

SBFM launches cleaning academy at HM Prison Wealstun

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Soft services facilities management provider [SBFM](#) has launched a cleaning training academy at HM Prison Wealstun (HMP Wealstun) as part of The Ministry of Justice's HMP Academies Programme, further expanding its commitment to providing sustainable employment opportunities for ex-offenders.

Following the initial bid in early 2023 and a comprehensive onboarding process, SBFM is the only organisation successfully enrolled on the HMP Academies Programme for a three-year contract, with the option to extend for a further two years. SBFM will train nine cohorts annually through the academy.

HMP Wealstun is a category C men's prison in West Yorkshire, which houses approximately 800 prisoners.

SBFM was responsible for designing and fitting out the interactive workshop. The space features a mock-up of multiple specialised spaces including a bathroom facility, hotel room, warehouse, corporate environment, retail area and a cinema space. Each environment has the flooring it would have in a natural setting to support training, from carpets to hard and shiny surfaces.

Working closely with HMP Wealstun and The British Institute of Cleaning Science (BICSc), SBFM developed a two-week training programme for prisoners who are within three months of their release. As an accredited provider of The British Institute of Cleaning Science (BICSc) training, SBFM ensures all participants can earn industry-recognised qualifications before release.

Beyond technical cleaning skills, the programme supports recruits with English, maths, and communication development, tailored to individual starting levels. The academy also incorporates practical job-seeking elements, including CV writing sessions and interview technique building.

After each course, SBFM will open up employment opportunities and the recruitment team will conduct formal interviews, all successful candidates will be offered employment opportunities. SBFM has an agreed-upon target to employ 30 per cent of trainees over the next three years.

Colin Shute, founder of SBFM, said: "This workshop represents a significant milestone in our commitment to creating meaningful opportunities for those in need of a second chance. By expanding our Evolve scheme through this partnership with HMP Wealstun, we're not just teaching cleaning skills - we're rebuilding lives and contributing to safer communities through reduced reoffending rates."

SBFM and Wealstun have previously worked together to offer ex-offenders employment as part of its SBFM's Evolve programme, which offers sustainable employment opportunities to disadvantaged groups.