



HMP Brixton

Independent Monitoring Board

Annual Report to the Secretary of State

1 September 2012 to 31 August 2013

Section 1 STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB

- 1.1 The Prison Act 1952 and the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 require every prison and IRC to be monitored by an independent Board appointed by the Secretary of State from members of the community in which the prison or centre is situated.
- 1.2 The Board is specifically charged to:
 - a. 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.
 - b. inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom he has delegated authority as it judges appropriate, of any concern it has.
 - c. 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.
- 1.3 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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Section 3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

- 3.1 For the year under review, HMP Brixton held Category C and Category D prisoners, with the aim of focussing on training and resettlement. The prison was re-roled in July 2012. At that time, the accommodation for education, training and resettlement was inadequate. This is still the case. The loss of experienced officers, different patterns of staff deployment, and the shortfall in managers with the right experience for their changed roles has also had an impact.
- 3.2 The prison's normal and operational capacity remains at 525 and 798. There are five residential areas (wings), together with a Care and Separation Unit (CSU). A and B wings hold category C prisoners. C wing holds Cat D prisoners, not all cleared for Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL). Most prisoners going out to work on ROTL are housed on D wing, which has a relaxed regime. G wing falls outside the main resettlement ambit, holding Cat C vulnerable prisoners (VPs), mostly offence-related (i.e., sex offenders). Because VPs were reluctant to transfer from establishments with better facilities, the roll was under operational capacity for six months, rising to over 700 only in March. The capacity summary is:
- Cat D, 183 prisoners in 95 cells, on C and D wings, one ground floor cell on C and three on D
 - Cat C, 365 prisoners in 227 cells, on A and B wings: on A, 17 ground floor cells, and 62 places on two half landings gated off as a Drug Recovery 'wing'; on B two safer custody cells
 - VPs, all Cat C, 250 prisoners in 148 cells on G wing, one ground floor cell adapted for two prisoners
 - The Care and Separation Unit is 6 cells, plus one holding room and one special cell.
- 3.3 Daily admission numbers varied, and were at a much lower level than in the local regime of the previous year. By April 2013, admissions were concentrated on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, and in addition up to 50 ROTL prisoners were going out and in most days.
- 3.4 Apart from privacy locks in D wing, there have been no material changes to the prisoner accommodation. Most prisoners share a small cell, with bunk beds, an uncovered and sometimes unscreened lavatory, and little storage space. Except on D wing, prisoners also eat in their cells. There is a limited number of ground floor cells throughout the prison. There is only one ground floor cell on G wing, so older prisoners with mobility problems often have to negotiate stairs: this is consistent with medical advice, however. Shower rooms need complete renovation and in the CSU the plaster is crumbling off the walls, in defiance of frequent repairs.
- 3.5 There has been an acute shortage of regime space, education facilities and workshops for the whole reporting period. In addition, decanting facilities from one area to another, to allow for building works, has made things more difficult, for instance with education space and the library. There was an unplanned power failure in the spring for most of a day; several disruptive power cuts because of the building works; boilers on the wings have failed several times and taken more than a day to repair in cold weather; and work to update fire protection and provide utilities for the new building restricted movement on the cramped site for several months in the spring and summer.
- 3.6 The regime has improved, slowly over the year, with more time out of cell and slightly more access to purposeful activity. More and significant changes are planned, to bring the establishment finally up to a 'resettlement' level and to implement imposed staffing reductions.

- 3.7 The chaplaincy is very active. Full time chaplains are Christian (Church of England and Roman Catholic), and Muslim: other faiths and other Christian denominations provide part-time support, and there is liaison with local churches.
- 3.8 Healthcare is delivered by a consortium led by Care UK. From 1 April 2012, it has been commissioned by NHS England, with reduced oversight. Mitie took over the contracts for building services and the operation of the kitchen in spring 2013. A4e took over the education contract in November 2012. Over 80 other outside agencies are involved in the prison: these are mentioned in relation to their main roles and services.
- 3.9 There were 271 staff in post (all grades including 7 kitchen workers) in September 2012 and 257 in August 2013 (by which time 7 kitchen staff had been contracted out). Both figures are about 10% under complement, although some vacancies were covered by agency staff or overtime working.

Section 4 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview

- 4.1 This Report, covering the period September 2012 to August 2013, highlights a number of major areas of concern in Brixton. The Board recognises, and is happy to commend, the good work being done in the prison, and the commitment of staff and agencies. However, the significant structural and policy deficiencies of the re-role made it impossible for the prison to succeed as a training and resettlement establishment.
- 4.2 The Board raises the following thematic issues which underlie many of the detailed comments made in this Report:
- Brixton was recategorised as a resettlement prison in July 2012 despite its patent lack of readiness and unsuitability. Important issues highlighted by the Board include a lack of regime facilities to aid resettlement; too few experienced staff to progress all the new initiatives; no retraining of officers to match the new role; and transfers in by NOMS of prisoners who did not meet the resettlement requirements and profile. These factors combined to prevent the prison moving away from the approach and feel of its previous Cat B local role.
 - Brixton's accommodation is old, and of poor standard, from a lack of historic capital investment. Of itself this is an area of significant regret, the more so in the context of Brixton's resettlement role. The Board is aware of, and is optimistic about, Brixton's development of new workshops and training facilities which are due to come on-stream after November 2013.
 - As with other prisons in the MOJ estate, Brixton is having to shoulder the burden of a significant headcount reduction. The prison's staff complement fell about 4% in the year covered by this report. By January 2014 there will be a 17% reduction compared with September 2012. This is bound to weaken further the regime's effectiveness, and especially in a prison which is going through wide-ranging operational changes.
 - A major concern for the Board this year has been the availability of illicit drugs, mobile phones, and other items of contraband. This has led to gambling, indebtedness, bullying and intimidation, resulting, in some areas, in a significant deterioration of the generally harmonious regime in the prison. Although there has been some recent improvement, the Board would still emphasise that steps have to be taken at prison, police, and policy levels to reduce the supply further.
 - An additional problem, quite beyond Brixton's control, was that many prisoners were transferred from other prisons without an assessment (OASys) and sentence plan. Without these, resettlement cannot start, since they identify requirements the prisoner must complete (like sex offender courses) and conditions to be fulfilled before he can be allowed day release, or transfer to an open prison. At the end of the reporting year, the backlog of prisoners without sentence plans was still increasing.
- 4.3 The Minister provided a full response¹ to the Board's Report for 2011-2012, with much information about NOMS initiatives. He agreed that Brixton had had very little capital investment for many years, and that facilities at Brixton would be inadequate for a resettlement prison until November 2013. The Board agrees with this assessment.
- 4.4 This year, as the Board recognises, there was a great deal of effort, by staff, management and agencies to prepare the prison for full implementation of a resettlement role. Despite

¹ Letter of 11 December 2012 from Jeremy Wright MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice

many difficulties, prisoners generally felt it was a safe place. Nevertheless, this year has been a holding operation. There was simply not enough training accommodation at Brixton to offer effective resettlement activities, and the range of programmes fell far below the required standard. For prisoners, this often meant being locked up too long, bored, and frustrated because they could not work to improve their prospects on release. These shortcomings were compounded by the transfer-in of many prisoners who did not meet Brixton's criteria, or who came with reasonable expectations of resettlement work or training, and of accommodation no worse than what they had left. On top of the re-role staffing changes, the establishment had to deal with the resource demands of NOMS initiatives and further staffing reductions. The Board considers that the inadequacies of the facilities at Brixton condemned prisoners to additional penalties on top of their sentences.

Accommodation

- 4.5 The prison accommodation remained substandard, despite best efforts to deal with its poor state, and there are no plans for significant improvements to cells. Some transferred-in prisoners, many previously assessed as high-risk, caused trouble when they were re-assessed as capable of cell-sharing, and filled the segregation unit (CSU). One man self-harmed from shame as a result. Others quietly despaired.
- 4.6 Prisoners in the CSU, including some who were very vulnerable, praised the patience and kindness of the officers there. Several 'difficult case' men were held there for months, an unacceptably long time, awaiting transfer after re-categorisation to B. There were a few dirty protests. Intervention by the Deputy Director of Custody took too long to achieve their transfers. However, men who 'kicked off' on the wings were quickly moved out. The Board felt this sent the wrong message to prisoners.
- 4.7 The number of prisoners at risk of self-harm ('on an ACCT') declined sharply after the last prisoners with acute mental health problems were transferred out in August 2012. The Board commends those involved in this process: the healthcare agencies, prison management, and the Deputy Director of Custody. For most of the year, there were fewer than 10 ACCT prisoners, and few instances of prisoners requiring constant supervision. These were handled using agency staff, occasionally on the CSU, but seldom for more than a few days.

Resettlement role

- 4.8 For the future, the NOMS *New Ways of Working* report (NWW, February 2013) focussed in part on enhancing a 'job market ready' regime, shifting the emphasis from a wider focus on education and employability to a narrower range of defined employment training. This may disadvantage those prisoners who are furthest from 'job market ready', for instance if they are functionally illiterate, and older prisoners on G wing, who are unlikely candidates for the job market on release. The proposed outcomes for the prison are:
- full-time activities for 798 prisoners
 - 60% increase in purposeful activity and more time out of cell
 - a staff reduction of about 14%, on top of earlier reductions
- 4.9 Within Brixton, there are proposals, which the Board welcomes, for a range of higher level qualifications, including NVQs and a 'virtual campus', and specific provision for older prisoners: the Board will monitor access and suitability.

Staffing

- 4.10 Despite the difficulties, many staff at all levels, including in agencies, worked hard to get the best outcomes for prisoners. Officers on the wings had to deal with men who were inactive and dissatisfied. Many of them continued to treat prisoners with patience and humanity.
- 4.11 Inducting and managing such a mixed range of prisoners with few or no purposeful activities posed significant difficulties for staff, themselves getting used to lighter staffing and changes in operational details. For instance, by the end of the reporting year there were fewer 'regular' officers on the CSU and this led to inefficiencies in the management of reviews and adjudications, and possibly less stability for prisoners. On the wings, the greater availability of drugs aggravated problems. Several prisoners told the IMB that drug use was the only activity readily available to them in Brixton.
- 4.12 The *NWW* places a greater emphasis on offender supervision and making 'every contact matter' at officer level. Prisoners will be out of their cells for much longer, with the aim to have a full day's employment or training for all Cat C prisoners. This is welcome.
- 4.13 The officer to prisoner ratio will remain at 1:30 at peak unlock periods (serving meals, full association). Between peaks, staffing will be reduced as officers accompany men to training and education, with some provision for the unexpected. The Board is concerned that this may not be enough cover, unless there is an improvement in the consistency of transfer of appropriate prisoners to Brixton. For instance, this year has demonstrated that prisoners going out on ROTL need searching for illicit items (drugs, mobile phones) on return. If more men are going out, more staff may be needed. If searches are not thorough, there may be consequential difficulties on the wings.

Drugs and contraband

- 4.14 A big increase in the supply of illegal drugs was identified in autumn 2012. It was less practicable to conduct whole wing surprise searches, because of reduced staffing. In January the PE department barred prisoners failing drug tests from the gym, which the Board commends. A management decision about action on a broader front was delayed for intelligence reports until May, and it suffered initially from poor co-ordination. For much of the reporting year, there were problems on all the wings from bullying and debt as a result. Cat C prisoners who became vulnerable for these reasons were moved from A and B to G wing. This had the effect of creating new victims among the offence-related VPs.

Operation of the regime

- 4.15 Far too many prisoners did not meet the criteria for a resettlement prison, for instance having too short or too long a time to serve, or not having links with south London. This meant that creating links with families and the local community, including health and addiction care and education, was impossible. Some men on short, first-time sentences would more appropriately have been transferred straight to an open prison. Instead, Brixton was made a 'hub' for Cat D prisoners. Men came to Brixton with unrealistic expectations, perhaps on the basis of information from their transferring establishment. The precipitate closures of HMP Camp Hill in January 2013, and earlier of HMP Latchmere, brought prisoners who were used to a genuine resettlement regime and conditions, and they were understandably resentful at going backwards in Brixton. Some men had completed all the courses suitable for them, and found nothing else appropriate to do. Men on distance learning courses got no support at first, since the A4e contract did not provide for it. Best efforts were made by A4e and prison staff, but these could not be sufficient.

- 4.16 A large proportion of men transferred in had no sentence plan, contrary to requirements and to expectation, and the Brixton Offender Management Unit (OMU) was overwhelmed. Priority had to be given to men who were transferred out following disciplinary offences and re-categorisation, or because of some other marked unsuitability, so others had to wait. The Board considers that the NOMS transfer system was weighted against Brixton. Thameside prisoners were a particular difficulty, because it appeared that sentence planning there was under-resourced for contractual reasons: in effect the problem was transferred to Brixton.
- 4.17 Transfers from HMP Thameside caused other problems, because it does not use the PNOMIS prison information system in the same way as public sector prisons. So there were unacceptable delays, for part of the year, with the transfer of prisoners' monies and their PIN phone numbers, making it impossible for them to ring their family or buy canteen², sometimes for weeks. Prisoners' families did not know where they were, and PIN numbers had to be re-checked in Brixton, taking security staff resource away from (for instance) dealing with the availability of illegal drugs. Transfer of prisoners' property was also problematic. The Board considers that security, medical and other essential information might also have been delayed or lost in transit. And since Brixton was technically no longer a receiving prison, emergency canteen was not available for men with no cigarettes or other requisites. It has recently been reintroduced, which the Board welcomes.
- 4.18 Prisoners who applied for transfer out had to wait an unreasonably long time. In July 2013, there were around 100 men, two thirds of them category D, awaiting transfer. One man had applied in April 2012. It appeared to the Board that the central NOMS unit for prisoner movement, the PMU, was requiring Brixton to arrange its own transfers in the first instance, and requiring completion of a sentence plan (OASys)³ before a transfer could be affected.
- 4.19 Administrative systems were also over-stretched. However, the Board found that re-categorisation reviews were thoroughly documented and fairly judged. A very high proportion of men had housing on release. The ROTL scheme did not really get off the ground till spring, partly because of the lack of staff resource. Since then, it has worked well, and the Board commends the work of staff and agencies, which has overcome significant difficulties. 20 men were going out on ROTL to work placements by Christmas, 50 by the spring, 65 by August – this represented a huge amount of work by staff and agencies.
- 4.20 Finally, there were too many NOMS initiatives to be handled at the same time as Brixton was managing its own transformation to a resettlement prison. Despite some leeway on staffing up the management team, the prison struggled to keep all the necessary programmes moving forward: stability and continuity suffered because of changes in management responsibilities to meet contingencies. One conspicuous casualty was work on Equality. Another was dealing with illegal drug and mobile phone availability. And there were less critical but significant problems like the handling of prisoners' mail and complaints, which did not improve until the spring.

² This is the prison 'shop', with a restricted list of food, toiletries and such like.

³ This is a lengthy process, starting with a 2-3 hour interview with the prisoner and involving checks with other agencies and against sentence conditions.

Issues requiring a response

For the Minister

- 4.21 The Board strongly criticises the policy decision to designate Brixton a resettlement and training prison with resources which were known to be inadequate. The consequence has been severe damage to the resettlement chances of hundreds of men, despite the efforts of the prison management, officers and agencies. This outcome was not an operational failure but a foreseeable consequence.
- 4.22 The Board recommends that a senior official in NOMS be given responsibility for co-ordination of inter-prison issues such as transfers and the exchange of information, to ensure greater efficiency within the system, and less prejudicial impact on prisoners.
- 4.23 The Board is concerned about the narrow 'job market ready' focus of the OLASS4 contract, which takes little account of the diversity of the prison population, including the increasing number of older men, both VPs and non-VPs. Education and training programmes should be available which are suitable for all prisoners, and this should include creative writing projects and arts programmes. The Board urges the Minister to discuss this with his Education colleagues.
- 4.24 The Board is also concerned that courses required for the completion of sentence plans, for instance sex offender treatment and other psychological interventions, are insufficiently resourced, so that there are waiting lists, delaying rehabilitation.
- 4.25 The Board is concerned about the failure to develop a prison-wide strategy for prisoners with learning disabilities, and urges the Minister to progress this with Health colleagues.
- 4.26 The Board considers that there should be better provision of computers and IT training in prisons, given the importance of these skills.

For NOMS

- 4.27 The Board strongly criticises the inter-prison failures in relation to transfers in and out of Brixton, which exacerbated the challenges of the re-role. In particular, the Board considers that the delays in transferring unsuitable prisoners out of Brixton were unacceptable. An effective and enforceable mechanism for such transfers should be developed, taking more account of prisoners' rehabilitation and resettlement needs.
- 4.28 A more accurate algorithm should be devised for the transfer of prisoners to a resettlement prison, placing more weight on locating them close to their likely destination on release.
- 4.29 An effective system should be implemented to ensure the efficient and quick transfer of information (security, PIN numbers, prisoners' monies, medical records) and property between all prisons, especially where there is no PNOMIS read-across from the transferring prison.
- 4.30 The Board considers targets for completion of sentence planning should be set, and adequately resourced. Prisoners should not be transferred to resettlement prisons without a sentence plan.
- 4.31 The Board considers that prisoners with learning disabilities are specifically disadvantaged when they are unable to complete courses required in their sentence plan, and that more appropriate support should be provided, in advance of a prison learning disability policy.
- 4.32 Programmes of benefit to elderly prisoners and those with a learning difficulty should be available and adequately resourced. Access to creative writing and arts programmes should be facilitated for all prisoners.

- 4.33 Given the importance of family contact for resettlement outcomes, the adequacy of requirements in Spurgeons' contract for London prison visitor centres, and its funding, should be reconsidered.
- 4.34 The Board considers that NOMS should provide an agreed framework for liaison with local police forces on preventing drug supply to prisons from which men are released on temporary licence.
- 4.35 Prisons with an acute drug problem should have access to additional drug dogs.
- 4.36 The requirements and monitoring of centrally-commissioned contracts should be made more transparent for Independent Monitoring Boards where they relate to IMB responsibilities.

For the Governor

- 4.37 A clear and co-ordinated strategy needs to be consistently implemented to prevent drugs, mobiles and other illicit items coming into the prison, including more searches and better liaison with local police.
- 4.38 The Equality team should ensure that it monitors data for all 'protected characteristics' groups and takes appropriate action when necessary.
- 4.39 Consideration should be given, in discussion with Healthcare, to ensuring that there is appropriate provision for all mental health needs, including anxiety and depression.
- 4.40 All prison staff should have a first aid refresher course, and especially those likely to use a defibrillator.
- 4.41 Sufficient heating in the CSU should be installed for the winter. The walls should be treated for damp in such a way that it does not recur.
- 4.42 Shower facilities throughout the prison should be upgraded to an acceptable standard that will be safer and need less maintenance.
- 4.43 Prisoners who request to see CCTV images when they are facing serious disciplinary charges should be able to do so without undue delay.
- 4.44 Officers supervising visits and the CSU should be given appropriate training.
- 4.45 Plans for a refreshment point and for enhanced childcare in Visits should be implemented.

Section 5 CORE REPORTING AREAS

Education, learning and skills

- 5.1 This was one of the key areas where resettlement objectives were frustrated. Because of local accommodation shortages far too few education sessions were available. There was at best only ten hours a week for each prisoner throughout the year. Decanting the education department, to allow for works, aggravated the problem temporarily, for instance because computer access was restricted for teaching staff. To make things worse, course enrolment was not at capacity, sometimes much lower, and attendance was generally less than 70%, despite efforts to improve it. Prisoners' records were not automatically transferred from other prisons, leading to discontinuity in learning, and unnecessary re-assessments and delay for some prisoners.
- 5.2 There were also failures in the strategic approach of the Skills Funding Agency. The OLASS4 education contract, taken over from November 2012 by A4e, does not provide for non-vocational or distance learning. As a result, there were 13 distance learners in December without support, including Open University students: for VPs, there was only one computer slot available a week. A4e have since made some provision but it remains inadequate. There was, and remains, nothing available for those men who have completed the vocational courses available in other prisons, or for whom they were unsuitable – elderly VPs, for instance and prisoners on long or life sentences. There were about 60 of each in Brixton this year (some men may be counted in both groups).
- 5.3 The prison library, run by Lambeth Council with one full-time staff member, is open for over 24 hours a week, but it is not well used. Some books are available on the wings and in the CSU. The library was moved to a smaller room in autumn 2012, with no computer access and nowhere to sit and read. The Lambeth library catalogue is not available, which makes it more difficult to access books not on site, for instance for distance learning.
- 5.4 The Board welcomes the resumption of 'Toe by Toe' sessions, now organised by the Shannon Trust to support prisoners with literacy problems. Prisoner mentors are trained and co-ordinated by the librarian, and work one-to-one on the wings with other prisoners. The good work done by Brixton's Writer in Residence ended in March when funding ran out. This is a loss to the considerable number of prisoners the Writer supported in Brixton on creative writing and debating skills. She also ran a book club on prison radio. The Board also regrets the proposed withdrawal of art classes, except for design.

Equality and inclusion

- 5.5 The Board considers that the prison has only partially fulfilled its duties under the Equality Act in this reporting year. As a result of the Fair and Sustainable programme, the Equalities team was reduced from three to one part way through the year, and is now 1.5. This has diminished its operational ability and effectiveness. Only ethnicity and religion have been monitored, and even for these data have not been consistently available. Meetings have been cancelled or postponed, and prisoner representatives have had only limited opportunities to engage with the team.
- 5.6 The Board is particularly concerned that not enough has been done to monitor the needs of older prisoners – around 40 men over 60 on G wing alone – but the problem is much wider. A Ministry of Justice survey reported in 2012 that 36% of prisoners had a disability, including anxiety and depression and physical disabilities. The problems for prisoners with restricted mobility in Brixton are patent: many applications to the IMB also report severe anxieties, and the Board considers that more provision for mental health and psychological needs may be necessary.

- 5.7 A number of groups around nationality has been set up. To date, however, there is no travellers group, although some prisoners self-identify to the IMB. Foreign nationals are seen by the Borders Agency, which runs a weekly surgery with ad hoc appointments for VPs, but there seems to have been little support and engagement within the prison. The Board has received several applications from foreign national prisoners, some detained beyond the end of their sentences, who did not understand what was planned for them. They need clearer information and quicker action.
- 5.8 The major religious groups are well served by the Chaplaincy. However, the prison management did not re-issue guidance on drug testing in Ramadan and a number of Muslim prisoners were required to produce a urine sample while fasting. There is generally a good atmosphere within the prison with little evidence of tension between prisoners on the basis of race or religion. One exception was the fallout from an incident early in the summer on B wing. This was well handled. The IMB receives relatively few applications on equality and diversity issues. Some, however, come from prisoners who seem to be unaware of, or unwilling to use the prison's reporting system, which might be indicative of the lack of visibility of the Equalities team during the past year.

Healthcare and mental health

- 5.9 Healthcare provision has been generally good over the year, and this was confirmed by an audit, commissioned by NHS Lambeth in spring 2013, before it ceded responsibility to NHS England. The 'net promotor' score (a customer satisfaction measure used by retail groups) was high. The one problem identified by the Lambeth NHS audit, a low score on cleanliness because of the standard of the accommodation, is addressed by regular deep cleaning, and the dental treatment room has been refurbished.
- 5.10 During the reporting year, there was no partnership board meeting organised by NHS England, although one took place in September 2013. Under the new regime, oversight has been reduced. Funding is less affected, although there is no allowance for inflation. After some delay, it was confirmed that NHS England will handle patient complaints not resolved at local level, as NHS Lambeth did.
- 5.11 As planned following the re-role, the emergency healthcare service (H6) was withdrawn in June 2013: monitoring of H6 logs indicated that this was not a serious risk. Serious cases out of hours are sent to hospital, as before. Finding escort officers is sometimes difficult during the core day: night-time staffing allows enough cover for one blue-light escort. Non-emergency telephone advice at night is provided by Harmoni, which also provides such services in the community. Defibrillators said to be foolproof are provided on the wings. However, prison staff have not received supplementary first aid training. Because of this, and because healthcare staff were not clear about their remit for non-prisoners, the response to a (non-serious) medical incident in Visits was not as effective as it should have been.
- 5.12 The forensic psychiatry service and the mental health advocacy worker are still operating, with a reduced but variable caseload. There have been a few incidents over the year of mentally ill prisoners losing control or requiring constant supervision. These have been handled adequately, and the prisoners quickly transferred if appropriate. The community mental health team, two people, provides a valuable service and has had a heavy caseload. Two community-based therapists⁴ provide a two day a week therapy on psychological problems – anxiety, depression, anger – using a cognitive behavioural approach.

⁴ IAPT – Improving Access to Psychological Therapies

- 5.13 Wing health services, GP, dentistry, specialist clinics and well man promotions continue as before. A 'release pack' was developed because of poor attendance at release planning appointments; there is still a general problem of prisoners missing healthcare appointments, much less among VPs. A television was provided in the waiting area in response to prisoners' complaints of boredom while waiting. ROTL prisoners are seen on the one weekday they are required to be in the prison. During Ramadan, since the H6 service was unavailable this year, prisoners were given their own medication to take at the end of the fast: those on controlled drugs were asked in advance whether they would accept it during fasting hours.
- 5.14 Monthly prisoner representative groups are held, and the Board has seen patient complaints conscientiously followed up by the prison and agencies working in Brixton. A transplant patient, not accepted by a prison nearer the hospital of treatment, recovered well on G wing.

Purposeful activity (includes work)

- 5.15 As with education, there has been completely inadequate provision during the year. This will continue at least until the new building is complete in November 2013, almost 18 months after Brixton became a resettlement prison. The Board strongly criticises this policy failure. The Board is optimistic that plans are well advanced for provision after November; the Board will then closely monitor the implementation.
- 5.16 Most in-prison jobs were on the wings, in roles such as orderlies, prisoner representatives, Listeners, wing cleaners and serving staff. Vulnerable prisoners provided the staff in the kitchen and a number of Cat D prisoners worked on internal maintenance. After the re-role, prison management split most of the full-time jobs to provide opportunities for more men to work. The Board was concerned at the start of the reporting year that vacancies were filled only slowly, with some improvement after a weekly labour board was set up in March 2013. In July 2013, however, only about 270 of around 430 part-time jobs were filled, apparently as a result of prisoners not applying for them. This suggests that the jobs are 'make work', with little or no training element. The HMIP inspection of July 2013 found 40% of men unemployed, and over half of the population on the wings with nothing to do.
- 5.17 The Bad Boys Bakery continues to offer good quality full-time training and work for up to 12 Cat C and Cat D prisoners. The manager, who is employed by the Working Links charity, has been very successful in expanding the bakery's range of products and customers – it has been supplying Caffè Nero throughout London for several months, and local Brixton outlets, and hopes to move to two-shift working. Several of its workers have obtained full time catering jobs on release.
- 5.18 The lottery-funded National Prison Radio offers full-time work to up to seven prisoners, and accredited radio production training is provided for up to 12. It broadcasts a range of programmes – music, advice and other content – to prisons across the country. Its senior producer wrote and produced two programmes broadcast on BBC Radio 4 in June on the prison in the nineteenth century. Prisoners and staff were involved.
- 5.19 Prison staff and agencies, including Bounce Back, worked hard to provide opportunities for men eligible for Release on Temporary Licence to work outside the prison. ROTL jobs are mostly unpaid, for public and third sector employers. The prison hopes to broaden the range of employers and to increase the number of prisoners working out of Brixton to 100.
- 5.20 The Governor has strongly supported the ROTL policy, and has established an appeals process which he handles. By summer 2013 nearly all eligible men had a placement, with about 60 going out of the prison. Too many Cat D men remain ineligible, because they are

on short sentences or have too little time left to serve: this is another indication of the need to ensure that more suitable men are transferred in.

- 5.21 From July 2013, the prison-based charity Keep Out recruited and employed eight serving Cat C prisoners on a full-time basis. The team receive seven weeks' training to provide a one-day intervention programme aimed at diverting low and medium risk 13 – 17 year-old males from crime. Keep Out's official launch at Brixton is on 11 October 2013.
- 5.22 The Board is pleased to see that, after protracted negotiations, the work on The Clink restaurant⁵ will begin on 26 November 2013. This will allow prisoners to train in key catering skills including cooking, front of house and hospitality.
- 5.23 The current workforce policy is that prisoners against whom an adjudication is found proven are not eligible to work for two months. The IMB feels that this is disproportionate and not compatible with the objectives of a resettlement prison.
- 5.24 The restricted core day significantly limits the time available for other purposeful activity. PE/gym is most popular, and the Board commends the staff for offering weekend sessions, and for running classes over most of the Christmas break. There is a wide range of activities for about 30 prisoners at a time, and three weekly smaller classes for older prisoners and men with injuries or physiotherapy regimes. Royal Society of Public Health qualifications in sporting and health awareness are offered, and first aid training. The Chaplaincy runs a wide-ranging resettlement course, 'Faith in the Future' with debt advice and a drama class, as well as religious study sessions.

Resettlement

- 5.25 It has been an enormous challenge for Brixton to transform itself into a genuine resettlement and training prison. The lack of suitable accommodation means far too many prisoners are still inactive, even if they spend less time locked up than before. The Board is pleased that plans are well in hand for the new regime after November. This will be monitored by the Board.
- 5.26 Many transferred prisoners do not meet the target criteria, of less than two years but more than 3 months left to serve. It has not been unusual for prisoners to arrive with less than 3 months left. This makes it impossible to provide meaningful resettlement opportunities given the time taken to assess new arrivals and clear them for ROTL.
- 5.27 Prisoners also arrive without an OASys sentence plan – in July 2013, for instance, there were 120 of these. This is a policy problem in the NOMS system, since the plans are the responsibility of the transferring prison. The Brixton OMU had to be expanded on the re-role. As in other areas of the prison, there has been a high turnover of senior and operational staff, some with little or no experience. The OMU would have been overstretched, even without the additional burden of producing sentence plans for prisoners transferred in without them.
- 5.28 Establishing ROTL policy and practice in Brixton was also a slow process, not bedded down until summer 2013, when the 'Reducing Reoffending' policy was reissued. More needs to be done by the prison to disseminate this information and keep it updated for prisoners, staff and community partners. A questionnaire on prisoners' needs, completed by about a third of the population, was issued in June and is being analysed. This will provide information on priority issues like accommodation, substance misuse, debt and employment.

⁵ The restaurant, operated by The Clink Charity, will be open to the general public. Clink restaurants already operate in HMP High Down and HMP Cardiff.

- 5.29 The vulnerable prisoner population has less access to resettlement activities. There is a waiting list for two programmes required in some prisoners' sentence plans: sex offender treatment (SOTP) and thinking skills (TSP). The Board is concerned that not enough NOMS resources are committed to these and other programmes to improve resettlement chances and reduce re-offending.
- 5.30 As in the previous two years, Brixton has consistently exceeded the NOMS target for prisoners having accommodation on release. The prison has continued to provide a range of support across all seven resettlement pathways, through relations with a range of partners including Jobcentre Plus, housing, debt and substance misuse charities. Lambeth Council has dedicated a full-time worker to finding jobs for Lambeth-based prisoners released from Brixton and from HMP Wandsworth. It is regrettable that there have not been more 'local' prisoners to take advantage of this service. The main agencies involved in the resettlement pathways are:
- Accommodation: St. Giles Trust, Jigsaw and the Healthcare psychiatry team
 - Finance, Debt and Benefit: Lambeth Advice Centre
 - Substance Misuse: End-to-End and RAPt
 - Education, Training, Employment: A4e, the contracted provider. The Writer in Residence programme was funded by the Writers in Prison Foundation
 - Children and Families: Spurgeons, the contracted provider
 - Mental and Physical Health: Healthcare
 - Attitudes, Thinking, Behaviour: NOMS Psychology staff.
- 5.31 Altogether there are over 80 agencies making a contribution: the Board commends their work, and the efforts of prison staff to introduce and manage them.

Residential services

- 5.32 Brixton accommodation is poor, the result of years of underinvestment in old buildings, and difficult to keep clean. For instance, before the B wing roof was cleaned in February, lumps of dirt and dust were falling off it onto the stairs. There are separate boilers on each wing, and the very cold winter 2012/2013 overtaxed them. The most severe problem was on G wing in January, where there was no heating for several days. Long-standing problems include water spilling out from the shower suites onto the wing, crumbling surfaces in the showers, and on the CSU walls, and delays in replacing or fixing equipment. The showers are also slippery, and there are no seats for men with disabilities.
- 5.33 The washing and drying machines in G wing and the dryers in B and C wings were out of action for some weeks, and there have been longer than acceptable delays before kitchen equipment was fixed. In April, after the building maintenance contractor changed, there was a vermin problem – it had previously been kept in check. Rats were seen, although not on the wings, where the problem was pigeons getting in through the ventilators. Feral cats were introduced, and this seems to have been largely successful.
- 5.34 The kitchen, some three years old, is generally in good condition. In January a container of human excrement was found in a freezer. The kitchen was closed, all prisoner workers sacked, and food was brought in from HMP Wandsworth until everywhere had been deep cleaned. No sickness was reported. The Board commends the Governor for his prompt action. Shortly afterwards, a local authority environmental health inspection resulted in a five star rating, for the kitchen and the Bad Boys Bakery. The wing serveries are generally well kept, less so on D wing.

- 5.35 The varied choices of menu and the overall quality of the food is commendable on the tight budget, £1.97 a day per prisoner, down from £2.20 in November 2012⁶. Portion size has been an issue from time to time, but does not seem to be a major problem. Food over the Christmas period was very good. Special dietary needs are something of a challenge: halal food is good, vegetarian less so, vegan and kosher cause difficulties, although a vegan prisoner told the IMB the menu was good in July. Special requests, sometimes from prisoners gaming the system, come at increased cost. For instance, Mormonism appeared to become popular when hot chocolate was offered instead of tea and coffee: soya milk is requested by 'lactose intolerant' prisoners who eat other food containing milk. Kitchen staff are to carry out a review of prisoners with special dietary needs. Food for prisoners observing Ramadan was provided in tray containers with a lockable lid to keep it hot. After a complaint, and intervention by the IMB, food for a diabetic prisoner was improved and provided more regularly.
- 5.36 As a result of the re-role, the numbers of prisoner kitchen staff fluctuated. While this did not adversely affect the timing of the meals, it put the professional kitchen staff under more pressure. Liaison with prisoners, and the IMB, improved when the contractor changed in April. There were no significant staff changes. Food comment folders have replaced the unsatisfactory complaints books on the wings, although they are not much used. Menu orderlies now meet the chef regularly, and feel their comments are taken on board.
- 5.37 DHL, the contractors, took over canteen distribution on the wings. This has improved DHL's understanding of problems, and there is better communication with prisoners. However, there is a delay of two weeks for refunds.

Safer custody

- 5.38 The Safer Custody team has coped better with change than other areas of the prison this year. It scored well in an audit on training, family visits, reception/first night procedures, and violence reduction. There have been far fewer prisoners at risk of self-harm, usually under 10 at any one time. ACCT documentation for these men was generally well completed and monitored, although some problems were identified in management audits.
- 5.39 A dedicated team investigates and interviews all those involved in incidents of anti-social behaviour. All such incidents are considered at the monthly Safer Custody meeting, which is attended by prisoner representatives and relevant staff (though staff attendance has been declining). Information requiring immediate action is discussed at the daily meeting of officer representatives from each wing. Prisoners involved in a violent assault are immediately downgraded to the basic regime. There are Management and Support plans for prisoners whose behaviour is unacceptable or threatening to others.
- 5.40 Listeners (prisoners trained by the Samaritans to counsel others) play an active role. For instance, when there was a problem with prisoners arriving in Brixton, Listeners were posted in Reception. The prisoner violence reduction strategy is displayed around the prison, including in the visits area. Prisoners participate in its development and implementation. A recent survey of 60 representative prisoners showed that prisoners generally feel safe.
- 5.41 This year, there were no deaths in custody. There are two inquests pending, on deaths in 2010, a not untypical length of time. These delays cause unnecessary grief to the men's families. Recommendations from previous inquests were reviewed and consolidated quarterly. No actions were outstanding for Healthcare.

⁶ The reduction was the consequence of basing the food budget on projected numbers of prisoners: it will be restored.

- 5.42 The Board is concerned, however, that despite good work by the Safer Custody team, there were persistent reports of bullying on the wings. For instance, after prisoners who were vulnerable for non-offence related reasons (bullying or debt) were transferred from A and B wings to G wing, some of them in turn bullied more vulnerable offence-related VPs. Some VPs had money fraudulently taken from their accounts. The Board was assured after the first occasion that measures were in place to prevent any reoccurrence. The ex-A&B Wing men were for a time separated from offence-related VPs on the top landing, with a different daily schedule. This was discontinued after HMIP criticism.
- 5.43 The fuel for much of the bullying was the availability of illegal drugs – much more noticeable than when Brixton was a local prison. Cannabis was sometimes being smoked so much on A and B wings that officers' and IMB members' clothes smelt of it. Although it was deduced in autumn 2012 that supply was coming partly from men going out of the prison on ROTL, not enough action was taken until the late spring. This was a significant failure, in the Board's view. There was not enough co-ordination among different parts of the prison, for instance between Reception and Security. Attempts to liaise with the local police to identify or forestall the men involved were not successful. Changes of personnel in Security worked against there being a coherent focus on the problem, and in March 2013 'suspicion' drug tests were not being carried out because of staff shortages. In addition, only one sniffer dog was available.
- 5.44 Some action was being taken before May. Drug tests throughout the prison in January, for instance, showed up 29 positives of 428 tests, 6%. Not all drugs show up in the readily available tests, however. "Spice" was much in evidence, but the test is too expensive to be used regularly. Around 10% of men on ROTL have been recategorised to C for drug use/possession: half of these men were in prison for drug offences. Several prisoners were sacked from the Bad Boys Bakery. One successful measure, 'nothing out, nothing back in' for ROTLs on day leave, could have been introduced before May with no resource impact. The Board believes there should be more searches of all types in future, including staff and contractors, and that another sniffer dog should be made available if necessary. However, it appears that by the end of the reporting year, there was a reduction in drug supply. Prisoners turned to home-made hooch.
- 5.45 Mobile phones were also readily available, and new miniature car fob phones made their concealment easier. It appears that SIM cards were being lent between prisoners for a fee. Under new legal powers, more options are available for control. Both drugs and phones increase the possibility for debt, victimisation, and bullying, of users and of potential suppliers who are going out of prison to work or on home/town leave. In May, for instance, a significant number of weapons was found in a B wing search. As an indication of the discipline problems, there have been more prisoners at a time reduced to basic privileges than when Brixton was a local prison, although the numbers are still small.
- 5.46 All this vitiates the prison's focus on resettlement and rehabilitation. The Board considers stronger measures to curb the supply of illegal items must be implemented in the coming year, including better liaison with the local police.
- 5.47 Adjudications that were observed were seen as fair and considerate to prisoners, with defensible outcomes. The IMB has found it difficult to see CCTV evidence which prisoners believe will support their case in adjudications. This goes against transparency. Lack of timely information about the date and time of Review Boards, recently improved, meant that the IMB's attendance was not consistent over most of the year.

Segregation, Care & Separation, Close Supervision

- 5.48 The Care and Separation Unit (CSU) accommodation is sub-standard, even by comparison with the rest of Brixton – damp and cold, with blocked drains and an unsafe shower – and repairs do not seem to last. Because there was more use of the CSU this year, at least one prisoner was put in a damaged cell which was unfit for use. On a couple of occasions, prisoners under discipline or close supervision had to be accommodated on the wings, but the Board observed no adverse consequences.
- 5.49 Continuity of staffing in the CSU, for most of the year, resulted in more efficient processes, and good outcomes for prisoners. There was some decline in standards when there was more cross-deployment of officers towards the end of the reporting year. This year, the CSU was used more than when Brixton was a local prison. In the Board's view, this was the consequence of designating it a resettlement prison without appropriate resources and facilities, aggravated by the transfer in of prisoners not suitable for the Brixton 'offer'.
- 5.50 Sometimes there were vulnerable prisoners in the CSU: none of them raised concerns about being in contact with other prisoners. There were several dirty protests, and more incidents than in previous years (well-handled by the prison in the Board's view). This may have been because several prisoners were held in the CSU for a long time, one for almost four months. Long CSU stays were for a variety of reasons: men were unfitted for resettlement, recategorised to B, refusing to share a cell, or were a risk to their own or others' safety on the wing. The NOMS process for transferring these 'difficult cases' seemed to break down completely.

Section 6 ADDITIONAL REPORTING AREAS

Chaplaincy

- 6.1 The Brixton chaplains are well regarded by prisoners, and very active. The Board commends their work. There are weekly well-attended services by Church of England, Roman Catholic and Islamic chaplains, and a chaplain is available for Buddhist, Jewish, Orthodox Christian and Sikh⁷ prisoners. Local churches are actively involved. Chaplains continue to offer support to prisoners in distress, whatever their faith or lack of it, for instance if there is a family bereavement, but not only then. There is a thriving group of eight Prison Visitors, who visit men on the wings weekly. They carry keys, and receive referrals from the Chaplaincy, wing staff and prisoners.
- 6.2 A faith-based resettlement programme, Faith in the Future, has been running for up to 20 prisoners daily. It includes debt advice, and there is a tailored version available for sex offenders. In January, the William Wilberforce Trust placed a full-time representative in Brixton to start up their Care for Ex-Offenders programme.

Complaints procedures

- 6.3 Problems with the post room and the handling of complaints continued until the spring. Before that, some letters from legal advisers were opened; and prisoners' outgoing mail went missing (some had arrived at the post room without having been properly checked for ID on the wing). Some Comp 1 complaints seemed to get lost in transit, others were delayed, sometimes for more than a month, and filing by prison staff was poor. Now, although there are occasional problems, administration is under much better control.
- 6.4 Comp 1 complaints sent to other prisons are chased up if they have passed a deadline for response, and there is random monitoring of timely responses within Brixton. Confidential access complaints are now being better recorded. In March, separate forms were introduced for appeals about recategorisation, ROTL and HDC (Release on Temporary Licence and Home Detention Curfew). These have no fixed deadline for response: the Board considers there should be formal logging and a fixed deadline for response. However, the current turn-round time is reasonable.

Drug Recovery Wing

- 6.5 The Drug Recovery Wing (DRW) began as a pilot in June 2012. It was inadequately resourced, and it suffered earlier this reporting year from staffing changes and a dilution of focus, because prisoners not committed to the programme have had to be housed there. The accommodation is 10 single cells, much in demand, and 23 doubles over two floors, gated off from the rest of A wing.
- 6.6 Drug services staff are now provided by RAPt (Rehabilitation for Addicted Prisoners Trust). Accommodation for the RAPt staff is inadequate, and it is difficult to find a private area for one-to-one interviews with prisoners, for presentations and for rehabilitation activities, such as yoga.
- 6.7 Now almost all of the prisoners in the DRW are there because they have signed a commitment to engage with drug recovery. Access to other courses and educational

⁷ The Sikh chaplain runs a joint weekly religious observance for Hindu and Sikh prisoners.

opportunities for prisoners in the DRW is difficult, although no worse than elsewhere in the prison. But there is not enough activity or diversionary comforts consistently available to maintain men's resolve to give up drugs.

Escorts

- 6.8 The Board is concerned about the delay when Serco vans arrive at Brixton over the officers' lunch period, and are held for an hour or more with the prisoners inside vans in cramped cubicles.
- 6.9 Finding enough officers for bed watches, if there is more than one prisoner out at a time (either admitted to hospital or attending an appointment) is sometimes difficult with current staffing levels. However, very few hospital appointments have been missed for this or any other prison-specific reason. The Board will monitor the situation once the new staffing complement is in place.

Incentives and earned privileges (IEP)

- 6.10 The effectiveness of the local IEP policy has been undermined by the lack of purposeful activity, and the availability of drugs. Over the year, more men have been reduced to basic than when Brixton was a local prison. However, the average of ten on basic is still low compared with other prisons. The patchiness of the Personal Officer scheme does not seem to have impacted adversely on the proportion of enhanced prisoners, although recording of disciplinary action on PNOMIS (the prison information system) is not consistent.
- 6.11 The IMB has received applications from prisoners who claim that they have not been informed of a change in their IEP status. Others have complained because, on transferring in, they are automatically placed on standard, even if they had been on the higher enhanced grade in their previous prison.

Induction

- 6.12 The regularity and quality of induction sessions faltered during the year. By the spring, sessions were held on the three days after admissions on A, B and G wings, and were run by prisoners with minimal staff support. C wing reached the best standard in its prisoner-led weekly induction. Some prisoners chose not to attend.

Personal Officers

- 6.13 There has been a step change in Personal Officer involvement this year, with a less changeable prisoner population, although the scheme is still not operating optimally. Entries by Personal Officers on PNOMIS were regularly checked by managers: some entries were required to be improved. More needs to be done to ensure prisoners know who their Personal Officer is and to increase contact. Some prisoners are reluctant to seek officers' advice, and some officers too readily refer men to the complaints system. Changing patterns of staff deployment, so there are fewer 'regular' wing officers, and more time off the wings for the men, may mean that the focus of the system has to be reviewed.

Time out of cell

- 6.14 For a large part of the year, prisoners on A and B wings had no more time out of cell than in previous years. So they might be locked up for more than 16 hours in 24. In the winter, B wing prisoners who worked in the day were allowed a short period out of cells in the evening, to make phone calls and have showers. This was stopped because of security concerns, with reduced evening staffing, but there is now more time out of cell in the evening for some prisoners. Since June 2012, prisoners on G wing have been out of their cells for a total of 5.5 hours a day. By the summer, prisoners on C wing were unlocked for almost twelve hours, and D wing men were in their cells only overnight.

Visitors and Visitor Centres

- 6.15 Visits are every day except Monday and Thursday, with dedicated sessions for vulnerable prisoners (VPs) on two days, and four VP places on three other sessions. Two hour visits are offered, to help visitors who have to travel a long way. The Board would not like to see sessions reduced back to one hour, since longer visits were introduced as an incentive for prisoners to move to Brixton. Longer 'family day' visits are four times a year, for up to 15, enhanced prisoners only. These include events – with snakes, face painting and magicians on one occasion. Few prisoners have contacted the IMB about difficulties in booking visits, although these persist. Visitor waiting/queuing time has reduced over the year. The Board has observed, and heard from visitors, that searches are conducted sensitively.
- 6.16 There is little privacy in the visits hall, which is crowded at the maximum of 23 visits. New toys and games for the play area and more comfortable chairs are being provided. These will not be fixed, in line with the lower security status of prisoners. The Board also welcomes the plan to replace the unsightly ID bibs for prisoners with ID bracelets. It regrets that it has not been possible to replace the expensive drink and snack machines, which are prone to break down, with a staffed refreshment bar. Space could be freed up by reducing the 'closed visit' area.
- 6.17 The visits hall is not a good shape for supervision. The number of supervising officers has been reduced to three, and they have had no specific training for their role in a lower security category prison. Nor has first aid training been provided, now that the 24 hour healthcare emergency service has been withdrawn. Also, legal visits are more frequent than anticipated, and an upstairs space is also being extensively used for resettlement interviews – housing, employment, probation, and video links. Staffing may need to be reconsidered, given the awkwardness of the space for supervision.
- 6.18 The Visitor Centre, run by Spurgeons, is open for fewer hours than previously, and closed on Mondays and Thursdays. So on those days friends and family waiting for prisoners to be released have nowhere to shelter from the weather. The small building can be crowded, but there are generally enough lockers for visitors' property. Spurgeons do not offer the visits booking service that was introduced under the previous contract. Since December 2012, supervision of the children's play area has been patchy, often not at weekends. The Board has been told that the contract is not sufficiently funded.

Vulnerable prisoners

- 6.19 A4e, the education and skills contractor, recognises that it will be a challenge to provide purposeful activities for offence-related VPs, many of whom have longer to serve, and are also older. They are considering courses to be provided by the Prisoners Education Trust, or Independent Living courses for retirement-age men. When the Writer in Residence was working in the prison, a group of prisoners produced a book of short stories. The Board much regrets the withdrawal of funding for a creative writer.

- 6.20 There are daily IT classes, but a severe shortage of PCs and hours available to use them. This is a particular problem for distance learners, and some dropped out of courses they had started in other prisons. Other current activities running on G wing include AA, Fine Cell Work, and a well-attended reading group. Older VPs on G wing have a separate gym session. Provision for these prisoners remains limited by the lack of space on the wing. More space, in portacabins, should be available in November 2013. Brixton hopes to collaborate with HMP High Down to get funding for Circles, which works to reduce sex offending by providing support and practical guidance when the prisoner is released.
- 6.21 There are waiting lists for courses which prisoners are required to complete as part of their sentence plans, including sex offenders' treatment (SOTP) and other psychological training (the Thinking Skills and Healthy Sexual Functioning programmes).
- 6.22 The bunk beds in G wing are not suitable for older men, a number of whom use walking sticks, or have other difficulties in carrying their food upstairs. A dining area would be beneficial, if space could be found on the wing after November. The G wing exercise yard is very small. The prison hopes that a garden will be established, as well as the proposed polytunnels for training in vegetable growing.
- 6.23 The Board has some concerns about the HMIP recommendation that VPs should be integrated more into mainstream activities, for two reasons. There was bullying on G wing when non-offence related vulnerable prisoners were mixed with the main body of VPs; and some VPs are anxious about attending medical clinics on non-segregated days, although they have a separate waiting room.

SECTION 7 THE WORK OF THE IMB

- 7.1 Four new Board members have been recruited during this reporting year; five members have left the Board.
- 7.2 Monthly Board meetings are held and are attended by the prison's Governing Governor or his nominated deputy. There was no meeting in March because no room was available for it in the prison. Each Board member is expected to carry out one rota visit between Board meetings. This allows for three members to carry out a rota visit each week. During a rota visit a Board member is expected to complete some outstanding applications and to attend segregation reviews and adjudication hearings in addition to monitoring the day to day operation of the prison. Each member also has an area of special interest that they focus on for the reporting year. This involves attending prison meetings on the area, arranging information gathering meetings with the relevant prison management and staff, and additional monitoring e.g. of completion standards of ACCT documents.
- 7.3 There have been problems with the availability of IMB Clerk support during the reporting year because the NOMS Fair and Sustainable staff restructuring made no allowance for the IMB. The Board has managed to negotiate continued support but at a reduced level.
- 7.4 Board members during this reporting period have included a relatively good balance and range of ages, gender and ethnicity.
- 7.5 The Board is grateful to prison management and members of staff who have facilitated the work of the IMB, whether by attending Board meetings, by making time to explain their roles to the Board or by more general assistance. We are especially appreciative of the time and focus the Governing Governor, Edmond Tullett, gives the Board. He is always approachable and helpful in response to our queries and listens and responds to our concerns. He has attended personally 10 of our 11 Board meetings during this reporting period and keeps us well informed of developments within the prison.
- 7.6 The total number of applications to the IMB during this reporting period was 602.

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The signature on the left is 'Edmond Tullett' written in a cursive style. The signature on the right is another name, possibly 'John', also written in a cursive style.

BOARD STATISTICS	
Recommended complement of Board members	20
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	19
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	18
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	4
Number of members leaving within the reporting period	5
Total number of Board meetings during the reporting period	11
Total number of visits to the establishment	468
Total number of segregation reviews held	not available
Total number of segregation reviews attended	35
Date of annual Team Performance Review	September 2012

Applications to the IMB

Code	Subject	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
A	Accommodation	41	36	44	15
B	Adjudications	11	9	11	12
C	Equality & Diversity (including religion)	18	16	21	36
D	Education/employment/training including IEP	24	28	49	65
E1	Family/visits including mail & phone	61	72	76	37
E2	Finance & pay				19
F	Food/kitchen related	27	36	30	14
G	Health related	55	62	68	56
H1	Property (within current establishment)	92	112	123	26
H2	Property (during transfer/in another establishment)				59
H3	Canteen, facilities, catalogue shopping, Argos				9
I	Sentence related (including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-cat etc)	15	22	59	145
J	Staff/prisoner/detainee concerns including bullying	38	36	45	57
K	Transfers	29	34	40	24
L	Miscellaneous	64	69	150	28
	Total number of IMB applications	475	532	716	602
	Of total: number of IMB Confidential Access				57