



Annual Report

for

HMP/YOI Drake Hall

1st November 2009
to
31st October 2010

Section one

Statutory role of the IMB

The Prisons Act 1952 requires every prison to be monitored by an independent board appointed by the Secretary for the State of Justice from members of the community in which the prison is situated.

The Board is specifically charged to:

- (1) satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody within its prison and the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release;
- (2) inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom he has delegated authority as is judged appropriate, any concern it has;
- (3) report annually to the Secretary of State on how well the prison has met the standards and requirements placed on it and what impact these have on those in custody.

To enable the Board to carry out these duties effectively its members have right of access to every prisoner, and every part of the prison and also to the prison records.

Section Two

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Section Three

Description of HMP & YOI Drake Hall

The prison is situated in rural Staffordshire, about a mile from the town of Eccleshall and 10 miles from Stafford and the nearest railway station. The women are accommodated in 15 houses, each with c.20 rooms; most being single rooms, with a small number of doubles.

Drake Hall is a Closed prison for women with a certified normal holding capacity of 315. Population averaged 90% of capacity over the year of which an average of 40 (14.5%) were Foreign National prisoners. The number of Young Offenders in the total averaged 17 (6%).

The Adult Learning Centre is managed by City College Manchester, whose contract runs until 2014. Prisoners' education and training needs are assessed by JHP Group, a careers information and advice service.

Healthcare provision is under the South Staffordshire Primary Care Trust.

The Library is run by Staffordshire County Council. It is open every day including Sundays and runs a Poetry Group, Storybooks for Mums and a Sunday Reading Group; total visits for the year were 18,887. During the latter part of the year a Writer in Residence has been appointed.

There is a prison shop, contracted to DHL Booker who also run a warehouse in Drake Hall from which 9 other prison shops are supplied; this provides work for 40 prisoners at Drake Hall. Work is also provided through the Gardens, the Laundry, the CFM workshop, the Recycling Unit and Hair & Beauty Salons. As a prison with a strong remit for resettlement, Drake Hall also encourages prisoners at the appropriate stage of their sentence to find work outside the prison.

Section Four

Executive Summary

4.1 Issues requiring a response

Although there are signs of improvement, neither of the issues raised last year has been resolved :

- (a) **Transfers** : last year we commented on the inefficiencies in the transfer of prisoners' cash and property between prisons. This continues to be a problem, particularly delays in cash transfers with private prisons; this appears to be a problem of different systems, frustrating to both parties. There also seem to be an increasing number of instances of incomplete paperwork : sentence plans, medication information, ACCT documents, education records. The lack of these is, at best, an unwanted complication to the reception/ induction process but, at worst (in mercifully relatively few cases), dangerous to the prisoner concerned and to staff. We are also concerned that home and family circumstances seem to play too small a part in transfer decisions; whilst the small number of women's prisons makes some problems inevitable, some consideration of these issues before a transfer is implemented and a more effective range of alternatives to visits, like the accumulated visits arrangement, would, we feel, assist the rehabilitation process.
- (b) **Laundry** : the Drake Hall laundry awaits a decision, at regional level as we understand, about its future whilst its elderly machinery becomes ever more difficult to maintain. Looking from the pure Drake Hall perspective, it still provides a useful workshop for prisoners and a useful service.

4.2 Issues contained in our previous report (November 2008-October 2009)

Paragraph references are to our 2008-9 report :

- (a) there are to be further attempts to improve the personal officer scheme (4.2.a)
- (b) the applications policy (4.2.b) has been revised and, after a successful trial period, there are signs that this is improving matters
- (c) the timetabling system for prisoner movements (4.2.c) was eventually introduced at the end of our reporting year and, although there are a few teething problems to be sorted out, there are signs that it will make a significant improvement
- (d) there now seems to be recognition that the Cofathec (now Cofely) contract (4.2.d) is a distortion to the Drake Hall budget. Inevitably it is complicated to resolve, but we hope that some satisfactory means of reaching a more rational arrangement can be found
- (e) we commented on the number of business changes (4.2.e) imposed on prisons. We remain concerned that the cumulative effect of annual budget reductions puts increasing strain on the ability of the prison to adapt to changes where they result in additional demands or the reduction of support services, such as the proposed regionalisation of the Psychology service. Change however is not inevitably bad and we very much welcome the Government's stated intention to find alternatives to prison for those with serious mental health problems.

- (f) Most of our fears about the change of status last year (4.4) from semi-open to closed have proved unfounded though we still believe that the nomenclature of 'semi-open', however incomprehensible to the layman, did give the prison service a better description of the role Drake Hall plays in the system
- (g) In commenting on the Laundry (4.1.b) we mentioned the related problem of the domestic clothes-washing by prisoners. The delays in making a decision about the Laundry (see 4.1.b above) have closed off some of the options for solving this problem but the proposed creation of laundry orderly posts will help alleviate some of the costs.

4.3 Other Issues of Concern or Excellence not requiring a response.

Paragraph references are to this report :

- (a) we mentioned last year our concern about inadequate facilities for dealing with those prisoners whose mental health issues make them vulnerable. They currently have to be located in the Care and Support Unit, where, although the staff are invariably supportive, the environment is inappropriate, or in the Haven, which is designated for the use of vulnerable, distressed prisoners but does not seem to us to fulfil its mandate satisfactorily. This issue was picked up by HMIP in the report on their unannounced inspection in September and we welcome the fact that this has resulted in an investigation of alternative arrangements.
- (b) HMIP noted the improvement in Resettlement at Drake Hall. We very much endorse that and congratulate the prison on this achievement against the background of the introduction of layered offender management (challenging but helpful) and P-NOMIS (ultimately helpful) and the different mix of prisoners following the change of status (challenging).
- (c) The Board notes the discussions between the Governors of Drake Hall and Foston Hall with a view to improving the working links between the two prisons and, perhaps, enable more West Midlands-resident prisoners to remain nearer to their families. Bearing in mind our comments in para. 4.1.a, we think that this is a positive initiative.
- (d) The Board commends the excellent work done in training health trainers (para. 5.2). Funding for this is provided by the PCT and we hope that proposed changes in NHS structure will not jeopardise what is a very beneficial initiative which warrants further expansion.

4.4 Overall Judgement

Throughout its changes from open to semi-open to closed status Drake Hall has always put an emphasis on resettlement. With that in mind, the Prison has developed strong links with external organisations, whether to provide housing and social care support on release, paid outwork in preparation for release or to tackle issues such as domestic violence and drug abuse. This chimes in harmony with the Government's emphasis on the rehabilitative role of prisons and we believe that, with the right encouragement, Drake Hall is well-placed to play a significant part in the rehabilitation process.

Overall Drake Hall continues to provide a safe and secure environment where prisoners are treated with decency and humanity.

Section Five

Areas that must be reported on

	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10
Ave. population	273	263	249	282
No. of Adjudications	447	291	383	417
No. held in C&SU	138	67	77	133
Transfers from CSU	n/avail	n/avail	19	31
No. of ACCTs opened	n/avail	127	154	139
No. of R&C	n/avail	850	729	987
No. of UBRFs	n/avail	n/a	66	161
No. of RIRF/IDRFs	n/avail	46	73	42
No. of SIRs	n/avail	1586	1985	2340

5.1 Diversity

The strengthening of the Diversity Team in 2009 as a result of the staff profiling exercise has been consolidated during 2010 and has continued to bring significant benefits to the way Drake Hall addresses the whole issue of diversity. Most staff have now received diversity training (Challenge it, Change it) which should bring still further improvements.

In 2010 the Inequality and Diversity Report Form (IDRF) was introduced for non-racist complaints including age and disability incidents. Previously these had been included in the RIRF procedure. The number of RIRFs/IDRFs has declined from a total of 73 in 2008/2009 to 42 in 2009/2010, which is back to the levels of 2006/7 and is a reflection of the way Staff have effectively tackled the various aspects of diversity.

Although Foreign Nationals only make up around 15%-18% of the prison population, the wide spread of nationalities is causing significant problems in relation to day-to day communications. Staff do the best they can with the use of pictograms and using English speaking foreign nationals to act as translators. However the problem is putting some members of staff under considerable strain.

There is some criticism that the foreign translation service Big Word, which is better suited for more formal occasions, is not being used enough, particularly by Healthcare and Reception. Better training is considered to be the solution.

Prisoners with disabilities receive high levels of support from both the Disability Liaison Officer and Healthcare staff. A recent problem with disabled prisoners missing their appointments for medication because of the time it takes for some to reach Healthcare has been resolved satisfactorily.

A change of Managers within the UK Border Agency earlier in the year resulted in the number of meetings between the agency and prisoners being reduced to an unsatisfactory level. Staff at Drake Hall tackled this problem with commendable tenacity and the frequency of meetings has now been restored.

Seven areas of risk were identified in March 2010 using the NEAT (NOMS Equality Assessment Tool). Although some difficulties were experienced in using the new tool, Equality Impact Assessments have now been completed and are anticipated to be loaded onto the system by the end of the year.

The Scrutiny Panel, referred to in the previous year's report, is now fully operational and is monitoring RIRFs and has made a number of useful recommendations on the process.

The DREAT Meetings, chaired by the Deputy Governor, have been held regularly during the course of the year. The meetings have been much better focused and controlled than in the past. They have also been well represented by Diversity Reps from the prison population. It is commendable that these representatives feel confident to participate fully in the meetings.

Overall the Board feel that the issues of diversity in Drake Hall are managed in a professional manner by a dedicated team who are both enthusiastic and committed to their roles.

5.2 Learning and Skills

Prisoners arriving at Drake Hall are, during their first week in Reception, assessed by JHP and allocated work placements, training and education programmes, as appropriate. Women can take a full-time programme of education or attend part-time and work for the rest of their week. Courses are well subscribed and attendance, retention and the achievement of qualifications good. However HMIP was critical that the information provided by JHP was not always used effectively to drive forward programme development.

Hair and Beauty continue to provide a number of women with the skills to set up their own business upon release. The Commis Chef course, run by Intercontinental Hotels Group has also been a great success with 11 women gaining the qualification in the reporting year, and a further 6 in training; they graduate with a celebration lunch for invited guests from the local community and the IMB, as well as a guaranteed interview with IHG.

Forty women have been engaged in peer tutoring in a variety of forms; classroom assistants, library and housing assistants, Signpost (prisoner information) workers and health trainers. The training of women to become health trainers is significant and commendable as is the work that they subsequently engage in with the women. Since 2008, three hundred and fifty eight women have accessed the service and engaged in a twelve week programme to develop healthy eating and exercise regimes together with lifestyle changes to benefit not only the individual concerned, but, on release, their children and wider families. This programme, jointly developed and delivered with the local PCT, has provided two women with employment with PCT's, working as Health Trainers in deprived communities. This is prison working at its best and is highly commendable.

Discussions are underway, but as yet, no qualifications are currently undertaken in other work areas; gardens, cleaning, general kitchen work, laundry etc..

The Board is disappointed that the 'celebration' of achievement for the majority of women is non-existent: students just pick up their certificates from the office or the

table in the dining room. This does not build on the sense of achievement felt by those who have never before gained a qualification.

The development and implementation of the virtual campus has been successful and has been used extensively throughout the year to give women access, via the internet, to careers information, some education programmes and material for personal development.

Although it has taken some time to implement, the introduction of individual timetabling is having a positive effect on attendance and adherence to regimes.

5.3 Healthcare and Mental Health

Overall, this department continues to function efficiently, but a few points are worthy of mention:

1. A female GP is not available on a regular basis, although arrangements can be made for one to attend if requested, the patient having to wait a little longer.

2. The introduction of the new IDTS (Integrated Drug Treatment Service) has been well handled, but occasional problems occur when officers detailed to supervise the medicines queue fail to appear or are delayed.

3. A new computer system (SystmOne) has been introduced, but problems have arisen with the programme itself and also with user training. Electronic prescribing was also introduced in September and this has proved time consuming and has user issues. No doubt these problems will be rectified over time, but together they have proved stressful and irritating for Healthcare staff.

4. In our previous report we highlighted delays in dental care provision, but from October 2010 a new contract is in place and services will be provided by South Staffs Provider Dental Services. A dentist will attend Drake Hall on Mondays and Wednesdays for three hours each session, and we anticipate that this will result in shorter appointment delays and a better managed service.

5. Drake Hall has been criticised for the number of women who fail to attend healthcare appointments, but a new call-up system has been put in place and we are happy that a fall in Did Not Attends will be achieved.

6. During the summer, a spate of complaints about healthcare provision was made by some women. Amongst them were complaints about the attitudes of some healthcare professionals, the length of time before an appointment could be secured with Healthcare, the reluctance of some nurses to issue sick notes, and not receiving the same prescriptions as they had had on the outside. These issues were addressed promptly and effectively by the Head of Healthcare, who instituted a Healthcare User Group so that any difficulties could be discussed and resolved. The Governor in charge of Residential issues has also implemented a Healthcare Operations Meeting, which gives healthcare and operational staff a forum in which to discuss any issues which may arise.

7. It seems to the Board that a disproportionate amount of time and effort has to be spent collecting data and statistics for the PCT. If these are carefully interrogated and result in an improved service, then their collection is worthwhile, but we question whether this is always the case and energies would be better directed to service delivery..

5.4 Offender management

In our report last year we reported at some length on a new resettlement process, Layered Offender Management (LOM), which Drake Hall piloted. We are delighted to note that, after a difficult time during which P-NOMIS was also introduced, the new system is firmly embedded and only requires some fine tuning. LOM extends sentence planning to all the women, including those previously outside the scope of offender management, and is playing a role in improving resettlement prospects for both long and short term prisoners.

The introduction would not have been so successful without a capable and adaptable team, always ready to offer assistance to each other. The Case Administrators find that their personal job satisfaction has improved and a better service is offered to the prisoners. The only area which is a cause for concern relates to foreign nationals, who often have to wait a considerable time for decisions to be forthcoming from the immigration services

5.5 Safer Custody

The Board is pleased with the efforts of the Safer Custody Team who ensure that all prisoners feel safe and secure in Drake Hall. The Board attends the monthly meeting which is well attended by staff from all functions. The monthly Monitoring data is well produced and shows up any trends or fluctuations, which are then discussed. The importance of the discharge questionnaire is appreciated and again is monitored closely.

Both the Samaritans and Listeners are represented at these meetings and their reports are heard and discussed. The Board is pleased that free phone lines to the Samaritans have been made available in all residential houses. However the positioning of the phones does not lend itself to confidentiality and so this facility is not used as much as expected. A Digital Electric Cordless Telephone (DECT phone) is to be made available to prisoners in CSU and The Haven to allow them to call the Samaritans, and this will be available to be used on all houses.

There have been more incidents of self-harm since re-rolling to Closed status. However as a percentage of the population this is well below the current national average; although still a concern. The Board is satisfied that every procedure is in place to deal with these and the Staff are always aware of any prisoner who is considered to be at risk.

The Board accepts that the Care and Support Unit is only used as a last resort to hold vulnerable prisoners when removal from normal location is considered necessary, and the Staff in the CSU are very caring and considerate to those held there. However, the use of the CSU as the only suitable place to hold prisoners on constant

or frequent watch is not satisfactory. The SMT accept this and are looking for other, more suitable, solutions.

The number of ACCTs opened this year is comparable to last year. The Board is pleased with the care with which the documents are completed and the way the Safer Custody Officer monitors them.

5.6 Segregation

133 prisoners were held in the Care and Support Unit during the year and 417 Adjudications were held. These figures represent a significant increase on the previous year which reflects both the increased population and the change in status which occurred during last year, and this is further emphasised by the number of transfers back to fully closed conditions from the CSU. Although CSU numbers are surprisingly still lower than in 2006/7 when the establishment was still semi-open, the initial reduction came from a better handling of discipline, without recourse to segregation for minor offences, which is still having an effect.

The Board believes that this is commendable given the very different population now catered for and reflects a management style which has resulted in a generally safer and more stable environment within the Prison.

The Board believes that the staff in the Care and Support Unit deliver a high standard of care and decency especially in the light of the Unit's continued additional use for vulnerable prisoners (see Safer Custody, para 5.5).

Section six

Other Areas of the Prison

6.1 Security

We commented last year about the effect on security of the change in status from semi-open to closed. In the event many of our fears were unfounded and the initial volatility has largely settled down. Nonetheless it remains the case that Drake Hall, because of its open regime, is only suitable for low-risk prisoners and this has meant that the prison has, not infrequently, had to transfer unsuitable prisoners back to fully closed conditions because they have been too disruptive for the Drake Hall environment.

6.2 Kitchen

The kitchen has adapted well to the increased population during the year and to the changes imposed by the new PSI. At the end of the year the high standard of hygiene and management was recognised by the award of a 5-star Environmental Health rating.

6.3 Recycling Unit

The Recycling Unit continues to be an excellent hard working unit with 15 prisoners attaining a 65% recycling result. Over the last 2 years the number of bins being collected weekly has been reduced from 24 down to the current 6. It has now been suggested that collection be made fortnightly so as to make further savings.

The Board supports the Unit in their enthusiasm to expand even more with suggestions of the use of Bio fuel, Solar heating, and even Turbines.

6.4 Toe by Toe

The Toe by Toe scheme for non-readers, introduced last year, has grown in strength with 20 prisoners helped during the year, bringing benefits both to them and to the prisoners who act as mentors. We hope that this can be further expanded in the next year.

6.5 Staff/Prisoner relationships

The HMIP report highlighted the inconsistency in staff/prisoner relationships and this is the Board's experience too. Many, indeed most, staff are professional and treat prisoners with respect, even in the most difficult circumstances but we keep coming across evidence of some officers falling short of the best standards. The Board expects that this issue will be addressed in the Action Plan following the HMIP report.

6.6 Chaplaincy

The multi-faith chaplaincy has worked effectively to meet the requirements of the ethnically-diverse population, often working with the Diversity team and the Kitchen to celebrate the different festivals. The team is fully staffed, apart from a Pagan Chaplain where a replacement is awaited. To reflect the changing population, the Muslim Chaplaincy hours are being increased and this will enable the incumbent to undertake some of the statutory duties of the chaplaincy. The Board recognises the role the Chaplaincy plays in helping create a humane environment in the prison.

Section Seven

Work of the IMB

The Board is, again, very appreciative of the Governor's presence at Board meetings, providing excellent reports on all pertinent matters and responding pro-actively to issues mentioned in Board minutes. The Board is also conscious of the advantage that comes from having a good relationship with many staff, at all levels and perhaps most notably in the Care & Support Unit. We also recognise the considerable help provided to us by the Clerk, despite her many other duties and we are grateful for the prison's recognition of the importance of the clerk's role.

Statistics for year November 2009 to October 31st 2010

<i>The reporting year is November 2009 to October 2010</i>	
Recommended complement of Board members	12
No. of Board members at start of reporting year	9
No. of Board members at end of reporting year	7
No. of Board members joining within the year	1
No. of Board members leaving within the year	3
Total number of Board meetings during the year	12
Average attendance at Board meetings in the year	6.8
No. of attendances at meetings other than Board meetings	166
Total number of visits to the prison in the year	384
Total number of applications received	77
Total number of segregation reviews held	16
Total number of segregation reviews attended	11

The number of applications is up from last year but still well below the 135 received in 2005-6. The significant increase in questions about ROTL reflects some confusion about entitlement following the change in status.

Code	Subject	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10
A	Accommodation	0	3	2	5
B	Adjudications	1	3	3	2
C	Diversity related	2	1	1	2
D	Education/employment/training	0	2	5	2
E	Family/ visits	6	3	8	12
F	Food/ kitchen related	0	1	0	0
G	Health related	5	3	5	9
H	Property	14	11	13	6
I	Sentence related (incl. ROTL)	8	15	10	24
J	Staff/ prisoner related	5	8	7	6
K	Transfers	3	5	8	4
L	Miscellaneous	4	7	6	9
	Total	48	62	68	81

Some applications cover more than one subject.

Glossary

ACCT	Assessment Care in Custody Teamwork
CARATS	Counselling, assessment, referral, advice & throughcare relating to drugs
CFM	Centre for Manufacturing
CSU	Care and Support Unit
DREAT	Diversity and Race Equality Action Team
HDC	Home Detention Curfew
HMP	Her Majesty's Prison
HMIP	Her Majesty's Inspector of Prisons
IDRF	Inequality and Diversity Report Form
IDTS	Integrated Drug Treatment Service
LOM	Layered Offender Management
MDT	Mandatory Drug Testing
NEAT	NOMS Equality Assessment Tool
OLASS	Offender Learning and Skills Sector
PCT	Primary Care Trust
PFI	Private Finance Initiative
P-NOMIS	Prison – National Offender Management Information System
R&C	Requests & Complaints
RIRF	Racial Incident Report Form
ROTL	Release on Temporary Licence
SIR	Security Information Report
TC	Therapeutic Community
UBRF	Unsocial Behaviour Report Form
YOI	Young Offender Institution