



Ministry  
of Justice

Lord Timpson  
Minister of State for Justice

Chair, Independent Monitoring Board  
HMP Kirklevington Grange  
Kirklevington  
Yarm  
TS15 9PA

MoJ ref: SUB126647

21 August 2025

Dear Chair,

**HMP/YOI KIRKLEVINGTON GRANGE: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT  
FOR 01 JANUARY 2024 – 31 DECEMBER 2024**

Thank you for submitting your Board's annual report on HMP/YOI Kirklevington Grange. I have read your report carefully and would like to extend my sincere thanks to the Board for its dedicated monitoring and the comprehensive insight provided into the prison's performance over the reporting period while short of members.

I was saddened to learn of a self-inflicted death in custody. My condolences go to the family and friends of the individual affected. This case will be the subject of a thorough investigation by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman, and I can assure you that any recommendations made will be taken seriously.

I acknowledge the Board's concern regarding the lack of visible progress on the replacement accommodation units at HMP/YOI Kirklevington Grange under the Rapid Deployment Cells Programme (RDCP). I fully recognise the impact that limited capacity can have on the prison's ability to expand opportunities for outside paid employment, which remains a central pillar of the resettlement model at Category D establishments.

The development of these units has unfortunately been delayed by a series of complex planning requirements. The project was initially subject to Nutrient Neutrality conditions, which required appropriate mitigations to be in place before planning permission could be secured. Temporary credits were obtained in October 2023 to allow progress while design work for a wastewater treatment plant was conducted in parallel. However, following revised guidance from Natural England, additional mitigation measures enabled the acquisition of permanent credits in August 2024 at which point full planning permission was granted.

In September 2024, progress was further hampered when the principal contractor went into administration. This necessitated the appointment of a new contractor to review and where necessary update, the existing designs before construction could resume. An established modular contractor has now been appointed to take this work forward. Design activity is expected to take approximately 30 weeks. At the conclusion of this phase, a confirmed cost and programme of work will be received to allow construction to recommence on site. While I appreciate the frustration such delays cause, I want to reassure the Board that the project remains a key priority and that all efforts are being made to restore momentum and deliver the expanded capacity needed to support HMP/YOI Kirklevington Grange's vital rehabilitative work.

I am encouraged to note the Board's positive observations regarding several areas. The continued high standard of healthcare and the absence of notable complaints in this area is commendable and aligns with findings in the most recent HMIP report. I also welcome the outcomes of the Ofsted inspection, which confirmed generally good progress in education. The structured induction process for new arrivals, the complete absence of recorded assaults during 2024 and the strong engagement with rehabilitation and neurodiversity initiatives all reflect positively on the management and staff. The contribution of partners such as Age UK and Novus also deserves recognition with the latter achieving a 99.7% success rate on its education delivery plan. Feedback from prisoners, including the 81% satisfaction rate with accommodation and the high attendance in education, further reinforces these achievements. It is particularly pleasing to see ongoing investment in the physical environment, including plans for a garden space for older prisoners and a future wildlife pond.

It is heartening that in your comments for the Governor, you have recognised the prison's achievements, and I hope that you will continue to have a constructive relationship going forward. Further information on the key issues you raised for HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) is provided in the annex to this letter.

The Lord Chancellor and I continue to appreciate the valuable role played by members of Independent Monitoring Boards and we extend our thanks for your ongoing commitment on behalf of HMP/YOI Kirklevington Grange.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James', written in a cursive style.

**Lord Timpson**  
**Minister for Prisons, Probation, and Reducing Reoffending**

## **HMP/YOI KIRKLEVINGTON GRANGE: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 01 JANUARY 2024 – 31 DECEMBER 2024**

### **HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report**

#### **Prisoners' Property**

HMPPS notes the Board's continued concerns regarding the handling of prisoners' property during transfers between establishments. This remains an area of focus. Consideration is being given to how we can address the findings of the IMB's national thematic report on the impact of property loss, alongside the thematic review conducted by the Independent Prisoner Complaint Investigations which looked at five years of related complaints.

In response to these reports, Governors and other senior leaders have been reminded of the key principles of property handling, including the importance of compliance with volumetric control limits.

Over the last twelve months no complaints have been received from HMP/YOI Kirklevington Grange regarding property loss during Prisoner Escort Services (PECS) transfers.

#### **Financial Autonomy**

The Board's suggestion that local purchasing autonomy could offer financial efficiencies is noted. Within the current framework, Governors already have a significant level of budgetary flexibility. While core financial responsibilities such as compliance with Managing Public Money, delegated authority limits and the requirement not to overspend remain fixed, Governors are empowered to make decisions about local resource allocation. This includes the ability to move funding between pay and non-pay budgets, reinvest in-year underspends and prioritise spending in line with local strategic objectives, including infrastructure, rehabilitation and staff engagement. Governors are also able to reinvest surpluses from local industries and determine the allocation of performance-related rewards, provided this is in line with national policy parameters.

These freedoms are supported by the Free Flex Fixed (FFF) framework, which clearly sets out where discretion lies at local level and where central direction applies. All financial decision-making must meet the four Accounting Officer tests: regularity, propriety, value for money and feasibility. The framework is designed to strike a balance between central accountability and local flexibility.