request to see one on each residential wing.

From its observations, the Board believes despite an increase in self-harm and assaults, the prison is generally a safe place for men in custody, with an established culture of care and attention being given to those in need. Data are monitored and analysed constantly and action taken to mitigate against emerging trends of concern.

### **4.3 Violence and violence reduction, self-isolation**

As with self-harm, there has been an increase in the level of violence in the prison. As the data are analysed rigorously, action is continually taken to address any increasing trends. There were 104 incidents of prisoner-on-staff violence in the reporting period compared with 79 in the previous year. Of these incidents, 20 occurred in January, 13 in July and 12 in December.

The subsequent and prompt actions of the Governor and SMT in pursuing a 'safer prison policy' following the serious assault on a member of staff early in the year, are to be commended. Action was taken as a result of increasing self-harm but also of this incident, and razors with blades are being replaced with battery operated razors.

There were 238 incidents of prisoner-on-prisoner violence recorded during 2024, compared with 129 during 2023. The incidence rate fluctuated significantly throughout the year, with slightly higher levels noted from June to August. Prisoners are not always forthcoming about the reasons behind each incident and will often not engage in discussion about the incidents, either at the time or during a follow-up investigation.

Significant work has been carried out in relation to behaviour during the early days in custody. Subsequently, the role of debt analyst has been introduced, promoting a whole-prison approach to debt reduction, developing both staff and prisoner awareness. This includes focused training to give staff the tools needed to support prisoners with custodial debt, including low-level indebtedness. It provides an understanding that debt is a significant factor in both violent and protesting behaviour, with the result being the implementation of a debt reduction strategy.

During the year, the Board has received a number of applications (written representations) from prisoners, complaining they do not have access to some monies in their account. The security team considers that money sent to individual prisoners, which is not from named family members or friends, may be involved in the illicit economy. Therefore, as part of the debt reduction strategy, they will not release this money until the prisoner leaves the establishment.

Incidents of protesting behaviour were high in the first quarter of the year, with over 100 each month, and similar numbers in June and July. But they have fallen significantly since then, with the total being less than 60 for the last three months of the year.

The prison adheres to the national challenge, support and intervention plan (CSIP) framework, which is used to support and manage prisoners who pose an increased risk of violence. A total of 313 CSIPs were opened in 2024, an increase on 2023. They are opened for perpetrators of violence, victims of violence and those who are self-isolating.

The safer custody team regularly conducts safety surveys, with 300 prisoners surveyed in May, for example. A reduction was seen in comparison to the previous year in the number of prisoners who felt debt was an issue, which is an early indicator that the drug strategy may be having an impact. Several men also reported that, if they were able to be allocated to work more quickly, this would help reduce the need to borrow and get into debt.

In October, the survey centred on those who were short term self-isolators only. This was focused to try and identify any reasons for self-isolation and how well these prisoners' needs were being met. No clear patterns of need were identified, although some men saw it as a strategy for transfer to another prison.

The safer custody team also encourages those who are due to be released to complete exit questionnaires, which are scrutinised by the safer custody analyst, with the results contributing to the theme of the monthly safer prisons key message alerts.

The Board is impressed with how data are used to identify trends and the subsequent strategies implemented to counter any worrying trends. The Board is confident that this approach to debt reduction will have a positive impact on helping to reduce violence and self-harm within the prison.

The Board is also aware that the elevated churn of prisoners at HMP Humber has impacted on violence and the debt picture. There is an increase in prisoners with much shorter sentences being transferred to the prison, which has allowed debt and the illicit economy to flourish.

#### **4.4 Use of force**

There were 771 incidents concerning the use of force (UoF) in the reporting period, compared with 554 in the previous year. However, UoF incidents were higher in the first half of the year, dropping to 154 in the final quarter of the year.

UoF meetings are held monthly to analyse the data and actions, therefore enabling

prompt responses to any worrying trends. All operational staff of appropriate grade use body worn video cameras (BWVC) to safeguard both staff and prisoners alike. The BWVC footage is reviewed at the meeting, where good practice is identified, such as the use of de-escalation techniques, along with incidents needing to be challenged. Reflective feedback by staff involved is encouraged. Board members observe these meetings when time permits and are impressed with the emphasis on the critical analysis of a variety of incidents. These are useful meetings, which demonstrate the commitment the prison has in monitoring, challenging and training to ensure force is used appropriately.

The Board concurs with the HMIP inspection report, in 2023, which found that body worn video cameras were not activated early enough to capture incidents in full. The prison has worked hard to tackle this, and notable improvements have been made. There has been a focus on staff training, monitoring and reflective feedback and over 93% of BWVCs are now activated appropriately and in a timely manner. The focus on training has also led to an increase in the use of positive communication before incidents escalate.

The use of pelargonic acid vanillylamide (Pava) spray, an incapacitant, remains low, despite more staff being qualified to use it. It was used seven times during the year, and drawn but not used six times. Batons were used on four occasions, and drawn but not used on four further occasions. These incidents are monitored by the senior management team (SMT) and, where necessary, challenged, investigated and appropriate action taken.

HMP Humber holds a high proportion of white British men and, therefore, in general, the use of force incidents are the highest for this group compared with prisoners of smaller, minority ethnic groups. Similarly, there is a higher proportion of UoF amongst men in the 30 to 39 age bracket and young adults.

The reasons for the use of force tend to vary, month to month, but are generally to prevent harm or because prisoners refuse to return to their cells.

The Board has recorded attendance, for monitoring purposes, in the Command Suite at four serious incidents at height (which includes prisoners on the netting, climbing over bars or on the roof) over the reporting year. On all occasions, the National Tactical Response Group, or NTRG (a team trained to intervene in dangerous, high-risk situations), were informed and duly arrived. Members of the Board have observed the operation of the command suite in several serious incidents and we conclude that the prison handles serious incidents in an extremely professional and well managed way.

Evidence and data demonstrate that use of force is monitored, analysed and challenged effectively. The use of force training for staff is excellent and has led to positive improvements. The Board believes this area of the prison is particularly well managed.

#### **4.5 Preventing illicit items**

Prisoners who have drug and/or alcohol issues will usually have been identified and confirmed as such on arrival at HMP Humber, with onward referrals made to the drug and alcohol rehabilitation team (DART) to ensure continuity of care.

The total illicit number of finds for 2024 was 1,126, compared with 383 in 2023 and 169 in 2022. A total of 39% of these were drug related, compared with 62% in 2023, and the remaining 16% were alcohol related, compared with 38% in 2023. During the reporting year, more suspected UTIs (under the influence) were identified, due to prisoners using tampered vapes so that they could facilitate drug use. Some men report that this is due to boredom. A 'vape free' wing is planned for 2025 to help support prisoners who wish to

progress in a healthier living environment.

Sources for drugs coming into the prison continue to include bogus Rule 39 (legal) mail and social visits, although drones are now an increasing threat, as are organised crime groups. The methods for dealing with these include security intelligence, photocopying prisoners' domestic mail and using high-tech scanners to detect traces of drugs on any correspondence, as well as using the body scanner on new arrivals at the prison.

The airport-style gate-security system, introduced during 2022, through which all staff and visitors must enter, was supported by the addition of baggage scanners in 2023 to further increase security.

The Yorkshire area search team (YAST) uses drug-finding sniffer dogs and is usually present in the reception area for the arrival of new prisoners and during social visits. The dogs are also taken on to the wings to search for drugs and alcohol.

Intelligence-led searches and cell clearances are undertaken regularly. Wing staff tend to find the highest amounts of fermenting liquid in the cells, as daily cell checks are undertaken.

Work on in-possession medication checks and supervision of medication hatches to discourage the trading and selling of prescription drugs continues on an ongoing basis.

A significant number of operations were undertaken by the prison throughout the year, some of which were in conjunction with partnership organisations, such as Operation Cavalier and Operation Scorpion involved R39 (legal) mail, for example.

Prison-wide amnesties were also held for drugs, weapons and razors. Some of the projects initially implemented in HMP Humber have been rolled out across other establishments throughout Yorkshire.

Mandatory drug testing (MDT) was carried out in the prison during 2024. Compact-based drug testing, undertaken as part of an agreed 'good behaviour' contract between the prison and prisoner, is undertaken regularly on the Hope unit and the incentivised substance-free living unit.

## **5. Fair and humane treatment**

### **5.1 Accommodation, clothing, food**

As previously referenced, the number of shared cells increased in 2024. The maintenance work to the general alarm, as well as the cell and fire alarm upgrades, were completed in 2024. In order for the maintenance work to be carried out in a safe manner and to allow a complete wing to be decanted, cell sharing was required. With these additional population pressures, the OpCap increased again to 1,079 at the end of 2024.

At the end of the reporting year in 2023, the number of prisoners sharing a cell was 230, with an increase to 256 at the end of 2024. As a Board, we have received very few complaints regarding cell sharing and some men have appreciated the company.

It is hoped that with the success of the vape-free segregation unit, the trial at HMP Humber of a vape-free wing will have a positive impact and result in more healthy living.

In 2024, food shortages in the kitchen were minimal in comparison with those during 2023, so the menu choices have not been affected. The kitchen also carried out periodic food surveys and menu reviews, resulting in the addition of some new dishes.

Work started in 2024 and continues on two new house blocks, with a planned completion of late 2025/early 2026. Each house block will accommodate an additional 60 prisoners, with the first projected arrival of spring 2026.

### **5.2 Segregation**

The segregation unit comprises 14 cells, four of which are adapted to be anti-ligature: one has closed-circuit television; another is a photochromatic cell, where the door is made of transparent glass, which allows staff to make easier observations of the prisoner; and two cells can be used as part of the secreted items policy.

At the end of the reporting year, there were nine officers, equivalent to eight full-time equivalent (FTE) in the unit, all of whom are experienced in working with prisoners who have complex needs, especially mental health issues. All staff are qualified in basic control and restraint (C & R) techniques, one is advanced Tornado trained (specialist incident resource) and all staff are qualified in the use of Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE).

Members of the Board have regularly commented on officers' professional attitudes towards prisoners and their ability to build a rapport with them, thereby enabling them to help the individual reintegrate back into the wider prison population. The Board's monitoring reports have stated that prisoners are treated with understanding and kindness and are well supported by staff.

Over the reporting year, 13 prisoners stayed on the unit for more than the 42-day limit. This is the same as the previous year. Staff dealt compassionately with these challenging situations, where the priority was to keep a prisoner in a place of safety whilst a more appropriate establishment could be found.

Over the year, 483 men were segregated, making the average number of men segregated per week just over nine, which is similar to the previous year. This continues to be an indication of the stability of the prison and reflects the good order of the establishment.

During the reporting year, there were 36 use of force (UoF) incidents in the unit, with all being recorded and appropriate paperwork completed. There were 10 incidents of dirty



protest (where a prisoner has chosen to defecate or urinate in a cell without using the facilities provided) over the year, two more than in 2023 and five more than 2022.

The number of prisoners on an ACCT in segregation increased significantly during the reporting period, with 105 men on open ACCTs during the last quarter of the year, compared with 31 in the similar period last year. Those prisoners supported by an ACCT in segregation are case managed by the segregation supervising officer (SO) and the custodial manager (CM) and are treated as complex cases. If deemed necessary, the adapted cells can be used to accommodate men on open ACCTs. All segregation staff are also fully aware of ACCT procedures and attend mandatory suicide and self-harm (SASH) training each year.

All prisoners in the segregation unit are subject to a re-integration plan. This enables men to be managed through regular multi-disciplinary reviews and includes an exit strategy for each individual.

Prisoners in the unit have access to books, distraction/activity packs, showers and time outside in the exercise area. Portable in-cell phones are available during the day but are removed at night for safety reasons.

Board members have maintained at least weekly visits to the segregation unit as an integral part of monitoring and made it a priority to speak to each individual prisoner, either with the door unlocked or, on rare occasions, through the cell-door observation panel. Almost all the prisoners we spoke to understood the reason for being in the unit and reported that they felt well looked after.

Internal adjudications (disciplinary hearings when a prisoner is alleged to have broken prison rules) have continued throughout the year, with a member of the Board observing them on occasion. The number of adjudications increased during the reporting year, with 3,441 taking place, compared with 3,019 in 2023 and 1,660 in 2022. The numbers were higher in the first part of the year, dropping slightly in the second half.

Segregation review boards take place every week, which an IMB member observed, whenever possible. However, due to the low number of Board members over the course of the reporting year, this has been increasingly difficult. The healthcare department, the chaplaincy team and the offender management unit (OMU) regularly attend. All those we observed were conducted professionally and in a fair manner.

In April 2024, the segregation unit became a vape-free unit, and the Board has had no reported issues. It was initiated following concerns in relation to cell fires associated with vapes being in the possession of men. It seems to encourage some men who may have been reluctant to return to the wing to consider it a more viable option.

It is noted that when asked by Board members, prisoners in segregation are consistently positive about the way they are treated.

### **5.3 Staff and prisoner relationships, key workers**

From our observations, staff and prisoner relationships continued to be constructive and positive, although restricted at times due to staffing issues, such as sickness, restricted duties or redeployment. The prison is looking at the possibility of having a dedicated key worker team in order to ensure that prisoners are consistently supported and the quality of sessions maintained.

A total of 11,143, key worker sessions were recorded in 2024, compared with 15,915, in 2023. The time from a prisoner arriving at the establishment to the allocation of a key

worker has been an average of one day, with an average of nine days before a key worker session takes place.

From the Board's observations, there is good peer support at HMP Humber, with prisoners known as 'Humber pilots' working in a variety of roles. They are wing based and on hand to help any prisoners with processes within prison life.

Over the year, there were 57 new members of staff and 51 leavers, slightly lower than in the previous year, when there were 84 new members and 67 leavers.

In the Board's view, HMP Humber continues to prioritise prisoners considered to be the most vulnerable, e.g. men under 25 years old, on an open ACCT or CSIP, at risk of self-harm, or causing, or being a victim of, violent incidents.

#### **5.4 Equality and diversity**

The equality action team continued to meet bi-monthly during the reporting year, and the Board is pleased to see the amount and detail of information that is shared, measured and discussed.

The Board has been provided with detailed information to allow a serious consideration of outcomes for a range of protected groups in areas such as the use of force, adjudications and incentives scheme status, which have given few concerns. Where apparent discrepancies have appeared, these appear to have been fully explained, and the Board is happy to report that these are interrogated at the meetings referred to above.

A number of forums take place regularly, which Board members attend, for observational purposes, if convenient, which address the issues raised by different protected characteristic groups, e.g. race, sexual orientation, young adults, disability and 50+. These are useful tools and an opportunity for prisoners to raise issues that might otherwise be missed. Special events have been organised, such as Black History Month, and for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller prisoners, which were well received.

Meals appropriate to religious and other festivals have continued to be provided as part of the weekly menu choice.

The number of foreign national prisoners over the reporting year was similar to the previous year and represented approximately 1% of the population at the end of December, a decrease from 2% in 2022 and 7% in 2021. From our observations, the prison seems to have good working relationships with Home Office immigration enforcement staff, who visit the prison regularly to host clinics so that prisoners receive regular face-to-face updates on their case. Notices continue to be translated and appropriate distraction materials and picture dictionaries are available. The ICE TV channel broadcasts material for foreign national prisoners at given time slots.

A total of 57 discrimination incident reporting forms (DIRFs) were logged during the reporting year, compared with 82 in 2023, with independent scrutiny of the completed DIRFs being provided by a charity, the Zahid Mubarek Trust.

#### **5.5 Faith and pastoral support**

The chaplaincy team continued to deliver its statutory responsibilities to a very good standard in 2024, in the Board's view. Corporate worship across all faith groups has been well attended and smaller faith group sessions remained consistent. Over 6,000 visits were made to the chaplaincy for corporate worship throughout 2024.

The needs of Christian, Muslim, Pagan, Buddhist and Jewish men continued to be served

through regular attendance from their respective chaplains. Additionally, 2024 saw the addition of a Latter-Day Saints chaplain, who now leads a weekly group for their community.

Unfortunately, 2024 marked the absence of a dedicated Sikh chaplain. Despite this, the wider chaplaincy team introduced Sikh group meetings, encouraging the community to observe and celebrate their festivals. Weekly group sessions will re-commence during January 2025 with the appointment of a new Sikh chaplain.

All men on an ACCT receive a pastoral visit from a chaplain once a week; during the reporting year, there was a significant increase in requests for chaplains to attend ACCT reviews. To maintain a multi-disciplinary approach, the chaplaincy team has become the primary point of contact for ACCT reviews. Other departments such as healthcare and mental health are not always available or required, so the focus often moves to chaplaincy. Depending on the number of reviews scheduled on any given day, the team would attend an average of 4-6 reviews per day.

In the Board's view, the chaplaincy staff consistently go above and beyond to provide pastoral care and support to prisoners. For example, during times of bereavement, when a prisoner is unable to attend a funeral, chaplains have arranged individual services in the chapel to mark the death rather than simply conducting a candle lighting. Three types of bereavement care are offered: individual care from a chaplain; the Living with Loss Programme; and Cruse Bereavement counselling.

The recruitment of prison visitor volunteers (OPVs) continues to be challenging. Five expressions of interest were received over the year, but none completed the vetting process required to start the role. The team, however, does continue to publicise the role across various voluntary networks and churches.

The pen friend scheme is now available to prisoners and some men expressed an interest in this service in the reporting year.

## **5.6 Incentives schemes**

The HMIP report stated that many prisoners did not have confidence in the scheme and only 26% of survey respondents said the prison rewarded good behaviour fairly. However, 78% said that the opportunities and rewards in the prison motivated them to behave well. From its observations, the Board is satisfied that the incentives scheme has been applied positively in order to manage behaviour and considers it is operated fairly and consistently.

The table below shows the average proportion of prisoners by incentive level, for the last three years.

Year	Enhanced (top level)	Standard (middle)	Basic (bottom)
2024	578/56%	431/42%	43/3%
2023	66%	31%	3%
2022	65%	34%	1%

## **5.7 Complaints**

A total of 1,585 complaints were received in 2024, which averages at 132 per month, compared with 104 in 2023, and 107 in 2022. The peak was in April, with 163, and the

lowest in September, when 85 were received. Property continues to be one of the main issues, alongside residential concerns and the offender management unit (OMU).

The management of complaints, together with the process, seems to have noticeably improved over the year, with assurance checks being carried out on a monthly basis by the IMB, the head of assurance and the functional manager, ensuring the quality of the responses and that they are within timescales.

As reported in 2023, prisoners continue to submit duplicate copies of their complaints to both the prison and to the IMB in the hope of speeding up or receiving a more favourable response.

External complaints continue to be an issue, with property lost on transfer being the main cause for complaint, which has been exacerbated by a greater number of prisoners transferring within the prison estate. These are particularly challenging to resolve, as the level of communication and attention from the prisoners' previous establishments can greatly vary.

## **5.8 Property**

The Board believes that the level of property loss at HMP Humber continues to be an issue, which we have continually raised in our annual reports, year on year.

As with previous years, the handling of property within the prison was one of the highest number of complaints during 2024. The proactive approach taken by the prison in addressing property issues, which saw a significant reduction in property complaints in 2022, became particularly challenging when HMP Humber was designated a resettlement prison. The significant increase in turnover of prisoners on a daily basis and the requirement to increase the number of cell spaces has proved to have a detrimental effect.

Cell-clearance training is provided to residential staff to try and improve on property being lost when a prisoner moves location within the establishment itself.

Compensation paid out for missing or lost property in 2024 was approximately £2,616, an increase of around £400 on the previous year and, again, a significant increase on the year prior. Prisoners continue to send applications to the IMB regarding missing property: in 2024, the Board received 25 applications in relation to property in the current establishment and 28 in relation to property from their previous prison. Staff continue to work to mitigate property losses, especially in relation to other establishments, despite the challenging circumstances during the year.

## **6. Health and wellbeing**

### **6.1 Healthcare general**

Spectrum Community Health CIC (community interest company), or Spectrum, acts as the main provider of health and social care services, having taken up the appointment in August 2022. Clinical substance misuse services are subcontracted to the charity, Change, Grow, Live (CGL), with Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys (TEWV) NHS Foundation Trust commissioned to run mental health services and Time for Teeth commissioned to operate dental services.

The Board acknowledges that the improved level of service referred to in our last report has continued during the reporting year. General healthcare staffing levels have improved and, as a result of the good work around raising awareness of prison health, the department has seen increased interest in enquiries about vacancies.

A final approval of a business case for an improved staffing model from NHS England was still awaited at the end of the reporting year, and the Board hopes this will be successful. It is unfortunate that the current staffing model impacts the ability to deliver services outside of the day-to-day routine.

The Board hopes that work on the proposed new pharmacy will be completed in the coming year and that this will alleviate some of the pressures currently experienced.

The reporting year has, again, seen the continuing practice of assessing new arrivals in reception. Healthcare staff continue to have a presence during ACCT and segregation review boards. The improving links between the healthcare team, managers and prison staff, identified in the Board's previous report, have been maintained during the reporting period.

The monthly security and drug strategy meeting and prisoner health operation group (PHOG) have taken place throughout the year. Meetings are chaired by the Governor to maintain direct oversight in relation to the safe delivery of ongoing healthcare services.

The Board is pleased to note that the number of complaints is minimal, particularly given the numbers received by the previous suppliers. We also note that the number of healthcare applications it has received has fallen by 22% compared with 2023.

### **6.2 Physical healthcare**

At the end of the reporting year, there were fewer vacancies for various positions within the primary care team than at the end of the previous year.

The healthcare provision does not operate 24 hours a day, but contact details are available for advice – i.e. the urgent treatment centre at the Bransholme Health Centre. A handover takes place between healthcare staff and prison night staff, which highlights any prisoners who may be of concern overnight. However, the lack of detailed information exchanged between day and night staff has been raised as a concern by both prison and healthcare staff.

The number of clinics offered and the waiting times continue to appear, to the Board, to be reasonable. The use of the dedicated patient phone line and face-to-face contact with administration staff appears to work effectively. The Board has seen evidence of a proactive approach to try and ensure that men miss as few appointments as possible.

In addition to GP appointments, nurse-led clinics, physiotherapy, optometry and podiatry appointments are available.

Clinic room space is oversubscribed, which limits the opportunity to offer additional services. The Board notes that staff are using a 'making every contact count' (MECC) approach, leveraging everyday interactions in order to support positive health and wellbeing and to offer all vital services to patients.

The Board shares concerns about the available healthcare accommodation as the prison population rises, both currently and with the development of the additional house blocks under construction.

Autumn and winter vaccination programmes have been implemented, mirroring those in the community.

The Board was pleased to note the appointment of a long-term conditions nurse towards the end of the reporting year, addressing concerns that were previously raised by both HMIP and the Board.

The Board believes that the conclusion HMIP reached in its report, stating that the standard of the provision is similar to that which patients could expect to receive elsewhere in the community, continues to reflect the position at HMP Humber at the end of the reporting year

### **6.3 Mental health**

TEWV continues to have responsibility for the delivery of mental health services. The Board is pleased to record that service delivery has improved throughout the reporting year, with new structures and processes being implemented, following the recruitment of new team members. However, staff recruitment remains an ongoing challenge in the mental health area, with a poor response to the vacancies advertised. Strategies to improve recruitment success are being investigated, but there is still a high reliance on agency support.

Prisoners are assessed on arrival and can self-refer to the mental health service at any time. Despite pressures from a high number of ACCT referrals, the team has been making consistent improvements on waiting times and assessing people within agreed standards. However, the primary service acknowledges that there is further work to do.

As reported previously, the team provides services daily, with certain treatments and therapies being subcontracted to agencies such as Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust and Rethink to provide additional services. The Board would welcome an improvement in the services available to men who have less serious conditions.

The mental health team attends all initial ACCT reviews. The Board is pleased to report a greatly increased attendance by mental health colleagues at ACCT reviews and the increase in staff training in this area. It is acknowledged that this puts a strain on the service. Staff attended 495 ACCTs and reviews in the last three months of the reporting year, but this is welcome.

Workspace, both patient facing and otherwise, continues to be an issue, which can result in men having to be seen for assessment in unsuitable environments.

The Board is pleased to note the proposal to make additional office space available for the service in a disused part of the prison and hopes this will enable improvements to the service to be continued.

Professional relationships within the prison appear positive, and newly appointed staff receive mental health awareness training. It is intended that the service will deliver training and information about other services to operational staff.

The Board has previously reported its concern at the time taken to transfer men suffering from serious mental illness to secure hospitals. We are pleased to note this issue has not arisen during the reporting year and we acknowledge the increase in collaborative working between the service and the prison to deal with potential difficulties in a proactive manner.

The Board notes that the team has effective links with community providers to assist with arrangements for men on release.

#### **6.4 Social care**

The East Riding of Yorkshire Council has worked within HMP Humber since 2021. Working collaboratively with Spectrum and the prison, the team aims to offer the same level of social care and support to those in prison as in the community. The team is continually promoting the services it offers. It has provided training for prison staff to ensure referrals to them can be accepted, which has resulted in an increase in referrals. The team is usually available within the establishment to conduct Social Care Act assessments and provide recommendations for healthcare packages. Although they have no dedicated office accommodation, practitioners attend the prison at least twice weekly.

#### **6.5 Time out of cell, regime**

The Board was pleased to see that opportunities for outdoor activities were maintained during 2024. The prison continued its accreditation opportunities for younger prisoners to obtain the Duke of Edinburgh's (DoE) Awards. However, the number of prisoners attempting this in 2024 was small and were impacted by the age profile of the prison population, together with the overall turnover of prisoners.

The Shield course continued to be run to offer personal development and teamworking skills training. It runs along the lines of military basic training and is a short course, so can work within the constraints of rapid prisoner turnover.

The gym timetable featured a large range of activities, including football, weights, badminton, circuits, spinning, stretch mobility, volleyball and tennis, with dedicated sessions for prisoners detoxing from methadone. These latter sessions are jointly supported by Change, Grow, Live (CGL), the prison's substance misuse provider, and are ongoing.

The physical education (PE) department organised another fitness incentive scheme called 'HMP Humber's Fittest Man', and a football coaching course in partnership with Twinnings Scunthorpe United in 2024.

The Board is pleased to report that specialist exercise-referral gym sessions continue to be facilitated twice a week. This involves prisoners who have been referred for a bespoke session by the GP, physiotherapist or member of the mental health team.

The PE department continues to work closely with HMP Humber's safer custody staff in 2024, to engage prisoners who are feeling particularly vulnerable or require additional support to access the gym. Prisoners are paired with a buddy selected by staff. Overall, the buddy scheme is reported to be instrumental in improving wellbeing and reducing instances of self-harm for the specific prisoners joining these sessions.

#### **6.6 Drug and alcohol rehabilitation**

Clinical substance-use support is provided by Spectrum, and psychosocial support by CGL. The caseload at the end of the reporting year was comparable to last year, at approximately 300 patients, of which 261 were receiving opioid substitution therapy

(OST) – again, an increase on the previous year.

New referrals are seen promptly and provided with appropriate advice and information. Previously reported care plans continued for prisoners transferring from HMP Hull. Prisoners can self-refer and staff are aware of how to progress referrals. The Board is concerned by a further increase in prisoners identified as possibly under the influence (UTI), with 88 reported possible cases during October. While this may be related to the number of men passing through the establishment, it results in an increase in work. All such men, many of whom are not already known to the service, are seen by a member of CGL, provided with appropriate information and advice and encouraged to engage with the team. This, of course, increases the demand for the team's resources.

The delivery of the recovery programme offered by HMP Humber has had to be reviewed as a result of the turnover of prisoners and remaining sentence lengths. Historically, this programme has been of a meaningful timescale of six months. However, due to the pressures over the reporting year and the reduction in sentence lengths, the delivery length was initially reduced to three months and then further, to only eight weeks, to meet demand.

At the end of the reporting year, 161 prisoners were housed on incentivised substance free living (ISFL) wings. Prisoners have to apply to move to these wings and agree to the conditions set, including submitting to regular drug testing. This figure marks a significant increase on the previous reporting year, which the Board views as very positive. However, as prisoners are arriving on a daily basis with extremely short sentences (some with as little as two weeks), many who would usually be identified as suitable for recovery/ISFL support, or who are eligible and willing to look at alternative treatments to methadone, are being denied access to tailored care packages, as staff do not have a long enough period of time to work with them.

Espranor and Buvidal (drug substitution treatments for opioid dependence) have been introduced as an alternative to methadone. However, to safely prescribe in terms of regular reviews, prisoners require around six months left to serve on their sentence. This time also allows for a greater handover of care to community services, as all the appropriate reviews and necessary meetings can be facilitated.

Prior to discharge, prisoners are offered planning and advice, with appointments being made with teams in the community, to continue treatment. Prisoners are also offered naloxone (a medicine that rapidly reverses an opioid overdose), together with training in its use, prior to release. It should be stressed, however, that not all those trained take a naloxone kit on discharge.

## **6.7 Soft skills**

As in previous years, extensive use continues to be made of the prison's in-cell television service, ICE TV, in providing a full soft-skills programme. The Governor often provides updates, and information is given on the prison regime and any changes. Lessons continue in art, and gym sessions are also available.

Sessions from DART (drug and alcohol recovery team) on managing drug addiction and mental health continue.

Information is also provided on a wide range of other subjects, including author of the month, poets' corner and news from the chaplaincy team at appropriate times of the year, such as programmes in the evening for the men observing Ramadan, for example, as well as information and films on other cultures.



Adverts for jobs and meetings, such as those for veterans, CRUSE bereavement support, Shannon Trust, Humber Pilots, Listeners and Andy's Man Club, are all shown.

Soft skills' development, as part of the resettlement programmes, is delivered through a number of ways:

- Diversity and inclusion forums are held across the prison.
- Ready-for-release programmes are held on the 'Creating Future Opportunities' wing, consisting of three modules:
  - Resettlement
  - Community payback
  - Paid employment

Community payback includes charity and fundraising events, such as working with B&Q, for example, to produce foil blankets for the homeless. The aim is to prepare men for release with an improved chance of not re-offending and with a better skillset to live in the community. It is important to stress that the ability of the prison to provide this type of training and activity has, again, been severely impacted by the number of men passing through the establishment.

## 7. Progression and resettlement

### 7.1 Education, library

Novus is the main education provider in the prison and offers a range of courses, including Maths, English, and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), plus a variety of vocational training and several unaccredited courses.

There are typically 6-12 prisoners taking Open University degree courses in subjects such as history, business management and criminology. Other distance-learning courses are available below degree level, with some of them funded by grants from the Prison Education Trust.

The table below shows the qualification passes for learners in Maths, English and ESOL during 2024, compared with 2023 data, which is shown in brackets.

Qualification achieved	Entry Level	Level 1	Level 2
Maths	153 (117)	60 (38)	5 (1)
English	131 (131)	104 (113)	14 (4)
ESOL	23 (30)	9 (0)	0 (0)

The HMIP report found that the Maths results at Level 1, compared with English, were too low. This improved in 2024 but is still low.

The Board is aware that there are not enough education, skills or workplaces to meet the needs of the prison population. The HMIP report found that too many prisoners were unemployed and waiting lists for education and training were too long. This has not improved over the reporting year due, mainly, to the volume of prisoners in the system. As soon as some prisoners are allocated to education, they leave the establishment.

Novus staff have been instrumental in the success of the prison's reading strategy, working with HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) partners. Prisoners in classes are encouraged to read and are given time to do so: they have the opportunity to read technical books, as well as for pleasure, and several initiatives and competitions have been run to encourage reading.

There are two libraries, one in each zone of the prison, both of which are run by East Riding of Yorkshire Council. From the Board's observations, prisoners have the opportunity to visit the library regularly.

## 7.2 Vocational training, work

The table below shows the number of vocational qualifications attained in Novus provision in 2024, compared with 2023 data, which is shown in brackets. The range of qualifications covers bricklaying, maintenance operations, construction skills, construction skills certification scheme (CSCS) card, waste management, horticulture, industrial cleaning, catering, health and safety, IT, computer aided design, and peer mentoring. Waste management and horticulture are delivered in partnership with the prison industries teams in waste and gardens (and Novus continued to work with industries to internally verify their performing manufacturing operations qualification).

Qualification achieved	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
No. of learners	236 (196)	535 (492)	22 (25)

A further 741 unaccredited courses were passed, and 376 men engaged with Novus Works.

Great efforts are made to ensure that as many prisoners as possible are engaged in purposeful activity, and this begins with the induction process delivered by Novus Advise. The information, advice and guidance (IAG) service gives prisoners impartial advice and guidance to ensure they are clear about their choices for learning, work and employment opportunities on release. Prisoners are encouraged to create their own skills action plan.

The challenge has been made more difficult by the rapid turnover of the prison population. It is very difficult for short-stay prisoners to get the benefit of many of the training and courses on offer, particularly for advanced skills or where formal qualifications may require many weeks to complete courses. In addition, many courses require a qualification in English or Maths before men can progress.

Springboard, a scheme for encouraging the most challenging prisoners to engage, operates in the establishment and typically supports 12 men at any one time.

Novus Works engages with men three months before release and after release, where required. They help around 80 men each year into work or training that leads to work, with popular destinations being rail engineering, dock work, and construction.

Novus learners are able to engage in enrichment activities, including entering work into the Koestler Awards for arts in criminal justice, singing groups, exhibiting artwork externally via a number of organisations. They can take part in themed days and activities often based on the equality and diversity calendar, and in producing work in vocational areas beyond the boundaries of the curriculum, which extend learners' imaginations and attitudes to their own success and possibilities.

An underlying theme in 2024 has been the possibility of the prison returning to training role. This would require an increased range of work offers. Whilst this process is ongoing, it has, understandably, resulted in a focus on the future. Whilst it was unfortunate that the prison lost a significant contract towards the end of 2024, this has been offset by the plan to create three new workshops in recycling, warehousing and textiles. All three will be able to operate using prison resources and will link up in a 'supply chain'. Other projects are in the pipeline that will help the prison operate successfully in the new environment.

The recent HMIP report stated that attendance on many courses is too low and needs to improve, a view with which the Board agrees. We are very concerned about the rapid

turnover of the prison population and the impact on achieving qualifications and developing skills. It is very difficult for short-stay prisoners to get the benefit of any meaningful training by means of courses on offer, particularly for advanced skills or where formal qualifications may require many weeks to complete courses.

The Board has received a number of applications from prisoners complaining about not being able to work, however we acknowledge that the activities team does work tirelessly in order to provide places for prisoners, but we would like to see an overall increase in available places to help reduce levels of unemployment.

### **7.3 Offender management, progression**

There are several factors that have had an impact on the work of the offender management unit (OMU) this year. The Board has well documented, in this report and the previous year's report, our concern about the increased churn of prisoners. An increased number of prisoners with only a short time left to serve obviously places pressure on the work of the OMU. In 2024, this has also been exacerbated by the early release scheme. Despite this, the Board believes that the department has worked tirelessly and continues to maintain high standards. Members of the team work well together, as noted in the HMIP report last year, and we have observed this to still be the case. Several initiatives, such as induction information given to new prisoners and the daily one-hour, offender management in custody (OMiC) hotline, have continued to be successful.

At the end of 2024, there were approximately 150 to 170 releases each month and around 200 transfers in each month. It is the view of the Board that the early release scheme was managed extremely well, with 57 men released calmly on tranche 1 and 33 on tranche 2. This was also reported in the local media, with TV cameras present on the day, which helped to show the prison in a positive light.

Recategorisation reviews (which assess a prisoner's risk, behaviour and efforts towards rehabilitation to see if they can be managed in a prison with a different/lower level of security) continued throughout 2024. Transfers to open conditions were managed with minimal delays, with 120 moves during the year.

Extra resources were used to reduce the backlog of the offender assessment system, or OASys (a risk-assessment tool), in 2023, and HMP Humber was in a positive position. However, following the early releases during the reporting year, the backlog gradually began to increase again. At the end of 2024, the backlog was around 30, which seems manageable, and the Board has no concerns.

Generally, HMP Humber does not offer prisoners the opportunity to be released on temporary license (ROTL), because risks to security have an impact on the safety of the prison, although cases are considered on an individual basis. No prisoners were released on ROTL during 2024.

At the end of 2024, there were 65 indeterminate-sentenced prisoners (ISP), which means they have no release date, housed in HMP Humber, of whom 28 were on imprisonment for public protection (IPP) sentences.

Humber has a specific wing known as the Hope unit, which aims to release ISP prisoners into the community successfully without recall, and to equip them with the skills, knowledge and support to make that transition. This forward-looking, innovative unit is very successful. A total of 28 of the ISPs (a mix of IPP and life-sentence prisoners) were in the Hope unit, of which 14 were IPP prisoners. From the opening of the unit in May 2018 to the end of 2024, over 100 prisoners have gained release through this regime, including 28 this year, who have either been released or progressed to category D status

(which means they are eligible to be transferred to an open prison).

The unit has good links with the Hardman Trust, a charity that provides grants to prisoners who have served 10 years or more of their sentence. The Hope unit encourages prisoners to apply for these grants in order to help with their progression on release. Grants are now also available to prisoners in custody, residing in the unit, to aid study and progress to further education when released.

Recognising the additional challenges ISP/IPP prisoners face on release, a prisoner helpline number has been provided so they can receive support over the phone. This continues to work well.

At the end of the year, the Hope unit was assessed and was very hopeful of success in gaining the Enabling Environment Award. This is a national project that aims to encourage services to create positive and rewarding places to live, work and study. In November, the unit was assessed on 10 different strands, demonstrating it could meet the rigorous criteria in each strand. This will be a phenomenal achievement for a unit within a prison. (The accreditation results will be announced in March 2025.) The Board believes that it would be very strong evidence of the excellent way this unit is led and managed, together with the quality of staff and prisoner relationships within the Hope unit.

In the Board's view, offender management and progression continue to areas of strength in the prison.

#### **7.4 Family contact**

Social visits have been taking place throughout 2024 and are obviously a popular means of prisoners maintaining positive family and significant other ties.

Family days (which bring together prisoners and their families outside of their statutory entitlement to social visits, usually in more informal settings) were held every month throughout 2024, all of which were well received and allowed a more relaxed environment to enjoy family time.

Prison social video calls were well used during the year, and were particularly beneficial for prisoners located some considerable distance from home.

In-cell phones are a great benefit to prisoners for contacting family, friends and legal advisers, as well as for some healthcare and resettlement appointments and conversations with the IMB.

The prison identifies and contacts prisoners with no family contact and low phone use on an ongoing basis to offer support. Events have taken place that are jointly run by Lincolnshire Action Trust and the safer custody team for prisoners who do not receive social visits. Some prisoners prefer not to have visitors, either social or video calls, which has to be respected.

#### **7.5 Resettlement planning**

Reducing reoffending and resettlement planning continued to be a major focus for staff at HMP Humber during 2024. The resettlement hub consists of commissioned services and prison departments working together to jointly provide a supportive service for prisoners nearing their release date.

The following services are offered through the resettlement and employment hub team:

- Induction: Staff and some trained prisoners visit the induction wing once a week to

engage with all new prisoners transferred in, to offer support and promote the services, opportunities and support offered by the employment hub.

- 12-weeks-to-release appointments: Staff contact all men who are identified as having 12 weeks left before release, or who come into the prison with fewer than 12 weeks to serve. They hold a 'resettlement check in' to ensure all avenues of support are in place ready for release.
- Humber employment advisory board (EAB). EABs are chaired by representatives of employers. They offer guidance to establishments on the best way to get prisoners work-ready for their local labour market.
- Prison leaver project: Grow Into Employment programme: The prison leaver project run in 2023 had its funding ceased early in 2024.
- Identification (ID) and bank accounts for released prisoners: The ID and banking clerk processes applications for birth certificates and bank accounts with Halifax bank. HMP Humber can also process driving licence applications in certain circumstances.
- Accommodation: Housing charity Shelter is the primary contractor for accommodation referrals from the community offender manager (COM). However, the contract restricts this to referrals within the Yorkshire and Humber areas only. For those out-of-area, the commissioned rehabilitative services (CRS) accommodation provision can be delivered remotely. Accommodation issues can also be dealt with by a prisoner offender manager (POM) and or the pre-release team.

The Board remains concerned that too many prisoners can be released with either no fixed abode or with unsustainable accommodation. However, the 2024 figures show that 92% of prisoners are released to first night accommodation and 38% to sustainable accommodation.

The strategic housing specialist (SHS), who works between HMPs Hull and Humber, provides support to Shelter and has set up pre-release panels with local stakeholders and local authorities. The aim is to ensure that arrangements are put in place for each prisoner's release and to highlight those who are vulnerable and need support. Close co-operation with Hull City Council's homelessness prevention and options team continues and members are vetted to enter the prison.

## 8. The work of the Board

### Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	16
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	7
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	7
Total number of visits to the prison	274

### Applications to the IMB

Code	Subject	Previous reporting year	Current reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	9	15
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives scheme, sanctions	5	7
C	Equality	5	4
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, time out of cell	20	19
E	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection, restrictions Finance, including pay, private monies & spends	18	19
F	Food and kitchens	10	11
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	40	31
H1	Property within the establishment	42	25
H2	Property during transfer or in another facility	35	28
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogues	14	9
I	Sentence management, including HDC (home detention curfew), ROTL (release on temporary licence), parole, release dates, re-categorisation	26	10
J	Staff and prisoner concerns, including bullying	34	21
K	Transfers	32	16
L	Miscellaneous	34	21
Z	Complaints on Comp1s and Comp 1As	7	10
	<b>Total number of applications</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>246</b>

## **Annex A**

### **Key service providers**

- Physical healthcare: Spectrum Community Health (a community interest company/CIC)
- Mental healthcare: Tees, Esk & Wear Valley (TEWV) NHS Foundation Trust
- Substance misuse treatment: Change, Grow, Live (CGL)
- Dental: Time for Teeth (TFT)
- Education framework: Novus
- Escort contractor: GeoAmey





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