



HMP GARTH

IMB

ANNUAL REPORT

REPORTING PERIOD

1st December 2009 - 30th November 2010

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 Home Secretary from members of the community in which the prison or centre is situated.

The Board is specifically charged to;

1. Satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody within its prison and the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release.
2. Inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom he has delegated authority as it judges appropriate, any concerns 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 the right of access to every prisoner and every part of the prison and also the prison records.

SECTION 2

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SECTION 3

Description of the Prison

- 3.1 HMP Garth is a Category B Training Prison. It opened in 1988 and holds long-term and life sentenced prisoners, together with IPP prisoners. E Wing opened in 1997 and houses a Therapeutic Community run in conjunction with Phoenix Futures. In 2007 a further two wings were added ie. F & G, together with three new workshops, an education centre, a new kitchen and additional gym facilities.
- 3.2 The Healthcare Services are provided by the Central Lancashire Primary Care Trust. The Centre is a Type 3 facility and can accommodate up to 8 prisoners.
- 3.3 Education and Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) are provided by Manchester College.
- 3.4 The Operational Capacity is 847, with a certified normal accommodation (CAN) of 812. Of these, 65% are serving a Life Sentence.

SECTION 4

Executive Summary

Issues requiring a response:-

4.1 The Board continues to be concerned about prisoners in possession of mobile phones, and notes that the Boss Chair appears to be under-utilised, especially on Wings, and staff searches are seldom performed.

Shortages of resources means that intelligence led searching is incomplete and reduced attendance, at visits , of the North West Drug Dog Team will challenge staff to, simultaneously, deter drug passing and facilitate quality visits.(6.9),(6.5.5)

4.2 Workshops are still experiencing a deficiency in the availability of work, 2 out of the 13 workshops being closed. Theoretical training in employability skills cannot wholly substitute for practical experience. (5.2.2)

4.3 The board is increasingly concerned about the number of disruptive prisoners with serious mental health issues, and personality disorders, held in Segregation, sometimes for over 3 months.

The intended closure of the 8 bed in-patient unit represents the withdrawal of an important and well-utilized resource.(6.5.5)(5.3)

Other Concerns:-

4.4 Although there has been an increase in progressive transfers, there are still approx 150 Cat C prisoners awaiting transfer to Cat C establishments.

If the range of programmes offered at Garth is reduced there will be a substantial increase in the number of prisoners awaiting transfer to establishments delivering the programmes specified in their Sentence Plans.(6.1.3) (6.2)

4.5 Administrative support for the 'Security Vetting' of non-directly employed staff appears to be deficient. This can be compounded by a lack of communication between contact vetting points and Gate staff. (6.4)(6.9)

Overall Judgement

The Board considers that, even in the current economic climate, the prison continues to provide a safe environment where prisoners are treated with decency and respect and have access to an intensive programme of education and skills, but has serious concerns regarding the effect , on the regime, of continuing substantive financial constraints.

SECTION 5

Statutory Reporting Areas

Section 5.1 - Race & Diversity

HMCIP'S expected outcomes as identified at last full Inspection:

5.1.1a Diversity

All prisoners should have equality of access to all prison facilities. All prisons should be aware of the specific needs of minority groups and implement distinct policies, which aim to represent their views, meet their needs and offer peer support.

5.1.1b Race Equality

All prisoners experience equality of opportunity in all aspects of prison life, are treated equally and are safe. Racial diversity is embraced, valued, promoted and respected.

5.1.2 HMCIP's

Recommendations:

HMCIP made a total of 9 recommendations for action related to 'Diversity and Race Relations' at HMP Garth. All of these recommendations have either been, or are being addressed. These detailed recommendations can be found in the Chief Inspector's last full report dated April 2009.

HMP Garth's Equal Opportunities & Diversity Policy

- The Diversity policy has been recently updated to reflect current legislation and the Equality Act 2010.
- Management and staff wholeheartedly support the principle of diversity and equal opportunities.
- All forms of unfair or unlawful discrimination, victimisation or prejudice on the grounds of colour, race, nationality, ethnicity, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability or any other irrelevant reason are rigorously addressed and challenged.
- Everyone's differences are recognised respected and valued.
- There is a commitment to providing an environment which allows people of all backgrounds to work together to achieve their potential.
- Every possible step will be taken to ensure individuals are treated both fairly and with respect.
- The establishment has extremely active 'Race & Diversity Action Teams' – 'REAT' & 'DEAT'. 'REAT' meets monthly and 'DEAT' bi-monthly. The 'DEAT' meeting follows on from the 'REAT' meeting, as much of the information discussed is very similar. The prisoner reps are also now able to be present at the meetings and play a proactive role.
Membership is shared by both groups and comprises of:- (a) Governors; (b) Officers; (c) Prisoners – who represent wings; (d) The Imam; (e) Civilian clerical and professional staff; (f) Our Board – Currently there are two members who attend both 'REAT' and 'DEAT'.

- 10 of the prison representatives are receiving/having received 'equality training'. Once completed they receive a polo shirt – designed by them – to identify them as 'Equality Representatives'. They are also able to access designated additional areas in the prison to address equality issues. The reps meet once a month prior to the meetings to identify issues concerning prisoners.
- HMP Garth has approximately 23% BME prisoners which is a slight rise from the previous year, rather than focusing solely on race issues other diversity strands are given the same weighting so all areas are covered. 'Diversity' in all of its forms is evident throughout the establishment.
- An 'Older Prisoners Action Plan' has recently been produced and implemented.
- There are currently 79 disabled prisoners with a clear disability policy in place. One of the disabled prisoners is causing concern, as he has had both legs amputated and suffers from advanced diabetes. He wishes to return to a prison in Northern Ireland and despite repeated applications to the 'Cross Border Agency', nothing has yet happened. Our board initially contacted the Agency in October 2009. Support has been given to help him with the process but there are still issues with the ministry refusing to accept a transfer. He has refused location in one of the four cells, in the new wings, fully equipped for the disabled. Both the Board and the establishment are actively pursuing this to enable an improvement in his quality of life.
- Healthcare is fully involved in ensuring the needs of both disabled and older prisoners.
- Impact assessments have been completed throughout the year with further ones being issued for access to services such as Healthcare and Gym.
- There are regular worship sessions for all faiths.
- The following events have been undertaken/celebrated this past year:- (a) Christian festivals; (b) 'Ramadam'; (c) A successful Eid feast took place; (d) 'Black History Month – The charity 'Rainbow Beach' organised a celebration through drama, this was extremely successful; (e) Chinese New Year; and (f) Holocaust Memorial Day.
- Forums for Travellers and Irish nationals have recently been introduced. The first meetings were very positive and further ones are planned.
- Plans for coming year:- (a) Disability focus groups; and (b) Three-way phones for translation services are situated in Education; Segregation and Healthcare.
- Complaints have decreased this year, as the prisoners state they have more confidence in the process now. Many more complaints are resolved at a lower level through discussions and through prisoner equality reps.
- Monitoring is undertaken by 'REAT', the Board and 'Lancashire Police Diversity Unit'.
- The establishment's 'Creative Media Group' publish a regular magazine entitled 'Diversity Matters'. All prisoners are encouraged to contribute.
- All staff are currently undertaking diversity training entitled 'Challenge It-Change It' There are currently 42% of staff trained. A number of our Board members have also accessed this training . Further training is planned throughout the coming year.
- All aspects of both 'Diversity and 'Race Equality' have a very high place on the priorities of the Governor and her SMT.

By proactively addressing all issues relating to these areas, life for prisoners and staff is far more positive and rewarding.

Section 5.2 - Learning and Skills

5.2.1 Good quality learning and skills opportunities continue to be provided, Manchester College delivering the OLASS contract, “Working Links” providing information, support and guidance.

There is an intention to provide more out-reach support in workshops, and on wings, focusing on employability skills.

5.2.2 2 out of the 13 workshops, Motor Mechanics and Welding, have closed whilst the Speedy Workshops continue to experience component shortages.

Plans are in place to utilise the Learning Pod, in the Speedy Workshops, to deliver IT Skills for life and employability courses.

The Woodwork Workshop has won the Elton Trophy for the leading workshop in the country, demonstrating a close working relationship between Learning and Skills.

5.2.3 Out-reach support is provided on the Therapeutic Community Wing with a programme including social and life skills, art, industrial cleaning and, when possible, IT skills.

The Learn Direct service has been withdrawn from the Evaluation and Reallocation Unit but Manchester College is providing a daily programme for these prisoners who have to be kept apart from the general population.

An Art course is provided for prisoners residing on the Hospital wing.

5.2.4 A “Virtual Learning Campus”, a restricted internet facility, is being set up in the Learning Centre, to be accessed on an appointment basis.

A Peer mentoring scheme is in operation – whereby prisoners help low level learners, accompanying them to classes. It is the intention to offer a course, with qualifications, to Mentors and orderlies.

5.2.5 There will be a reduction in the number of prisoners using distance learning as all courses must be linked to employability.

A training package to promote employability, especially self-employability, is being prepared. Units will include business studies and accounts to Level 1.

A 2-week pre-release course, involving “Working Links” and “Job Centre Plus” will be offered in 2011.

Section 5.3 - Healthcare and Mental Health

The provision of good quality healthcare is the responsibility of Central Lancashire Primary Care Trust to provide and maintain an excellent standard of medical services to the prisoners at HMP Garth, equal to that provided to the public within the community.

The multi professional healthcare team who provide 24 hour care within the prison are constantly challenged by prisoners seeking medical assessments and review of treatment, for many who have chronic and mental health needs through association of substance abuse, illegal drug and alcohol.

In the period December 2009 to February 2010 there were significant shortfalls of clinical treatment provided by the General Practitioners and Dentists due to sickness absences, which had a significant effect on prisoners' attendances and in extension of waiting times.

There were serious concerns raised by the prison management that the contract agreement of quality and service was not of the standard acceptable.

- A corporate risk notice was actioned to Care UK.
- A de-fault of healthcare services to HMP Garth.
- The renewal of contract in October would be reviewed.

Healthcare Staffing

The position of healthcare manager has seen several changes in the last year but there has been a maintained stability of employment by allied health professionals. At the present time within the core department there are just two Band 5 Registered General Nurse vacancies.

There has been a marked improvement in dental care with the introduction of dental practitioners and dental hygienists whose role will be to assist the dentist in triage assessment and treatment pathway of prisoners.

Telemedicine, the contact to link prisoners with external consultants for a medical assessment is to be enhanced with the contract awarded to Airedale Health Service with the anticipation of improving the telemedicine resource.

All prisoners waiting for external hospital clinics have received their appointment and initial attendance at hospital within the NHS eighteen week maximum upper limit.

Healthcare Complaints

In the twelve month period the IMB has received 22 applications from prisoners in relation to healthcare matters. The nature of their concerns was in relation to personal medication needs and seeking urgent appointments with dentistry and general practitioners.

The healthcare manager has the responsibility to investigate all complaints submitted by prisoners through the green form internal complaints system. The prison partnership meetings provide the opportunity to overview and discuss healthcare management.

The PCT is reviewing the requirements for the 8 bed inpatient unit which provides 24 hour care for prisoners the majority who have chronic mental health issues.

The intended closure of the inpatient unit would have an obvious effect on the prison service. An impact assessment will need to be undertaken. The consequence of the 8 bed unit closure will result in an increasing number of prisoners being transferred to external hospitals requiring prison officer escorts.

Summary

The consistent demand on the healthcare department at HMP Garth will continue to remain an ever increasing challenge to provide medical services to the adult male population.

The financial constraints within the NHS and the Prison Service may create additional difficulties in satisfying the constant, unrelenting healthcare needs and management of prisoners.

The IMB at HMP Garth are satisfied considerable progress has been made in the latter part of the year to resolve specific issues relating to general practitioner and dental services and will continue to monitor the standards of health services at the prison.

Section 5.4 - Safer Custody

5.4.1 The Board considers that the prison continues to take the issue of Safer Custody very seriously.

Safer Custody Team Statement:

“Garth is committed to providing a safe, non-threatening environment for staff, prisoners and visitors. We believe that everyone here has the absolute right to live, work, and visit in complete safety, free from fear of abuse, harm or oppression.”

5.4.2 A major review of the Violence Reduction Strategy resulted in an update and the publication of a “Violence Statement” in January 2010 followed by the “Integration of the Violence Strategy and the I.E.P. Policy in July 2010. This Integration means that documents are shared between the two systems i.e. I.E.P. Warnings and Challenging Anti-Social Behaviour (CAB).

5.4.3 In support and Monitor of the Strategy, joint Violence Reduction Suicide and Self-Harm Meeting. (The Safer Garth Meeting) is held every month, attended by senior management, principal officers, wing staff and other Departments including Psychology, Carats, Security, and Education. It provides a management led focus on current violence reduction issues based on relevant and up to date data. Listeners and prisoner representatives attend and actively participate in the discussions. There has been renewed impetus to these meetings during the year with improved attendance.

5.4.4 In February 2010, the Safer Garth Team and other Wing and Department Officers attended an “Away Day Workshop” to analyse and discuss, in work groups, the 2009 statistics.

Action Points arising:

- Include prisoners and visitors when reviewing Violence Reduction Policy and procedures.
- Maintain Pro-Social Modelling for staff and consider this for prisoners.
- Ensure disruption/interruptions to the regime are kept to a minimum.
- Review the I & EP Policy.
- Consider the possibility of job swaps to gain a better understanding of each other’s roles.
- Encourage staff to use OASYS and liaise with OMU for risk management.
- Review Arrangements for supervision of communal areas/stairwells/meal queues.
- Local training for all staff on CAB procedures.
- Training days to reflect local needs.
- Links to the community and other agencies are developed to improve the image of the Prison, including the use of the press where appropriate.

5.4.5 Overview of Progress during 2010

- A change in Safer Custody Lead Manager and Admin Support.
- Listener meetings increased from 1 to 2 a month.
- Listener rota maintained throughout the year.
- 1 Listener removed from the group.
- Safer Cell protocols introduced for F & G wings and the Segregation unit.
- Monthly checks of safe cells maintained with the works department.
- Publication of Listener representatives on the wings.
- ACCT awareness maintained during introduction of new staff.
- Case Manager refresher training facilitated.
- ACCT Assessor training completed for 2 new members.
- Prisoner survey completed.
- Samaritans volunteers trained in aspects of security.
- Suicide and Self harm Strategy reviewed and updated.
- Assessor meetings re-introduced with TNA for interview techniques planned.
- Fish knife database refreshed and staff equipped to deal with ligature incidents.
- Audit of Suicide and Self harm procedures in April resulted in a Green rating.
- Safer Custody meeting TOR and structure reviewed for 2011.
- A complete review of Violence Reduction.
- Violence Reduction prisoner representatives recruited and trained in the role.
- Violence Reduction lead Senior Officers identified on each unit.
- 2 VR representatives removed from the team.
- Publication of Violence Reduction Initiative published on all wings.
- Poster and logo competition run to raise awareness of Violence Reduction in the prisoner community.
- Introduction of CAB (Challenging Anti-Social Behaviour).
- Roll out of the CAB process and on-going training for staff in its use.
- Safer Custody activities/competitions organised on wings during holiday periods.
- Violence Reduction Strategy reviewed and updated.
- Introduction of Induction information for VR issues.
- Integration of the CAB and I& EP to challenge behaviours.
- Closer working relations between Security and Safer Custody.

5.4.6 Areas for Development for 2011

- Facilitate an 'Away Day' to include Prisoner representatives.
- To conduct the annual prisoner survey.
- To maintain both prisoner representatives on the Listener and safer Custody Teams.
- TO ensure all assaults on staff are reported on the IRS
- To continue to improve inter-departmental support throughout the establishment.
- To ensure training and development needs identified are met.

Section 5.5 - Segregation

Staffing

Over the past twelve months there have been some significant changes within the staff in relation to experience, age and gender. A substantial change in the staffing occurred by the unit recruiting from other areas of the prison, initially in 2009, then further in September 2010 when six long term staff were transferred to the residential units. Those moving onto the unit have settled in well and it is expected their expertise from the residential units will be an asset to this challenging area.

Incidents, Overviews and Transfers.

Although 2010 has seen a significant reduction in incidents and the use of the special cell, there have unfortunately been a steady number of prisoners who have shown violence toward staff. One prisoner is being investigated by the police for threats he made to kill a Senior Officer - this prisoner has been moved out of the prison! There have also been two successful prosecutions by the courts taken toward two other prisoners for assaulting.

There remains a difficulty arranging the transfer of some of the most disruptive prisoners, such as those with both mental health issues and personality behaviour disorders. These offenders need specialist assessments and this can take a considerable amount of time. This, of course, impacts on both the prisoner and the staff. Similarly the waiting time for appropriate interventions or places in hospitals is a cause for concern. A number of these prisoners with mental health problems have been waiting to be moved under the mental health act or to another establishment willing to take them on. This is clearly distressing for the prisoners and the staff who have to deal with their violent and abusive outbursts. As Garth does not have a set number of places at other establishments, the 'knock on' effect is that some prisoners have been located in the unit over the recommended time of three months. The Regional Manager is aware of this situation.

Another cause for concern is that prisoners are still moving to the unit for refusing normal location - there is an 'urban myth' that this is the way to get a transfer. However the Governor and her SMT are determined that prisoners will not be allowed to manipulate the system. Approximately 4 years ago a policy was introduced to this effect and this has had a positive impact.

The Segregation Unit Governor now attends a quarterly 'Disruptive Prisoners' meeting with senior staff employed in most of the prisons from the North and Midlands This meeting is proving to be successful in both enabling the removal of disruptive prisoners as well as 'networking' between prisons.

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- All policies now in place, although there are still some areas of improvement required.
- Induction process of new prisoners being received into the unit. We are informed that a comprehensive guidance has been written and will be in force during this reporting period.
- Initial and 14 day Review paperwork requires up-dating.
- Use of force paperwork was highlighted, in recent audit of this area, as deficient. An Action Plan has been written to address this.
- Although work is on-going, I&EP process is not fully implemented.

- SMARG meetings are now held quarterly with a good representation & input from all members of the group. The SEG Governor has a thorough grasp of all the requirements, both statutory & advisory areas, of a positive segregation unit.

Fabric

- Despite a major refurbishment three years ago there are still problems with the showering facilities, these problems have been reported to the works department.
- The unit is presently being repainted in more calming colours and is looking a more pleasant and calmer place.
- The cells are part of a repainting programme. After a condition assessment they have recently been partially or totally repainted.
- Cleanliness is at an acceptable level although rubbish has been allowed to accumulate in an area outside the cells. Hopefully this will be addressed when the metal grills are fixed to the windows adjacent to the area.
- Recent inspections of the Hotplate Area by the Catering Manager have been commented on as a good example to the rest of the prison.
- On the whole, given the constraints the unit is under, we find it to be an effective area that manages some of the most difficult prisoners in the 'Category B' estate.

SECTION 6

Other Areas

6.1 - Offender Management.

6.1.1 The Offender Management model continues to be applied effectively, including both in-scope and out-scope prisoners, all prisoners being allocated an Offender Supervisor and having a Sentence Plan.

6.1.2 New work profiles, adopted in September 2010, have resulted in departmental restructuring.

An increase in the number of Offender Supervisors, to 16 and 2 Probation Officers, has reduced caseloads from approximately 65 to 50, high risk or complex cases being allocated, on reception, to the Probation Officers.

An office as Transport Clerk has, by facilitating direct contact, improved communication with prisoners. The officer attendance at Segregation Reviews has enabled continuity. Improved information flow is reflected in a reduction in the number of transfer related applications to the Board.

The unit's workload is adversely affected by the cross-deployment of officers to cover staff shortages on the wings.

Weekend working profiles allow for "surgery" times on the wings. This is effective on the wings where an hour is allocated but impractical on others where the time is allocated in 2 half hour slots around the time when meal trolleys are collected.

6.1.3 There has been an increase in progressive transfers but there remains, on average, 150 prisoners waiting for transfer to Cat C establishments.

This may be addressed by the outcome of the review into a Regional Allocation Centre.

6.1.4 Staff changes have resulted in the suspension of the Offenders Support Committee where prisoners representing all residential wings met monthly, with staff, to address queries, disseminating information to the wings.

Plans are in place to reinstate the Committee and to produce a booklet for prisoners explaining Offender Management procedures, highlighting where there are differences between in-scope high risk, prolific and priority offenders, and IPP prisoners, and out-scope prisoners, including Lifers.

6.2 - Programmes

A wide range of programmes is offered at HMP Garth, but the Programmes team continues to experience difficulties in satisfying the demand for addressing offending behaviour programmes.

The Programmes team offers 3 accredited programmes. Controlling Anger and Learning to Manage it (CALM), Thinking Skills Programme (TSP) and Healthy Relationships Programme (HRP)

Non-accredited programmes such as Anger Management and AARO (addressing alcohol related offending) are also offered.

Supporting Offenders Through Restoration Inside (SORI) a “restorative justice” programme, where prisoners confront the effects of their crimes on victims, is delivered by the Chaplaincy. A quarterly bulletin “Crossroads” provides information about courses.

Offender Supervisors refer prisoners for the programmes on their Sentence Plans. The Programmes team assesses the prisoners’ suitability for the programmes and facilitates their delivery.

The waiting lists for programmes are continually changing as IPP prisoners, who usually have shorter tariffs, are received. The waiting lists, prioritised on tariff, can be very long.

The high numbers of indeterminate sentence prisoners are often at a disadvantage, delays to achieving Sentence Plan targets causing considerable frustration.

There is some concern that, if the logic of concentrating funding on the last 12 months/2 years of sentence is applied to Programmes, it could mean that the only accredited programmes offered at Garth would be TSP.

6.3 - Catering and Kitchens

6.3.1 The Catering department, in common with other departments, has made reductions to staffing levels. Unified grades working in the kitchen have been replaced with civilians, and two members of staff were lost as a result of the benchmarking exercise. This reduction of staff, particularly that of the Storeman can cause disruption when problems arise and the Chefs or the Manager are diverted from other duties to sort the problem out.

6.3.2 The Catering department staff and prisoners are well trained and their skills and team working are of a high standard which reflects in the high standards attained with hygiene, food quality and presentation.

6.3.3 Whilst the Works Department and the Catering Department work closely to ensure equipment is well maintained there were some difficulties over the Christmas period with broken Boiling Pans. It would seem the TSS reporting system in use slows down the resolution of problems.

6.3.4 The Control of food costs and operating expenditure to meet the Budgets imposed continues to be a difficult challenge.

6.3.5 The standard of wing serveries, in appearance and hygiene, has been much improved together with increased training of wing staff and prisoners in Basic Food Hygiene.

6.4 - Chaplaincy

The Board considers that Chaplaincy staff and associated volunteers provide a great amount of pastoral care, support and religious provision for prisoners of all faiths. Care is taken to respect and facilitate prisoners’ religious requirements regarding dress, diet and possession of religious

materials. These needs are primarily determined during the induction phase at which prisoners are interviewed by a member of the Chaplaincy and provided with a booklet explaining the purpose of, and services provided. The religious festivals of all denominations within the prison are recognised and celebrated including arrangements for fasting and abstinences. Worship for the main religious faiths takes place weekly.

The Chaplaincy also facilitates, on a weekly basis, a number of courses including a Muslim Study Group, Bible Study and Bereavement Counselling allowing the opportunity for prisoners to benefit both mentally and emotionally. The Chaplaincy also lead on the prisoners' restorative justice work and facilitate the SORI (Supporting Offenders through Restoration Inside) programmes four times yearly and provide opportunities for selected prisoners to engage with community youth programmes as part of their own restorative work.

As well as providing services for prisoners, the Chaplaincy also provides support for prison staff, volunteers and visitors.

Despite a significant reduction in chaplaincy staffing just two years ago and an ongoing vacancy for an Anglican Chaplain it is understood that the prison is intending to further reduce the chaplaincy staffing by sharing one of the remaining posts with HMP Preston. This decision has been taken despite concerns being raised by the chaplaincy team who have coped admirably to cover all services and pick up the additional workload caused by the vacancy.

There have been improvements in officer detailing for the majority of chaplaincy groups which have meant that groups are starting on time more often, something that was of great concern in the early part of 2010. The chaplaincy have welcomed the increase in supervising officers for RC Mass on a Saturday and C of E /FC service on a Sunday, however, there has been no significant increase in prisoner numbers and there are regular difficulties in getting the fourth officer to attend the chaplaincy, therefore these services are starting late more often for no apparent reason.

HMP Garth has recently enacted a new national policy for visitors to the establishment, allowing only 3 visits before full security clearance (at CTC level) is required. Whilst clearance is obviously required for those people who come into prison, this new policy was poorly thought through prior to its implementation. Despite several months' notice of the regular visitors to the chapel, no attempts were made to gain security clearance for any of these individuals or groups. The clearance process only began after a number of volunteers and visitors had been told they could no longer attend the prison until their clearances had been completed. At this point it was discovered that none of the vetting contact points work evenings or weekends when the majority of these individuals attend the prison and no attempts have been made to rectify this issue, meaning that many have to take time off from their paid employment to attend the prison to complete these checks. This has had an adverse effect on the volunteers, many of whom have decided not to proceed with requesting clearance as the prison seems unwilling to be flexible in accommodating their needs. This has vastly reduced the variety of programmes the chaplaincy can provide and has seriously impacted on the worship leaders who freely gave of their time to assist the chaplains at the services in Garth.

6.5 – Visits, Gate & Correspondence

6.5.1 The Management of visits is well organised through Security intelligence and the RIPA

Close links with Pops are maintained to ensure all operational aspects of running the Visitors Centre are regularly reviewed. Meetings will continue with the main focus on Family Forums, which will allow prisoners and their families to become involved in the decision making process relating to visits.

6.5.2 Visitors Questionnaire

This questionnaire, recently completed, which only had a 20% response rate, confirmed that a recent refurbishment was appreciated. Changes and improvements to the processing procedures of visitors had also been welcomed. There was some concern that the regional dog handlers were overly robust in carrying out their duties; however staff in the visits area are generally friendly and respectful. Some comments were made about the food available being expensive.

6.5.3 Visits Hall Cleanliness and Fabric

Comments were made through the CAST committee that cleanliness left something to be desired. It is considered that the Staff cleaners generally maximise the time available to them, but consideration is to be given to supplementing staff cleaners with prisoner cleaners. Periodic deep cleaning will be considered.

The floor in the searching area is damaged and the visits areas generally show a lack of repair. This is due, in the main, to on-going flooding problems during periods of heavy rain. There has been on-going work to rectify these drainage problems; however no work can be undertaken to the visits areas until the flooding has been rectified.

6.5.4 Family Visit Days

Family Visits were stopped on Mondays as part of efficiency savings. There is a possibility of Family Days taking place during school holidays and discussions are continuing on this.

6.5.5 Drug Finds/Arrests

As a result of an increased robust approach to drugs being passed during Visits, it is reported that attempts to traffic drugs through visits have reduced when compared to last year. It is considered that the quality of visits has improved. However, the reduction in the resource of the North West Drug Dog Team with reduced attendance at HMP Garth will result in a huge challenge to deter the passing of Drugs during visits whilst maintaining a quality environment.

The Specification and Benchmarking Programme continually striving to reduce Costs, whilst providing value for money, will be extremely challenging.

6.5.6 The Sure Start Organisation has provided learning games and books to enable and encourage Fathers inter-action with their children. However, it is understood that Funding from this organisation may cease.

6.5.7 Correspondence

Staff are extremely thorough and capable in the Correspondence group, their vigilance has proven exceptional in preventing drugs and phones entering the establishment.

6.6 -Therapeutic Community

The TC at HMP Garth runs, within the prison in partnership with Phoenix Futures, an independent charity. The TC is an abstinence –based programme, where the long term aim is to be become permanently drug free. There is common misconception that the TC is ‘just a drug rehabilitation’ programme however this is not the case. The TC helps to modify behaviours by using pro-social modelling from staff and senior residents, and through peer pressure. There are 44 beds on the unit and residents live and work on the wing.

Residents are responsible for their own change; however they address their problems together as part of the community. Residents encourage positive behaviour and challenge negative behaviour. This is known as mutual self-help. The community is the method by which change occurs and therefore it operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and residents must be totally dedicated to treatment otherwise discrepancies may occur. The programme lasts for approximately twelve months.

The TC helps to reduce offending by addressing risk factors. Taking poor cognitive skills as an example, that the TC addresses this risk factor by using the routine and structure to help residents delay gratification by learning that they have to have patience and become less impulsive. Throughout the programme the residents will have key work sessions, where they will be able to discuss any issues on a one to one basis. A care plan will be completed with objectives regarding continuous treatment needs. The key work session will last approximately one hour and will take place once every two weeks on induction, and once a month for the rest of the programme.

The TC is staffed by Phoenix Futures, which include the treatment manager, deputy treatment manager, admin worker and facilitator and six prison officers who all work as facilitators. The team were recently nominated for a staff recognition award.

This year the TC held an open day to which they this time, invited Offender Supervisors, Offender Managers, Funders from the community, and Solicitors in order to spread the word of what the TC entails. The day was a real success and essential in today’s climate where there is a struggle for referrals. Within the Prison staff, still struggle to understand the concept of the TC and TC staff are promoting the benefits through regular staff awareness training.

Last year the TC received an ‘almost achieved’ in the quality of the delivery—this year due to the hard work of the team this was scored as ‘achieved’---the Auditor commenting that this is the best he has ever seen the TC running—something the staff and residents are very proud of.

6.7 - Reception

Reception is well managed, dealing with the movement of offenders into and out of the establishment, prisoner applications, prisoners’ stored property and prisoners’ purchases from

authorised suppliers. A recent re-profiling, in order to meet efficiency savings and SBC guidelines, meant a reduction in officer grades.

The main concerns highlighted by staff include:- (a) Governors applications authorising items outside of the IEP scheme. This has become the norm and not just for special cases. This is recognised by other offenders who then ask for items not on the facilities list. There have been examples of an offender receiving four pairs of trainers in an 18 month period, outside of the IEP scheme; (b) Due to increased movement pressures and the reduction of officers in Reception, as part of the efficiency savings, this means less time is available to process the wing call-up property. In turn, this impacts on offenders and leads to applications and complaints; (c) Offenders families are able to send items into the establishment which are often not on the facilities list, these are placed in stored property cupboard causing crammed shelving. This means other items are sent to Branston, at a cost to the establishment. Perhaps this could be rectified by not allowing property to be sent in, but by allowing extra monies to be sent by families, so that offenders could purchase items from authorised sources and as such will then have them in their possession.

6.8 - Works

The Board have received regular, detailed & thorough reports from the Works management team. This section of the report outlines a brief description of both the proactive & reactive works/maintenance already completed or planned for the future.

Major Projects

- 1) The major project this past year has been to commence the complete re-roofing of the establishment. For the period of this report, approximately ¼ of the project has been completed. The completion date is April 2011. Obviously being so complex the impact on security has been significant. Both the 'Works' & 'Security' departments are liaising well, ensuring the contractor maintains the integrity of the establishment.
- 2) Metal grills are currently being fitted to E Wing. This wing is adjacent to a public footpath & is used to project drug packages into the exercise yard & grassed areas. Prisoners are able to retrieve these packages by using lines to pull them through the windows. The grills will prevent this.
- 3) Work has started on replacing all cell windows. This will ensure prisoners are unable to use lines for passing drugs, phones, and hooch etc. Replacement of E Wing windows has already commenced. All windows will be 'anti-ligature' to help prevent suicide & self harm attempts

On-Going Planned Maintenance Programmes.

Being reactive, has a major impact on staff resources which can sometimes mean planned maintenance not taking place. However, the organisation & ability of the staff reduce any disruption to the minimum.

- 1) Maintaining the fabric/decoration of cells damaged by prisoners. This occurs regularly throughout the establishment, especially in the 'Segregation Unit'.
- 2) Workshops lighting-Movement activated to save energy.
- 3) Workshops & E Wing cameras.
- 4) Educational virtual campus.

- 5) HMP Garth and HMP Wymott share a coal-fired boiler, and next year a joint bid will be submitted for decommissioning the system & replacing it with smaller gas-fired boilers. This will significantly reduce the carbon emissions.
- 6) Ensure the 'Gardens' area has adequate heating. Lack of this appears to have been the poor design by 'Interserve' the contractors for the two new wings. As these Wings are now 2 years old this is a matter of urgency. The Governor has requested the Works Department to try and rectify the situation.

Summary

On the whole the Board is satisfied with the upkeep of the prison. However we are concerned with the length of time it can take to replace/repair items throughout the establishment. This would seem to be caused by staff to act as escorts for contractors for both major works and the day-to-day service contracts.

6.9 - Security

Personnel Changes

Over the course of the year there have been some significant changes to the Security Department. The Head of Security and Operations has moved to OMU and the DPSM has moved to a residential wing. The SO and officer have also moved areas and have been replaced by two new officers of similar seniority and experience. A new 'Police Liaison Officer' has also been seconded to the prison.

Profile Restructuring

- The security department has also seen a restructure following the changes to the profiles this year, the searching group had resources deployed to it from other areas; the rationale behind this was to increase the amount of intelligence lead searching but decrease the amount of routine searching which was deemed not as effective.
- The searching cycle was changed from a 2 month cycle to a 6 month cycle. Unfortunately due to a shortfall within the establishment being covered by this group not all the planned Intelligence lead searching has been completed.

Despite these changes, this vital area of the prison has continued to be managed well. It received a visit from the Standards Audit Unit .In April 2010 it was audited by the 'Standards Audit Unit', who looked at 3 modules as laid down in the new audit arrangement :- (a) Keys, Gates and access (b) Searching; & (c) Escorts and Bed watches . It is pleasing to record that the overall score for security increased from 86% to 89% following this visit. The department was also inspected by the 'Office of Surveillance Commissioners'. This was also positive, highlighting good practice from a professional & effective team.

The Department has now taken responsibility for 'Security Vetting', as outlined in PSI 43-2010'. Numbers of none directly employed staff requiring clearance have been considerable over the year. As HMP Garth is a Cat B Training Prison, it is important this level of clearance is maintained.

Other Targets linked to this function are:- (a) Searching 100% this currently being achieved,. (b) MDT has a target not to exceed 9.5%. The current target to date of 3.66% (up to December 2010).The MDT is particularly good and reflects the efforts the prison has taken to reduce the amount of illicit drugs coming into the prison.

SECTION 7

The work of the Independent Monitoring Board

- 7.1 During the reporting period there were some changes to the Board. Two members resigned for personal reasons, another retired and sadly another valued member died suddenly.
- 7.2 Two new members were recruited just before the end of the reporting period.
- 7.3 Board Members continued to be assigned to specific areas of the prison for Monitoring responsibility and also as representative to observe at Key meetings.
- 7.4 A Team Performance Review was carried out and following further discussion an Improvement Plan was prepared.
- 7.5 During the reporting period a number of Board Members visited two prisons in order to widen members' experience of other prisons and other Boards approaches to Monitoring. The Garth Board also hosted a reciprocal visit.
- 7.6 The Board BDO up-dated the Induction Programme and the Mentoring Procedure for New Members.
- 7.7 A designated Board Member attends the induction programme for new prisoners and also the induction of new staff to explain the work of the Board and how prisoners may make Applications to the Board.
- 7.8 The Board continues to operate with a team of 3 Members on duty each week.

Board Statistics

BOARD STATISTICS	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	20
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	14
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	13
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	3
Number of members leaving within reporting period	4
Number of attendances at meetings other than Board meetings	56
Total number of visits to the prison/IRC (including all meetings)	759
Total number of applications received	341
Total number of segregation reviews held	428
Total number of segregation reviews attended	428

Code	Subject	2008/9 (01/12/08 – 30/11/09)	as a % of total no. of apps	2009/10 (01/12/09 – 30/11/10)	as a % of total no. of apps
A	Accommodation	7	1.8%	0	0
B	Adjudications	19	4.9%	5	1.5%
C	Diversity related	6	1.6%	12	3.5%
D	Education/employment/training	17	4.4%	15	4.4%
E	Family/visits	13	3.4%	6	1.8%
F	Food/kitchen related	1	0.3%	2	0.6%
G	Health related	37	9.6%	22	6.5%
H	Property	72	18.8%	73	21.4%
I	Sentence related	37	9.6%	36	10.6%
J	Staff/prisoner/detainee related	26	6.8%	45	13.2%
K	Transfers	82	21.4%	45	13.2%
L	Miscellaneous	67	17.4%	80	23.5%
	Total number of applications	384		341	