Enhancing operational efficiency :
modernising print services across the
Ministry of Justice prison estate

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) is one of the largest government departments, supported by 35 agencies and public bodies and employing over 79,000 people (including those in the Probation Service). They operate through their agencies in locations across the UK, including 500 courts and tribunals, and 122 prisons in England and Wales.

HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) aim to reduce reoffending by rehabilitating the people in their care through education and employment. The agency is made up of HM Prison Service, Probation Service, Youth Custody Service, and a headquarters focused on creating tools and learning.
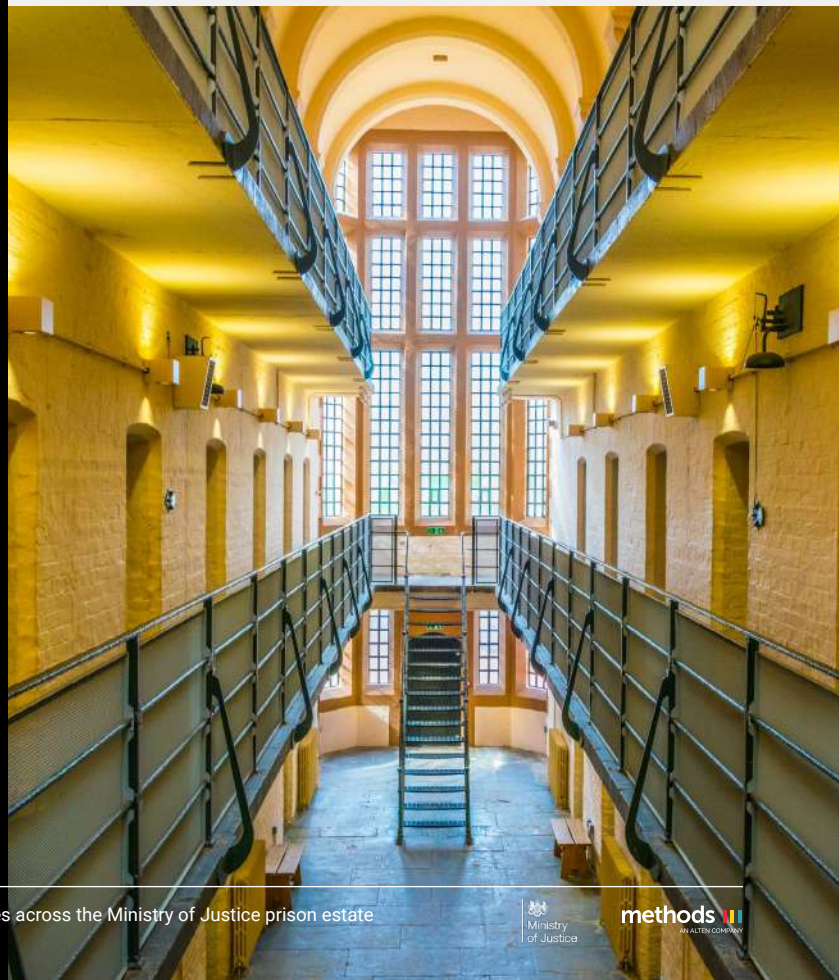
The Ministry of Justice has embarked on a significant transformation journey, highlighted by the MoJ Prisons Technology Transformation Programme (MOJ PTTP), which aims to enhance the End User Computing capabilities across the prison estate. The MoJ is focusing on Innovation, Technology, and Data to drive digital transformation for over 1 million users. By developing digital services, the goal is to support key priorities and improve access to services, ultimately benefiting both staff and inmates.

Methods have been a trusted partner of the MoJ since 2019, when we ran the MoJ Prisons Technology Transformation Programme (MOJ PTTP), setting up their Project Management Office. This programme completed in December 2022, and due to its success, Methods were contracted to support the next phase of their transformation.

Challenge

Non-functioning print and scan facilities can significantly disrupt prison operations and negatively affect the mental well-being of both staff and inmates. The inability to print release forms can delay the discharge of individuals, causing unnecessary stress and complications.

Ensuring print and scan facilities operate smoothly is vital for maintaining order and promoting the well-being of everyone within the prison environment. Recognising the 'mission critical' nature of these devices, it was imperative to take swift action. The Methods Managed Service team were tasked with undertaking a discovery to ascertain what improvements were needed within the current HMPPS Print Service to enhance the provision and enable the handover of the maturing service to the HMPPS operations team.

> The risk of not having this basic tool (printer) in place to perform my job is that real people could come to real harm if I am unable to provide hard copies of the necessary information that is required
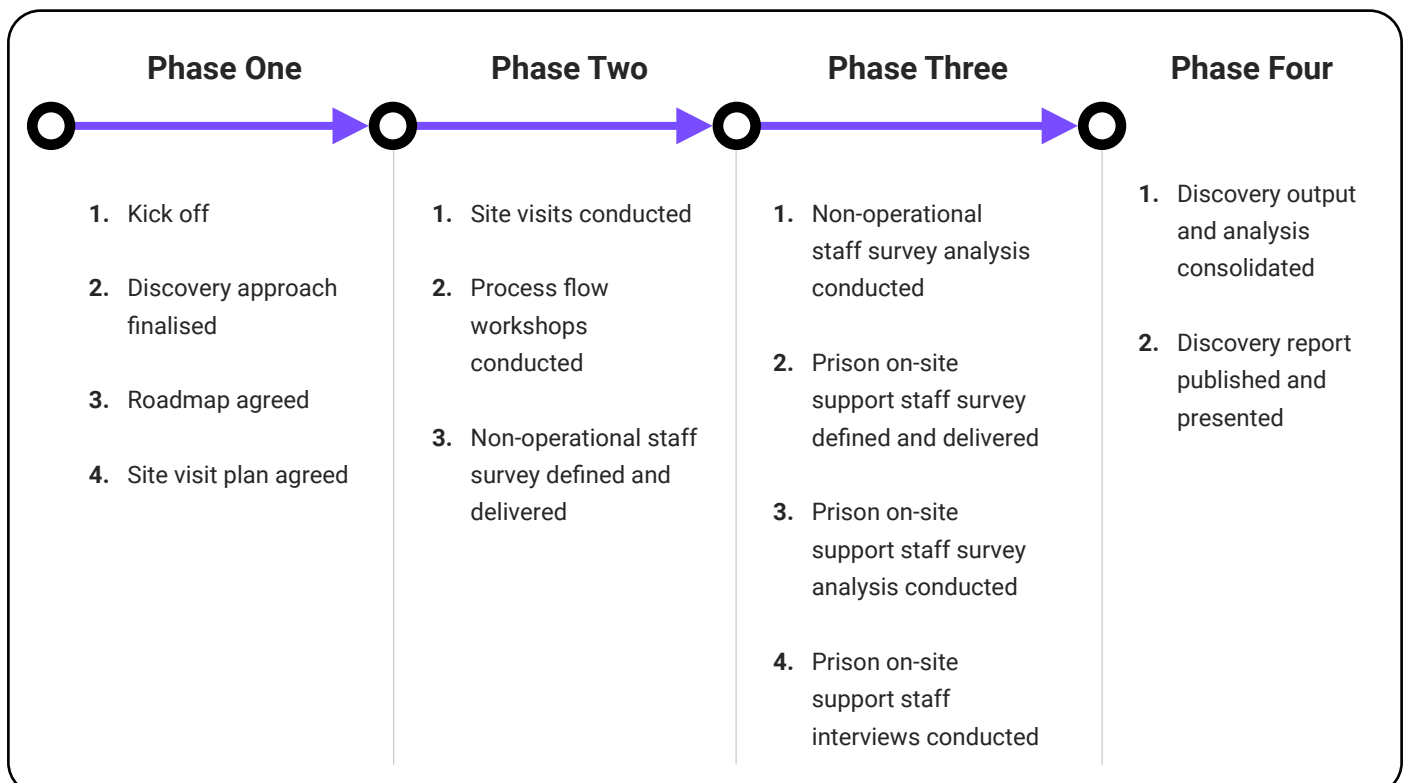
Solution

The Discovery started with a visit to a single prison in May 2023. The goal was to understand the current service provision by observing a 'day in the life' of the Prison Onsite Support (POS) team member. Given the sensitive nature of the estate and the necessity for further site visits, it was crucial that all team members were SC cleared.

Subsequent visits were conducted across multiple prison sites to determine if print issues varied by prison category/type and to assess whether the problems identified at the pilot site were isolated or more widespread. At each location, the team engaged with POS teams, Offender Management Units (OMU), Business Hubs, Reception areas, Prison Officers, and other high-volume print areas to gather comprehensive insights into their experiences.

Prison Print Programme Discovery Roadmap (April - August 2023)

Phase One	Phase Two	Phase Three	Phase Four
1. Kick off	1. Site visits conducted	1. Non-operational staff survey analysis conducted	1. Discovery output and analysis consolidated
2. Discovery approach finalised	2. Process flow workshops conducted	2. Prison on-site support staff survey defined and delivered	2. Discovery report published and presented
3. Roadmap agreed	3. Non-operational staff survey defined and delivered	3. Prison on-site support staff survey analysis conducted	
4. Site visit plan agreed		4. Prison on-site support staff interviews conducted	

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The high-level initial findings highlighted requirements for:

1. end-to-end service designs for printing in prisons
2. a more comprehensive understanding of users' needs, as prisons operate in a wholly different manner to corporate offices
3. a more robust and stable printing platform and queue management approach.

A 'Recommended Action Plan' was presented to the MoJ and accepted in its entirety. Its intention:

· improve operational effectiveness, reliability, and stability of print and scan services
· reduce costs associated with maintenance and repair
· modernisation and scalability of print services across the prison estate.

The main deliverables of the Recommended Action Plan included:

An end-to-end service design produced and accepted

A plan to introduce a printer maintenance programme within the prison estate

A series of recommendations produced and agreed with the client for next steps

Enhanced engagement with Microsoft in relation to evolving their Universal Print product to ensure it meets the requirements

An internal architectural review of the EUCS infrastructure supporting the current prison printing infrastructure

Investigation of the potential for reducing the reliance on print devices in the field

A phased refresh of the print fleet authorised, prioritised, and scaled according to identified needs on a departmental basis

Next Steps

Methods is collaborating with the MoJ to implement several key recommendations from the Action Plan. Our current efforts are focused on ensuring that the HMPPS Operations Team can seamlessly take over the initiative. The ultimate goal is to expand the Print and Scan strategy across the entire MoJ estate.

Our approach includes refining the existing infrastructure, introducing more robust support mechanisms, and ensuring that staff are adequately trained to handle and troubleshoot print and scan issues. This comprehensive strategy not only supports the immediate needs of the prison estate but also lays the foundation for a sustainable, long-term solution that can be scaled and adapted across the MoJ.

Through this partnership, we are committed to delivering a transformative impact that enhances the day-to-day functionality of prison operations and contributes to a more harmonious and effective correctional environment.