



HM Prison & Probation Service

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Ms Jenny Goldring
London Inner South
Southwark Coroners Court
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11 June 2026

Dear Ms Goldring,

REGULATION 28 REPORT TO PREVENT FUTURE DEATHS: MR MARK ROBERT SMITH

Thank you for your Regulation 28 report of 7 April 2026, following the inquest into the death of Mark Robert Smith at HMP Thameside on 6 February 2019. I am providing the response on behalf of His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) and the Director at HMP Thameside, as the Director General of Operations.

I know that you will share a copy of this response with Mr Smith's family, and I would first like to express my condolences for their loss. Every death in custody is a tragedy and the safety of those in our care is my absolute priority.

Following evidence heard at the inquest you raised concerns directed to HMPPS, Practice Plus Group (PPG), Queen Elizabeth Hospital and Serco. I am responding to the issue relating to HMPPS regarding the availability of disabled cells which can be used for constant supervision at HMP Thameside.

I recognise that there are limitations in the availability of cells at HMP Thameside and across the prison estate that are capable of accommodating prisoners requiring the use of a hospital bed and/or wheelchair which can also be used to support constant supervision. Currently, at HMP Thameside where such a need arises, individual risk assessments are undertaken and, subject to security considerations, mitigations may include leaving cell doors open to allow access and observation, alongside the provision of additional staffing to maintain safe and effective supervision. As you have noted, this may not be appropriate in all cases and where

a suitable cell cannot be made available locally, Serco can request a search across the wider prison estate for appropriate accommodation.

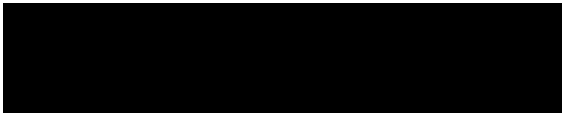
To address the limited accommodation available locally, HMPPS has consulted with the contracted company who built and operate HMP Thameside, and they have assessed viable options for improving provision. A feasibility study has now been completed locally, and quotations have been obtained for the modification of an existing cell which would enable staff to maintain an appropriate line of sight into the cell, consistent with standard constant supervision arrangements, whilst preserving cell security.

The next steps are to review the proposed design alterations and costs and resolve any associated commercial considerations with all relevant stakeholders. These processes are currently underway and are projected to take several months to conclude before installation could proceed.

HMPPS recognises the importance of ensuring that appropriate facilities are available to safely manage prisoners with complex physical and clinical needs and will continue to progress the identified improvements at HMP Thameside while considering wider estate implications.

Thank you again for bringing your concerns to my attention. I trust that this response provides assurance that action is being taken to address this matter.

Yours sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the Director General of Operations.

Director General of Operations