



HM Prison &
Probation Service

Action Plan: HMP Lewes.

Action Plan Submitted: 24 September 2025.

A Response to the HMIP Inspection: 09 – 19 June 2025

Report Published: 08 September 2025

INTRODUCTION

HM Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) and HM Inspectorate of Probation for England and Wales are independent inspectorates which provide scrutiny of the conditions for, and treatment of prisoners and offenders. They report their findings for prisons, Young Offender Institutions, and effectiveness of the work of probation, and youth offending services across England and Wales to Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS). In response to the report HMPPS / MoJ are required to draft a robust and timely action plan to address the priority and key concerns. Action plans provide specific steps and actions to address the priority and key concerns, that are clear, outcome focussed, measurable, achievable, and relevant with the owner and timescale of each step clearly identified. Action plans are sent to HMIP and published on the GOV.UK website. Progress against the implementation and delivery of the action plans will also be monitored and reported on.



ACTION PLAN: HMIP REPORT

ESTABLISHMENT: HMP Lewes

1. Rec No	2. Concerns	3. Response Action Taken/Planned	4. Responsible Owner	5. Target Date
	Priority concerns			
1.	Drugs were too freely available and there was not enough support for prisoners with substance addictions.	<p>The prison will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HMPPS continues to work hard to detect, deter and disrupt the ingress of illicit items into our prisons. Work continues at HMP Lewes to review site vulnerabilities and deter such harmful ingress from criminals in the wider community. Close collaborative working continues between HMPPS and law enforcement partners in support of this. This year HMPPS has invested over £40 million in physical security across 34 prisons, which includes anti-drone measures such as window replacements, external window grilles and netting across 15 priority prisons. • HMPPS is exploring all options to mitigate this growing risk, working closely with other government departments to assess the effectiveness of all available interventions. • Submit a business case to region for a standalone local search team that would be available outside of profiled times to put in place pro-active 	<p>HMPPS</p> <p>HMPPS</p> <p>Governor</p>	<p>Commenced and Ongoing</p> <p>Commenced and Ongoing</p> <p>October 2025</p>



		<p>operations regarding drones and for immediate response to intelligence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substance Misuse staffing Provision (SMP) has been reviewed in line with current demand and potential future demand following changes to the sentencing laws and a business case is being prepared to submit to NHS England by the end of 2025. • Two recovery workers have been recruited to bring the establishment back up to the agreed five staff members. It is anticipated that they will be in post by the end of October 2025. <p>Enable Peer Led Support by providing time and space for peers to hold discussion and fellowship groups.</p>	<p>Governor</p> <p>Practice Plus Group</p> <p>Practice Plus Group</p>	<p>December 2025</p> <p>December 2025</p> <p>November 2025</p>
2.	Too many prisoners had no work or were not engaged in purposeful activity. Leaders had increased the number of activity places, but it remained insufficient to meet the population's needs.	<p>The prison will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review work placements to understand if expansion is physically possible within boundaries or review the capacity of the current workshops/activity places. • Continually reassess the contracts and spaces in workshops in conjunction with conversations with New Futures network (NFN) and external employers. 	<p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p>	<p>October 2025</p> <p>October 2025</p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure oversight and closer management of the Incentive Framework to ensure prisoners are encouraged through rewards to attend purposeful activity. This will be measured through biweekly dip checks of IEP reviews and of case notes. This will be shared at the Residential Activity Attendance meeting 	Governor	November 2025
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review notification and unlocking arrangements for those scheduled to attend activities to ensure they are reminded of individual responsibility to attend and attend at the appropriate time. This will be managed through the Incentives Framework. 	Governor	February 2026
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise and celebrate those that successfully complete an educational course such as maths and English. This will be published in the fortnightly prisoner newsletter subject to individual permission. 	Governor	February 2026
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a review of educational levels and ensure that prisoners progress into work once lower educational needs have been met. 	Governor	September 2025
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide promotional material across the prison which demonstrates the avenues prisoners can access to gain employment outside of prison, and how that journey begins in custody with employment in the workshops or education. 	Governor	October 2025



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure adequate information, regarding employment and education opportunities is available to prisoners throughout their time within HMP Lewes – starting from the Crown Court through to release or transfer. • Introduce new criteria in relation to the level of education required for work applications and engage other partners to support prisoners with low literacy levels into education as part of an employment pathway. • Ensure valid and up-to-date external employment opportunities are advertised within Education and Industries to motivate prisoners' engagement. 	Governor	October 2025
			Governor	October 2025
			Governor	October 2025
	Key Concerns			
3.	Early days support was undermined by increasing numbers of prisoners arriving late. Safety interviews were not held in private, and information about risk and vulnerability was not always adequately captured. –	<p>The prison will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively engage with Prison Management Unit (PMU) and Prison Escort and Custody Services (PECS) to ensure all redirected prisoners are identified early, minimising late arrivals. • Audit and repurpose space on the Early Days Centre to guarantee a private, secure area for interviews which are available both day and night. 	Governor	December 2025
			Governor	February 2026



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train Reception and Early Days staff on interviewing techniques to encourage openness and better risk disclosure using a locally developed training package. 	Governor	March 2026
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and revise induction questions to ensure they effectively identify risk factors such as self-harm, bullying, mental health, and prior vulnerabilities and gang affiliation. 	Governor	December 2025
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a standardised process for sharing induction outcomes with relevant departments (e.g., Safer Custody, Healthcare, Residential). 	Governor	February 2026
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the method in which the Insiders record their interactions with new receptions so that this can be quality assured to ensure areas of concern are highlighted quickly to minimize risk and ensure information is shared appropriately. 	Governor	January 2026
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop on the training package for insiders to ensure that they have all the tools to support, Induction and Safer Custody. 	Governor	December 2025
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Prisoner Escort Contract Services (PECS) team will continue to evaluate data relating to establishment arrival times and use this as part of stakeholder meetings to support the establishment. Additionally, the data is shared monthly with HMP Lewes senior managers to review and act upon the data related to the prison 	PECS	Complete



		<p>to further improve overall performance and reduce both the impact and cause of any delays.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PECS will continue to hold contractors to account when delivery is later than the scheduled reception time and to maintain sufficient staff to reduce the impact of low resources on operational delivery. 	PECS	Complete
4.	Levels of recorded self-harm were higher than at most similar prisons.	<p>The prison will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the safety strategy to ensure our management of self-harm at Lewes reflects the current population and identifies the drivers of self-harm through our better analysis of our local data. • Implement a rolling listeners training programme to ensure appropriate cover to support prisoners across all residential units to enable the team to forecast appropriately. • Identify an appropriate space / room to complete reviews / assessments away from main residence to encourage open conversations regarding self-harm. • Encourage increased engagement with family members / support networks where appropriate for prisoners being supported by the ACCT 	<p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p>	<p>March 2026</p> <p>November 2025</p> <p>October 2025</p> <p>January 2026</p>



		<p>(Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork) process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement an ACCT single case management system to ensure continuity and that case managers remain throughout a prisoners' stay at HMP Lewes. Review the safety strategy location to incorporate the attendance of the Listeners to understand trends for call outs and self-harm. 	<p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p>	<p>January 2026</p> <p>April 2026</p>
5.	Prisoners were very negative about the quality and quantity of food they received. Lunch portions appeared small, meals were served too early, and serveries were not always supervised.	<p>The prison will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold regular Prisoner Consultations to understand the concern regarding quality and quantity of food and ensure prisoners are given the opportunity to air their concerns regularly. Ensure the prisoner menu is responsive to feedback, meets diverse dietary and nutritional needs, and supports wellbeing within the establishment. Ensure the food trolleys are collected at times that are appropriate with the regime. Catering manager to enforce this and report any incidents of early collection to the Head of Residence. Develop and deliver training to officers who supervise the servery regarding Personal 	<p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p>	<p>December 2025</p> <p>December 2025</p> <p>October 2025</p> <p>December 2025</p>



		<p>Protective Equipment (PPE), and food hygiene. Prisoners will be trained in food hygiene before accessing employment on the servery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All catering staff will be allocated a wing to be a point of contact and assurance check one meal service per month (including a check of portion control). The findings will be shared at the Reducing Reoffending meeting and where areas of concern arise, this will be immediately addressed with residential managers. 	Governor	October 2025
6.	Too many cells were in a poor condition. Graffiti was common, fittings were frequently stained or damaged, and very few cells had curtains.	<p>The prison will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain momentum on cell refurbishment: despite current capacity pressures, continue to progress with the agreed target of refurbishing 6 cells per month. Prioritise available cells and coordinate with residence managers to ensure this target is met consistently, feeding progress into the redesigned residential quality assurance framework. Curtain Installation Plan: ascertain the delivery status of cell curtains which have been ordered, if necessary, re-order curtains, develop a structured plan for installation across the establishment using Lewes Assurance Multi-Skills ensuring all cells are equipped with curtains to improve decency. 	<p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p>	<p>December 2025</p> <p>December 2025</p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trial and Evaluate Enhanced Cleaning Products: Support the trial of a stronger cleaning solution to address long-standing issues with stained cell fittings. Monitor effectiveness over a 4-week period and, if successful, roll out the product establishment-wide with appropriate training for staff and prisoners. 	Governor	December 2025
7.	Some prisoners in protected characteristic groups still experienced unequal treatment, and little progress had been made in resolving the disadvantages faced by black, Asian and minority ethnic prisoners	<p>The prison will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with staff and prisoners in the protected characteristic forums to understand perceptions of their experiences at HMP Lewes to influence events/training for staff and prisoners based on feedback during the forums. • Develop a specific forum agenda to support the current concerns / trends for the protected characteristic groups using the local equality data. • Protected characteristic leads will hold an event for each protected characteristic forum they manage. • Create a monthly forum group to be led by either/ and Use of Force (UoF) co-ordinator, Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) lead and Young Adult (YA) lead to understand the prisoners experience of UoF within these groups. Data from this to be shared at the D&I meeting. 	<p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p>	<p>December 2025</p> <p>February 2026</p> <p>January 2026</p> <p>November 2025</p>



8.	The application system to enable prisoners to raise routine requests was not effective.	<p>The prison will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the national Digital Services Team in the design process for creating the digital general application to ensure that the final design reflects the needs of HMP Lewes. Monitor usage and feedback weekly to ensure functionality and identify any further improvements needed. • Implement new QA process for applications which will be monitored by the Head of Residential Services and Head of Business Assurance to ensure that the applications are returned in a timely manner and responses are relevant. 	Governor	Ongoing
9.	Some health care oversight and governance processes were not effective. This included poor oversight of emergency bags, out-of-date standard operating procedures, some data discrepancies and limited communication with patients regarding applications, medication and general concerns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training has been provided to all healthcare staff to identify where the bags are located and what is available in bags for emergency responses. This training will continue as part of the regular training schedule for staff. The training slides will also be shared with prison colleagues. • Emergency bag audits are in place and all staff have been reminded of their responsibility to complete daily seal checks and bi-weekly open bag checks. This is recorded and being monitored closely with appropriate actions and escalations being taken where this has not been completed. 	<p>Practice Plus Group</p> <p>Practice Plus Group</p>	<p>Completed August 2025</p> <p>November 2025</p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update the PPG National Alcohol Dependence Policy and will share with the healthcare team once complete. PPG will review the data processes to ensure that all data is captured within SystemOne. Any significant delays to prescriptions will be communicated to patients with the reason for the delay and likely timeframe for resolution. All issues raised with healthcare are recorded and assigned to a named individual. Weekly reminders are sent to all senior leaders to ensure that concerns are addressed within 7 days and complaints managed with 20 working days. Where delays occur, a letter is sent to the individual to inform them of the delay and the reasons for this. 	Practice Plus Group	October 2025
			Practice Plus Group	October 2025
			Practice Plus Group	September 2025
			Practice Plus Group	October 2025
10.	Attendance in education, skills and work was not yet high enough. Though attendance had increased since the previous inspection, it continued to require improvement. Managers regularly scheduled medical, legal, and other appointments for prisoners during activity times, resulting in low and erratic attendance patterns.	<p>The prison will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with stakeholders to ensure that all internal appointments are booked appropriately to prevent clashes with other activities. Ensure that prisoners are encouraged to attend activities rather than engage in alternative regimes through rewards from the Incentive framework. 	Governor	October 2025
			Governor	October 2025



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A stakeholder meeting will be held to track information available to prisoners about attending Education, Skills and Work to improve attendance and identify any challenges/blockers that prisoners are experiencing • Introduce education wing champions on all residential wings that will oversee attendance at activity ensuring collaboration between functions. 	Governor	September 2025
			Governor	November 2025
11.	Aspects of teaching and learning required improvement. Tutors did not always check prisoners' understanding before moving on to the next topic, which resulted in some prisoners continuing to make the same mistakes. Tutors also occasionally failed to stretch and challenge more able prisoners, leading to a few of them losing interest in the lesson.	<p>The prison will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the quality assurance of education delivery is carried out on a regular basis and is feedback into the Education Performance Meeting (EPM) • Ensure that joint provider and HMPPS observations are carried out as part of the quality assurance calendar. • Ensure that outcomes of observations and other quality assurance work is inputted into the Quality Data and Evidence Workbook (part of the Education Skills and Work (ESW) Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). 	<p>Governor/Milton Keynes College</p> <p>Governor/Milton Keynes College</p> <p>Governor/Milton Keynes College</p>	<p>August 2025</p> <p>August 2025</p> <p>August 2025</p>



12.	The recording of work skills and behaviours developed in prison workshops was poor. As a result, prisoners did not fully understand the progress they had made or how their new skills might be useful to them when applying for work in prison or upon release.	<p>The prison will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the 'Progress in Work' books which document employability skills are in place in every workshop. • Formalise support for instructors and Band 3 staff in the process of completion of the 'Progress in Work' books. • Identify ways to link the 'Progress in Work' books to external employment opportunities and CV writing sessions • Place the quality assurance of Progress in workbooks as a monthly QA exercise in the QA calendar and include it as part of Performance conversations. 	Governor	August 2025
			Governor	October 2025
			Governor	December 2025
			Governor	November 2025
13.	There was insufficient visits capacity to meet the needs of the population.	<p>The prison will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a capacity review to assess current visit slots against the population demand. Identify peak/day times and concerns and use data to forecast future needs based on population trends. Once completed, if available more visit slots will be added, including social prison video. • Minimise redeployment of visits staff to other duties during scheduled session including family days, by engaging with Senior Management Team 	Governor	March 2026
			Governor	Dec 2025



		<p>and Custodial Managers to improve the forecasting of staff requirements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve booking system functionality to reduce complaints, double booking or errors and maximise capacity by using Digital Prison Services (DPS) for social visits and feedback any issues that arise. • Monitor and report progress by sharing performance data, monitoring and reviewing trends for example on cancellations in forums with Operational Support Grades (OSG), Senior Leadership Team and Family and Relationships meetings. 	<p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p>	<p>Feb 2026</p> <p>March 2026</p>
14	Key work was not sufficiently focused on supporting sentence progression. Some recent improvements showed potential but inconsistency in the approach undermined efficacy.	<p>The prison will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 'Key Working' workshops and ongoing training and development for staff, updated to reinforce and highlight support for sentence progression. • Develop a new Keywork Pack for staff, including a section about sentence progression. • Continue to focus on the monthly quality assurance practice, feedback and reporting, in collaboration with residential managers. 	<p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p>	<p>February 2025</p> <p>February 2025</p> <p>February 2025</p>



15.	Too many prisoners were released homeless. Twenty per cent of all prisoners discharged over a 12-month period left without an address to go to.	The prison will:	Governor	December 2025
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an Accommodation meeting to look strategically at what can be undertaken to improve outcomes and data recording. This will include the Head of Reducing Reoffending, the regional Strategic Housing Specialist and the Senior Probation Officer for the pre-release team and accommodation providers as part of the Commissioned Rehabilitative Services. 	Community Accommodation Services (CAS)	September 2025
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are 50 prison based Strategic Housing Specialists (SHS), across England and Wales. SHS work with a range of stakeholders, including local authorities and Homelessness Prevention Teams (HPTs) and develops, and delivers a range of solutions that remove barriers to accommodation. Due to staffing issues in Kent, Surry, Sussex (KSS) region over the last 12 months there has been a lack of SHS presence at HMP Lewes. In response to this work has been undertaken and two seconded posts into the team have now been finalised. One of these roles will be a strategic housing specialist assigned to HMP Lewes. Confirmation of the start date is yet to be confirmed but we have been advised that it will be in September 2025. To further tackle reoffending and homelessness, HMPPS are also working closely with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government 	MOJ Accommodation Policy	Autumn 2025



		(MHCLG) and other government departments on the development of a new cross-government strategy to put us back on track to ending homelessness. This should be published by MHCLG by the end of the year.		
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