



HMP Channings Wood Annual Report

September 2012-August 2013

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Section 1 Statutory role of the IMB

The Prisons Act 1952 and the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 require every prison to be monitored by an Independent Board appointed by the Justice Secretary from members of the community. 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 its standards and requirements placed on it and what impact these have on those in custody.

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

Equality and Inclusion Statement

The Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) of HMP Channings Wood is committed to treating all with whom members interact with respect and fairness, regardless of race, colour, ethnicity, religion, belief, national origin, gender, age, marital status, sexual orientation or disability.

Section 2 Description of the prison

HMP Channings Wood is a medium sized Category "C" training prison in a rural area of South Devon close to Newton Abbot. Its population fluctuate slightly in excess of 700 a large proportion of whom are considered vulnerable due to the nature of their offences. It has limited access by public transport with no public transport on Sundays. Prisoners' accommodation is split into three separate areas: the main wings, the vulnerable prisoner unit (incorporating LB1) and the drug therapeutic community. Contained within the perimeter fence are a sports field and an area that is used for horticulture. Education,

vocational courses and offending behaviour programmes are provided by Weston College. A4c are responsible for delivering Social and Life Skills provision and Tribal Group deliver the remainder of courses. Since April 1st, 2013 Healthcare has been provided by Dorset NHS University Trust. There is no In-patient Unit, nurses are on duty everyday and out of hours GP service is provided by Devon Doctors.

Section 3 Executive Summary

3.1 Executive Summary

It has been a very difficult year for HMP Channings Wood with a number of changes taking place that have had a significant impact upon the Establishment.

The Fair and Sustainable process, the Business Development Group process and the unsustainable pressure of long - term sickness amongst staff have had a marked effect upon staff morale.

March 2013 saw the arrival of a new Governor – Gavin O'Malley. Governor O'Malley has been very focused on reducing the long - term sickness figures in the Establishment and has introduced new procedures that are proving to be very effective in achieving this aim.

The Board is pleased to note that since his arrival, Governor O'Malley has reduced long - term sickness of staff significantly and is continuing to pursue this with vigour.

This, in turn, has led to considerable improvement in the Offender Management Unit as uniformed staff at work in the unit are not being called upon so often to cover for colleagues absent through sickness.

This year has also seen the establishment of a new Healthcare Provider contract with Dorset NHS University Trust. First indicators show that the first 5 months “bedding in” process has been successful and the service given is showing an improvement.

3.2 Questions for the Minister

None

3.3 Questions for NOMS

None

Section 4 Mandatory Reports

4.1 Last Year's Concerns – an update

The number of elderly and disabled prisoners continues to cause concern. It remains, in our view, to bring the fabric of the Prison up to an acceptable standard - one that meets current legislation and in particular, wheelchair accessible cells and showers. The Board has still not received a satisfactory response to our question to the Minister last year.

Plans still do not seem to be in place to address the number of places available in Psychiatric Units for prisoners to receive the support and treatment that is unavailable in prison.

It is still difficult for category D prisoners convicted of sexual offences to be moved to appropriate prisons.

Healthcare is under new management and the initial signs appear to be positive after only five months of the new contract. Improved pain relief, staffing numbers, Doctor continuity and Dentistry service continue to be closely monitored by the Board.

The Board still has ongoing concerns about the lack of offenders logged in the Anti-Bullying Register.

4.2 Equality & Inclusion

- there are currently two officers working in the social inclusion area
- written equality, diversity and disability policies are available to all staff and prisoners
- direct and indirect discrimination are not allowed
- prisoners are fully allowed to exercise their rights under equality and diversity legislation and are not victimised for doing so

- discrimination forms (DIRFS) and envelopes are available on all living blocks and other communal areas around the prison. All complaints under the DIRF are treated confidentially and fairly
- wherever possible, prisoners with mobility problems are located on ground floors and if sharing a cell, on the lower bunk
- there are several wheelchairs available to enable disabled prisoners to move around the prison
- grab rails are provided where necessary, portable ramps are available and a stair lift is provided in the education block to enable access to the library
- aid is provided for those with visual impairment
- healthcare for older prisoner is compatible with the National Service Framework for older people. It has been difficult to obtain Occupational Therapists in order to assess those prisoners with more physical needs. Some equipment has not been easily obtainable e.g. specialist beds.

The ethos of the prison, reflecting diversity, equality of opportunity and the absence of discrimination aims to ensure that the prison community totally rejects all forms of discriminatory behaviour and language whilst actively promoting equality of opportunity. To that end : -

- prisoners are treated with respect and dignity
- the prison is clean and provides reasonable facilities, showers and accommodation
- planned daily regimes
- prisoner/staff relationships are good
- workshops and courses are attended by an appropriate ethnic mix of prisoners
- incentives and earned privileges (IEPs) are fully explained and understood by prisoners and staff
- ACCT forms are completed accurately, fully recorded and managed by Safer Custody staff

- All prisoners are treated equally and with respect
- discrimination is not allowed under protected characteristics
- discrimination forms (Dirfs) and envelopes are available on all living blocks and communal areas around the prison. All complaints under the Dirf are treated confidentially and fairly
- staff receive an induction in diversity awareness
- diversity posters are displayed throughout the establishment
- the prison rules are available (in several languages) and are clearly understood

4.3 Foreign National Prisoners (FNP)

- a FNP policy is in place
- arrangements for family contact are in place
- translation services are available
- free monthly phone credit for those who have not received a visit in the preceding month is available
- there is access to a prisoners handbook and DIRFs in multiple languages
- there is universal access to healthcare
- there are canteen privileges for all prisoners

4.4 Education, Learning and Skills

Since the last report the Learning and Skills Department has undergone a major upheaval in the course of changing provider (from Strode College, A for E and Tribal) to Weston College.

Initially the lack of information about budget, new course details and staffing created great insecurity. Some courses were axed, many reduced in length, some tutors made redundant and many had their hour and/or salaries reduced.

With the benefit of hindsight the situation would have been less disruptive had Weston College been given greater access to the prison and information about issues and the provision of education in prisons. It would appear that Weston College did not have adequate information about the daily prison regime or even the annual prison cycle. They did not appear to understand the enormous diversity of abilities and educational background of prisoners.

Currently, however, staff are more settled and report many successes. The week - long induction courses are working well and retention is high. HMP Channings Wood is currently 2nd and 3rd for retention and achievement in the Southwest Cluster. There is a general feeling the Weston College is supportive and co-operative. There is some feeling that the mediocre results in some of the new course e.g. Life and Living Skills is due to a lack of guidance from the Examining Board.

The Distance Learning Courses are reporting success with 45 students working towards Open University (OU) degrees and Level 3 and 4 Diplomas supported by a member of the prison team

4.5 Healthcare and Mental Health

Since the 1st April 2013 healthcare has been delivered under the auspices of Dorset NHS University Trust. Initially there were communications difficulties but these are gradually being ironed out and there is a general impression that the provision is improving from that which was available previously. Problems are being anticipated and measures taken to address them.

Staffing issues are slowly being dealt with. It is the intention to have salaried General Practitioners (GPs) in place within the next quarter.

Training programmes are being initiated to up-skill staff, independent and supplementary prescribing training is being investigated, and leadership and management training and other programmes are being looked at.

Harmonisation of medications is being looked at for the whole Devon Prisons Cluster.

Pain Management Programmes are being made available.

The Substance Abuse Team have generally endorsed the new providers policy.

A Psychiatrist attends the Prison one day a week.

MIND (The Mental Health Charity) who used to have counsellors in the Prison 3 days a week no longer attend at all due to a cut in funding. This has obviously had a detrimental effect on mental health provision for prisoners with complex mental health needs.

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) has finished since the restructuring of the healthcare provision. To some extent this has been taken up by the Mental Health nurses. They would like to be able to offer more specific monitoring and support for prisoners with mental health issues. Prisoners who issues such as bi-polar disorder currently receive treatment fro a Band 6 mental health nurse.

The Psychological Programmes Department runs Thinking Programmes for Sex Offenders in groups with additional individual support where needed. Pre-course interviews have resulted in higher completion rates. Regrettably they no longer offer the Better Lives Booster Programme, it is now only available outside prison – it was valuable in relapse prevention. The Low Risk Programme has also been terminated.

Staffing levels are workable but training is still taking place.

The Psychology Department now operates as part of the South West of England Cluster. They are understaffed at the moment but managing their workload and feel supported by the prison structure.

We greatly regret the termination of the Belief in Change Programme that set out to meet the needs of those who had identified problems in their backgrounds and lifestyles that they wanted to change. Many have endorsed the benefits gained from the programme. The course Graduation Event was a very impressive affair.

4.6 Purposeful Activity (including work)

The Woodworking Department achieved a high degree of success in the first six months of 2013 completing a large order for the Ministry of Defence (MOD). They instituted a new

interviewing regime for prisoners to work on this order and this continuing to ensure that they only employ motivated workers. Since then, however, there have been very few new orders and both prisoners and machinery have been underemployed.

The Laundry has achieved more success and has contracts for HMP Exeter, Dartington Hall and HMP Guys Marsh.

4.7 Resettlement

The Prison continues to work diligently in achieving the results demanded in this area.

4.8 Safer Custody

HMP Channings Wood endeavours to ensure a safe environment for all prisoners in often challenging times. Staff are well informed of issues surrounding drug abuse, mobile phones and isolated pockets of violence within the prison, and also with external matters relating to their role.

Staff must be commended for their vigilance surrounding medication abuse, fence security and the detection of alcohol production and abuse.

It has to be noted that paperwork has been diverted to allow dog handlers more time to operate amongst prisoners and visitors.

A higher number of deaths in custody have occurred this year but nothing untoward has been noted.

4.9 Segregation, Care and Separation, Close Supervision

We continue to be impressed by the way the Segregation Unit is run and by the staff employed there. There have been staff changes during the last twelve months but the standard of excellence has been maintained with first- rate support of the Unit's appointed Governor.

The Unit staff has to deal with some of the most troubled and difficult prisoners. They are managed with the utmost consideration and professionalism.

This Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) regularly attends reviews and adjudications and has had a presence at each of the Segregation Monitoring and Review Group (SMARG) meetings over the last reporting period from which the following statistics have been gleaned :-

- 100% of initial Segregation Healthcare screenings were completed within 2 hours
- 100% of Review Boards were held within the specified time (from December 2012)
- the number of prisoners per week held in the Segregation Unit over the past twelve months averaged just under 6 per week (5.8). There was no use of force used to prevent self harm over this period and PPE was used fifteen times during the twelve months cycle.
- All officers are up to date with training for Diversity, Control and Restraint (C&R) and Suicide Awareness. All Segregation Unit staff will have a training day before September 2013
- One prisoner was held in the Unit from September 2012 until his release in April 2013. The Board were concerned about this and monitored the situation very carefully. The

prisoner concerned was reviewed and mentally assessed weekly. It has to be pointed out that after the initial segregation the prisoner specifically asked to remain on the Unit.

4.10 Residential Services including accommodation, food, catering and kitchens.

Staffing in this Department is continuously being reduced and is increasing reliant on civilian staff.

The mix of prisoners has also changed. Prisoners working here were, for a long time, exclusively from the Vulnerable Prisoners Wing (VPU) – LB5. Time and experience had proved this to be a reliable workforce. Recently prisoners from LB1, again a VPU wing but with a more volatile mix of individuals, have been included in the workforce. This has led to a less than harmonious working environment leading to more staff time being spent on sorting out prisoner disputes.

The Kitchen Layout was established to meet the needs of 4-600 prisoners, this is now stretched with the prison population between 7 and 8 hundred.

Kitchen equipment is deteriorating and frequently breaks down with maintenance contracts appearing to be inadequate for the task.

The budget allows for a daily spend of £1.96 per prisoner for all food and beverages. It is remarkable how the catering staff achieves what they do on this amount. The budget is always under pressure and prisoners with various religious dietary demands (that have to be catered for) stretch it even further. For example, the daily food and beverages cost for somebody of the Jewish faith is around £20.

Menus are changed quarterly, based upon prisoner food surveys.

The national food and beverages contract prevents the flexibility that used to be present when local purchasing was allowed. This is one area in which local business do not accrue any benefit from having such a large facility in the Community.

Changes to the Core Day

This area needs specific comment as it led to considerable upheaval and disquiet amongst the Officers and some reduction in prisoners' social contact and their ease of contact with friends and family.

Budget pressures led to the implementation of one core-day change and the preparation for a second. Opposition by the Prison Officers' Association (POA) to these changes was resolved nationally.

Some of the changes involved, for example, stopping visits on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, leaving slots only on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

The core day changes also led to less gym provision during the working day, access being limited to those on a course. This puts pressure on gym places.

Prisoner access to phones is expected to continue to be a sensitive issue. A rota for phone use after 6.30pm is planned.

The reduction in association from Monday to Thursday is counterbalanced by an increase in association on Saturday and Sunday mornings.

Prisoners Property

A common complain from prisoners being transferred from other Prisons to HMP Channings Wood is the time taken for their property to follow them. Because of the nature of the Prisoner transport contract and the capacity of the transport vehicle there is no room to carry personal property. Long - term prisoners have frequently gathered together a large amount of personal effects. It has often taken several months for their property to reach them. This issue also takes up a lot of the time of Board members.

BOARD STATISTICS

Recommended Complement of Board Members	16
Number of Board Members at the start of the reporting period	10
Number of Board Members at the end of the reporting period	9
Number of Board Members joining within the reporting period	0
Number of members leaving within the reporting period	1
Total of Board meetings during the reporting period	12
Total number of visits to the Establishment	563
Total number of segregation reviews held	120
Total number of segregation reviews attended	76
Dates of Annual Team Performance Review	N/A

APPLICATION STATISTICS

Code	Subject	Year 2010	Year 2011	Year 2012	Year 2013
A	ACCOMMODATION	1	1	16	11
B	ADJUDICATIONS	5	1	3	9
C	EQUALITY & DIVERSITY inc. RELIGION	7	4	0	6
D	EDUCATION/EMPLOYMENT/ TRAINING inc. IEP	23	32	21	15
E1	FAMILY/VISITS INC. MAIL & PHONE				15
E2	FINANCE/PAY				6
F	FOOD/KITCHEN RELATED	8	9	11	3
G	HEALTH RELATED	19	31	36	36
H1	PROPERTY (WITHIN THE CURRENT ESTABLISHMENT)				19
H2	PROPERTY DURING TRANSFER/IN ANOTHER ESTABLISHMENT				38
H3	CANTEEN, FACILITIES, CATALOGUE SHOPPING, ARGOS				2
I	SENTENCE RELATED inc. HDC, ROTL, PAROLE, RELEASE DATES, RECAT etc.	55	37	36	61
J	STAFF, PRISONER/DETAINEE CONCERNS inc. BULLYING	23	29	16	14
K	TRANSFERS	49	29	19	20
L	MISCELLANEOUS	39	33	49	21
	Total number of IMB Applications	312	264	238	276
	Of Total: Confidential Access				6

