

## Site

HMP Warren Hill

## Name of project / initiative

Willow Unit

## Overview

Warren Hill is the only full site progression prison in England & Wales, focusing on helping long term prisoners who have otherwise struggled to progress from Category C conditions, prepare for release or the transition to open conditions.

As part of our approach, Willow unit is modelled on Approved Premises. It offers an experience that replicates principles of normality in order to best prepare our prisoners for their progression and in turn, seeks to prevent re-offending and allows prisoners to practise living to a set of licence conditions with the aim of reducing licence breaches in the community post-release.

The unit offers 4 individually-designed single bedrooms, along with a shared bathroom, kitchen and living room. Prisoners learn to cook together, take responsibility for looking after their living environment and abide by licences similar to those in the community. Our aim is to reduce the recall rate, in particular for our specific cohort of over tariff IPP's and lifers.

## Longevity

The unit opened in summer 2021.

## Benefits

The unit helps to prepare men for release, often after serving very long sentences, by giving them the opportunity to learn to live in an environment which mirrors as closely as possible what they can expect when they are released.

## Uniqueness

This is currently the only prison in the closed estate with a unit of this kind.

## Applicability

This approach, or a variation of it, could be taken in any prison which releases prisoners either into the community or on to Category D conditions.

## Requirements

It does require a suitable space – in this case, Willow is converted office space – and there are cost implications to any rebuilding or conversion that might be required. However, there are no additional running costs.

## For more information:

Contact: [Katie.Banham@justice.gov.uk](mailto:Katie.Banham@justice.gov.uk), Head of Learning and Skills, and Willow Unit  
See also: [KnowX.uk/WarrenHill-RMT22.pdf](https://www.knowx.uk/WarrenHill-RMT22.pdf) [Pictures]

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