



Ministry
of Justice

Lord Timpson
Minister of State for Justice

Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP North Sea Camp
Croppers Lane
Freiston
Boston
PE22 0QX

MoJ ref: SUB128306

21 October 2025

Dear Chair,

**HMP NORTH SEA CAMP: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 1 MARCH 2024 – 28 FEBRUARY 2025**

Thank you for providing your Board's annual report on HMP North Sea Camp. I note that, although the situation is improving, the Board continues to operate below its recommended complement of members. I am therefore extremely grateful for all the work that has gone into producing this informative report.

I have read your report with care and recognise that the concerns raised are often a repeat of those raised last year, which must be a source of frustration, and I hope that I can offer assurance that some progress is being made. Regarding the completion of OASys reports, HMP North Sea Camp has established procedures in place to follow up and escalate overdue OASys and does not currently have a backlog. However, there remains an estate wide issue with prisoners arriving in open conditions without an updated OASys review, which have unfortunately been impacted by population pressures and higher workloads. For this reason, a central OASys taskforce has oversight, reviewing OASys backlogs on a monthly basis and supporting establishments to improve their performance in this area of work.

We are not standing still on the important issue of progressing those serving 'Indeterminate sentences for Public Protection' (IPP) towards a prospective future release. We are working with organisations and campaign groups to ensure appropriate action is taken to support those still serving these sentences, such as improved access to mental health support and rehabilitation programmes. The refreshed IPP Action Plan, published in July 2025, puts renewed emphasis on effective frontline delivery in our prisons and the Probation Service to ensure that those serving IPP sentences have robust and effective sentence plans, which they are actively engaging with, and that they are in the prison most appropriate to their needs. The Action Plan now also includes measurable targets to ensure transparency and better track progress.

In response to your question about the 'Keyworker' scheme, this was originally developed for the closed estate, where safety and staffing were a major concern. In contrast, prisons in the open estate focus on resettlement and release, with prisoners spending more time in the community and having frequent informal contact with staff. As such, the formal Keyworker scheme hasn't been extended to the open estate, where support is delivered through resettlement work, offender management, and informal officer engagement. At North Sea Camp, personal officer work plays a central role in maintaining safety, promoting rehabilitation, and supporting prisoner wellbeing in open conditions. The personal officer scheme in open conditions remains a cornerstone of effective prison management. Through tailored

support, close monitoring, and a proactive management culture, we continue to evolve its approach to meet the needs of all prisoners.

I was heartened to read your comments about the impact of the new Governor and the positive changes brought in. It was encouraging to receive your comments about efforts to improve expectations and engagement before arrival, via a film for prisoners to see the geography of the site and learn how outside work licences are achieved. This will undoubtedly help prisoners making the transition to the open estate. I was also delighted to hear of the improved links being forged to aid employment opportunities including the new modular building and construction course that has been introduced in partnership with an external ROTL employer, Dragon Heart Homes.

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. HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) comments in response to other issues raised in your report are set out in the attached annex.

The Deputy Prime Minister and I value the important work done by Independent Monitoring Boards throughout the estate and we extend our gratitude for your ongoing dedication on behalf of HMP North Sea Camp.

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

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HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

In-cell telephony

It remains the intention to pilot the use of mobile PIN phones that could be used in those parts of the open estate without in-cell/ room telephony, this is subject to relevant senior approval. Prisoners currently have access to 60 Coracle in cell laptops which are available to sign out from the library. They also have access to the Digital Education Platform computers on an evening and weekend.

Capacity / accommodation

The 18 self-contained units were installed under emergency planning provisions. As a result of an environment agency flooding concern at North Sea Camp, MOJ Estates advice was that planning permission for continued installation was unlikely to be successful. We had also previously explored a larger-scale deployment of 120-bed Rapid Deployment Units (RDU), however discussions with the Environmental Agency and Local Authority did not progress due to fundamental issues related to Flood Zoning classification, sea wall requirements and evacuation planning. Additionally, the operational costs for the units were significant.

Given the national prison population pressure and the lack of progress in establishing additional accommodation, reducing the size of the dormitories is currently not feasible.

With regard to improving the quality of accommodation, Property Services are investing additional sums to replace electrical distribution consumer units as well as completing a programme of replacing prisoner kitchens within the units. The Governor has instigated an improved Clean Rehabilitative Enabling and Decent programme to target accommodation areas, concentrating on maintaining a good standard of decor and repair at all times.

Prisoner property

Careful consideration is being given to the findings in the IMB national thematic report on how property loss impacts on prisoners, as well as those received from Independent Prisoner Complaint Investigations following a thematic review of the property complaints they have received in the last five years. Since receiving the reports, Governors and other senior leaders have been reminded of the most important property handling points. This includes the need to ensure compliance with volumetric control limits on transfer. Consultation is taking place with prisons on further areas raised in the reports.