



HMP & YOI SWINFEN HALL

ANNUAL REPORT

MAY 2009 – APRIL 2010

1. STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB

The Prisons Act 1952 requires every prison to be monitored by an independent Board appointed by the Secretary of State 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 it judges 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 its 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's records.

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3. DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

HMP & YOI Swinfen Hall holds male long-term young offenders and young category C adults serving from three and a half years through to life.

The establishment has an operational capacity of 654 prisoners of which about one third are adults and two thirds are young offenders. Swinfen Hall operates as an integrated young adult establishment for prisoners who are aged from 18 to 25. There are nine residential units, each unit having a primary specialist focus reflecting the specialist circumstances or needs of different groups of prisoners, such as Reception/Induction, Programme Support and Lifer/IPP status. The prison has been operating at near operational capacity for most of the reporting period, however towards the end of the reporting period there has been an increase in capacity of about 30 places and the current year is showing a growth in adult prisoners and a reduction in young offenders; in early August 2010 the roll comprises 55% adults and 45% young offenders. Around 40% of the population is from the Midlands region; the major factor that influences the placement of those outside the locality is Swinfen Hall's designation as a national resource for offence specific interventions.

The work at Swinfen Hall is intended to be at the heart of the Government's overall delivery plan for reducing re-offending. The philosophy is for individual needs to be identified early and addressed through an active and integrated regime of education, skills training and specialised accredited offending behaviour and substance abuse courses. The establishment works together with national corporations, local businesses, voluntary organisations, the Young People's Learning Agency, the Skills Funding Agency, and education providers to meet the training and development needs of prisoners and prepare them for a crime-free life on release.

4. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

4.1 Policy Issues for the Minister's Response

4.1.1 The Board is pleased to recognise again the high standards and repeated good work carried out by the Governors and staff at Swinfen Hall. This reflects the teamwork and individual contributions of all involved with the prison. However, the Board remains concerned that the standard cannot be maintained indefinitely in a climate of continuous year on year budgetary cuts. Inevitably, this impacts on staffing numbers that affects prisoner regimes and also increases the risk to safety and security against a background of a prisoner population close to maximum levels. To provide evidence for this, although mandatory and voluntary drug testing targets were met for the reporting year, we are concerned to note that in April 2010 there was no suspicion drug testing carried out due to a lack of resources.

4.1.2 Similarly the Board remains concerned that the high standards of facility afforded via the building programmes during the last ten years should not be eroded through lack of funding for an ongoing maintenance and upgrade programme. Once again, the Board draws attention to the remnants from the original 1960's construction that includes three Residential Units and part of the Care and Separation Unit. These locations have barely acceptable accommodation that is substantially inferior to that provided elsewhere within the prison.

4.1.3 For the last three years, the Board has voiced its concerns at the increase in the life sentenced and IPP prisoner population and questioned the capacity to provide the compulsory treatment programmes in a timely manner. This group continues to increase in number and at June 2010 comprises over 38% of the operational capacity thereby continuing to place overall programme delivery capability against demand under severe pressure. The key aims of rehabilitation and reform require that prisoners be given the opportunity to be in a position to persuade the Parole Board at the earliest opportunity that they no longer present a risk to the public and this is being jeopardised by pressures on programme delivery.

4.1.4 The levels of mobile phones believed to be within the prison continue at an unacceptable level despite the efforts of the Governor and staff to combat the problem using the tools and technology available. It continues to be the Board's view that the risk to security that this issue presents across the prison estate is such that a legislative solution to enable the signal to be blocked is warranted.

4.1.5 Again the Board brings to your attention that there have been occasions where a prisoner's apparent mental state has been of concern to the Board such that, in its view, a secure place outside of the prison environment would be more appropriate. The Board is of the opinion that a prison is not a suitable place for those displaying bizarre mental health behaviour and they remain in prison because there appears to be inadequate provision of suitable secure places for these individuals outside of the prison estate.

4.2 Operational Issues for Prison Service Response

4.2.1 Prison Service complaints and applications to the Board contain significant numbers of property and finance related matters. Of these, a material proportion relates to property claimed to be lost during transfer from another establishment. The Board asks again that the Prison Service reviews its procedures for inter-prison property transfer to avoid such occurrences, the investigation of which is time consuming and wasteful of resources. Additionally, during this reporting period, many of the 'table topping' finance-related complaints followed the implementation of the P-NOMIS computer system. A failure to accurately and comprehensively record prisoners' work attendance led to errors in prisoners' pay. Whilst the Board acknowledges that remedial action was swiftly taken, we feel that better implementation planning for P-NOMIS could have reduced the errors and complaints.

4.2.2 Once again, the Board finds it necessary to note the inconsistent quality of food delivered to the wings and standard of cleanliness in wing serveries. The Board acknowledges that sometimes the food quality and standard of cleanliness can be very good and, with particular regard to food quality, improvements have been made. However, it is unacceptable that there are occasions where they are not up to standard. The Board is also concerned that the daily 'food allowance' of £2.10 per capita may be insufficient to provide adequate portions of well-balanced and varied meals.

4.2.3 Education class cancellations due to teaching staff 'non availability' have been high throughout the year with no ongoing improvement despite the change of provider to Manchester College. Whilst the Governor has endeavoured to find alternative meaningful activity for those prisoners affected, some inevitably have been locked in their cells. The Board believes that the arrangements for Education provision should provide a direct means for the Governor to challenge performance and invoke punitive measures provided in the contract when unsatisfactory performance continues. The Board has again noted occasions where prisoners have been playing games in classes or workshops rather than undertaking educational or vocational activity.

4.2.4 The Board also believes that the extensive engagement of prospective employers in the Learning and Skills process would provide an additional source of meaningful activity, build relations with the community and improve the chances of prisoners obtaining future employment - a key contributor to reducing the risk of re-offending.

4.2.5 Prisoners can be held in the Care and Separation Unit for long periods whilst awaiting investigation by the Police following an alleged incident. The Board accepts that the Governor has no alternative in the circumstances where the prisoner(s) concerned cannot be returned to wing accommodation. Nonetheless, it is wrong that a prisoner should be held on such a restricted regime for what can typically be several weeks. The Board understood last year that national arrangements would require the Police to expedite these investigations in a timelier manner but there is little evidence of this. The Board now directly asks that the Prison Service establish a service level agreement with the Police to remedy the problem.

4.2.6 The Board acknowledges the efforts made by the Governor to prevent the entry of mobile phones into the prison. The Board continues to note occasions where prisoners have

been found to be in possession of mobile phones on arrival in Reception. This implies that either the security procedures in other establishments or those employed by the prisoner transport contractors have failed. The Board looks to the Prison Service to ensure that effective security measures are employed at all stages of the prisoner transfer process.

4.2.7 The Board has noted that the time to fix faulty equipment, much of which impacts prisoner food preparation and some of which supports educational or other meaningful prisoner activity, can be excessive. The Board believes that operational inefficiencies will inevitably occur where inadequate maintenance arrangements exist.

4.3 Key Points of Excellence and Concern (not requiring a response)

The Board wishes to recognise the following as being examples of good practice. There are no points of particular concern that it wishes to raise at this level, other than those noted above.

4.3.1 For a large majority, positive relations and respectful behaviour continues between staff members and prisoners to provide the framework for all that is achieved at Swinfen Hall.

4.3.2 The involvement of prisoners in decision making and the existence of mutual help and support groups (Toe-By-Toe, Learning Mentors, Listeners, Insiders, Wing Representatives etc.) have maintained a culture of ownership and self help within the prisoner population.

4.3.3 The Care and Separation Unit is staffed with a dedicated specialist team that works with difficult prisoners and circumstances in a professional but caring way. The Board would wish to recognise the positive work carried out within the Unit to engage with the prisoners whilst they are held there, establish relationships and support their reintegration into normal prison regimes.

4.3.4 The Healthcare team comprises professionals qualified to deal with both physical and mental health needs; they are well managed and demonstrate evidence of good practice. Prisoners have access to all facilities that are available to the general public via the NHS, in safety and with total confidentiality. The Board has observed good interaction between nurses and prisoners and attendees at clinics are always treated with respect and dealt with in a professional and caring way.

4.3.5 The procedure for making complaints is well publicised at Swinfen Hall from the point of arrival. The Board is satisfied that the vast majority of prisoners are aware of what they need to do to make a complaint and have easy access to the appropriate forms. The majority of complaints made are resolved at the initial stage within the prescribed time allowed and without the prisoner choosing to escalate.

4.3.6 Diversity continues to be embraced, valued, promoted and respected at Swinfen Hall. Training is provided to staff and prisoners alike and a high profile is given to the topic in all facets of prison life.

4.3.7 The importance of maintaining family contact and involvement from first reception into Swinfen Hall is an integral part of the ultimate resettlement strategy. Prisoners' families are encouraged to maintain contact with frequent visits and participate in the

personal development of their relatives whilst in custody. Special theme visits that are arranged include Lifer Days, Fathers Inside, and Post Induction, all designed to help maintain the family bond. Contact via other means such as letter exchange and prisoner telephone calls is readily available.

4.3.8 The Board is pleased to acknowledge the positive working relations that generally exist with the Governor and the staff. The importance of our role is recognised and our independence is respected. We are willingly afforded the information and assistance that we need to perform our duties.

4.4 Overall Judgement

4.4.1 Whilst finding it necessary to raise several points for attention, the Board is in no doubt that Swinfen Hall continues to set a high standard, providing a safe, respectful and structured environment in which all prisoners in its care are encouraged to address their offending behaviour. The prison has continued to deliver strongly against its KPT measures and the management and staff at Swinfen Hall are to be congratulated and should be proud of their achievements during a difficult year of financial and resource constraints.

5. MANDATORY REPORTING AREAS

5.1 Care and Separation Unit

5.1.1 The CSU provides a clean and safe environment for those under punishment or held under Rule 45/49. The Unit is managed by a small and dedicated team who undertake their duties in a professional manner, building positive relationships with those in their care, often in difficult circumstances. There are fifteen cells available in the unit and this has generally been proven to be sufficient to accommodate the demand. Facilities for constant watch are available, enabling the staff to fully support any vulnerable prisoners or prisoners on an open ACCT. It does, however, remain a fact that there is a substantial gap in the quality of the accommodation between old and new cells. The older cells are considerably inferior with less available daylight and condensation continuing to be specific areas of concern.

5.1.2 The board is satisfied that the segregation of prisoners continues to be utilised for lawful purposes only and that prisoners have generally received their entitlements whilst held in the unit. The Board is also satisfied that the statutory requirements and guidelines for use of the unfurnished cells, use of mechanical restraint and visits by the Governor, Healthcare and the Chaplain have been met. Members of the Board have visited the prisoners held in the unit on a regular basis throughout the year, examining their files, care plans, authorisations and algorithms. These documents have been updated with evidence of regular senior management reviews.

5.1.3 A standard timetable for Rule 45/49 reviews has meant that the Board has been in attendance for the majority of cases and when reviews have occasionally had to be held outside the agreed arrangement, every endeavour has been made to inform the relevant Board member. In addition, Board members have observed at prisoner adjudication hearings conducted both by Governors and the Independent Adjudicator. These have been conducted fairly and in accordance with the rules.

5.1.4 The Board keenly monitors the period for which a prisoner is segregated and that it should be no longer than is necessary given the circumstances and is satisfied that the Governor has applied this principle at all times. However, the Board does not accept as reasonable, the long periods of segregation of prisoners that typically occur whilst awaiting police investigation of an incident and whereby circumstances are such that it is inappropriate for the prisoner to return to a wing.

5.1.5 The Board has continued to review the statutory records and reports maintained by the unit and found them to be in good order. This has enabled the Board to monitor trends and be in a position to request explanations from the Governor where abnormal patterns occur. The Board has monitored the ethnic proportion of the segregated prisoners and has found no grounds for suspecting unfair treatment by virtue of ethnic group.

5.2 Diversity, Race Equality and Disability

5.2.1 The Racial Equality Action Team (REAT) at Swinfen Hall continues to meet monthly. The meetings are chaired by the Race and Equality Manager. A prisoner focus group discussion precedes the REAT meeting to enable the prisoner representatives to identify any problems on their wings and to prepare for the main meeting.

5.2.2 The REAT meetings are consistent and well structured and there is regular attendance from various areas of the establishment. All of the departmental representatives are given the opportunity to freely discuss specific information relevant to the meeting. Prisoner representatives are also encouraged to contribute to the discussions and the meetings are regularly monitored by a designated member of the IMB.

5.2.3 There is monthly feedback on the monitoring information for Diversity, Disability and Racial Equality. This includes the systematic monitoring and analysis of the race template (SMART) data and action plan. A monthly Racial Incidents Complaints log is presented detailing racial complaints and action taken. Forthcoming promotional information is a regular item on the agenda and this includes cultural awareness theme days and events, community engagements and a variety of ideas to promote good relations.

5.2.4 Training strategies are reported upon frequently and Training Awareness days and Workshops for staff and prisoners are undertaken. The new Diversity training, 'Challenge it Change it' course, is to be prioritised in order to meet the deadline of January 2011.

5.2.5 New arrivals at Swinfen Hall are seen by Healthcare and at that time can disclose details of any disabilities although protocol does not allow Healthcare to pass on any medical information to the Disability Liaison Officer (DLO). During the prisoner induction process new arrivals complete a self-assessment questionnaire which gives them the opportunity to confirm details of any disabilities, dyslexia, learning difficulties and any special needs. This information is then passed to the DLO who meets with all of the disabled prisoners. Prisoners with learning difficulties are seen by Education staff.

5.2.6 A Disability Liaison Officer (DLO) was appointed during the reporting period however designated support officers have not yet been appointed from the residential wings and there is no set procedure on the wings for Personal Officers to see the new arrivals with disabilities within a specific time scale. There is a Disability Policy in place which requires updating and is currently under review. The Board feel that due to resource pressures the Disability Liaison role is not yet fully undertaken and engaged but remains confident that this is being addressed.

5.2.7 At present there is adequate special accommodation for the disabled on four of the residential wings. Other facilities include wet rooms which have arm rests and support and there are also ramps and lifts in some areas. In the event of an emergency on a wing, under the supervision of the staff, appointed prison 'buddies' would help in looking after the disabled and those in need of extra assistance.

5.2.8 The Board is satisfied that Swinfen Hall has satisfactory procedures and policies in place and that all complaints in this area were properly investigated during the reporting year. The Board considers that, except for the Disability Liaison role, there were no major areas for concern during the reporting period.

5.3 Healthcare and Mental Health

5.3.1 There is evidence of good practice in health care within the prison and the quality of primary care is high; staffing levels, having been under pressure, are now returning to normal. The team comprises professionals qualified to deal with both physical and mental health needs. Staff training is ongoing in order to further develop professional expertise and training files are regularly updated.

5.3.2 Prisoners have access to all facilities that are available to the general public via the NHS, in safety and with total confidentiality. For example, the GP visits on a daily basis, the Optician comes in every other week, physiotherapy run a weekly clinic as does the Urology nurse. Prisoners attending clinics are always treated with respect and dealt with in a professional and caring way and all health records are kept securely.

5.3.3 Regular meetings are held as part of the management process. The Healthcare Operational meeting, chaired by the Health Care Manager, takes place monthly; other Healthcare/Governance and Medicines meetings are held quarterly and a member of the Board attends as an observer at meetings. The Rethink Team, responsible for promoting healthy living, has recently left the prison due to lack of funding however there are plans for a new counselling service to be made available in the next few months.

5.3.4 During the year there have been occasions, thankfully relatively few in number, where a prisoner's apparent mental state has been of concern to the Board such that, in its view, a secure place outside of the prison environment would be more appropriate. This was highlighted last year and the Board continues to be of the opinion that prison is not a suitable place for those displaying bizarre mental health behaviour and that it is likely to aggravate whatever disorder they are suffering from. However, the Board recognises that this is more a matter for the Government to deal with than one which the Healthcare team can resolve beyond the care and support that they provide.

5.4 Learning and Skills

5.4.1 The Board is of the view that performance with the provision of traditional classroom education continues to be poor. Many of the issues raised in our last two annual reports have remained of concern during the period covered by this one, particularly the recruitment and retention of good quality educational staff. Our report on Learning and Skills for this period includes many of the issues from our last two reports as the situation has improved little if at all.

5.4.2 In formal classroom settings there was a high level of ongoing class cancellations, which resulted mainly from the unavailability of teaching staff. There has been no

consistent effective management team based at the prison to drive through improvements. The prison service appeared to have no effective sanctions to correct these ongoing issues. It is thought that the level of courses offered are too biased towards basic literacy and numeracy skills and that more medium and high level courses should be available. One consequence of this is prisoners repeating courses to justify them being in class.

5.4.3 The Board continues to believe that the function would be more effective if the Prison Service had greater control with the ability to influence performance by involvement in the planning, delivery and review of Learning and Skills. As things stand, it remains difficult to identify who is accountable and who is managing what is ultimately delivered.

5.4.4 In other educational areas the gymnasium continued to perform its educational role well and workshops, including automotive, have been observed to work well with much purposeful activity observed during visits. However, as with the classroom education, we have observed that more advanced courses would benefit prisoners showing a specific aptitude.

5.4.5 The Board has also noted occasions where prisoners have been playing games in classes or workshops rather than undertaking educational or vocational activity. In addition, there appeared to be a lack of urgency on the part of prisoners in getting to their classrooms, however, towards the end of the reporting period, challenges to this behaviour by Officers resulted in a significant improvement.

5.4.6 The Board is aware that Manchester College has replaced Derby College as a supplier from August 2009. The Board, although given assurances that this would lead to a step change in the performance delivered and the effectiveness of the associated management processes, is not convinced that this is imminent.

5.4.7 The Board continues to believe that the extensive engagement of prospective employers in the Learning and Skills process would provide an additional source of meaningful activity, build relations with the community and improve the chances of prisoners obtaining future employment - a key contributor to reducing the risk of re-offending. The board, however, noted no significant increase in the number of employers playing a part in helping to provide prisoners with future employment, with the exception of the catering training provided by the Intercontinental Hotel Group which is a good example of what can be achieved.

5.5 Safer Custody and Violence Reduction

5.5.1 Over the last twelve months the Board has seen a continuation of the commitment from the Violence Reduction and Safer Custody team to constantly review and adjust existing procedures to keep prisoners as safe as possible during their stay at Swinfen Hall. It is with regret however that we have to report that during the current reporting period we have had two deaths in custody. One of these is thought to have been due to natural causes and an inquest date has not yet been set. The second death, following the application of a ligature, has recently (June 2010) had an Inquest held. The finding was

death by hanging and there were no failures or faults found with the actions of Swinfen Hall Governors, staff or the PCT; no recommendations were made by the jury.

5.5.2 Meetings covering all areas of Custody and Care are held on a regular monthly basis. Representatives from both inside the Prison areas and external organizations attend. Data from the various reporting areas are reviewed together with trends and where necessary recovery plans are put in place.

5.5.3 A greater emphasis has been placed on the use and quality of information entered into the ACCT process. Random audits have been applied and it is the Boards opinion that the system is now working well and much more robust than twelve months ago. Time and dates for ACCT reviews are now widely published giving all interested parties the opportunity to attend and contribute. During the reporting year 151 ACCT plans were opened which is 9% less than the previous year. A total of 148 incidents of self harm were recorded during the year which is a significant increase from the previous year figures. At the beginning of 2009, however, reporting and recording procedures for this topic were improved thus giving more representative results.

5.5.4 The number of reported violent incidents has increased to 759 in the reporting year from 530 in the previous year. The Board feels that an important contributory factor is the initiative to gain more accurate information and the Board are pleased to note that Prisoners involved in violent incidents are now being managed by the Violence Reduction team. Prison staff have become more involved with Conflict Resolution, in other words “nipping the conflict in the bud” before it is necessary to involve the VR team and in general this has been quite successful.

6. OPTIONAL REPORTING AREAS

6.1 Catering and Kitchens

6.1.1 The Board's opinion of the kitchen is that it is generally maintained in a satisfactory clean and tidy state with evidence of ongoing building maintenance work being undertaken. The wing serveries vary in standard of cleanliness and some are significantly better than others. Food is delivered from centralised kitchens and trolley routes have been improved, however there is a continuing concern that the quality of food delivered to the wings varies and whilst there are occasions where the food is very good there are equally times when it is poor. Prisoner comments are made concerning portion size, selection, general quality and not receiving what they had ordered and on occasions, there still remains a lot of waste food to be disposed of on the wings. Repair and replacement of equipment is often slow or not done at all. Served comment books are maintained and reviewed by Governors and the Catering Manager. Overall, the Board believes there are weaknesses that still need to be addressed before an acceptable standard can be consistently maintained. From a financial perspective, the Board remains concerned that the daily 'food allowance' of £2.10 per prisoner is insufficient to provide a quality varied menu to satisfy the dietary needs of a young adult male population.

6.2 Drugs and Substance Misuse

6.2.1 Overall another good reporting year within all areas of drug strategy and intervention with all targets having been met. All departments continue to liaise closely in order to ensure that a high level of service is achieved at Swinfen Hall and that policy formulation maintains an appropriate level of currency.

6.2.2 P-ASRO and CARAT have both performed to a high standard despite experiencing ongoing recruitment problems exacerbated by budgetary cuts. Nevertheless they continue to provide a quality service in line with the needs of the establishment and also maintain a flexibility of provision in order to ensure there are no service gaps left between where one team ends and another commences.

6.2.3 One of the ongoing issues at Swinfen is the number of prisoners with alcohol related issues. Although up until recently there have been regular AA meetings these have disappointingly ceased for the time being due to the non-availability of AA personnel. However, a new and accredited course (COVAID) has recently become available and relevant staff will be trained in readiness for this to be rolled out at Swinfen in quarter 3 of 2010.

6.2.4 Although both MDT and VDT targets were met for this reporting period, it is concerning to note that suspicion testing has gradually reduced to such an extent that in April 2010 suspicion testing was not carried out due to a number of unplanned resourcing issues.

6.2.5 IDTS is to be introduced at Swinfen enabling the prison to take prisoners on substitute medication in future. A number of initiatives need to be completed (building

work/staff training etc) before this can be fully implemented, however the Board are pleased to note that all of these initiatives are currently in progress.

6.3 Life and IPP Sentence Prisoners

6.3.1 Swinfen Hall takes prisoners with Life Sentences and also those sentenced by the court to an indeterminate sentence with a minimum tariff for public protection (IPP). As at June 2010 there were 45 Lifers and 195 IPP prisoners, constituting over 38% of the prisoner population. The majority of prisoners with life sentences are resident on specified wings but there is ample opportunity for them to be resident on wings specifically for prisoners with 'enhanced' status should their behaviour be appropriate. IPP prisoners are fully integrated within all wings dependent upon their age and IEP status.

6.3.2 Life sentenced prisoners have an annual review of their sentence plan and attendance at these reviews includes representation from Probation, Psychology, Offender Management, IMB and the relevant Lifer Manager. These reviews are carried out in a timely and professional manner with the clear objective of ensuring that the prisoner understands his tariff/sentence and the various key gateways to be negotiated during this period. In particular it is made clear when he should be applying for parole and what preparation he should be making. By the end of the review meeting there will be a clear updated sentence plan with both short and long term objectives which have been agreed by all parties.

6.3.3 Swinfen holds quarterly Lifer Forums with full representation from the prisoner population ensuring that they have an opportunity for input to their time at Swinfen Hall. There are also regular 'Lifer Days' held wherein the families of these prisoners are invited to Swinfen Hall in order to ensure that they also have a full understanding of how the sentence for their relative will work. There is a post Lifer Day review held with the prisoners in order to check the effectiveness of this initiative.

6.3.4 IPP sentenced prisoners should be given a pre-tariff review with all relevant reports available. We reported last year that there were a number of prisoners 'post tariff' who had not yet had a review and although Swinfen now commences this process early in order to mitigate potential issues and has therefore reduced these numbers, it continues to be somewhat of an issue with the timely availability of Parole documents being the main concern.

6.4 Prisoner Complaints

6.4.1 The formal complaint scheme has been operated in accordance with the established Prison Service regulations. The facility is secure, well publicised to the prisoners and offers confidential access to the Governing Governor, Regional Custodial Manager or IMB Chair for appropriate cases.

6.4.2 Records are maintained and have been examined by the Board. In the main, the responses to the complaints have addressed the issue raised and been courteous. The prescribed time scale for reply was achieved for all but a small minority of cases.

6.4.3 During the period May 2009 - April 2010 there were 1682 complaints made of which 30% were upheld. A very large majority was resolved at Stage 1 and there were only two referrals to the Ombudsman. Approximately 13% utilised the confidential access facility. The total continues the recent trend of a year on year increase in the number of prisoner complaints. This time the increase is a massive 40% for a population of similar number. Many of the 'table topping' Finance related complaints followed the implementation of the P-NOMIS computer system. A failure to accurately and comprehensively record prisoners' work attendance led to errors in prisoners' pay. Whilst the Board acknowledges that remedial action was swiftly taken, the errors clearly demonstrate an inadequate preparation prior to implementation of the new system

6.4.4 Complaints are comprehensively analysed by subject matter and complainant characteristics to assist in the identification of any trends. Finance matters apart, the most frequent subjects for complaint continues to be property and regimes.

6.5 Reception

6.5.1 As the Swinfen Hall prisoner roll has increased, there has been a steady flow of new arrivals and discharges throughout the year. Staff are well trained and there is a welcoming atmosphere in Reception. It is a safe environment particularly for those prisoners who are vulnerable. Healthcare staff are present at reception in order to assess prisoners' physical and mental needs and a risk assessment is also carried out at this stage. The new arrivals process has been observed on a regular basis by members of the Board and it was noted that procedures are well documented and staff make every effort to ensure that each prisoner understands each step of the reception process. Prisoners are treated with respect and dignity.

6.5.2 Induction staff will also interview the prisoners whilst in Reception. After completion of the process the new arrivals are escorted to their wings where they are introduced to staff and other prisoners. The Insider scheme is a key support for many new arrivals and an introduction to Insiders and their role is an important element of their introduction to the wing. This ensures they are aware of information, guidance and reassurance from their peers to ensure a stable and secure start to their time at Swinfen Hall. The Listeners, who are selected and trained by the Samaritans, are also well recognised and provide support in crisis when needed.

6.5.3 At Swinfen Hall prisoner needs during their time in Reception are catered for, regardless of their ethnicity. Staff are always prepared to help each prisoner.

6.6 Security

6.6.1 The Security Department is managed by a Governor grade Security Manager and comprises an Operations Manager, Uniformed Officers and Support Staff. Board Members generally liaise with the Security Department at the start of each rota visit to be aware of any current incidents or issues within the prison.

6.6.2 The Security Committee/Tasking and Co-ordination Group is chaired by the Deputy Governor or in his absence the Security Manager and includes senior Security Department staff, other functional Governors, Residential Officers, a Police Liaison Officer and representatives from Health and Safety, Estates and the IMB. The monthly meeting reviews, updates where appropriate and signs off the security objectives of the prison, which are then forwarded to the Governing Governor for approval. The meeting receives a monthly security report compiled from feedback, investigations and other information gathering techniques. The Board notes that the report is professionally presented, thorough, detailed and is the basis for reviewing and improving operational procedures where necessary.

6.6.3 Security risks to the prison are constantly reviewed and the last year continues to see a number of drugs issues and the presence of mobile 'phones within the prisoner population. The Board is happy that measures taken by the Governor to mitigate risk and reduce the influx of prohibited items are progressing well, however we comment again that further assistance from National level, such as allowing the use of technology to prevent mobile 'phone signals within prison wings would be beneficial in further reducing risk and perhaps supporting a general reduction in crime.

6.6.4 The Board is satisfied that the security processes in place to review banned visitors and to monitor and review the use of closed visits are effective and well managed.

6.6.5 The Board is also represented on the Use of Force committee and is satisfied that correct Control and Restraint techniques are used and that Officers receive the appropriate update training to ensure safe and proportionate restraint methods are deployed.

6.6.6 Whilst it is accepted that removals from Wings to the Care and Separation Unit, sometimes under Control and Restraint and filmed, can be conducted at any time in response to an incident, the presence of a Board member can only be achieved if there is a member within the prison at the time. For planned removals, the processes in place demand the presence of Healthcare and also a member of the Board, again if one is within the prison at the time.

6.6.7 A number of removals to the Unit have been observed during the year. The Board from its observations and from its presence on the Security Committee, which monitors Use of Force statistics, is satisfied that Use of Force is commensurate with both the population of Swinfen Hall and the ethnic breakdown of that population.

6.6.8 The Board commends the professionalism and diligence of both the Security Department staff together with the Control and Restraint staff with whom it has interfaced throughout the year.

6.7 Visitors and the Visitor Centre

6.7.1 In addition to normal visits to prisoners from family and friends, Swinfen Hall has continued to facilitate other types of visits:-

- Induction visits where prisoners' families are given an insight into the facilities and courses available at Swinfen Hall.
- 'Fathers Inside' visits where prisoners are able to see their young children in a 'family friendly' environment within the Visitors' Room.
- 'Lifer Days' where life-sentenced prisoners have the opportunity for a longer family visit and post-course review visits where families attend course completion and award ceremonies.
- Occasional Visitor Forums, where many interested parties including some prisoners and their families, are brought together for discussion and debate.

6.7.2 The Visitor Centre at Swinfen Hall is external to the secure area and visitors are processed and moved into the secure environment in manageable groups. Visitors are searched appropriately including the use of drug-detection dogs and moved through the biometrics check into the Visits Room. Board members regularly attend 'visits', often following the process from end-to-end. Verbal complaints were sometimes heard from visitors about the length of time taken to be processed from the Visitors' Centre through into the Visits Room, sometimes taking up to 40 minutes. A review during the year by the Governor together with the co-operation of Staff has resulted in minor regime changes enabling Visitors to be processed and moved through to the Visits room 15 minutes earlier than previously. This means reduced delays once the Visits room is opened without compromising security procedures and has provided an improved 'visitor experience' at Swinfen Hall.

6.7.3 Throughout the year the use of the camera facilities by prison staff during visits was observed and found to be decent and professional. There were no occasions where a Board member felt that camera use was an intrusion to personal privacy.

6.7.4 It was pleasing to note that Officers and Staff, especially Visitor Centre staff, are very helpful to visitors many of whom find initial visits stressful. It was also noted how Officers and Staff continue to assist and provide information to the Visits Room when expected visitors were delayed or could not attend enabling visits room staff to keep prisoners updated. The Board's view is that staff who are involved with visits continue to act in a sensitive and caring manner.

7. THE WORK OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD

7.1 Board Statistics

BOARD STATISTICS	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	15
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	10
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	10
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	1
Number of members leaving within reporting period	1
Number of Board Meetings	11
Average number of members at Board Meetings	7.6
Number of attendances at meetings other than Board meetings	108
Total number of visits to the prison (including all meetings)	437
Total number of applications received	246
Total number of segregation reviews attended	147

7.2 Prisoner Applications

Code	Subject	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10
A	Accommodation	2	5	2	6	5
B	Adjudications	0	2	2	10	21
C	Diversity related	2	1	2	4	3
D	Education/employment/training	20	21	8	30	37
E	Family/visits	3	15	9	21	15
F	Food/kitchen related	2	5	1	6	9
G	Health related	3	11	10	4	12
H	Property	36	17	23	55	53
I	Sentence related	10	14	10	28	6
J	Staff/prisoner/detainee related	13	12	22	24	24
K	Transfers	36	34	18	26	22
L	Miscellaneous	18	17	22	16	39
	Total number of applications	145	150	129	230	246

8. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

AA Alcoholics Anonymous

ACCT Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork

BME Black & Minority Ethnic

CARAT Counselling, Assessment, Referral Advice and Throughcare

CSU Care and Separation Unit

DLO Disability Liaison Officer

COVAID Control of Violence for Angry Impulsive Drinkers

ETS Enhanced Thinking Skills

HMP Her Majesty's Prison

IDTS Integrated Drug Treatment System

IMB Independent Monitoring Board

IPP Indeterminate Sentence For Public Protection

KPT Key Performance Target

MDT Mandatory Drugs Testing

NHS National Health Service

OMU Offender Management Unit

P-NOMIS Prison - National Offender Management Information System

P-ASRO Prison – Addressing Substance Related Offending

PCT Primary Care Trust

PSO Prison Service Order

REAT Racial Equality Action Team

REO Race Equality Officer

RIRF Racial Incident Report Form

Rule 45/49 Prison & YOI rules on segregation

SMART Systematic Measuring And Reporting Tool

VDT Voluntary Drugs Testing

SOTP Sex Offender Treatment Programme

YOI Young Offender Institution