



Ministry
of Justice

Lord Timpson
Minister of State for Justice

Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay
Woodbridge
Suffolk
P12 2JW

MoJ ref: SUB128547

18 November 2025

Dear Chair,

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

Thank you for submitting your Board's annual report on HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay. I am grateful to you and your colleagues for the considerable effort invested in capturing such helpful observations. Your commitment is particularly commendable given that the Board operated below its recommended complement of members throughout the reporting year.

I was saddened to learn that two prisoners died during the reporting period, including one who passed away in hospital. I extend my sincere condolences to their families and friends. Please be assured that recommendations made by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman are taken very seriously. I note that following one of the deaths an inquest was completed and an action plan issued. This will be addressed by the healthcare team and provider.

I understand the Board's continued concern regarding the re-sentencing of prisoners serving Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) sentences. The Government is not standing still on the important issue of progressing those serving IPP sentences towards a prospective future release, including those in the open estate. Whilst this Government does want to make progress in relation to IPP prisoners, we cannot take any steps that would put the public at risk. The Justice Committee Report outlined the key principles that any resentencing exercise should balance the protection of the public and justice for the offender. The Government does not think this balance could be achieved when the independent Parole Board has determined, in many cases repeatedly determined, that the IPP offenders in custody are too dangerous to be released, having not met the statutory release test.

Despite the challenges, our commitment to progressing IPP prisoners towards safe release has seen good progress. As of 30 June 2025, there were 2,486 IPP offenders in custody, a reduction from 2,734 the previous year. Of these, the never been released population had fallen to 978 and 1,508 had been recalled. The refreshed IPP Action Plan, published in the HM Prisons and Probation Service (HMPPS) Annual Report on 17 July 2025, outlines reforms focused on reducing the IPP population, improving fairness, and supporting rehabilitation. It includes measurable targets and emphasises effective delivery across prisons and probation. Reforms to the IPP licence period began in November 2024, with 1,742 licences terminated. A reduced qualifying period introduced in February 2025 led to around 600 referrals to the Parole Board.

Regarding the impact of Standard Determinate Sentences (SDS40), I recognise the significant operational pressures placed on staff across the estate during its implementation. The Government took steps to mitigate risk, including an eight-week implementation period, and ensured close coordination with partners across the criminal justice system. I commend the professionalism shown in managing over 200 discharges within six weeks at HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay. The creation of dedicated teams, thorough eligibility screening, recalculations, and robust pre-release checks ensured that releases were properly managed. Regionally, probation services worked closely with prison teams to develop release plans and complete safeguarding checks. To support future resilience, we are increasing probation funding by 45%, investing up to £700 million by 2028, and recruiting 1,300 trainee probation officers by March next year. We continue to monitor SDS40's impact and remain committed to supporting establishments and ensuring safe reintegration for those released.

I share your concerns about the limited job opportunities for day-release prison workers at the Sizewell C construction site. While Sizewell C is not currently recruiting ex-offenders directly, I recognise the importance of ensuring that major government-backed projects offer inclusive employment pathways. The East of England Probation Service has noted that many roles at Sizewell C require specific qualifications, such as five GCSEs at grades A–C, which can be a barrier. However, efforts are underway to address this. A new employment pilot, launched in partnership with prison colleagues, aims to increase employment among people on probation and is strengthening links between Probation Delivery Units and prison employment leads across Norfolk and Suffolk.

Additionally, HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay's Reducing Reoffending Team have been building a relationship with Sizewell C and its Skills Development Leads and have also explored bespoke vetting processes for prisoners. Engagement with supply chain contractors has already led to small, but positive, opportunities for those on Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) with further growth expected. Joint interviews with contractors and the Resettlement Team have taken place, and Sizewell C has presented at HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay's Employment Advisory Board, with more sessions planned. Regular meetings with the Skills Development Lead Team are helping to maintain momentum and identify future opportunities.

I was very pleased to read the Chief Inspector's praise for HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay, describing it as one of the most impressive jails in the country. The recognition of the Governor's innovative leadership, strong staff team, and positive ratings for safety, respect, and preparation for release is commendable. I was also pleased to read in your report about the development of Blything Industries and the upcoming Shack music and arts centre, both are exciting steps toward rehabilitation and skill building.

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

The Deputy Prime Minister and I remain deeply appreciative of the important contribution made by Independent Monitoring Boards across the prison estate, and we are sincerely grateful for your continued hard work and dedication on behalf of HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay.

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

HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Management Structures at HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay and HMP Warren Hill

The close proximity of HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay and HMP Warren Hill has historically enabled shared resources and collaborative working, including in areas such as kitchens, chaplaincy, communications, and recycling. While both prisons have developed distinct identities over the past decade, their operational alignment has laid a strong foundation for this transition. The decision to pursue single governance was informed by a feasibility study and consultation with key stakeholders, including prisoner focus groups. The model is designed not as a cost saving exercise, but to enhance operational effectiveness and deliver tangible benefits for prisoners. These include improved sentence planning continuity, particularly for IPP prisoners, and increased flexibility to respond to safety and wellbeing needs, such as the ability to transfer prisoners from HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay to cellular accommodation at HMP Warren Hill when necessary.

Following the Area Executive Director's visit to both establishments in July 2025, no concerns were raised regarding the move to a single governance structure. The Governing Governor expressed strong support for the merger, and feedback from both staff and prisoners has been positive. No decline in performance has been observed since the implementation. HM Inspectorate of Prisons, in its February 2025 report for HMP Warren Hill, was also optimistic about the merger and noted that "with the right leadership, this will give both effective prisons an opportunity to flourish."

Progression Regimes

HMPPS is committed to delivering regimes that support prisoner progression and is keen to learn from the successful sequencing model at HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay, with a view to identifying elements that may be transferable across the wider prison estate.

At HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay, the sequencing pathway remains central to prisoner progression. The Board may be aware that monthly discharge surveys are conducted with released prisoners, allowing them to share their views on the support and opportunities received. These insights are reviewed in weekly cross-departmental meetings, where data and outcomes are analysed to ensure that provision aligns with the needs of the current prisoner cohort. This approach is further supported by the use of the Segmentation Tool, which enables the establishment to analyse data by various categories allowing for the targeted allocation of resources and ensures that support is tailored to the needs of specific groups within the population. Following the introduction of single governance with HMP Warren Hill, the sequencing pathway has been expanded to include prisoners transferring from HMP Warren Hill who have achieved Category D status. These individuals are provided with appropriate activities and work placements upon arrival at HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay, enabling progression to ROTL and paid employment in preparation for release. Although there are local budget constraints for the next eighteen months from October 2025, HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay remains committed to maintaining a progression focused regime.

Prisoners' Property

HMPPS notes the Board's ongoing concerns about the handling of prisoners' property. This is an area to which HMPPS is currently giving further attention. 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 over the past 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. Compliance is important, as property within those limits transfers with prisoners when they move establishments. Consultation is taking place with prisons on further areas raised in the reports.

At HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay, property is processed and recorded upon arrival. If items are found to be missing, the sending establishment is contacted initially by phone, followed by a formal email request. If unresolved, the Custodial Manager responsible for Reception escalates the matter directly. Should these steps not result in resolution, the issue is managed through the complaints process, with all cases logged and monitored internally. Confirmations of dispatch from sending establishments are verified against Reception records to ensure accountability.

Capital Projects and Maintenance

Prisoner work teams are employed as part of the purposeful activity imperative across HMPPS. Over the last year, prisoners have contributed to site upkeep by assisting in repainting areas such as the gym and by obtaining employment opportunities in plumbing and electrical work, supporting the site team once they have demonstrated good behaviour and trust. The team currently comprises 11 prisoners who attend to site needs by repairing roads and paths with materials provided by the Ministry of Justice, removing the cost of hiring contractors.

Despite these valuable contributions, the need for capital investment remains. HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay currently has 24 approved projects underway, including the replacement of the Marsh Barn Café roof and the replacement of boilers and generators. These works are essential for ensuring the site is safe, winter-ready, and compliant with health and safety standards, including asbestos removal.

Plans are in place to continue collaborative work parties with HMP Warren Hill. Opportunities for prisoners working with Government Facilities Services Limited are expanding and include road and walkway repairs, painting and decorating, plumbing, electrical work, pre-planned maintenance and small repairs, and stores management. Additional work parties, supervised by the residential function, continue to support further painting, decorating, and furniture repair.