

CASE STUDY



HMP Peterhead

“Since gaining accreditation in 1996 we feel that our journey with Investors in People has allowed us to move forward and work in partnership with our staff and representatives to an extent that would have been difficult to imagine in those early days. Investors in People accreditation ensures that we regularly review our processes and communications to give our staff the best opportunities to carry out the difficult work they do.”



Eric Sandison, Head of Human Resources

BACKGROUND

- Size:** 200 employees
- Sector:** Prison Services
- Location:** Peterhead, Aberdeenshire
- Status:** Recognised since 1996.

THE ORGANISATION

As a maximum-security prison holding 300 long-term sex offenders, we aim to make Scotland a safer place by having our staff challenge prisoners' offending behaviour through the provision of several programmes. Our mission statement identifies our role in providing custody, order, care and opportunity to prisoners. Carrying out these responsibilities can often be difficult for staff due to the diverse nature of the work and prisoner needs, but also provides the opportunity to gain real job satisfaction.

IMPACT OF USING INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

In 1995 we identified a problem in getting staff to pinpoint their training needs and in making them available for training events. This proved frustrating since the prison was going through a change of use at the time - from dealing with violent, disruptive prisoners to managing long-term sex offenders - which required staff to adopt new skills and attitudes and to change the whole culture of the prison. We felt that making a commitment to Investors in People would enable us to introduce new procedures to tackle our training and development issues, and ensure that our staff were in possession of the necessary tools to carry out this demanding work. Achieving the Standard has ensured that we regularly update our policies and processes and look for continuous improvement across the whole establishment. We rely heavily on team work to provide a service to prisoners and by constantly reviewing the way we approach our work, we can make best use of our various teams. It is essential that our staff receive regular feedback on their performance and we have a robust appraisal system in place that allows two-way communications to take place. Without Investors in People there is always the danger that these important aspects would lose their priority. Constantly striving for improvement has now become endemic at HMP Peterhead and all staff realise the importance of embracing change. The current Standard is less dependent on business jargon and mysteriously-worded indicators and is much easier for staff to understand. The lack of copious evidence to be submitted prior to assessment is a real bonus and the assessors genuinely help to make the experience enjoyable.