

SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN – HMIP SCRUTINY VISIT INSPECTION OF HARMONDSWORTH IRC

Rec No	Recommendation Addressed to	Primary Theme	Secondary Theme	HMIP Recommendation	Accepted / Partially Accepted / Not Accepted	Progress Complete / Partially Complete / Not Complete	Action taken / proposed	Expected completion within [6/12 months]
S3	Centre Manager, Home Office	Safety	Security, freedom of movement and personal safety, use of force and single separation	<p>Key concern: Detainees were locked in their cells for an hour over lunch and during the night from 9.15pm. Such restrictions on free movement were inappropriate for a detainee population.</p> <p>Recommendation: Detainees should be able to live in an open environment and security restrictions should be proportionate to the risks posed. Detainees should not be locked in cells.</p>	Partially Accepted	Complete	<p>This recommendation is partially accepted as while Harmondsworth immigration removal centre will continue to aim to deliver a relaxed environment this is balanced against the requirements of policy and the need to maintain safety and security.</p> <p>Published Home Office guidance, DSO 4/2018 Management and Security of Night State, outlines the standards and general principles of how the night state should be operated.</p>	
S4	Home Office	Safety	Safeguarding	<p>Key concern: Levels of vulnerability were high and detainees assessed to be at risk of harm in detention had been held for too long. There were systemic problems in the provision of release accommodation for detainees who were considered unfit for detention and/or could not be removed.</p> <p>Recommendation: Detainees should be released promptly when there is no prospect of their removal within a reasonable period. The Home Office should resolve systemic problems with the provision of release addresses. There should be a time limit on the length of detention.</p>	Partially Accepted	Not Complete	<p>In order to detention to be lawful, the Hardial Singh principles (domestic case law) establish that there must be realistic prospect of removal within a reasonable timescale. We are held to account on this by the courts, and by a series of safeguards that ensure proper scrutiny of decisions to detain, and on-going detention. Individuals in detention can also apply for immigration bail at any time of their choosing.</p> <p>There has been much debate about the introduction of a time limit on immigration detention. The introduction of a detention time limit would severely constrain our ability to maintain the right balance and uphold the integrity of the immigration system.</p> <p>At the heart of our immigration detention reforms are commitments to ensure that all decisions to detain are made with adequate safeguards in place, that detention is used for the minimum possible period and that people in detention are treated with dignity and due considerations to any vulnerability concerns. We are progressing these priorities all while continuing to tackle abuse of the immigration system. This part of the recommendation is therefore not accepted.</p> <p>In accordance with the Immigration Asylum Act 1999, the UK Government has a statutory legal duty to provide accommodation to asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute. We must ensure our statutory obligations can always be met and ensuring we treat all asylum seekers humanely and with the dignity they deserve. There is however extensive work underway to reduce the cost burden to UK taxpayers on asylum accommodation.</p> <p>The Home Office will consider individual requests for specific accommodation or location on a case by case basis. The provider is instructed by the Home Office to provide accommodation that meets the needs of each individual case subject to the availability of accommodation.</p> <p>In 2020, demand for asylum support continued to grow due to sustained high levels of asylum intake. Throughout the pandemic, we have worked with local authorities and other partners within a number of forums to provide asylum seekers with suitable accommodation. We are working closely with local authorities across the UK to secure additional accommodation and ensure that asylum seekers are able to move through and 'move-on' from the support system.</p>	6 Months

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S5	Home Office, Centre Manager	Respect	Daily life: living conditions	<p>Key concern: Living conditions in the units were below an acceptable standard. Persistent problems with pest infestation, filthy cell toilets and broken and dilapidated communal showers were particularly problematic.</p> <p>Recommendation: Action should be taken to address longstanding problems with the living conditions in the centre. This should include developing a plan for eradicating infestations and investing in the refurbishment of units, as well as further deep cleaning.</p>	Partially Accepted	Partially Complete	<p>In line with the Government’s strategic priorities on the use of immigration detention, Detention and Escorting Services (DES) continuously seek to improve the welfare of those in detention. Amongst other things, we have improved accommodation and the facilities on offer across the estate for those in detention, as well as ensuring that decency and dignity are embedded into the re-procurement of our contracts.</p> <p>There is a comprehensive cleaning plan in place for all resident areas and we regularly deep clean all areas on a rotational basis. In addition, there is an established programme for replacement of broken or defective facilities.</p> <p>There are robust measures in place to prevent pest infestations. As with any urban environment there are occasional detections of rodents which are tackled vigorously.</p>	6 Months
S6	Centre Manager	Activities	Activities	<p>Key concern: The take-up of activity places was low. Not enough was done to make detainees aware of the benefits of participation or to encourage them to attend. Their learning and language needs were not assessed.</p> <p>Recommendation: Detainees should receive clear and detailed information about the activities available and the benefits of taking part in a format and language they understand. Their learning and English language needs should be assessed and considered when making referrals to education classes.</p>	Partially Accepted	Partially complete	<p>Care & Custody are conducting an analysis of activities and are implementing new measures to ensure better communication and promotion of activities. As part of this review the resident magazine published by the centre is being reviewed and improved.</p> <p>Activities are discussed at the detainee consultative committee and upcoming events are promoted. This will increase as we move out of the current Pandemic period.</p> <p>Regimes provision is covered in the new Virtual Reality Induction for residents. Care and Custody will however be placing a higher profile of availability and access to activities on full induction.</p> <p>English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) is to be further incorporated into the vocational training courses to ensure detainees can participate in education, training, paid work and in activities regardless of their ESOL needs. All residents, in normal circumstances, is given the opportunity for assessment to educational options including English Language following main induction.</p>	6 Months