



Chair, Independent Monitoring Board  
HMP/YOI Isis  
Western Way  
London  
SE28 0NZ

MoJ ref: SUB126630

18 August 2025

Dear Chair,

**HMP/YOI ISIS: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT  
FOR 1 JANUARY 2024 – 31 DECEMBER 2024**

Thank you for providing your Board's annual report on HMP/YOI Isis. I am grateful to you and your colleagues for your hard work that has been put into capturing your helpful observations. This is particularly appreciated as you continued to operate with fewer members than your recommended quota.

I have read your report with care and share your concerns about the rising levels of violence at HMP/YOI Isis, particularly amongst young adult prisoners. HMP/YOI Isis is dual designated, which allows it to hold 18 to 21-year-olds in addition to the older adult population. It is essential that reception prison places are maintained to effectively serve local courts. It is important that this cohort can progress to the next stage prison as designated by the national offender flows, and prisons of all categories designed to hold 18 to 21-year-olds should not routinely refuse to accept them. As HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) continues to navigate through population pressures, SDS40 and other initiatives have provided opportunities to progress prisoners through the system. This includes aiding the rehabilitation and access to the right services for 18 to 21-year-olds in the next stage prisons.

Reducing violence in prisons is a key priority, and we are working hard to make prisons as safe as possible. Whilst it is not possible to eliminate all risks of harm, we continue our efforts on a range of measures to address the levels of violence in prison. HMP/YOI Isis recognises that 18-21-year-olds are overrepresented as perpetrators of violence but initiatives to tackle this are showing encouraging signs. 90% of the men that have been through the Men of Purpose programme have been from this age bracket and early indicators are showing the decline of violence and positive behaviour of those participants.

I also recognise your concerns about gang culture and knife crime within our communities as well as our prisons. The Government is taking a number of steps to go 'upstream' of the crimes and behaviour that lead to young people committing knife crime and other serious offences. We will intervene earlier to stop young people being drawn into crime, creating a new Young Futures programme with a network of hubs with youth workers, mental health support workers, and careers advisers on hand to support young people's mental health and avoid them being drawn into crime. Local prevention partnerships will identify young people who could be drawn into violence and intervene. We have begun plans to test and pilot these in 2025/26. We are also legislating through the Crime and Policing Bill to create a new offence of criminal exploitation of children, to go after the gangs who are luring young people into violence and crime.

The Mayor of London continues to commission and support a wide variety of programmes across London to reduce violence in the community, with a number specifically focused on those being released from custody or with active involvement in the criminal justice system. This includes the GPS tagging programme for knife crime offenders, which often tags prisoners as they are released from HMP/YOI Isis and has been shown to reduce reoffending post-release.

I appreciate that managing these issues can be resource intensive. In March 2025, HMP/YOI Isis gained staff on detached duty, and this allowed for improved regime delivery as well as increased key work delivery to around 400 sessions per month. Whilst this is still below the target, it is a significant improvement. It is recognised how beneficial improved staffing is in supporting the establishment managing a complex population. As of May 2025, I am pleased to report that the prison was almost fully staffed with the required number of prison officers. In addition, retention rates are improving, and sickness levels have recently significantly improved.

I acknowledge that overall, your report shows a lack of progress around a number of concerns that you have previously raised and hope further inroads can be made over the next reporting year. I was though encouraged by some positives that you were able to point to in your report. These include the improvements in education attainment and success rates, positive feedback on catering training provided by 180 Kitchen, and the impressive achievement of the Equalities Manager being presented with a Butler Trust Award by HRH Princess Anne for 'her game-changing impact as equalities lead at HMP/YOI Isis'. I was also really impressed with the work of the Young Men of Purpose initiative during my visit on 3 April 2025 and would like to commend the prison on this.

I note you have raised some local issues of concern in your report which the Governor will continue to keep you aware of as work continues. HMPPS comments in response to other issues raised in your report are set out in the attached annex.

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

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 ISIS: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 JANUARY 2024 – 31 DECEMBER 2024

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

#### **Resourcing**

Please see comments above in the Minister's response.

#### **Reoffending Data**

Subject to satisfactory quality assurance and development, the intention is for the Ministry of Justice to resume the publication of reoffending rates by prison establishment in 2026.

#### **Ethnicity Factors in Relation to Violent Incidents**

Recent surveys and safe space discussions with young black men revealed that the majority had been exposed to violence during their childhoods. They were more likely to have grown up expecting physical violence as a punishment from their carers. Other opinions given were community issues that have happened outside and continue to affect life inside an establishment.

HMP/YOI Isis delivers a trauma informed response approach and many interventions to support young black men. Earlier this year a Use of Force survey on black men was carried out at the prison to deep dive into experiences of young black men in HMP/YOI Isis and an action plan was subsequently created to support this minority group. Interventions such as Belong, Men of Purpose, Changing the Game and Black Heroes Journey are all established in the prison to address the issues faced by black men in and outside prison and help change any patterns. Delivery of 'Aspire Higher' a Black Excellence programme to gain life skills such as leadership, teamwork, relationship building, personal development and problem solving has also had a positive impact. There has been a focus on ensuring that there is no disproportionality in the treatment of young black men and forums such as 'Black prisoner experiences' have been held regularly to give prisoners a voice on their perspective and better understand the disproportionality.

#### **Offender Management Unit (OMU) Resourcing**

The impact of capacity-related measures and activity on OMUs has been recognised and the work that has been delivered by OMU staff across the estate has been central to their successful delivery. While there has been an unprecedented pressure, temporary resource uplifts have been made available to prisons to assist with this, including an uplift to recognise extra work on Home Detention Curfew and the provision of incentivised overtime for OMU staff. In addition, a central team has been providing support in completing OASys assessments to support prison OMUs.

In response to SDS40, HMPPS has completed a national lessons learned review and this learning will inform the development of any capacity management measures we deploy in future, beginning with those we develop as part of the programme to implement the changes resulting from the Independent Sentencing Review.