



HM Prison & Probation Service

Action plan: HMP Woodhill

Action plan submitted: 24 June 2026

A response to the HMIP inspection: 2 to 12 March

2026 report published: 9 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: HMIP REPORT

ESTABLISHMENT: HMP WOODHILL

1. Rec No	2. Concerns	3. Response Action Taken/Planned	4. Responsible Owner	5. Target Date
Priority concerns				
1	The prison was not safe. Rates of violence had increased since our last inspection and overall levels were the second highest compared to similar prisons. The rate of serious assaults on staff was the highest in the long-term, high secure estate and around a third of all incidents involved the use of weapons.	<p>The revised safety strategy has been published and is now operational. A robust action plan is being developed to drive its implementation, accountability, and provide measurable outcomes. The strategy will be actively embedded through wing forums, a safety, security and drugs strategy fayre, and 'adopt a wing' visits conducted by the Senior Leadership Team. The strategy has been cascaded to all functional areas, and a 'Launchpad' video will be produced to reinforce key messages and expectations.</p> <p>The debt strategy has been reviewed and will be published to support consistent management of debt related risks. Training on gangs and harmful behaviours has been included within the training plan to equip staff with the knowledge and skills required to identify, challenge, and manage associated risks effectively.</p> <p>A targeted review of prisoners managed under Challenge, Support and Intervention Plan (CSIP) has been completed to strengthen oversight and identify those individuals driving increased levels of violence. This review has led to a prioritised cohort of prisoners, enabling focused interventions, enhanced monitoring, and tailored support to reduce risk.</p> <p>With support from the safety team, enhanced briefings on residential units are now taking place with a primary focus on priority prisoners.</p> <p>Recruitment campaigns for a Safety Analyst and Performance Manager have commenced to strengthen evidence-based decision making and increase governance.</p> <p>Increased adjudications are taking place to focus on the outstanding adjourned cases. HMP Woodhill are receiving assistance from other establishments to support with this.</p>	<p>The Governor</p> <p>The Governor</p> <p>The Governor</p> <p>The Governor</p> <p>The Governor</p> <p>The Governor</p>	<p>August 2026</p> <p>August 2026</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>July 2026</p> <p>Completed</p>



		Progressive collaborative working has been introduced between the Crime in Prison Coordinator and the Police enabling the referral process, for the most serious charges, to be streamlined with an effective collation of evidence, information, and outcomes.	The Governor	Completed
2	Rates of self-harm remained among the highest in the adult male estate.	<p>The risk reduction meeting has been revamped, leading to improved outcomes and the delivery of more targeted, action-driven solutions to manage and mitigate risk.</p> <p>The safety intervention meeting terms of reference will be revised to sharpen focus on the priority cohort, ensuring a more targeted and effective multi-disciplinary response to risk.</p> <p>Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork case manager training has taken place to improve consistency in delivery, strengthen the overall quality and effectiveness of case management as well as directly supporting improved safety outcomes. Furthermore, Custodial Managers now case manage prisoners being supported in the Segregation unit ensuring enhanced oversight, consistency of decision making, and strengthened quality of care.</p> <p>Risks and Triggers training is now being delivered on monthly training days to improve safety outcomes.</p>	<p>The Governor</p> <p>The Governor</p> <p>The Governor</p> <p>The Governor</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>September 2026</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>
3	Drugs were far too easily available. Three deaths in the last two years had been classified as drug related, and the positive random mandatory drug testing rate (MDT; see Glossary) for the last 12 months was among the highest of all adult male prisons.	<p>To restrict the ingress of illicit items into the prison via drones 120 window grilles have been installed, a full-site programme to install all remaining grilles will be delivered. The installation of anti-drone wires to House Unit 1 is complete.</p> <p>A revised drug supply reduction strategy is being developed which will drive action with measurable outcomes.</p> <p>HMP Woodhill will introduce an Incentivised Substance Free Living Unit to reduce the demand for drugs, and an additional Drug Strategy Co-ordinator will be recruited to improve drug strategy delivery and outcomes.</p> <p>In addition to the standard high security entry searching of all staff, additional targeted and full staff searches are now conducted, supported by management assurance checks to ensure appropriate quality and consistency.</p>	<p>MOJ Property</p> <p>The Governor</p> <p>The Governor</p> <p>The Governor</p>	<p>March 2027</p> <p>July 2026</p> <p>December 2026</p> <p>Completed</p>



		Suspicion drug testing has increased following the inspection and improved oversight will continue to drive and improve the process. The adjudications system is being utilised, including the use of the independent adjudicator, to ensure there are appropriate consequences. Substance misuse cases are being referred to the addictions team for support.	The Governor	Completed
4	Many officers were failing to set standards, enforce basic rules or engage with prisoners constructively.	<p>A structured programme of learning and development has been developed to strengthen capability and support consistent, professionally assured practice, with a clear focus on building the confidence of officers. This includes training in Five Minute Intervention, Pro-social Modelling, Procedural Justice and Every Contact Matters, all of which are intended to improve the quality of staff-prisoner relationships and strengthen staff confidence in responding appropriately to risk and challenge.</p> <p>Newly appointed officers will complete a clear induction and structured four-week transition period on return from college, this comprises two weeks of consolidation, followed by two weeks of shadowing. This approach supports the application of learning in practice, builds consistency in professional judgement and provides flexibility to review go-live dates where additional support is required. Training needs will be reviewed through supervision and assurance processes, with additional coaching and support provided where necessary through the New Colleague Mentors.</p>	<p>The Governor/ Improvement Support Group</p> <p>The Governor</p>	<p>First checkpoint October 2026</p> <p>November 2026</p>
5	Too many education, skills or work sessions were cancelled.	<p>The following measures will further strengthen recruitment and retention of prison officers at HMP Woodhill to support safety and security, and provide a more consistent and predictable regime:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The prison is prioritised for support within the national marketing campaign. • Development of a local Recruitment and Retention plan. • Proactive level transfer and alumni schemes bringing in experienced staff from other prisons and those who have previously left the service. • Use of the internal conversion scheme from Operational Support Grades. • Use of the Prison Officer First Deployment Scheme, which incentivises new joiners to commence their service at HMP Woodhill. • Newly recruited officers to receive a two-week training consolidation as well as an additional two weeks of job shadowing. • Effective use of the local Regime Management Plan. 	The Governor/ People & Capability	Commenced and ongoing



		<p>Targeted efforts to encourage people with Custodial Manager accreditation from across the estate to consider roles at the establishment, to further support workforce stability, confidence and development.</p> <p>HMP Woodhill will continue to receive an elevated tactical staffing deployment rate. This position is necessary to support the sustained delivery of safety and stability measures and to ensure that current operational risks are appropriately managed.</p> <p>A new core day and staff reprofile exercise will be completed, published and introduced. Cancellations will reduce by ensuring sufficient staff are staffing planned activities. As staffing stability continues to improve, delivery will be progressively expanded in a controlled way to increase the volume, reliability and predictability of education, skills, and work sessions for prisoners.</p>	<p>Directorate of Prison Operations</p> <p>The Governor</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>August 2026</p>
6	Prisoners had little opportunity to address their offending behaviour.	<p>The prison will continue to run Building Choices (BC) treatment and will also introduce a High Intensity Building Choices course commencing July 2026 alongside 1:1 BC for those unable to engage in groups. Both moderate and high intensity options will be offered driven by prisoner need.</p> <p>1:1 Motivation and Engagement programme will continue to be delivered to complex prisoners who are struggling to engage with mainstream treatment. Bespoke delivery of 1:1 psychology intervention work will be increased throughout the next 12 months.</p> <p>Offender Management clinics will recommence on residential units, providing additional support to prisoners to address their offending behaviour.</p>	<p>The Governor</p> <p>The Governor</p> <p>The Governor</p>	<p>November 2026</p> <p>November 2026</p> <p>July 2026</p>
7	There was little resettlement help, and risk management planning for release of the most dangerous men was inadequate.	<p>Two Probation Service Officers (PSOs) have been recruited and are currently going through the vetting process. They will be responsible for delivering Case Management Support, allowing for individual tasks to be delegated from a Probation Offender Manager (POM) to a PSO to ensure Probation POMs prioritise essential risk management tasks and actions, building on previous arrangements to improve the consistency and timeliness of sentence management and release planning activity.</p> <p>A mapping exercise has commenced to understand how the join up between the Pre Release team, Prison Offender Manager and Community Offender</p>	<p>The Governor/ Regional Probation Director</p> <p>The Governor/</p>	<p>July 2026</p> <p>July 2026</p>



		<p>Manager (COM) can be improved. The probation Pre Release Team are now tracking POM/COM handovers and monitoring pre-release activity to ensure prisoners are adequately prepared for release.</p> <p>The Inter-Departmental Risk Management meeting now takes place monthly, and a relaunch has taken place to increase attendance and active participation. A new terms of reference has been drafted to increase the scope of those prisoners that are being discussed, and a change of personnel has been made to improve the administration and facilitating of the meeting to ensure the release arrangements of high-risk offenders are in place.</p> <p>The sharing of information between departments will be improved for prisoners nearing release being managed under multi-agency public protection arrangements.</p>	<p>Regional Probation Director</p> <p>The Governor</p> <p>The Governor</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>August 2026</p>
Key concerns				
8	The rate of force being used had increased considerably and was the highest of all category B training prisons.	<p>A structured programme of learning and development has been developed to improve the quality of staff-prisoner relationships and strengthen staff confidence in responding appropriately to risk and challenge.</p> <p>A full review of use of force assurance has been completed by the Operational Resilience and Response Unit with findings used to improve practices and provide better oversight.</p>	<p>The Governor</p> <p>The Governor</p>	<p>First checkpoint October 2026</p> <p>Completed</p>
9	Patients waited far too long to transfer to hospital under the Mental Health Act. The average wait over the last year had been 191 days, which was very poor.	<p>Health and Justice East of England, in partnership with the East of England Provider Collaborative and the health provider will enhance the escalation process for those awaiting mental health transfers. This will include learning lessons from past hospital transfers, review current outstanding cases, and collaborate on pathways to 'speed up' transfers to hospitals when men are identified as needing in-patient psychiatric care.</p> <p>A bimonthly online learning session focussed on improving the flow of patients will also take place.</p>	<p>Ministry of Justice/NHS England</p> <p>NHS England</p>	<p>July 2026</p> <p>July 2026</p>
10	The prison was dilapidated and grubby. Extensive refurbishment, including the long-delayed shower improvement programme, was needed.	<p>An 18-month, site-wide programme of shower refurbishments is in design and projected to commence delivery on site in August 2026, pending agreement of capital funding for the next financial year. The cost of the project is c.£9m.</p>	<p>MOJ Property</p>	<p>Commencing August 2026</p>



		<p>A deep clean has been carried out in the segregation unit by an external contractor to improve conditions in the area.</p> <p>Clean, Rehabilitative, Enabling and Decent (CRED), a programme to engage prisoners in work that improves their skills, confidence and employability, will be introduced at the prison, and will contribute to ensuring a more decent environment in the prison.</p> <p>An establishment clean and decent lead will be introduced to raise standards of cleanliness. Expected standards of cleanliness will be published on each unit and responsibilities will be clarified; with new cleaning cupboards created to improve access to cleaning materials. To ensure that improvements are both embedded and sustainable, an improved assurance process has been introduced.</p>	<p>MOJ Property</p> <p>The Governor/ MOJ Property</p> <p>The Governor</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>December 2026</p> <p>August 2026</p>
11	<p>Urgent medical treatment was sometimes delayed. This was due to the lack of officers to escort patients to the A&E department in the community.</p>	<p>The health provider is now working directly with the Ambulance trust to improve partnership working and effective practice at local level. A coordinated local A&E Operating Procedure between the health provider and HMP Woodhill has been introduced to effectively address the delays. Through this work, the HMPPS Health & Social Care Team will support the Governor to build on existing work to improve the operational response to medical emergencies.</p> <p>Any concerns raised by the healthcare provider around delays are now escalated through the daily Operational Morning Meeting, this is the forum where staffing levels and wider operational issues around escorts are discussed and addressed in a timely manner.</p>	<p>HMPPS Health & Social Care Team/ Association of Ambulance Chief Executives</p> <p>The Governor</p>	<p>September 2026</p> <p>Completed</p>
12	<p>Leaders were not actively promoting fair treatment and inclusivity. The lack of consultation left them poorly sighted on the experiences of prisoners from different groups.</p>	<p>Equalities meetings are now held bi-monthly to improve oversight and increase understanding of the experiences of prisoners from protected groups.</p> <p>Prisoner forums will be established for each protected characteristic, led by the designated senior and subject matter leads, to gather and analyse prisoner feedback on lived experience and perceived barriers to fair and inclusive treatment.</p> <p>Guidance will be issued so staff are aware of those prisoners being supported by emergency evacuation plans.</p>	<p>The Governor</p> <p>The Governor</p> <p>The Governor</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>August 2026</p> <p>July 2026</p>



13	Time unlocked was particularly poor at weekends and for those who were unemployed.	A new core day and staff reprofile exercise will be completed, published and introduced. This will give greater flexibility in the core day across the week and will, with improved, consistent staffing, allow for greater time out of cell; this will be monitored and reviewed with particular attention on weekends.	The Governor	August 2026
14	The range of education, skills and work activities was too narrow and did not fully meet prisoner needs.	<p>The number of full-time purposeful activity places and the current provision of education, skills and work will be reviewed to ensure that the existing facilities are being used effectively.</p> <p>Activity places will be increased through the recruitment of five additional instructors increasing access to training and qualifications through barbering, construction, painting & decorating and media courses.</p> <p>New workshop/classroom spaces will be created with a specific focus on activities for high-risk prisoners and those newly admitted to the prison.</p> <p>Prisoner access to education will be improved by introducing additional in-cell laptops with pre-loaded education content.</p>	<p>The Governor/ Rehabilitation & Change Directorate/ Directorate of Contracted Services</p> <p>The Governor</p> <p>The Governor/ Prison Industries</p> <p>The Governor</p>	<p>September 2026</p> <p>December 2026</p> <p>December 2026</p> <p>July 2026</p>
15	There were too few accredited qualifications, and prisoners were unable to gain recognition for the skills they had developed in industries.	<p>The recruitment of five additional instructors will increase access to training and qualifications which will allow prisoners to gain recognition for the skills they have developed</p> <p>Creating Future Opportunities (CFO), a charitable branch of HMPPS, are seeking to augment the skills offer with construction and traffic management courses and qualifications not on offer through existing provision.</p>	The Governor	December 2026
16	There was no systematic approach to help prisoners get employment on release.	<p>Prisoners will be signposted to New Futures Network, a specialist part of HMPPS that connects prisons with employers to help prison leavers secure employment, three months before release.</p> <p>A Prison Work Coach has been recruited and is currently awaiting vetting clearance.</p>	<p>The Governor</p> <p>The Governor</p>	<p>October 2026</p> <p>October 2026</p>

