

Coldingley and High Down Reform Prisons



Our First Plans

2016-2019



**Our vision is of safe
prisons in which
responsible prisoners
and exemplary staff
work together to
change lives**





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Introduction: foreword



When I was asked to become the Executive Governor for High Down and Coldingley, I was both excited and intrigued. After 35 years of involvement with prisons, I was becoming institutionalised and with hindsight was at risk of losing sight of what the ultimate goal was - “to reducing reoffending by changing lives.” I had become part of a system that sought to control and be cautious, to accept the status quo not challenge it, and, to do unto people rather than work with them.

Prison Reform is our opportunity to do it differently - from recruitment to regime, to engage and explore, to empower and push the boundaries and remove those niggling issues that frustrate staff and prisoners and disrupt the prison community - I want to give prisoners what they can reasonably expect - a kettle, TV and decent clothing.

I realise that in order to deliver “the good” we must have the building blocks in place:-

- a full staff complement who are well trained, managed and motivated;

- a safe environment for everyone with less violence and drugs;
- a decent place to work and live which is clean and where staff and offenders get what they can reasonably expect;
- a better buy in from prisoners and a rehabilitative culture;
- a fair and just prison for all.

Our 3 Year Plan has of necessity been drawn up without anywhere near the consultation I would have wanted and it will need to be heavily influenced by the further engagement we will do with prisoners, staff and our partners.

The two prisons face some similar challenges - recruitment and drugs being two issues. However I recognise that the immediate pressures at High Down are very significant and we need to address these before we can go full steam ahead on reform.

I recently made my first significant “autonomous” decision - I did not need to refer it upwards or sideways for agreement or ratification. No I just did it and I liked the feeling. My goal is to pass on that autonomy to staff and as far as possible to prisoners.

It will be a journey with some highs and lows, success and failure, as we test the boundaries, but I believe it will be a great experience and am confident that together we will succeed.

Nick Pascoe

Nick Pascoe CBE
Executive Governor
Coldingley & High Down Reform Prisons

Introduction: the prisons

HMP Coldingley



I am delighted to lead Coldingley through the changes that being a reform prison will bring and am thrilled about taking on this challenge.

Our prison community is wonderfully rich, diverse and deserving of the opportunity to shape how we work together in the future. I truly believe that by giving those in our care the chance to take on more responsibility and live a life that mirrors the community

they will return to will then have a greater chance of success in reducing re-offending.

Involving staff, prisoners and their families in sentence management from the outset will give real meaning to the word resettlement and help each and every one of them be all that they can be.

We have always been proud of our industries and every visitor is impressed by the atmosphere in our workshops, it looks, smells and feels like real work because it is. Everyone within our community can learn from the experience and make a contribution. With autonomy, they will see the fruits of their labours re-invested back into the prison. We can build on our sound customer base and engage with our partners and future employers securing employment on release by opening our doors and asking “how can we do this differently?”

I want to encourage and facilitate the ideas, voices, perspectives and experiences that I know every partner, volunteer, staff member, prisoners and their families have and I will work tirelessly to bring about the changes that are required to make Coldingley everything I know it can be.

Jo Sims
Governor
HMP Coldingley

HMP Coldingley holds up to 521 Category C prisoners. The majority are serving long sentences – nearly 200 are on life sentences – but some 51 places are reserved for men within 12 weeks of

release into Surrey and Hampshire and with consequently far less interest in the prison being a stable, purposeful and decent environment.



Coldingley was built as an industrial prison and has a wide range of workshops from engineering through air-conditioning unit assembly and washing machine refurbishment to top quality sign-making and printing.

Despite these advantages – and in 2015/16 a £10.6 million budget - the reoffending rate for prisoners leaving Coldingley is above average for such Category C prisons and has deteriorated further in the last two sets of published statistics.

Coldingley's Target Staffing Figure for prison officers is 82 but actual staff in post are 70. Lack of staff has been cited by prisoners as well as staff themselves for recent increases in violence as well as disruptive short-notice restrictions on the regime.

HMP High Down



Having worked at High Down in 2000 as a Principal Officer, I was delighted to return as Governor in May, particularly because of the unique opportunity of leading one of the first Reform prisons. However, I do not underestimate the scale of the challenge ahead. High

Down's resources have eroded over recent years and this has had an impact on our ability to run a safe, decent and secure environment. Tackling those key issues will be my priority, both quickly and using the freedoms that reform offers.

I joined the Prison Service because I wanted to change individual's lives, both whilst they were in prison and on release. That continues to motivate me today. I also believe that staff across High Down will already have some great ideas about how we can run a better prison and improve people's lives – reform will enable us to use those ideas in making High Down a place where people are proud to work and where prisoners are given the opportunity to prepare for a better future. I look forward to working together with Nick, Jo and my staff to see our ideas become reality.

Louise Spencer
Governor
HMP High Down

High Down is a Category B male local which holds up to 1203 prisoners across six house blocks, including a first night centre, detox unit and vulnerable prisoners unit. We also have an inpatient unit, run in partnership with Virgin Care, with 24 hour nursing care, equipped to care for prisoners with both mental and physical health issues, including the facility to operate renal dialysis. We serve Guildford and Croydon Crown Courts, as well as 7 magistrate courts and receive an average of 10 new prisoners each day.

High Down has a range of opportunities for prisoners to occupy their time usefully whilst in prison, as well as better preparing them for a crime free life on release. There is a purpose built education centre offering a wide curriculum through our contract with Novus, including literacy, business enterprise, vocational training and courses to support prisoners to prepare for release. There are also a range of other workshops, including laundry, textiles, recycling and a call centre.

The prison is currently experiencing considerable staffing shortages, which are restricting the regime we are able to offer. Our target staffing figure is 392.22 with staff in post figure of 352.87, including 35.2 prison officer vacancies. We are also experiencing high levels of staff sickness – at the end of May, there was an average of 13 working days lost per member of staff, which obviously also has an impact on what we can deliver.

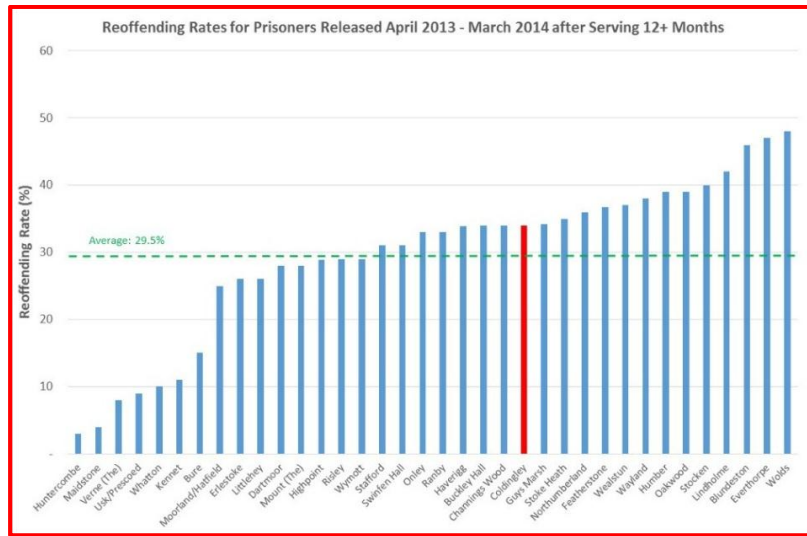
As of June 2016, the establishment held just over 300 prisoners on remand, with the remainder comprising of category B and C sentenced prisoners, as well as a small number of young offenders.

In 2015-16, HMP Highdown underspent on its delegated controllable budget by a total of £114k, which was mainly attributed to an underspend in prisoner direct costs of £82k. The budget for 2016-17 is still be formalised under the Reforms agenda and will be published imminently.

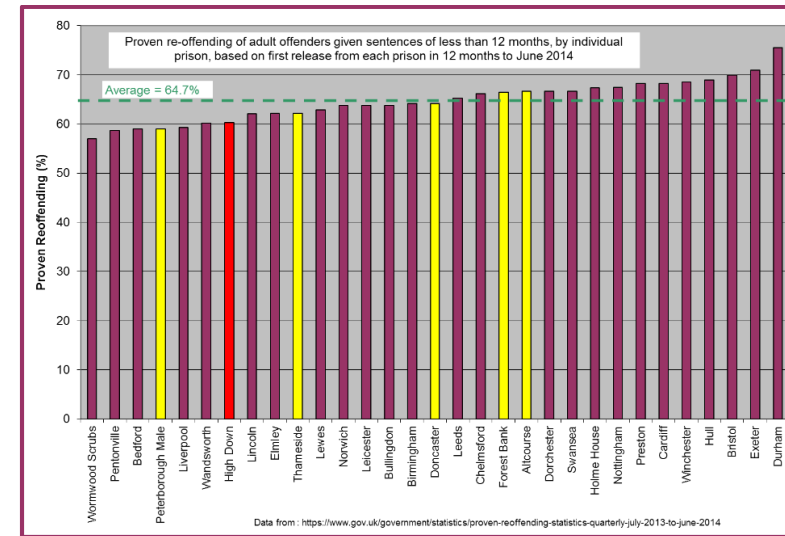


Delivery Context - Reoffending Rates

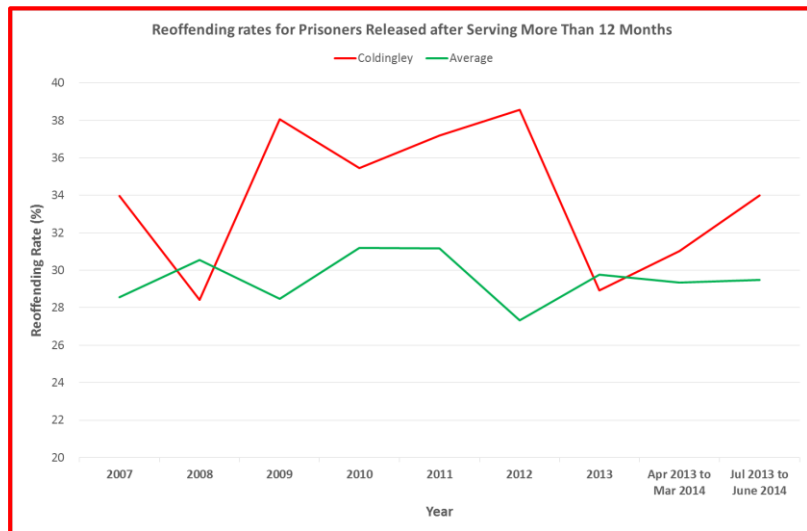
Coldingley – latest data, and for comparable prisons



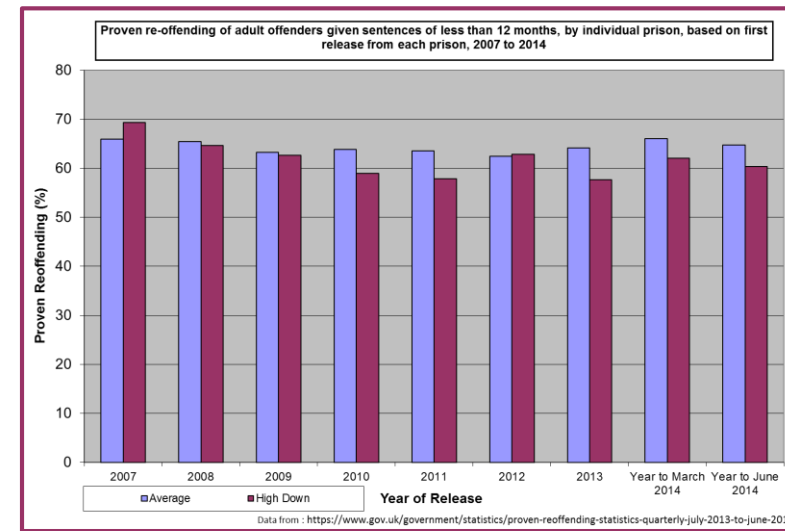
High Down – latest data, and for comparable prisons



Coldingley – trend since 2007 compared with average

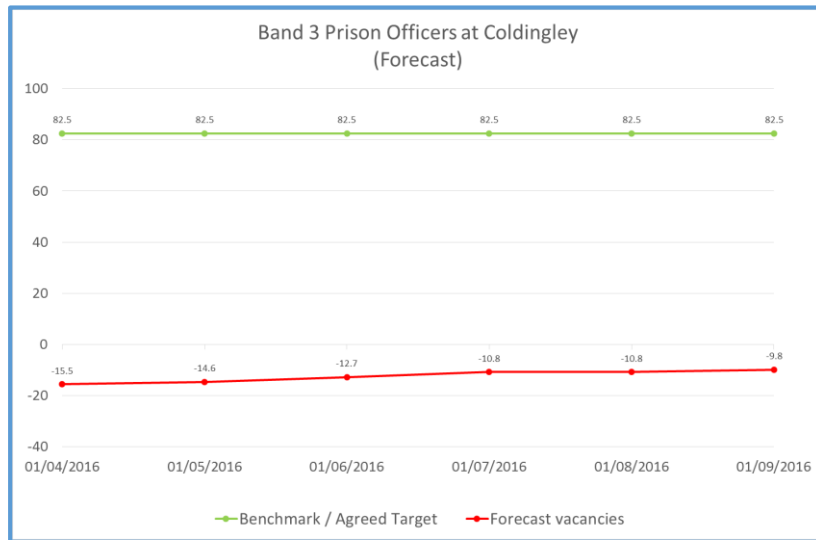


High Down – trend since 2007 compared with average



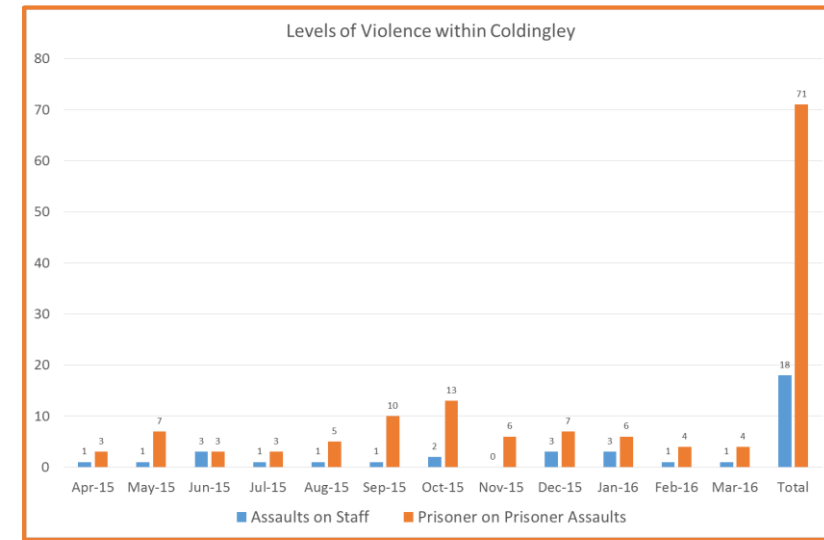
Delivery Context – Staffing

Coldingley – B3 Prison Officers



Delivery Context – Violence

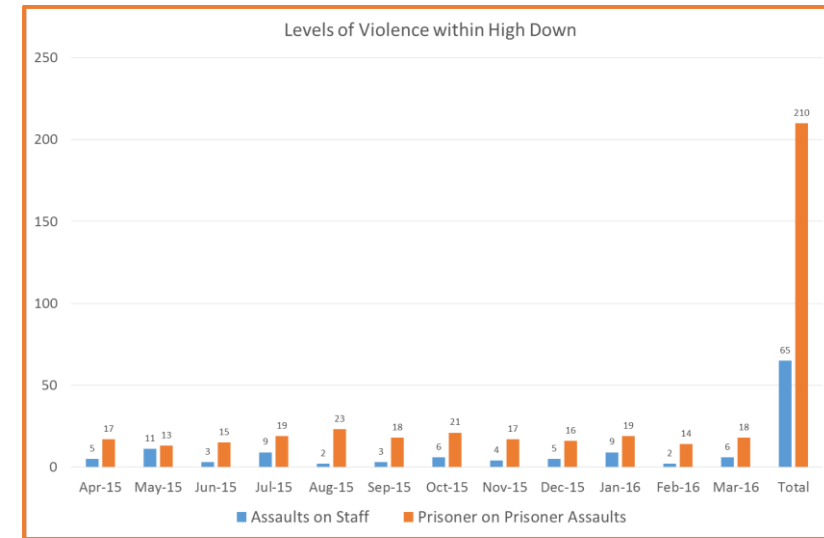
Coldingley



High Down – B3 Prison Officers



High Down



One vision, two prisons

Our two prisons are different in size, hold different cohorts and face a number of delivery challenges and opportunities unique to each site.

Their purpose, however, is a shared one. Both Coldingley and High Down must be places in which human beings are treated with decency and respect and afforded the opportunities they need – and may not previously have had – to adopt law-abiding lifestyles. That is why our vision for both prisons is the same: for safe environments in which responsible prisoners and exemplary staff work together to change lives.

Our plans for reform for both prisons will, therefore, be delivered as one. Having two Reform Prisons under one leadership is an opportunity to make us greater than the sum of our parts:

- Both prisons share a common geography. Many of our partners are the same, both inside the criminal justice system and out. We will build a common set of networks and find opportunities for joint working that benefit both prisons. The location of both prisons also creates number of common delivery challenges, such as the challenge of recruiting staff – a perennial problem in London and the South East. We will work together to deliver one solution to shared challenges.
- We will learn faster – sharing lessons between the prisons about what works and about what doesn't.
- We will exploit to the full our comparative advantage. We will buy smarter, and achieve better value together: our negotiating position will be stronger together and we will have access to larger suppliers than we would as separate sites. We will share and exchange goods and services between the prisons in a way that hasn't been possible previously and open up greater opportunities for the prisoners in both sites.

Two prisons, one set of values

The fundamental challenge of running a prison does not change as the quotes on this page, nearly 200 years apart, demonstrate. **Decency** whether in terms of the interactions between people – prisoners, staff or visitors – in the prison or in terms of the physical environment is always the starting point.

And the overall test still remains: “Would I be happy for my son or daughter to be locked up and treated in the way that prisoners are treated in this prison ?”

HMPS Business Plan 2005-6

Then for any of us, making fundamental, transformative changes in our lives is incredibly difficult. And we will never attempt it if we do not feel secure and confident to do so. Hence our vision is founded on our prisons being safe environments.

This however raises the classic tension in prison management: safety can be most easily achieved by stripping prisoners of responsibility, controlling their every movement and taking away even the most basic decisions (when to get up, what to eat, when to make phonecalls) from them.

This controlling approach however risks undermining the rehabilitation task: “A safe prison is a good start, but a safe prisoner may be disabled when it comes to coping with release.” Our vision therefore goes beyond safety to responsible prisoners who benefit from the role-modelling of exemplary staff to show that changing lives is possible. **Empowerment** and **responsibility** at every level are core values alongside the **hope** and **fairness** needed when building any relationship, not only those between staff and prisoners.

Recognising prisoners’ own needs and ability to act responsibly underpins the ongoing engagement jointly with them and staff to make, refine and deliver these plans.



When thee
builds a
prison, thee
had better
build with
the thought
ever in thy
mind that
thee and thy
children may
occupy the
cells.

Elizabeth Fry
1780 – 1845



Our vision	Safe prisons in which responsible prisoners and exemplary staff work together to change lives				
Our values	Decency, Hope, Fairness, Empowerment, Responsibility				
Our goals	Rehabilitation To provide hope, opportunities and time to reflect and rebuild lives, with families involved wherever possible	Partnership To empower prisoners and any interested organisations who can contribute to the running of the prisons	People To recruit, retain and empower the right staff to deliver our vision	Operational grip To provide safe, decent & secure prisons which deliver good performance and innovation	Organisational Development To develop our direction, structures, and approach in order to capitalise on autonomy
Our early priorities	Increase relevant employment including via ROTL Provide education in line with Coates Review Improve prisoners' communications with their families and other involvement for support at all stages of sentence Improve offender management with refocused and upskilled staff	Engage regularly with prisoners at all levels including over wing regimes Assess labour markets and build links to relevant employers Build links with external organisations so prisons are normalised as part of the community Identify best practice and work with other prisons elsewhere	Improve and streamline the way we recruit Develop and inspire our staff Make our prisons a great place to work Encourage collaboration within and beyond our prisons	Run predictable regimes Improve cleanliness & prepare for no smoking Tackle violence by drug supply reduction strategy, effective IEP incentives, prisoner peer mentors, and, police/CPS/judicial buy-in Prepare for re-role of HMP High Down Improve sanitation at HMP Coldingley	Create strategic direction through consultation Design our structures Establish our underpinning commercial and procurement strategies Clarify and communicate our success criteria Develop a performance and delivery culture

Strategic Development 2016-19

The agenda for the prisons' strategic development has been informed by engagement discussions already held and reflected in the five goals set in these first plans. Further engagement will extend and deepen our understanding of how to deliver those goals and may also add to, or reduce their number.

Our present thinking though is framed by the five goals of Rehabilitation, Partnership, People, Operational Grip, and, Organisational Development.



Goal One: Rehabilitation. *We will provide hope, opportunities and time to reflect and rebuild lives, with families involved wherever possible.*

Our rehabilitation goal; the need for reform

Rehabilitation is the fundamental task of prisons, repairing the lives of prisoners and avoiding damage to the lives of future victims. At present up to 60% of our prisoners reoffend within a year despite having had £30,000 a year spent on them. This is unacceptable performance - it's as if three out of every five of a carmaker's brand new models were breaking down within a year. The best experts on why this happens are prisoners themselves: listening to them tells us about basic needs – “some people don't know how to have a conversation when they're angry” – and emphasises the importance of preserving and improving relationships with children and other family members. Reform will allow us to invest rapidly in these areas.

Our early priorities

1. Increase relevant employment including through work outside of the prison walls. We want to equip prisoners with the tools they need to have to make a valuable contribution and a stable job on release. We will work to increase our ability to do this.
2. Provide education in line with Coates Review. Education needs to be at the heart of our core rehabilitative offer to all prisoners. We will implement the recommendations of the Coates Review and find new and innovative ways to get more prisoners trained and educated in classrooms, in workshops and outside the prison walls.
3. Improve prisoners' communications with their families and other involvement for support at all stages of sentence. We want the link between families and prisoners to be strong and we will use our new reform powers to develop local approaches, with charities and partners in the community.
4. Improve offender management with refocused and upskilled staff. A rehabilitative culture will become central to everything we do. We will use our autonomy to attract, recruit, equip and reward staff who share our vision.

Families are one of our most effective crime-fighting institutions.

*The Rt Hon Michael Gove, **Making Prisons Work**, May 2016*

Immediate actions 2016/2017

Coldingley: Recruit a Family Development Work Coordinator; Institute new super-enhanced spaces with basic catering facilities

High Down: Consider how we can best develop a rehabilitative culture at High Down. Develop our family engagement initiatives to support prisoners reducing reoffending.

Goal Two: Partnership. *We will empower prisoners and any organisations who can be of benefit to the running of the prisons.*

Our partnership goal; the need for reform

The Prison Service does not have all the answers and cannot do all the work. Engagement with prisoners has already reminded us that “prisoners see far more than staff do” and so we need to find ways of working with prisoners to address issues such as violence. We have longstanding partnerships with healthcare and education providers and more recently for services in HR, finance and facilities management. Reform will allow these partnerships to operate locally rather than everything being mediated through a remote national centre; reform will also unlock our ambition to work with new partners – be they small charities or multinationals, innovators or experts. A wealth of knowledge, ideas and enthusiasm exists beyond the prison walls and we want to capitalise on it.

Our early priorities

1. Engage regularly with prisoners to capture their ideas on improving their lives whilst in custody. We want to capitalise on prisoners’ knowledge of what is going on inside the prisons and their potential for being part of the solution, for example by mentoring those prisoners unable to live decently in the prison community.
2. Assess the labour markets in key home areas of our prisoners. We will ensure that the training opportunities we offer provide credible prospects for our prisoners that on their eventual release - whenever that may be and from whichever prison – they will be able to find work.
3. Enhance our prisons’ profile within the community. We want our prisons to be seen as assets and not merely tolerated by the communities living around them. High Down’s experience with ‘The Clink’ restaurant has shown that normalisation of prisons is possible and we will build on that using for example local procurement.
4. Identify best practice in prison management including chaplaincy, arts and other work to engage difficult prisoners and use our autonomy to introduce rapidly changes to replicate that and so be able to offer support to the wider Prison Service.

Being unable to take responsibility because it is denied to you is not the same as being irresponsible.
Prisoner

Immediate actions 2016/2017

Coldingley: Pilot peer to peer support scheme for Basic level prisoners; Review Industries’ fit with internal and external markets

High Down: Develop relationships with key stakeholders to enable us to make the prison safer and more decent, as well as exploring activity and employment opportunities for prisoners. Roll out in-cell technology, ensuring we make best use of this exciting initiative.

Goal Three: People. *We will recruit, retain and empower the right staff to deliver our vision*

Our people goal; the need for reform

Coldingley presently faces a 15% shortfall in prison officer numbers while High Down is heading towards being 16% understaffed. Autonomy will allow us to recruit directly, cutting the currently protracted process of six months or more, and, to offer a remuneration package suitable for the local labour market. Engagement tells us that we can do more to make rehabilitation our core purpose – to embed a culture where the rehabilitative needs of prisoners are at the front and centre of everything we do. With autonomy we will attract, recruit, train and empower staff to act as leaders and role models for all prisoners and to show them how to take responsibility, act decently and lead constructive, purposeful lives

Our early priorities

1. Do more to engage truly with our staff and their Trades Unions to enable all voices to be heard.
2. Increase everyone's understanding of the way we all work and encourage collaboration between staff.
3. Create career paths and development opportunities for our staff to enable everyone to improve and perform to the best of their abilities.
4. Streamline our recruitment process and reach out – including with an “Introduce a Friend” scheme - to a wider calibre of candidates to increase the diversity and capability of our workforce.
5. Think more creatively about how staff are deployed to enhance capability and to meet individuals' needs.
6. Create a work environment that our staff want to come to everyday, that encourages creative and collaborative thinking and that motivates people to deliver our vision.

Immediate actions 2016/2017

Coldingley: Provide short-term accommodation for staff; review management structure to ensure adequate numbers of Custodial Managers to drive daily regime; resource OMU to eliminate Recat backlog

High Down: Improve staff attendance levels. Engage with staff to harness ideas about how we can best develop as a reform prison. Improve our communication, sharing share key messages promptly so staff have the information they need to do their job effectively.

“a truer test of the quality of prison life is what staff and prisoners have to say about those aspects of prison life that 'matter most': relationships, fairness order, and the quality of their treatment by those above them”

Alison Liebling, The Moral Performance of Prisons

Goal Four: Operational Grip. *We will provide safe, decent and secure prisons which deliver good performance and innovation.*

Our operational grip goal; the need for reform

Autonomy cannot magic away fundamental issues such as staff shortages resulting in destabilising regime restrictions. No prison can ever be complacent about its stability and we will, particularly initially, be focused on running predictable regimes which provide the reassurance of certainty to prisoners. Autonomy will however enable us to procure more swiftly the TVs, kettles, bedding and clothing needed to ensure prison life is decent. And we will then go beyond that to ensure local leaders at all levels are empowered to make operational decisions so all our outcomes can be delivered more effectively and efficiently.

Our early priorities

1. Run predictable regimes. We know prisoners value consistency above nearly all else, not least because they can be sure of when they will be able to contact their families.
2. Improve cleanliness and prepare for No Smoking regimes. Dirt and litter in a prison may at times seem trivial compared to other issues. But the “broken windows” research makes clear that not gripping minor antisocial behaviour only leads to bigger problems.
3. Tackle extremist and other violence by drug supply reduction, effective Incentives & Earned Privileges schemes, prisoner peer mentors, police/CPS/judicial cooperation, and implementing relevant recommendations from the Acheson review.
4. Prepare for a re-role of HMP High Down

Immediate actions 2016/2017

Coldingley: Maximise prisoners’ access to sports and exercise; explore potential for in-cell sanitation

High Down: Improve levels of cleanliness throughout the prison. Implement an improved profile to make best use of our resources to deliver a full and varied regime.

THE RESPONSIBLE PRISONER – AN INVITATION TO CHANGE

“It is difficult to expect responsibility from people who are deliberately dehumanised by sloppy procedures and filthy conditions.”

HM Inspectorates of Probation & of Prisons, and the PPO, Autumn 2001

Goal Five: Organisational Development. *We will develop the direction, structures, and approach to work that allow us to capitalise on autonomy*

Our organisational development goal; the need for change

Autonomy represents a significant opportunity to create the types of prisons that can contribute even more for the men in our care and the society we serve. This will require significant development of both Coldingley and High Down, setting out a new direction that is enhanced by our exceptional people and their leadership at all levels, and underpinned by the structures, systems, and processes that allow us to flourish. Ours will be an environment where the ambition to improve our prisons mirrors the hope and ambition we have for our prisoners.

Our early priorities

1. Set the detailed strategic direction and priorities that will deliver our success and to do so through consultation with the people at the heart of driving that success.
2. Design prisons that enable our ambitions. Build an understanding of social enterprises; establish new structures and processes; and create new governance arrangements including a new Board.
3. Establish the commercial and procurement strategies that will underpin our new approach to working.
4. Ensure our success criteria are clear to all, including the data that will help us understand our progress.
5. Create a performance and delivery culture that matches the ambition we have for those in our care.

*I have always
found that plans
are useless but
planning is
indispensable*

Dwight D Eisenhower

Immediate actions 2016/2017

For both prisons: : recruit a Chair and with them recruit a Board; design and develop structures and processes that will enable our Reform Prisons to deliver effectively; review energy/water usage for savings and greening options
Coldingley: Open a branch of the Café Britannia social enterprise and use this to promote greetings cards, plants and other prison products; Access Grants to support further partnerships with social enterprises and other third sector bodies.
High Down: Begin our work towards a possible re-role to a training prison; Improve access to equipment and kit.