



HMP/YOI Elmley

Annual Report 2013

Nov 1, 2012 - Oct 31, 2013

Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody

Section 1

STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB

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.

[for inclusion in prison IMB reports] 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.

Section 2

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Section 3

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

- 3.1 The baseline Certified Normal Accommodation (CNA) is 995, and the Operational Capacity (OPCAP) is 1252. Actual occupancy continues to run just below the OPCAP level, at around 1219, which is an increase of 69 on the previous reporting period.

The establishment is the local prison for most of Kent housing remand and sentenced adult prisoners (Category B & C), and remand Young Offenders.

The prison continues to house Vulnerable Prisoners (sentenced and remand), Foreign Nationals (remand, sentenced and those whose sentence has expired) and Lifers.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 4.1. HMP Elmley was subject to Benchmarking during the latter part of the reporting period. The aim is to reduce costs, which will be achieved by “doing things differently” in order to maintain “safe, decent and secure operating levels”. The Board will be monitoring the “New Ways of Working” process closely in the coming year. This is currently targeted to be fully implemented by March 2014. As part of “A Revolution in the Rehabilitation of Prisoners”, HMP Elmley is to become a resettlement prison in 2014.
- 4.2. The Board continues to be concerned by high levels of staff sickness. HMP Elmley has one of the highest sickness rates in the country. This is having a significant impact on the operation of the prison including, increase lockdowns in the Houseblocks and the Segregation Unit. Staff have to be deployed from areas such as Reception and Offender Management Unit (OMU) to cover, causing delays in the processing of prisoners property and administration.
- 4.3. HMP Elmley continues to house prisoners with mental health problems who would be better served in dedicated secure mental health facilities. These prisoners remain at HMP Elmley because of the shortage of places in such facilities.
- 4.4. It is sad to report that this year has seen two deaths in custody, both of which appear to be self-inflicted.
- 4.5. The Board finds that the current delay in inquests resulting from deaths in custody is still of concern. There are 10 inquests outstanding, whilst the longest if these is 3 years old, the Board is pleased to note that Inquests for some recent deaths in custody have completed more quickly.
- 4.6. The Board is pleased to now receive copies of the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman’s reports into deaths in custody.
- 4.7. At the time of writing there are currently 81 triple occupancy cells, which are designed for two prisoners. Whilst this is a decrease from the last annual report, the Board still continue to find this unacceptable and to breach human rights.

4.8. Particular Issues requiring a response

4.8.1. Policy matters on which a reply from the Minister is sought

- 4.8.1.1. When will triple cell occupancy be eliminated from HMP Elmley? (Ref: 4.7)
- 4.8.1.2. What measures can be taken to address the issue of staff shortages and resulting negative effect on the regime and prisoner’s wellbeing? (Ref: 4.2, 5.3.2, 5.7.11, 5.8.1.8, 6.1.1.2, 6.1.1.3, 6.1.2.1, 6.1.2.3, 6.4.1, 6.5.4, 6.7.1, 6.7.3, 6.9.1, 6.10.1.1)

4.8.2. Other matters which require the attention of the Minister

4.8.2.1. Prisoners suffering with Mental Health. (Ref: 4.3, 5.3.6)

4.8.3. An operational matter requiring a response prepared or commissioned by the Prison Service

4.8.3.1. What measures can the prison implement a long-term and sustainable solution to the issues of the management of prisoner property? (Ref: 6.1.1, 7.3.2)

4.8.3.2. How can the prison increase the use of the Library? (Ref: 6.5)

4.8.3.3. What measures are being taken to reduce the amount of contraband being thrown over the prison walls? (Ref: 6.8.1)

4.8.3.4. How can the prisoner Application process be improved? (Ref: 7.3.1)

4.9. Previous year's concerns

4.9.1. Time delay to inquests after deaths in custody – some improvement (Ref: 5.6.3)

4.9.2. Prisoners housed in triple occupancy cells – not resolved (Ref: 4.7)

4.9.3. Diversity issues (number of sole detainees) – not resolved

4.9.4. Number of lifers held in a local prison – not resolved (Ref: 6.6.2)

4.9.5. IMB tenure – not resolved (Ref: 7.1)

4.9.6. Staff shortages – not resolved (Ref: 4.2, 5.3.2, 5.7.11, 5.8.1.8, 6.1.1.2, 6.1.1.3, 6.1.2.1, 6.1.2.3, 6.4.1, 6.5.4, 6.7.1, 6.7.3, 6.9.1, 6.10.1.1)

4.9.7. Prisoners' personal property – not resolved (Ref: 6.1.1, 7.3.2)

4.9.8. Library use – not resolved (Ref: 6.5)

4.9.9. Effect of "Fair and Sustainable" – continued with "New Ways of Working" (Ref: 4.1)

4.9.10. Segregation Unit restricted regime – not resolved (Ref: 5.7)

4.9.11. Time to process Visit Orders – resolved with the implementation of a new system. (Ref: 6.10.1)

4.9.12. Healthcare – New provider has been commissioned, with positive results (Ref: 5.3.1)

Section 5

5.1. EQUALITY & INCLUSION

5.1.1. Diversity

- 5.1.1.1. The Board is satisfied that HMP Elmley is committed to providing a fair service to all. All the members of the Diversity Equality Action Team (DEAT) are actively engaged in the provision of a clear and positive lead on the operational management of equalities. The staff attend “Challenge it Change it” training to keep up to date with the Equality Act 2010. The Board recognises that HMP Elmley responds promptly and takes appropriate action whenever a diversity issue arises.

5.1.2. Complaints

- 5.1.2.1. The Board is not pleased with the monitoring system in place. All complaints are dealt with by internal investigations and reported at the bi-monthly DEAT meeting and documented in the minutes. The quality of responses and delay in some final replies could be improved.
- 5.1.2.2. The number of complaints raised by a Discrimination Incident Reporting Form (DIRF) in the Board year was 61, broken down as follows:

Staff discriminating against prisoners as regards to Race x 25, Religion x 10, Racist behaviour x 6, Disability x 3, Sexual Orientation x 8 and no equalities issues evident x 9.

Areas identified where complaints occur mostly is on HB 1 = 14, HB 2 = 5, HB 3 = 14, HB 4 = 5, HB 5 = 3, Healthcare = 4 and Segregation Unit = 4.

5.1.3. Chaplaincy

- 5.1.3.1. The Chaplaincy is made up with a multi-faith team from diverse faiths by full timers and sessional chaplains and other chaplains visit on request. The chaplaincy team play a vital part in all aspects of life at HMP Elmley. They attend to most major meetings and are part of the Senior Management Team (SMT). They have numerous other commitments for the welfare of the prisoners e.g. death in custody, hostage situations, receptions, first night induction, Assessment Care in Custody Teamwork (ACCT) documents and Good Order or Discipline (GOOD) reviews, arranging events and celebrations, worships and teaching. The Board is pleased to have a good working relationship with the Chaplaincy team and applauds the work that they do.

5.1.4. Race Equality

- 5.1.4.1. There are 62 identified nationalities within HMP Elmley. The Traveller community is increasing in numbers and the Board continues to monitor this group closely as there is concern that they may be disadvantaged and their needs unmet as a result of low levels of literacy and numeracy. Proportionately there are fewer Travellers on enhanced regime and less in

work.

5.2. EDUCATION, LEARNING AND SKILLS

- 5.2.1. All prisoners are assessed for literacy and numeracy during their induction period. There has to be a question mark over the use of this information as currently no general records are created and no action plans produced to assist systematic follow up.
- 5.2.2. Two important developments have now impacted on this: firstly the new OLASS4 contracts for education place the emphasis on outputs rather than on inputs, and funding follows proven results. The education department at Elmley was slow to adjust to this significant change. As reported last year, there were occasions when up to 56% of allocated students failed to attend their class. Concern was expressed, but planned and concerted action to address it was somewhat slow. The second breakthrough came when the Governor's bid for his own 'in house' dedicated Head of Learning and Skills was finally accepted. This in itself, although the post holder has only been in post for a few months, has made a significant positive impact on the delivery of education.

The syllabus has been revised and a new prospectus is being created, analysis of need is being translated into action plans, waiting lists created, education classes filled and absences monitored. Planning is in hand for the new Induction Programme due to start in January 2014, when the educational needs will be recorded in the Sentence Plan, which is currently not the case. Already it has been noted that there is pressure on some of the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes.

At last there is clear evidence of planning, assessment of need and that this information will be translated into 'action plans, and that resources will be adjusted to match identified needs. All this has been achieved despite the resignation of the Head of Education.

- 5.2.3. The Board regret the loss of the car mechanics and hairdressing training courses, these were clearly positive preparation in terms of future employability, and there was positive feedback that in the case of hairdressing that 'graduates' had either found employment or set up their own business. Closure was due to insufficient prisoners being placed on the courses. It has to be asked whether sufficient co-ordinated effort was made by all parties concerned to maximise the uptake in order to retain these courses. The Bricks and Construction Course also has a record of low numbers, despite there being information suggesting a much higher interest. Filling the valuable places on this most relevant employment rated course should be a priority. In the general upsurge in the construction industry in the National Economy, these employable skills should be maximised by training those capable within the prison population.
- 5.2.4. The Industrial Cleaning Course, which is not run by Education, continues to run at capacity, has issued over 200 qualifications and saves the prison over £40,000 a year on specialist cleaning. The prison has information that on discharge a number of prisoners that took the course were able to gain employment. The Board endorses

the decision by the Prison to challenge the recommendation by the Benchmarking team that certification on this course should be changed and are pleased that the Prison view has been upheld.

5.3. HEALTHCARE & MENTAL HEALTH

- 5.3.1. The primary healthcare for the three prisons on the Isle of Sheppey was taken over by South East Health in February 2013 and is now called IC24 Integrated Health. Since the takeover 45 new staff have been employed, this has helped to improve the care of the prisoners and also raised the morale of the staff. Unfortunately many of the new staff are not trained in the prison regime. It is hoped this will be rectified in the near future with ongoing training. At the beginning of 2014 there are to be clinical rooms opened on three Houseblocks and by the end of February all six Houseblocks should have a clinical consulting room, this will relieve the waiting time in outpatients and hopefully put an end to the increasing amount of Do Not Attends (DNAs).
- 5.3.2. There is still the ongoing problem of lack of prison staff in the department, which often leads to the delay in prisoners being taken to other parts of the prison.
- 5.3.3. The Board are concerned about the length of time that patients in healthcare are locked down; also some of the prisoners have resided on the Healthcare unit for longer than would seem necessary due to lack of suitable places for them to be placed within the prison estate.
- 5.3.4. There is still a considerable waiting time for both dentistry and the optician, which leads to a great deal of frustration with the prisoners.
- 5.3.5. Generally the Healthcare is clean and the staff are very helpful and cooperative when approached with a prisoner's problem. Working in Healthcare is very difficult and challenging for the staff and they do an excellent job. All the staff work very hard to maintain a good standard of care. It seems one of the biggest problems in the running of this department is the impact of the prison regime.
- 5.3.6. Mental health continues to be of great concern within the prison. There are many prisoners with mental health problems and this has not been helped by three changes of psychiatrists over the last three months, this is very unsettling for the prisoners. There is still a long delay in finding suitable placements in secure units for prisoners, thus putting further strain on the nursing staff. The INREACH team are very helpful and should be congratulated on their continuing hard work with the prisoners with mental health problems.

5.4. PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY

- 5.4.1. The 4 workshops, which have sufficient work, and kitchen together provide out of cell purposeful activity for up to 200 prisoners. The work is routine, but this is largely

necessary in a large local prison with a transient population and high turnover. The shops are not always maintained to capacity level and there is a degree of 'absenteeism', but this is now being more closely monitored. As with other like establishments, there is a fairly high percentage of prisoners engaged in cleaning and orderly roles. Including outside cleaners this totals about 40%. Then it is important to have a clean prison.

- 5.4.2. Despite the workshop and education provision, there remain about 170 (15%) of prisoners who are not engaged in purposeful activity. Some of this is due to health, or age reasons or drug withdrawal.

5.5. RESETTLEMENT

- 5.5.1. The Resettlement Key Performance Targets (KPTs) are 90% of prisoners released will have accommodation, 4% will have a training/education placement and 25% will have a job. In the reporting period, the resettlement team consistently beat these targets with average figures of 93%, 6.79% and 35.42% respectively. The Board will be monitoring very closely the new Through The Gates Strategy, which is to be operational by the end of the next reporting period. Many of the current services will be put to outside tender.

The current pathways are:

- 5.5.1.1.1. National Careers Service whose only target is that they see 6 people per day with 6 members of staff.
- 5.5.1.2. Job Deal is provided by an organisation called St Giles and they are responsible for the very successful results in getting prisoners training/education placements. Unfortunately their contract ends in June 2014.
- 5.5.1.3. Job Centre+ is active in the prison.
- 5.5.1.4. PACT offer the Time to Connect Course which is very good and helps Fathers learn how to be better parents. Again this is not in the Through The Gates Strategy.
- 5.5.1.5. The Children and Families team provide a telephone service to families of prisoners. They receive upwards of 15 calls per day from troubled families and are, again a forgotten pathway in the new strategy. They also co-ordinate the highly valuable Toe by Toe scheme and Storybook Dads.
- 5.5.1.6. Finance, benefit and debt work with a charity called Unlock and have a deal with Santander to help prisoners open bank accounts. They have a target of opening 20 bank accounts per month, which they consistently achieve.
- 5.5.1.7. The Citizen's Advice Bureau come in and run debt sessions and have drop-in sessions in the Visits Centre. They are also in the cafe outside the prison every other week for families.
- 5.5.2. Searching for jobs is very difficult from the prison as the server is extremely outdated. However, the department organised a job fair in the reporting period which was again, very successful. The resettlement team have good contacts with many local companies including the Railways, HGV firms and construction companies.

- 5.5.3. One of the biggest problems facing Elmley prisoners is that there is virtually no Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) and so prisoners do not have the opportunity to demonstrate reliability prior to release.
- 5.5.4. Similarly, there is a need for a specialised resettlement officer or admin staff member to be available for HB5 as it is a designated Cat C Houseblock.
- 5.5.5. The work of the Resettlement department is applauded by the Board.

5.6. SAFER CUSTODY

- 5.6.1. Violence Reduction: Trends indicate that there has been a reduction in reported incidents over the past 12 months, with the number of violent assaults showing a marked decrease. Violence reduction reps are recruited from volunteers or nominated prisoners and it is intended to implement a training regime in the near future, which will be similar to the highly successful package currently undertaken by the Listeners.
- 5.6.2. Self Harm: There has been a steady rise in the number of Assessment Care in Custody Teamwork (ACCT) documents opened although serious incidents of self harm have reduced during the same period. Currently there is better staff awareness of the problem, reflected in the commensurate improvement in completion of ACCT documentation. Listeners continue to be trained effectively by the Samaritans.
- 5.6.3. Deaths in Custody/Inquests: There have been 2 deaths in custody, both self-inflicted and at present there are 10 inquests outstanding, the longest delay being 3 years.
- 5.6.4. General: Safer Custody Meetings are held monthly and are usually well attended by a relevant cross section of prison staff, agencies and prisoner reps. Benchmarking has led to proposed changes in staff appointments that will be responsible for the management of safer custody (and Diversity) in future. The effect of these changes will be closely monitored by the IMB.

5.7. SEGREGATION, CARE & SEPARATION, CLOSE SUPERVISION

- 5.7.1. The Segregation Unit consists of 26 cells in the main block and 2 special accommodation cells. Of the 26, 23 are in regular use, 2 are used as holding cells for prisoners awaiting adjudication and 1 cell is used for storage. These last 3 cells would also be available for normal accommodation if required.

The Board ensures that the Segregation Unit is visited every time a member is in the prison and that all prisoners are seen as soon as possible after being segregated, almost always within 24 hours, and then as frequently as possible, which is at least three times a week.

- 5.7.2. The Board attends the majority of GOOD reviews and Segregation ACCT reviews. GOOD reviews are usually attended by all the requisite parties, promptly at the scheduled time; however, we should note that on occasions other parties have suffered from the late arrival of the reviewing Governor. Also we are concerned that a number of GOOD reviews have been conducted as 'paper exercises' with no prisoner and some other parties not present. The Board also notes that there have been several instances when a Healthcare representative has not been present, although there has been an improvement compared to the previous reporting period. There

have also been occasions when GOOD reviews have been postponed for 24 hours due to pressure of work - usually when the Independent Adjudicator is conducting adjudications.

- 5.7.3. Staff are to be commended that the Special Accommodation cells are used infrequently, and even then usually for a very short period of time for any individual occupant.
- 5.7.4. Again, the Board has some concern over the number of prisoners in the Unit on GOOD. Although it fluctuates, having started the year at a low level, it is disappointing to see consistently higher numbers throughout the remainder of the year.
- 5.7.5. During the year, a number of cells have been regularly out of commission at any one time. The reasons include maintenance, cell damage and the results of dirty protests. Unfortunately this is a situation which is unlikely to be completely eradicated.
- 5.7.6. There have been an increased number of dirty protests compared to the last reporting period and the staff are to be commended for their continued professionalism and restraint under very difficult conditions.
- 5.7.7. There have also been occasions when the Unit has been expected to take overspill from the Segregation Unit at HMP Swaleside. Staff have therefore had to cope with unexpected influxes of more serious offenders and have dealt with them well. The Unit has also had to receive volatile prisoners from Lewes and Rochester following serious incidents.
- 5.7.8. There are several longer term residents (currently 9) in the Unit, which is of some concern to the Board. It is noted, however, that the management do their utmost to re-locate these prisoners, if not onto the Houseblocks, then to other prisons. The Board also accepts that it is undesirable to give way to prisoners who are using bad behaviour in order to force transfers.
- 5.7.9. Adjudications are held in a bespoke room within the unit and all those attended by Board members have been conducted justly and professionally. There have been a series of charges that were thrown out by the Independent Adjudicator because of incomplete or inaccurate paperwork, the Board does not find this acceptable from a justice point of view. Nor is it acceptable that adjudications are adjourned because staff witnesses are unavailable.
- 5.7.10. There have been occasional issues over the food in the Unit, where deliveries from the kitchen have been short of requirement, but it is difficult for the Board to state where the fault lies. At those times there has been an obvious communication breakdown, but examples are becoming rarer, and when they occur, they are rectified. Also the Board has noted on several occasions the poor quality of the food. However, examination of the food comments book, which is kept by the servery, rarely highlights any issues, and the Board receives almost no food complaints.
- 5.7.11. There have been instances during the year when there have been restrictions on the prisoners' regime. These are becoming increasingly common; they occur as a result of Segregation Unit staff being deployed elsewhere in the afternoons. The most obvious manifestation of this is a restriction of exercise time. This is a concern to the Board as it could lead to frustration and tension.

- 5.7.12. It should also be noted that the cleanliness of the outside exercise areas leaves something to be desired, particularly the larger of the two areas, where ground-in litter and debris could become a health hazard.
- 5.7.13. Segregation Monitoring and Review Group (SMARG) meetings should be held quarterly. This has not been happening. There has been only one held during this reporting period.

5.8. RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

5.8.1. Houseblock 1

- 5.8.1.1. The population of this Houseblock was made up of those on the First Night In Prison (FNIP) spur, vulnerable prisoners and sex offenders. Population changes took place towards the end of our reporting year when the vulnerable prisoners and sex offenders were re-located to Houseblock 6.
- 5.8.1.2. This Houseblock had a high turnover of prisoners, particularly on the FNIP spur, and cleaning and checking of cells before the next prisoners arrived put pressure on all of those involved.
- 5.8.1.3. Prisoners received into Reception were escorted onto the Houseblock. New prisoners arrived almost daily and it was an extremely busy function at times.
- 5.8.1.4. Prisoners were interviewed by staff on an individual basis and seen by Healthcare. We were informed that Healthcare/In-Reach staff took up to an hour with each prisoner, thus causing delays.
- 5.8.1.5. As Elmley is the local prison for the South East, many prisoners arrived late in the day. This caused pressure on the Reception staff, 'Insiders', fellow prisoners, and staff in the FNIP spur leaving very limited time to go through the essential first night protocol, including the provision of a hot evening meal, use of a telephone, basic information, shower and appropriate cell.
- 5.8.1.6. Insiders helped new prisoners settle in on their arrival to the Houseblock. A spur is set aside for the First Night In Prison prisoners and, until recently, Insiders were themselves housed there on the upper level of the spur providing a useful resource for the more vulnerable 'first nighters' when they could raise concerns without delay. They had single cells with their own keys and felt the enhancement of being a Cat C prisoner. However, they felt 'demoted' when they were relocated on Houseblock 5, a Cat C unit, sharing a cell with another prisoner. This has been raised with the Governor. It was a useful resource which has been lost
- 5.8.1.7. Despite the current insufficient numbers of Insiders, they have continued to raise any concerns about prisoners with staff and have done an excellent job. The Insiders and staff are to be commended for their efforts in ensuring that essential services have been provided despite the pressure of time and lack of resources.

- 5.8.1.8. The Custodial Managers have been frequently taken off the Houseblock throughout the year to cover duties elsewhere. There have also been staff shortages resulting in 'day trippers'.
 - 5.8.1.9. The Houseblock suffered numerous shutdowns during the year. Shutdowns are not acceptable and will cause instability in the long term if the situation continues. However, shutdowns have been monitored to ensure that they have been fairly allocated throughout the establishment.
- 5.8.2. Houseblock 2
- 5.8.2.1. This Houseblock houses prisoners serving various length of sentence. There is a considerable drugs problem and also mobile telephones are found on the block quite frequently, this is of concern to the Board. There are adequate facilities for association with pool and table tennis tables on each spur. This block also has classrooms for Arts and ICT and on average there are 35 prisoners on the list each day. Staff morale is fairly low due to cutbacks in staff.
- 5.8.3. Houseblock 3
- 5.8.3.1. Houseblock three is the substance misuse recovery unit. Offenders are identified in the First Night Centre (FNC) and are located on HB3 for both clinical and psychosocial interventions as required.
- 5.8.4. Houseblock 4
- 5.8.4.1. Houseblock 4 houses mostly Foreign Nationals. The staff complete diversity training and have translated leaflets in 10 different languages, recruited red-bands and held meetings as and when needed. Prisoners' reps attended all meetings i.e. DEAT meetings, Prisoners Consultative meetings and in-house meetings.
- 5.8.5. Houseblock 5
- 5.8.5.1. Houseblock 5 has been identified as Cat C/D accommodation with a differentiated and enhanced regime to provide a resettlement and community unit. The unit aims to provide more individually tailored advice and assistance in dealing with housing, employment education and benefits. It was also envisaged that in due course there would be opportunities to meet with Probation at local offices, attending local training colleges, and to participate in local community projects.
 - 5.8.5.2. The regime has generally been well received by the residents, but current staff shortages has meant some curtailment to the regime leading to some concern by the prisoners about its future. An assurance has been given that under Benchmarking the Houseblock will be unlocked throughout the core day. Other issues raised by the prisoners include Home Detention Curfew (HDC) boards not being held at the earliest date. This is due largely to the Probation Home Circumstances Reports not being made available in time for the scheduled board. The other issue is about the very few positive decisions with reference to Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL). It is early days, but this was a feature built into the

concept for this unit. If Elmley is to be a Resettlement Prison, then this item will become a bigger issue and will need to be addressed. This will place even greater strain on what is an already reduced management team.

5.8.6. Houseblock 6

- 5.8.6.1. Houseblock 6 was a generic block with no outstanding issues during the reporting period but that going forward will house Foreign Nationals and Vulnerable Prisoners (VPs), which the Board will be monitoring closely.

5.8.7. Kitchen & Catering

- 5.8.7.1. Food Quality: Members of the Board regularly taste the food at the Houseblock and Segregation Unit Serveries. Food quality is a subjective issue, which is difficult to quantify, particularly when different people taste the meals. Generally the quality of the food is acceptable. The number of Applications received by the Board from prisoners specifically on food quality and quantity are relatively few. However, the Board would like to see a wider variety of menus and the use of more fresh ingredients and vegetables.

Each servery has a complaints book that prisoners can enter comments in. These comments are collated by the Kitchen and genuine food complaints are responded to by the Catering Manager. In a typical month the Kitchen will receive approx. 10-12 comments and 2-3 formal complaints.

- 5.8.7.2. Budgets: From 1st April the budget for prisoner's meals was reduced from £2.09 to £1.96 per day. The Kitchen has implemented this change, without any discernible reduction in choice or quality.
- 5.8.7.3. Horsemeat Scandal: Elmley, as with all other prisons, was affected by this. As a large prison with a diverse catering requirement, Elmley was asked by the Prison Service to send 27 samples of meat for independent testing. All samples were found to have traces of horsemeat or pork. This obviously had an impact on the Halal meals. All Halal meat has now been re-sourced from other suppliers.
- 5.8.7.4. Staffing Levels: Prisoner staffing levels have continued to be a problem mainly as only low-risk prisoners can be employed. The Kitchen's full prisoner compliment is 30; however it can operate efficiently with around 20. At times the number of prisoners has been as low as 13. This issue has largely been addressed by allowing medium-risk prisoners to be employed. This change of policy was introduced in July. However, the recruitment and retention of inmates to work in the kitchen is affected by the large turnover of prisoners typical of a Local Prison.
- 5.8.7.5. Tea Packs: At the end of last year the Board received numerous complaints about prison-wide shortages of Tea Packs on the Houseblocks. This problem was on-going for 3-4 months. A number of initiatives were introduced including Cleaning Officers in each Houseblock having to sign for the packs and hence be held accountable for them and

changing where and how the Tea Packs were prepared. This issue has now been resolved.

- 5.8.7.6. Catering Liaison: In July the Catering Manager appointed members of the Kitchen team to the additional role of Catering Liaison. The role is to observe in each Houseblock the amount of food being served, prisoner server clothing, prison officers present, food hygiene, ensure food complaints book is accessible and provide support to Cleaning Officers. The Board applauds this proactive initiative, which has partly helped to overcome the Tea Pack shortage and address prisoners' complaints about food.
- 5.8.7.7. Lunch: In order to streamline the lunchtime catering, in March the existing selection of hot and cold food was replaced with a just cold choices, typically sandwiches in 'Grab Bags'. This was abandoned after a week due to complaints from prisoners. The Board has been informed that this issue will again be addressed in November.
- 5.8.7.8. Cold Preparation Area: Part of the kitchen warehouse was converted into a cold preparation room in April in anticipation of the introduction of the lunchtime cold 'Grab Bags'. It also addressed some food hygiene issues that were highlighted by Environmental Health during a past visit. Since the 'Grab Bag' trial was abandoned the area has been used as cold storage.
- 5.8.7.9. Catering for HMP Standford Hill: Providing all of the meals for Standford Hill has proved problematic for the Kitchen, resulting in a number of complaints about food quality and quantity. This issue was resolved in July when the supply of catering services to Standford Hill was transferred to HMP Swaleside.
- 5.8.7.10. The Catering Manager has proposed to use the Staff Mess in the afternoons to run lifestyle education programs for prisoners, such as 'Cooking on a Budget'. These courses have been submitted to management for approval. The cost of running the Staff Mess is always under review and the Board see this as a way of securing the long-term viability of this facility.

Section 6

6.1. INDUCTION/RECEPTION

6.1.1. Reception & Property

- 6.1.1.1. The Reception area processes over 20,000 movements per year. It runs relatively smoothly, with occasional late arrivals who are coped with well. Members are still called upon to investigate problems with property, but staff are co-operative and largely the issues raised are outside their sphere of influence.
- 6.1.1.2. One area of serious concern is the difficulty that prisoners have in accessing stored or newly arrived property. Very often staff are not available to accommodate this, because they are being utilised to process released/outgoing prisoners, or elsewhere in the prison. Also the distribution of property at weekends often has to be postponed because of calls on staff deployed to other more critical areas. This has meant that some prisoners who have transferred in from as close as HMP Standford Hill have not received their transferred property for several weeks.
- 6.1.1.3. There have been times when the waiting list for the call-up of prisoners for distribution or exchange of property has exceeded 100. Clearly with other calls on staff this will inevitably lead to considerable delay. At the time of writing, weekend call-ups in the Reception area have re-started after a two month gap, funded by Payment Plus. This will help to cut the back-log, which at the time of reporting had been reduced by half.
- 6.1.1.3.1. The Board receives more Applications for property issues than any other category.

6.1.2. Induction

- 6.1.2.1. Due to the lack of staff this year, Induction did not always take place on every possible day. Induction was also carried out entirely by the team of Insiders.
- 6.1.2.2. The team of Insiders that have provided this service to fellow prisoners should be commended for their commitment to such an important role within the establishment.
- 6.1.2.3. Members of staff that oversaw the work of the Insiders were often 'day trippers' from other Houseblocks because of staff shortages and had little, if any, experience of the Induction process.
- 6.1.2.4. Inductions have also taken place on Houseblock 3 where prisoners are on IDTS and in the Recovery Unit of Healthcare when they are too unwell to be located on the FNIP spur. Peer workers attend the latter to undertake inductions.
- 6.1.2.5. During the reporting year there were 3,627 inductions.

6.2. DRUGS/SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- 6.2.1. The service is provided by Rehabilitation for Addicted Prisoners Trust (RAPT) and Central & North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL), who work closely with other departments within the prison. As offenders progress through their recovery or for operational reasons some of the clients are located elsewhere within the prison.
- 6.2.2. With the changes to the induction system for all prisoners, those that are located on Houseblock 3, will receive an equivalent induction on the Houseblock to facilitate their clinical stabilisation.
- 6.2.3. The use of peer supporters is increasing and regular training is going to be rolled out to ensure an ample supply of peer support is available.
- 6.2.4. There have been challenges with offenders misusing prescribed medication, however with effective multi-agency working this has reduced.
- 6.2.5. The number of programmes being delivered on the Houseblock has expanded to ensure that the broad needs of a local prison are met. Fellowship meetings are also held on the wing to support those in various stages of recovery.

6.3. FOREIGN NATIONALS

- 6.3.1. UKBA hold weekly surgeries and the repatriation process can be slow because the nature and seriousness of the original offences may make prisoners who have completed their sentences unsuitable for a Detention Centre. Monthly surgeries are also held by Migrant Help.

6.4. GYM & PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 6.4.1. The gymnasium and courts continue to be popular at Elmley. However, the reduction in funds and staffing levels has resulted in a decrease of use. This is mainly due to reduced movements within the prison not facilitating access to the gym at the allotted times.
- 6.4.2. Purposeful activities continue including certificated courses for prisoners and training in C & R, First Aid, Manual Handling and Team Building for staff.

6.5. LIBRARY

- 6.5.1. This report is written against a backdrop of Kent County Council (KCC) cuts, which will include their library services.
- 6.5.2. There appears little change from last year's report. The revised visit timetable should have made the attendance easier, but from January 2013 to August 2013 the overall use amounted to only 36%, while individual Houseblock use ranged from 23% to 83% of their allotted time.
- 6.5.3. In mid-September the evening openings were cancelled as the prison evening regime was changed. The first 7 weeks showed an overall take up of 37.14%.
- 6.5.4. The biggest single factor for low support is the shortage of prison staff to escort the prisoners to and from the library, but there are other causes also, including KCC staff shortage and late roll calls.

- 6.5.5. Book losses still run at a higher rate than other establishments of a similar size, but it is felt that the high turnover of prisoners in a local prison is the main cause.
- 6.5.6. The Board would not like to see the loss of this valuable resource to the prisoners.

6.6. LIFERS

- 6.6.1. Implementation of the Performance Improvement Plan will refresh the plans of lifers and also cross reference with the Public Protection Unit Database (PPUD). This will also include the Probation Service. This will show up the various review dates so nothing is overlooked or the prisoner misses any opportunity. This is managed and maintained by a dedicated member of staff.
- 6.6.2. There are currently a total of 114 Lifers (46 Life, 68 IPP) accommodated in HMP Elmley. Again, the Board finds these numbers too high as it is not possible for these prisoners to be able to work through their sentence plans in a local prison.

6.7. OFFENDER MANAGEMENT UNIT (OMU)

- 6.7.1. Following on from the re-organising of the work structure implemented last year they are still working with four Band 4 officers below establishment, this has been shown up by the Benchmarking. OMU is in the process of recruiting to fill those positions.
- 6.7.2. Officers and members are grouped into 'Pods' led by a Band 4 officer supported by a case worker for a designated prisoner. In the past there were 4 or 5 officers dealing with different parts of the plan. There is now one person responsible for one prisoner. This system seems to be well bedded down and has the advantage of covering leave and sickness.
- 6.7.3. As at mid-November 2013 there is a backlog of Offender Assessment System (OASYS) of 234. These have all been identified by the Offender Supervisors. The primary reason for the backlog was the temporary re-allocation of OMU staff to other parts of the prison to cover holiday periods. The OMU is currently working on a plan to reduce the backlog by April 2014.
- 6.7.4. Over the last 12 months much has been achieved in OMU. Sickness has drastically reduced. The POD system is working well and staff should be congratulated on their efforts.
- 6.7.5. Observation Classification & Allocation(OCA)
 - 6.7.5.1. At the time of compiling this report HMP Swaleside's OCA has just been taken back in to that establishment.
 - 6.7.5.2. By February 2014 HMP Stanford Hill will also be housed in that establishment.
 - 6.7.5.3. It is proposed that the Court Liaison work will be transferred from Activities in to the OCA with the Officer. This will give a complement of four who will all be multi-disciplined, which will cover sickness and leave.

6.8. SECURITY

- 6.8.1. The import and distribution of drugs and mobile phones continues to be the main concern and focus of the security staff at HMP Elmley. During August - October 2013 packages being thrown over the back wall of the prison was seen as the main point of access, after 8 were located by prison staff over a single 10-day period.
- 6.8.2. There have been a number of successful intelligence led searches over the last few months in addition to regular reactive searches by Houseblock staff and monitoring of prison visitors, including full body searches and use of specialist search dogs.
- 6.8.3. It is perceived that the main drugs threat for the near future will be from the import of "New Psychoactive Substances" (NPS), a cannabis substitute known colloquially as "spice." New technology in the form of phone "blockers" will be available to security staff from December 2013 which, if successful, should go some way to eliminating illegal telephone communications within targeted areas of the prison.
- 6.8.4. Security Meetings are held monthly and currently these are not always well attended with the absence of Houseblock Custodial Managers or alternatively Senior Officers identified as the main shortfall. Additionally Benchmarking is likely to reduce the number of security staff available on a day-to-day basis in future.
- 6.8.5. The latest Security Audit was graded "Amber/Green".

6.9. STAFF

- 6.9.1. The Board has noticed low morale amongst some staff. This maybe as a result of the increased pressure on Officers as a result of staff shortages, the benchmarking process and the impact of staff members taking voluntary redundancy.

6.10. VISITS & VISITOR CENTRE

6.10.1. Prisoner Visits

- 6.10.1.1. The processing of Visit Orders (VO) has continued to be problematic. Staff shortages and high workload has meant the at times a backlog of up to 2 weeks occurred. This created numerous complaints from prisoners. The staff that processed VOs also dealt with visitor bookings on the phone and by email as well as in person on afternoons of visit days.
- 6.10.1.2. In order to help streamline the VO processing, in March the processing staff no longer took bookings in person. A new policy to take visitor bookings in the external Visitor Centre was introduced.
- 6.10.1.3. In March a new streamline VO booking system for prisoners in HB5 was also introduced that allowed them to book their own visits, thus speeding up the booking process.
- 6.10.1.4. From November the existing system for booking both legal and social visits will be transferred to Sheppey Group Visit Booking a centralised booking system for Elmley, Swaleside and Standford Hill. The new system will remove the need for prisoners to apply for each visit using a paper VO. Approved visitors will be able to book directly by phone and email. The Board will continue to closely monitor the performance of the new system.

6.10.1.5. The Children's play areas in both the Visits Hall and Visitors centre is run by PACT, a national charity which supports people affected by imprisonment, providing practical and emotional support to prisoners' children and families, and to prisoners themselves. PACT employs a full-time Play Co-ordinator who recruits volunteers to work in all three prisons on the Isle of Sheppy. Currently the Play Co-ordinator doesn't wish to recruit volunteers for HMP Elmley until the issues with the play area in the Visitor Centre (see section below) and security issues with the play area in the Visits Hall have been addressed. This means that the play area in the Visits Hall is only currently open 3 days a week and only then manned by the Play Co-ordinator. The Board believes this is an unsatisfactory situation. The issue has been raised with the Governor.

6.10.2. Visitor Centre

6.10.2.1. Contact between staff and a visitor is through a plexi-glass screen with a small aperture to pass documents and a number of small holes to talk through. Staff have to shout very loudly to be heard and it can be difficult to communicate effectively with the noisy environment. In January staff requested a simple intercom system to be fitted. This still has not been installed.

6.10.2.2. On the back of the Visitor Centre is a conservatory that is used as a play area. There are no blinds on the window and the room becomes insufferably hot, there are also very few toys for the children to play with. The rear door can be opened, but outside the back the ground is overgrown with nettles and weeds. The gardening comes under Stanford Hill's control as the Visitor Centre is outside Elmley prison. This does not give a good first impression of the prison to visitors. These issues have been raised with the Governor.

6.10.2.3. With the introduction of the new centralised visitor booking system the Visitor Centre will no longer be able to take future bookings directly from visitors when they are checking in for their current visit. This is a useful service for disadvantaged and elderly visitors who may find it difficult to use the phone or email.

6.11. WORKS & GROUNDS

6.11.1. Works

6.11.1.1. Planned Maintenance is as usual mostly up to date with the fire alarm system causing a demanding maintenance level to keep in service. The works department have a high amount of repair work to undertake due to damage by prisoners in their cells especially in the segregation unit. Ageing equipment within the Kitchen also adds to unplanned but high priority work.

6.11.1.2. The Works department seem to cope with all that is needed from them but a feeling of uncertainty about their positions due to privatisation of the department is causing concern.

- 6.11.1.3. Major capital schemes this year have included continuing shower block refurbishment, extra CCTV coverage and most noticeably the biometric key and prison entrance system (Tracker) which is working well now.
- 6.11.2. Grounds
 - 6.11.2.1. The gardens have continued to be a credit to the ground staff again this year. The flower beds and displays at the entrance and in the courtyard have been excellent.
 - 6.11.2.2. The litter around the Houseblock living areas is still a problem, each morning it is unsightly and without the clean-up efforts it could become a health hazard. We also notice in a few areas around rubbish bins and stairways litter can be left to accumulate.

THE WORK OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD

7.1 BOARD MEETINGS

The Board held 12 meetings during the period 1st November 2012 to the 31st October 2013, with an average of 75% membership attendance. One member completed their probationary period. This brings Board numbers to 13. The Board is concerned that as a result of the 15 year tenure rule, two experienced members will leave in December 2013, and two more in December 2015.

7.2 ROTA VISITS

Each Board member visits the establishment at least three times a month, to fulfil the Board's duties. Members also attended on other occasions, for meetings such as Violence Reduction, Drug Strategy and Course presentations, Diversity etc. as well as for training, interviewing, escorting visiting Boards and administrative duties. The Board attended the establishment 454 times during the reporting period.

It is the aim of the Board to have at least one member visiting the prison every weekday.

7.3 APPLICATIONS

7.3.1 The Board dealt with 882 applications during the year to 31st October 2013; an increase of 300 (+51%) from the previous year. The Board believes that the significant increase is mainly due to staff shortages causing delay in delivery of the regime. The Board feels that many prisoners do not have faith in the prison application process and so bypass it by raising Applications with the IMB in the first instance.

7.3.2 The Board is concerned at the extremely large increase in the number of applications received for Property issues. These have doubled year on year, to nearly 3 per week.

7.3.3 Applications related to Healthcare have also doubled compared to last year.

7.3.4 Sentenced related applications have increased by approx. 50%. The Board believes this is in part to delayed HDC and Parole boards.

7.4 TRAINING

Members of the Board attended National Training courses, visits to other establishments and received presentations from different functions within the Prison during the regular Board Meetings.

BOARD STATISTICS	
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Recommended Complement of Board Members	20
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	13
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	13
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	0
Number of members leaving within reporting period	0
Total number of Board meetings during reporting period	12
Total number of visits to the Establishment	454
Total number of segregation reviews held	Figures not available
Total number of segregation reviews attended	88
Date of Annual Team Performance Review	Aug 2014

Section 7 (cont.)

IMB Applications:

Code	Subject	Year 2010	Year 2011	Year 2012	Year 2013
A	Accommodation	9	22	5	15
B	Adjudications	5	11	4	35
C	Equality & Diversity (inc religion)	7	6	9	8
D	Education/employment/training inc IEP	41	15	28	46
E 1	Family/visits inc mail & phone	89	96	78	64
E 2	Finance/pay	24	25	24	26
F	Food/kitchen related	3	3	3	23
G	Health related	91	81	60	125
H 1 & H2	Property	102	84	73	144
H 3	Canteen, facilities, Catalogue shopping, Argos	16	5	8	6
I	Sentence related (inc. HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-cat etc)	113	169	98	161
J	Staff/prisoner/detainee concerns inc bullying	62	73	47	68
K	Transfers	49	59	74	98
L	Miscellaneous	59	56	74	65
	Total number of IMB applications	667	702	582	882
	Of total: number of IMB Confidential Access was:	17	25	29	10

Section 8

GLOSSARY OF ESTABLISHMENT RELATED TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS REPORT

8.1 The convention used in this report is to write out in full a term on its first use followed by, in brackets, the abbreviation, which is used thereafter.
