



HM Prison &
Probation Service

Action Plan: HMP & YOI Stoke Heath

Action Plan Submitted: 22 June 2026

A response to the HMIP Inspection: 23 February to 5 March 2026

Report published: 1 June 2026

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:

ESTABLISHMENT: HMP & YOI Stoke Heath

1. Rec No	2. Concerns	3. Response Action Taken/Planned	4. Responsible Owner	5. Target Date
Priority Concerns				
1.	Drugs, particularly psychoactive substances, were too freely available.	<p>HMP & YOI Stoke Heath will ensure the ingress risks are understood by undertaking a full review using the managing conveyance of unauthorised and illicit items policy framework.</p> <p>HMP & YOI Stoke Heath have implemented a fortnightly meeting focusing on identifying gaps in intelligence and ingress activity and to ensure these are reviewed frequently.</p> <p>The prison has prioritised mandatory drug testing through regime and management planning so that resources are focused on intelligence led testing. Prison wide intelligence will continue to be built and fed into proactive work in tasking.</p> <p>HMP & YOI Stoke Heath have implemented protection of standalone security staff to support proactive searching through regime management planning. The prison will continue to work with the regional security</p>	<p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p>	<p>December 2026</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed and ongoing</p> <p>Completed and ongoing</p>



	<p>team to secure resources for larger scale operations, aimed at disrupting the illicit economy.</p> <p>A monthly security training session has been implemented for all staff, focused on improving overall security standards across the establishment. These sessions include a clear focus on intelligence, ingress and the need for improved dynamic security.</p> <p>Since the inspection, a paperless system has been adopted in legal visits to prevent conveyance.</p> <p>The prison will create and implement a drone trigger plan with local police to allow swift reaction to this type of ingress.</p> <p>HMP & YOI Stoke Heath have obtained costings for netting on all exercise yards across the prison and will submit a bid by July 2026 for funding to support this, alongside considering options from local budgets.</p> <p>The drug detection machine has been moved to reception for indicative detection on clothes/paper via transfers into the prison.</p> <p>The prison will review the searching strategy to ensure that search activity is proportionate to the risk and responds to all potential ingress routes.</p>	<p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>September 2026</p> <p>July 2026</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>September 2026</p>
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		<p>HMP & YOI Stoke Heath will review the functions of both F wing and the Incentivised Substance Free Living (ISFL) wings to ensure a clear pathway to recovery and ensure these opportunities are communicated to prisoners from the point of reception through literature in reception, through the indication processes and via the Health and Forward Trust.</p> <p>The prison will, alongside health partners, review medication dispensation to reduce the opportunities for diversion. The prison will consider, alongside pharmacy leads, the response to those found diverting medications and those found under the influence of illicit substances to ensure clinical safety. The prison will communicate trends, key information, progress and next steps through the established security weekly bulletin as part of the improved prison wide communication strategy.</p>	<p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p>	<p>September 2026</p> <p>June 2026</p>
2.	<p>Rates of recorded self-harm were very high. There was not enough prison-wide work to address the reasons for this.</p>	<p>HMP & YOI Stoke Heath will improve understanding of the drivers of self-harm through better incident management and daily reporting. This will be achieved through revised orderly officer responsibilities and an increase in supervising officer coverage on residential areas, to be achieved through workforce delivery mobilisation.</p>	<p>Governor</p>	<p>December 2026</p>



		<p>The prison will ensure residential attendance to the weekly safety intervention meetings and ensure that the newly implemented tripartite meeting operates to effectively share information regarding risk and vulnerabilities. This work will be supported by the recruitment of an analyst to the safety team whose role will be to identify trends in data to better inform strategy.</p>	Governor	August 2026
		<p>HMP & YOI Stoke Heath will progress the work to address the themes identified by prisoners through the safety summit and monitor success through consultation, performance data and quarterly review. The main themes identified correlate with the priority concerns around, availability of illicit substances (See actions in priority concern 1), boredom (see actions in priority concern 3 and 4) and vulnerability/isolation (see actions in key concern 7).</p>	Governor	September 2026
		<p>The prison will work with regional colleagues to progress the local debt strategy, ensuring that it examines local themes and trends. The prison will pay specific attention to the risks around exploitation and the illicit economy and will work with serious organised crime colleagues to disrupt those responsible for controlling the illicit economy.</p>	Governor	September 2026
		<p>HMP & YOI Stoke Heath will implement a quarterly safety bulletin in order to update the whole staffing</p>	Governor	September 2026



		<p>group on key information, identified trends, progress against actions and next steps. This will form part of an improved prison wide communication strategy</p> <p>The prison will progress the regime improvement plans (See actions in 3 and 4) and seek opportunities to improve the regime offer for those who present with vulnerabilities or who present at risk.</p> <p>The prison will review the support offer for those identified as 'in need' and ensure that, as a minimum, prisoners considered to be experiencing heightened vulnerability receive consistent and good quality key worker support through a minimum of fortnightly contact.</p> <p>The prison will review reception and first night processes to ensure that time is taken to complete them in sufficient detail to support early identification of risk. This will include the provision of information regarding what happens next on induction and who is available for support. The prison will implement a quality assurance and prisoner feedback process to measure the success of these changes.</p> <p>HMP & YOI Stoke Heath will work with local authority partners to agree an adult safeguarding strategy that incorporates the existing elements of the agreed Memorandum of Understanding, making clear the</p>	<p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p>	<p>September 2026</p> <p>September 2026</p> <p>October 2026</p> <p>November 2026</p>
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		responsibilities in respect of the management of adults at risk.		
3.	<p>Leaders had not ensured that all prisoners had sufficient access to their allocated activities. They were taking too long to rectify the issues of low attendance across employment, skills and work.</p>	<p>HMP & YOI will progress the regime improvement plans, by taking the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Progression of E Wing regime to support full time activity access - Review of the gym timetable to prevent interruptions to allocated activity - Service appointment review to reduce interruptions to allocated activity - Move G Wing North to evening exercise and association to support full time working - Incentivise achievements in maths and English, using the prisoner pay policy 	Governor	September 2026
		<p>The prison will monitor and review the success of each of these measures using allocation and attendance data and within the weekly allocation and sequencing board.</p>	Governor	September 2026
		<p>HMP & YOI Stoke Heath will implement a bespoke service for the new fixed term recall cohort that meets their particular resettlement and support needs, therefore improving the regime offered to this specific group.</p>	Governor	December 2026
		<p>The prison will work with health partners and Forward Trust to review the function and regime offer for F Wing</p>	Governor	December 2026



		(designated drug treatment unit), ensuring that work and activity compliments recovery in a manner that supports full time occupation at allocated activities.		
4.	Leaders had not increased the number of full-time spaces in education.	<p>HMP & YOI Stoke Heath will work with the learning and skills partner to agree an annual delivery plan that meets the identified needs of the population. The prison will ensure that this considers demographic, average length of stay, functional skills obligations and progression.</p> <p>The prison will progress the regime improvement plan (see priority concern 3) to ensure that the capacity to access full time learning is increased across the population.</p> <p>HMP & YOI Stoke Heath will configure its annual delivery plan and directly commissioned learning and skills provision to ensure that opportunities for progression, employability skills and learner support are exploited as fully as possible. The prison will review the success of this through the monthly learning and skills commissioning and review meetings.</p>	<p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p>	<p>August 2026</p> <p>September 2026</p> <p>September 2026</p>



5.	Leaders had not implemented an effective reading strategy to develop prisoners' reading further.	HMP & YOI Stoke Heath will launch a revised and up to date reading strategy across the establishment. This will be co-ordinated by the newly appointed Head of Education Skills and Work, Novus and library services. It will include a prison wide support for, and understanding of, the importance of reading as part of the regime, with a clear approach to support emergent readers.	Governor	September 2026
		The prison will review the capability of in cell technology to support the offer to readers and to ensure reader voice through survey and digital interaction.	Governor	December 2026
		HMP & YOI Stoke Heath will review all regime areas, as well as living spaces, to optimise opportunities for reading and will invest in training for the instructional officer group and the residential areas to enable diverse support for reading.	Governor	December 2026
		The prison will re-invigorate Shannon Trust and reading mentors to support emergent readers and consult with library services to explore the possibility of reading clubs, book challenges and reader cafés.	Governor	December 2026
		Progress will be monitored through the monthly Quality Improvement Group (QIG) meeting	Governor	September 2026
6.	Leaders had not ensured that all prisoners had access to a	HMP & YOI Stoke Heath will review the learning, skills and employment needs analysis as part of the annual	Governor	September 2026



		<p>isolating and/or are presenting specific challenges to support interventions and aid consistency in the day-to-day management of prisoners. The efficacy of these changes will be reviewed as part of the SIM and complex case meetings.</p> <p>The prison will improve the priority keywork offer to the required 25% delivery in order to increase the support offered to those identified as in need (see Priority Concern 2).</p> <p>HMP & YOI Stoke Heath will implement a revised re-integration process to ensure that it is informed by safety, security, offender management and residential areas in order to support those moving back to normal location and to ensure that any risks presented are appropriately considered. The success of this process will be monitored through the Segregation, Monitoring and Review Group (SMaRG) meeting.</p>	<p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p>	<p>June 2026</p> <p>September 2026</p>
8.	<p>Too many cells were small and cramped, particularly when two prisoners were sharing.</p>	<p>The safety and decency of our prisons is paramount. HMPPS continually monitor prison conditions and take places on and offline depending on safety, stability, staffing levels and maintenance needs.</p> <p>HMPPS recognise that crowding can make it harder for prisons to deliver safe, stable and rehabilitative regimes and decisions are not taken that create unacceptable risks to prison safety.</p>	<p>HMPPS Directorate of Prison Operations</p>	<p>Completed</p>



		Capacity is being increased and the Sentencing Act will place the prison population on a more sustainable footing, paving the way for further reform of prison systems so better conditions and outcomes for prisoners can be created.		
9.	Although funding for remedial work on E wing had been approved, no start date had been set. This meant that many prisoners continued to live in poor conditions.	A bid for E Wing roof and wall repairs has been received and is currently progressing through the development and governance process. Once a project bid is received, HMPPS must carefully prioritise works to ensure the most effective use of funding. This prioritisation focuses on addressing risks to life, as well as risks to operational capacity and decency standards. HMP & YOI Stoke Heath have agreed an extension to the reduction to the operational capacity of the prison to support the management of maintaining the current condition of the cells through a cycle of cleaning and painting.	HMPPS Estates	April 2027
10.	Leaders did not have an accurate oversight of the progress that prisoners made towards their learning goals and skills development in industries and work.	HMP & YOI Stoke Heath will work with the learning, skills and employment partners to ensure that progress and outcomes are consistently monitored, and any interruptions/delays understood. The prison will ensure that this is providing effective insight through the contract management processes and Quality Improvement Group (QIG) meetings.	Governor	September 2026



		<p>The prison will ensure that each prisoner has an individual learning, skills and employment pathway and, in partnership with the Careers, Information, Advice and Guidance Team, the prison will ensure that activity is sequenced as far as is practicable, considering sentence length and identified needs. Each activity area will be expected to use the individual learning and work plans (or area equivalent) to monitor and support the progress of individuals. These will be quality reviewed by the relevant activity unit managers and overseen by the Head of Education, Skills and Work.</p> <p>The prison will review activity pathways with consideration to population demographic, identified need and average length of stay, to ensure that a progressive offer that caters to the diverse population is provided. The success of this will be monitored through the QIG meetings and annual delivery plan (including direct purchasing elements).</p>	Governor	September 2026
			Governor	December 2026
11.	Too often, visits started late, which was a source of frustration for prisoners and their visitors.	HMP & YOI Stoke Heath have reiterated the published visits start and finish times to visits staff to ensure they are clearly understood. The prison has removed the minimum delivery time and has implemented a daily recording sheet for start and finish times. Any late commencement of visits is reported to the manager in	Governor	Completed



		<p>charge of the prison and recorded on the daily briefing sheet with the reason for delayed start clearly detailed.</p> <p>The prison will review the movement of prisoners to the visits hall to reduce the likelihood of visits start times being delayed. The prison will implement a duty governor and daily supervising officer check and daily assurance visit to monitor delivery and improvement.</p>	Governor	August 2026
12.	<p>Key work remained disappointing and did not support progression. Too few sessions were taking place.</p>	<p>HMP & YOI Stoke Heath will prioritise delivery to the priority cohort (those identified as most in need through the Safety Intervention meeting) in the first instance ensuring that, as a minimum, prisoners considered to be experiencing heightened vulnerability receive consistent and meaningful key worker support through a minimum of fortnightly contact. The prison will review the priority cohort allocation and completion through the weekly SIM.</p> <p>The prison will review the establishment key work offer as part of the workforce delivery model project to ensure that the minimum requirement for the prisoner population achieved. As part of this work, the prison will consider a model that is residentially based in order to support wider work around safety, progression and regime engagement. The success of this work will be monitored through the quarterly performance review meetings.</p>	<p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p>	<p>September 2026</p> <p>December 2026</p>

