



**ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
INDEPENDENT MONITORING
BOARD
FOR
HMP GLOUCESTER**

1 December 2011 - 31 March 2013

SECTION 1 Statutory role of the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB)

The Prisons Act 1952 and the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 require every prison and Immigration Removal Centre (IRC) to be monitored by an independent Board appointed by the Secretary of State for Justice 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 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. Because of the closure of the prison, the Board was requested to extend the reporting period to the date of closure.

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 Contents

SECTION 1	Statutory role of the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB).....	1
SECTION 2	Contents.....	2
SECTION 3	Description of HMP Gloucester.....	3
SECTION 4	Executive Summary.....	4
4.1	Particular policy issues for the attention of the Minister.....	4
4.2	Particular operational issues for the attention of the Prison Service.....	5
4.3	Particular issues of concern or excellence not requiring a response.....	6
4.4.	Overall Judgement.....	6
SECTION 5	7
5.0.	The closure of the prison.....	7
5.1	Equality and Inclusion.....	9
5.2	Education, Learning and Skills.....	10
5.3	Healthcare and Mental Health.....	12
5.4.	Purposeful Activity (including Work).....	13
5.5	Resettlement.....	15
5.6.	Safer Custody.....	16
5.7	Segregation, Care and Separation, Close Supervision.....	18
SECTION 6	19
6.1	Accommodation.....	19
6.2.	Catering.....	20
6.3	Chaplaincy.....	21
6.4	Physical Education.....	21
6.5	Young Offenders.....	22
6.6	Substance Misuse.....	23
6.7	Visitors and Visitor Centre.....	23
SECTION 7	The Work of the Independent Monitoring Board.....	24
APPENDIX A:	Public and Private Sector Partners.....	28

SECTION 3 Description of HMP Gloucester

3.1 The premises of Gloucester Prison on an inner-city site date from the 18th Century. The prison was rebuilt in the Victorian era, and gained an additional accommodation wing and an administration block in the 1960s and 1980s respectively. It was latterly a Category B (closed) establishment for adult male prisoners, intended to hold mainly those remanded or recently convicted. It also accommodated Young Offenders (YOs) from 18 to 20 years of age, but the Vulnerable Prisoners Unit was closed at the end of August 2012. The certified normal (i.e. ideal) capacity for the establishment was 225, but it had an operational capacity of 321.

3.2 The prison had three main wings (A, B and C), each having 3 accommodation floors. A and B wings were situated in the Victorian building and were in the style of the period. Cells had toilet and washing facilities within them and normally accommodated two prisoners, although originally designed for single occupation. A large room, formerly the chapel, was situated between these wings and had been converted to provide facilities for prisoner induction, basic learning skills assessments, group work and meetings. C wing, built in the 1960s, consisted of single cells without integral sanitation and a night sanitation system regulated access to toilets.

3.3 The kitchen was situated adjacent to A and B wings. The separate, two-storey Healthcare Centre, equipped and run by the 2gether Foundation NHS Trust, had an assessment and treatment unit, but from partway through the reporting period included no inpatient facilities. Learning and Skills, delivered by Weston College, was based in a self-contained building on two floors. Elsewhere, there was a building latterly housing a recycling centre with the Offender Management Unit (OMU) on the upper floor. A bicycle repair workshop was situated in the former staff restroom. The prison had a gymnasium comprising two rooms with exercise machines. There were three exercise yards and the main exercise yard was used for basket ball and volley ball games. A new chapel, incorporating a multi-faith room and office, was provided by converting the former main storeroom.

3.4 In addition to the main provider partnerships mentioned above, Gloucester Prison management utilised the expertise, advice, and services of a number of organisations, in both the public and private sectors. These are detailed in Appendix A, together with a brief indication of what was provided.

SECTION 4 Executive Summary

This report covers the period from 1 December 2011 to the closure of the prison on 31 March 2013 rather than to the anticipated end of the reporting period on 30 November 2012. When the closure of the prison was announced on 10 January 2013, the drafting of the report covering the expected period was nearing completion. Its contents have largely been allowed to stand, though with some necessary changes of tenses. This has the advantage of recording the Board's rounded view of the work of the prison during the last 16 months. It would not be appropriate in view of the closure of the prison to raise issues with the Minister or the Prison Service that are specific to the prison. However, in their place, as a contribution to national evidence available to guide policy-making the Board has raised issues that, though exemplified at HMP Gloucester, seem to have a wider application.

4.1 Particular policy issues for the attention of the Minister

4.1.1 Accommodation: The closure of the prison has rendered superfluous the Board's and HMCIP's longstanding concerns about residential accommodation. However, the Board would urge the Minister to consider what mechanisms are necessary to ensure that it will no longer be possible for such accommodation (described without contradiction as being demeaning and amongst the worst in the prison system) to be given such a low priority in expenditure decisions that the conditions are allowed to remain unremedied for year after year after year. (See 6.1.1.)

4.1.2 Size of Prisons: The Board would draw the Minister's attention, when considering evidence on optimum prison size, to the impressive relationship at Gloucester between prisoners and staff and the benefits thereby gained. It would highlight that it was greatly facilitated by the relative smallness of the prison. (See 5.6.1, 7.1.7.)

4.1.3 Purposeful Activity: important targets and monitoring of Purposeful Activity by the Prison Service were not continued after the end of the Financial Year 2011/2012,. The Board would like assurance from the Minister that he will ensure a reasonable level of Purposeful Activity continues to be a priority and will expect it to continue to be monitored as an important indicator and target in Prison Service operations. (See 5.4.4-5.4.6.)

4.1.4 Mental Health: The Board would draw attention to continuing difficulties, outside the control of the Prison Service, in dealing with prisoners with mental health problems (See 5.3.2, 5.7.5.)

4.1.5 Homelessness: The Board would draw the Minister's attention to the large majority of prisoners who need help to find accommodation on their release and to the considerable problem of finding it. This often traps prisoners, particularly those receiving short sentences in the revolving cycle of homelessness, offending and imprisonment. The Board would seek reassurance on what is being done, or considered, to minimize this disruption to individual lives and to society's well-being. (See 5.5.8.)

4.1.6 Location of Young Offender Institutions (YOI) : The Board seeks an assurance that YOI provision will be nationally distributed to ensure that young prisoners are located at institutions within practical travelling distances of their families so that supportive links can be maintained (See 6.5.4.)

4.1.7 Decisions on prison closures: Whilst recognizing the need for confidentiality before Parliament is told of decisions, the Board urges the Minister to review the time between the decision to close a prison and its announcement. An extension would permit the discreet and detailed planning necessary to facilitate as seamless as possible a continuation of individual prisoner's sentence plans and due consideration of the importance of maintaining family relationships whilst imprisoned. (See 5.0.6, 5.0.7, 5.0.14.) It would also be fairer on those whose employment and family circumstances are impacted – an important factor in a service so dependent on the quality of its staff, both directly employed and those provided by contractors. (See 5.0.4, 5.0.10, 5.0.13.)

4.1.8 Reliance on charities and volunteers: The Board is concerned that the Government's expectation that charitable funding and voluntary sector providers will fulfill some essential roles is over optimistic. The experience within safer custody (see 5.6.9), restorative justice (see 5.5.3), provision for visitors (see 6.7.3), and supporting YOIs (see 6.5.3.) suggests expectations cannot always be met because of a lack of immediate funding or of suitable volunteers.

4.2 Particular operational issues for the attention of the Prison Service

4.2.1 Education, Learning and Skills Contracts: The Board urges that, when future contracts are awarded relating to the delivery of the programme of Education, Learning and Skills, higher priority is given to ensuring that the successful bidder has an appropriate level of knowledge and experience in offender education. Prior to the contract being signed that bidder should have a thorough understanding of the particular needs of different types of prisons to be serviced. (See 5.2.2.)

4.2.2 Appropriate curricular provision: The Board would draw attention to the lack of emphasis in Offender Learning and Skills Service 4 (OLASS4) on the importance, particularly in the earlier stages of imprisonment, of using a range of expressive arts. These have been found to assist in rebuilding self-esteem and helping to re-motivate those disengaged from formal learning because of previous failures. (See 5.2.3.)

4.2.3 Purposeful activity: In the light of the concerns expressed in 4.1.3 above, the Board would seek assurance of the Service's intention to require and closely monitor meaningful purposeful activity within prisons and in particular press to increase it within local prisons (where traditionally it has tended to be unimpressive).

4.2.4 Foreign National Prisoners: The Board continues to be concerned that various vital documents are still not provided to foreign national prisoners by the UK Border Agency (UKBA) except in English and that legal aid is due to be withdrawn from them during 2013. These policies make it difficult for prisoners to present their cases properly and seem inconsistent with the 'fairness and respect for people in custody' tag that encapsulates the mission statement of the statutory body of which the Board is part. (See 5.1.7.)

4.2.5 The 'Fair & Sustainable' model of staffing The Board would draw

attention to the problems of adapting to the 'Fair and Sustainable' levels of staffing and the possible need for adjustments. It hopes that the concerns being expressed at HMP Gloucester may, with evidence available from other local prisons, help establish staffing levels that maximise the potential benefits of imprisonment for every prisoner. (See 5.1.9, 5.4.4, 5.5.3, 6.7.2, 7.1.6.)

4.3 Particular issues of concern or excellence not requiring a response

4.3.1 Sections 4.1 and 4.2 above raise issues that have a wider application within the prison estate. In this section, the Board offers some examples of the excellent work undertaken at HMP Gloucester.

4.3.2 The Board draws special attention to the following matters:

- The extremely good prisoner-staff relationships at a time of considerable change and associated stress for staff. (See 5.6.1.)
- The imaginative and effective development of a First Night Centre (FNC) with substantial input from specially trained prisoners. (See 5.6.8- 5.6.9.)
- The inclusive services provided by the Chaplaincy team, ranging well beyond provision for religious observances, and the range of supportive contacts developed. (See 6.3.1- 6.3.5.)
- The continuing high standard of the catering section, when compared by prisoners to that provided at other prisons, especially as its budget has been cut whilst facing rising prices and unsettling staffing issues. (See 6.2.1-6.2.2.)
- The wide ranging, health-focused programme provided by the PE Department on a cramped site. (See 6.4.1- 6.4.7.)
- The Library, provided in partnership with Gloucestershire County Council, delivered a level of Library use far outstripping that of the general population, through imaginative initiatives and providing a welcoming atmosphere. By linking some activities to Family Visits, the Library helped prisoners maintain the family relationships that will be a key to their futures. (See 5.2.6.)

4.4. Overall Judgement

4.4.1 During the reporting period the prison experienced the introduction of change at a rate unprecedented in recent times. Some of the deepest change was nationally imposed, but there were also myriad changes locally conceived and driven. Many involved changes to the use of prison space and were allied to adjustments to organizational structures and managerial responsibilities. There was also a move to the cascade method as the usual means of communicating policy. All these changes were made with the best of intentions and were, to the great credit of those involved, centred on improving the prisoner experience as swiftly as possible. By the time of closure of the prison, some were clearly succeeding, others needed more time to demonstrate their worth. Many more were still at the gestation stage when the closure of the prison was unexpectedly announced.

4.4.2 In dealing with this, at times, unsettling pace of change, the prison was

hugely fortunate that it had so many staff with a clear sense of professional responsibility. They also had the skill to manage the undoubted pressures they felt so that they did not impact on the impressive staff-prisoner relationships that for several years had been the hallmark of Gloucester Prison.

4.4.3 As the detailed report indicates, even apart from the manifold deficiencies of the physical structures, the prison was certainly not perfect. However what it had at its best – and at its heart – was a humanity that showed itself in the little things, in the day to day exchanges between staff and prisoners. The role of the IMB at the prison was to monitor the fairness and respect with which the prisoners were treated. When fairness or respect relating to regimes or accommodation was lacking, it was most often the consequence of the physical limitations imposed by the building. The Board trusts that wherever future prisoners from HMP Gloucester's catchment area will now go they will find a physical environment that provides decency, programmes that provide hope and, above all, a quality in human relationships that was typical of the best at Gloucester Prison.

SECTION 5

5.0 The closure of the prison

5.0.1 On 10th January 2013, the Minister announced the closure of HMP Gloucester, in company with five other establishments, and along with the partial closure of three others. He explained that the decision to close was '*based on the suitability, sustainability and the cost*' of the accommodation. The overall aim is to '*replace accommodation which is old, inefficient or has limited long-term strategic value with cheaper modern capacity which is designed to better meet the demand for prison places*'.

5.0.2 The Governor alerted the Board shortly ahead of the Minister's announcement. Fortuitously a member of the Board was in the prison shortly after the announcement was made to the staff and he visited many areas of the establishment to observe reactions to the news. The Chair was able to attend the first closure planning meeting held later that day. The prison management at all times welcomed Board representation at meetings and kept the Board informed as the closure progressed.

5.0.3 A timetable for closing the prison in 10 weeks from the day of the announcement was drawn up and was kept successfully on target. C-wing was closed by the end of Week 1, A- wing by 1st February and the last prisoners left on 15th February, just five weeks and a day after the announcement. During the following weeks, the decommissioning and clearing of the prison continued.

5.0.4 Although staff were initially taken aback by the announcement, and by the speed with which the closure was to be implemented, they remained totally professional in performing their duties. Despite worries about their personal futures, made more acute by the lack of forewarning of ministerial intentions, they remained committed to doing the best for prisoners and a spirit of 'business as usual' prevailed. For example, a presentation in late January to prisoners who had achieved 'Health Trainers' Champions' qualifications was attended by the wives, girlfriends and children of the prisoners with the Governor, gymnasium and healthcare staff helping

with the buffet. Similarly, during the final days, when volunteers were no longer supplying refreshments in the visits hall, prison officers ensured that families were provided with tea and squash.

Transfer of prisoners

5.0.5 The prison was immediately closed to new arrivals and the transfer of prisoners began within a few days. Prisoners attending court were generally not returned, but taken to other establishments after their court appearance. Prisoners with release dates before mid-February were retained to finish their sentences at Gloucester. If possible, D-cat reviews were completed to enable successful prisoners to proceed directly to an appropriate prison. First Night Centre (FNC) mentors were amongst the last to leave, ensuring that their skills remained available to the prison for as long as prisoners were resident.

5.0.6 Prisoners were transferred to a range of prisons in the South West and West Midlands. Immediately after the announcement of the prison closure, serious attempts were made to transfer prisoners to appropriate locations to suit category, home area, health needs and sentence planning objectives. While limited success was achieved, the overall time frame did not permit these criteria to remain paramount and transfer decisions were driven by Central Population Control and spaces availability.

5.0.7 The Board received only one application relating to transfer and prisoners appear to have accepted their relocation as an inevitable reality. In talking to prisoners and their visitors, it was apparent that for some, the new establishments would be easier to access for visits, whilst for others, travelling by public transport was going to be problematic or even impossible with small children.

5.0.8 The Board was concerned that there would be capacity problems with transporting prisoners and their property with only limited storage facilities available on the transport vehicles. However, although there were occasions when property had to be transported separately, the Board was not aware of problems raised at the receiving establishments.

Learning and skills

5.0.9 As the only courses currently offered at the prison were of two weeks duration or less, it was decided that courses running at the time of the announcement would be completed and that no others would begin. Consequently education ceased by 18th January. As prisoners were not engaged in on-going, lengthy courses, their education was not disrupted by transfer to another prison.

5.0.10 The Board was disappointed that education staff were not well supported by their employer, Weston College, either in offering redeployment opportunities or with the physical task of clearing and packing the department. Although the Area Manager for the contractor visited the department shortly after the closure was announced, he was only permitted time for one further visit. The Education Manager had been confirmed in her post a few weeks before the closure, but the majority of staff had remained employed under the terms and conditions of the previous providers, A4e or Strode College. Learning and Skills staff left Gloucester on 31st January.

5.0.11 In contrast, Gloucestershire County Library Service provided ample packing materials and additional staff to complete the task of clearing the library.

Healthcare

5.0.12 Where possible, Healthcare attempted to delay the transfer of prisoners with imminent out-patient appointments to enable appointments to be kept. Similarly prisoners with on-going hospital treatments were transferred to establishments which would be able to maintain the continuity of treatment. Dental appointments were rescheduled so that treatments already underway could, where possible, be completed before transfer.

5.0.13 Whilst the issue was not within the remit of the IMB, the Board was concerned that long serving members of the healthcare team, particularly the general nurses, found themselves with very serious worries about their futures. The Trust responsible for the service is a mental health trust and offers only limited opportunities for general nurses. Greater notice of the impending closure would have been helpful to Prison Service partners as well as to others more central to the prison's operation.

Sentence Planning

5.0.14 Initially requests for moves were made regarding appropriate placements to coincide with sentences. However, this proved unsustainable when availability of spaces became the principal driver for relocations.

5.0.15 Prisoners were seen prior to their departure, Offender Assessment systems (OASYS) documents were completed and objectives verbally agreed. Home Detention Curfews (HDCs) were completed as far as possible. Sentence planning documentation for newly sentenced prisoners was not commenced.

5.0.16 Probation Officers returning to community positions did their best to minimize the impact on prisoners of this break in continuity. They advised prisoners that, should any Offender Manager taking over their case wish to have additional background information to assist with written assessments, they would be happy to be approached orally. They made it clear that, if the prisoners wished this, they could raise the possibility with the Offender Manager themselves.

5.1 Equality and Inclusion

5.1.1 An IMB member had specific responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the prison's equality policies (Older Prisoner, Disability, Foreign Nationals, Sexual Orientation and Faith) and regularly attended the Equality Action Team (EAT) meetings chaired by the Deputy Governor. The meeting covered all aspects of equality, checked indicators of discrimination and developed appropriate actions to address concerns.

5.1.2 On average over a quarter of the prison population volunteered that they had a disability; Black and Ethnic minority prisoners made up over 17%; 4% were assessed as Older Prisoners; and 13% were Foreign Nationals. A survey by HMCIP reported over 10% with Gypsies, Romany or Traveller status.

5.1.3 Following the HMCIP's inspection an action plan was being developed to address the lack of overarching strategy and to ensure that all protected

characteristics were considered at EAT meetings.

5.1.4 Discrimination Incident Reports (DIRs) were checked at the EAT and at all times were at an easily managed level. Following the inspection in July, the Equality Officer established links with Gloucestershire County Equalities Office to provide external scrutiny and verification of DIRs.

5.1.5 An Equalities questionnaire was developed to highlight difficulties or issues which older and disabled prisoners experienced because of the layout of the prison. The questionnaires were reviewed by the Equalities Officer with Healthcare input and appropriate care plans developed. A “Buddy Support” system had been implemented which aimed to ensure all prisoners had access to all areas. The lately opened FNC had a resident Equality representative to provide support to newly arrived prisoners.

5.1.6 The Equalities Officer provided a weekly support group for Young Offenders (YOs) and plans were in train for a weekly focus group, to provide a forum for a range of minority groups.

5.1.7 The UK Border Agency (UKBA) involvement in dealing with Foreign Nationals was generally appropriate. UKBA provided a monthly surgery for Foreign National prisoners and the Equalities Officer held fortnightly sessions if required. Following the recommendation of HMCIP, the Equalities Officer encouraged wing staff to use the professional interpreting services, as vital documents continue to be produced only in English. Legal aid is to be withdrawn for foreign national prisoners in 2013 and this may have repercussions for the welfare of this group. As these concerns continue to be relevant wherever the foreign nationals are held, the Board would draw both matters to the Minister’s attention for consideration.

5.1.8 Special dietary needs were catered for and celebratory meals provided for special festivals such as Christmas, Eid, and Black History Month (See 6.2.1.) A World Culture and Faith Day also provided the opportunity to raise greater awareness and understanding.

5.1.9 Whilst the positive climate for managing Equality and Inclusion across the whole establishment is applauded by the Board. The HMCIP report recommended that the Equalities Officer should be given sufficient time to undertake this work. In the present climate of staffing reorganization and the introduction of ‘Fair and Sustainable’, the Board remained pessimistic that this recommendation would be fulfilled and that the Equalities Officer would have sufficient time to extend the monitoring of equality to include all protected characteristics. These are difficulties that may well be present elsewhere in the prison system.

(See also Section 7 for the application of Equality policies within the Board itself).

5.2 Education, Learning and Skills

5.2.1 HMCIP’s report following the unannounced inspection in July raised concerns about both the poor range of educational and vocational opportunities for prisoners and the insufficiency of support staff and education management expertise to lead improvement. This reflected similar criticisms raised by a recent OFSTED inspection. HMCIP recommended urgent action by the prison to remedy these weaknesses (see paragraph 5.5 of that report). However this worrying picture should be seen in the context of both internal management changes following the retirement

of the Head of Learning & Skills in October 2011 and the national implementation of a new learning and skills contract, OLASS 4, for prisons in England and Wales.

5.2.2 In Gloucester the implementation of OLASS 4 produced a protracted period of flux and uncertainty. Although the impending change to a new contracted lead provider, Weston College in place of A4e, was known some months before the start date of 1 August 2012, only limited forward planning was possible for reasons largely beyond the prison's control. Not least among these was the new provider's lack of experience of offender education and lack of understanding of the particular needs of a local prison. This was exacerbated by the College's slowness in resolving personnel issues which created prolonged uncertainty for existing staff employed by A4e. There were some redundancies, the curriculum manager was finally confirmed in her post only in November 2012, and teaching staff thereafter. As a result of the College's tardiness, there was unfortunate delay in agreeing the new curriculum for the prison. In accordance with OLASS 4 it focused on life management and employability, with elements dealing with personal well-being, home cooking, and communication and work skills. All courses had to lead to measurable outcomes and be accredited. This curriculum was introduced gradually since late August 2012 as new courses were written and approved.

5.2.3 The introduction of the new curriculum brought to an end courses in art, pottery, and music which had been long-standing features of educational provision in the prison. The Board's rota reports consistently recorded prisoners' appreciation of these classes and their excellent relationship with the tutors. Although OLASS 4 states that establishments are expected to continue to provide 'informal education' where possible, funded by a separate development budget, the prison did not have plans to do so. Though mindful of the rationale of that decision, the Board was aware, through experience, of the value of courses in the arts in raising self-esteem and motivating re-engagement in formal education. It regretted their omission.

5.2.4 The Board pays tribute to the continued commitment of many staff at all levels which enabled progress to be made despite difficult circumstances. Positive developments in a number of areas highlighted in the Board's last annual report and more recently in the HMCIP report were sustained.

5.2.5 Although HMCIP reported the overall provision of education and vocational training to be inadequate, the achievement of qualifications by the small number of prisoners who took them was judged to be satisfactory. The percentage of learners who achieved their qualifications had risen consistently over the last three years. Success rates in ICT were particularly high, although low in literacy and numeracy. Achievement rates on vocational courses were also satisfactory; those in industrial cleaning had improved to 64% by July 2012.

5.2.6 The library, managed by Gloucestershire County Council, was well staffed with an assistant librarian appointed in April 2012, and it continued to meet the needs of prisoners well. Access was good and over 60% of prisoners had visited the library in the three months prior to the HMCIP inspection in July 2012. Reader development initiatives had been sustained, notably by the continuing good response by prisoners to the 'Six Book Challenge' reading scheme; renewed library input to family visits; and the introduction of a quarterly library newsletter distributed by cell-drop.

5.2.7 The 'Toe by Toe' scheme which enables prisoner mentors to teach fellow prisoners to read continued to be well promoted. New mentors had been trained, and the scheme was explained to all new arrivals during the induction process. In

addition, much preparatory work was done (including the sourcing of outside funding) to introduce a ground-breaking parallel scheme related to numeracy.

5.2.8 In sum, the prison had embarked on major changes in the provision of education and vocational training during this reporting period. This was driven partly by the introduction of the OLASS 4 contract and a new lead provider, Weston College; partly by internal initiatives developed through a revised management structure; and partly by a response to the critical judgements made by HMCIP.

5.2.9 It should be said that the prison had already recognised some of the significant weaknesses identified by HMCIP and was taking steps to remedy them before the inspection. All new arrivals were being introduced to learning opportunities as part of their induction and by speedier assessment of their needs. More effective use was also being made of the space available for teaching and vocational training, although the newly installed 'virtual campus' for IT learning remained unused at the end of 2012, delayed by technical problems.

5.2.10 It would be premature to make any judgement now of the effectiveness of these changes in meeting the recommendations of HMCIP for a radical overhaul of education and vocational training, especially with the new OLASS 4 regime barely in place. The HMCIP report echoed concerns expressed by the Board for some time, and the Board was intending to monitor the development of the prison's revised learning and skills strategy. The Board was already alert to the problems in effectively delivering education in the challenging environment of a local prison with its constantly changing population. It intended to remain watchful of changes in staffing structures and duty patterns (often associated with the move to the 'Fair and Sustainable' staffing model), the effect on the regime and consequently on the effective provision of education and training. Finally, the Board was also concerned to see whether the Government's expectations of OLASS 4, as a major reform of prisoner learning focusing on employability skills as a means of reducing re-offending, could be realised, not least within its budgetary constraints.

5.3 Healthcare and Mental Health

5.3.1 Healthcare services were provided by 2gether NHS Foundation Trust. The integration of the mental health team to provide both primary and secondary mental health services took place in late 2011, with some staff being re-graded and deciding to leave.

5.3.2 The difficulties with staff shortages, which have featured in previous Board reports, were again evident during the report year. A recruitment freeze by the provider (removed shortly before the announcement of closure) resulted in the mental health team coping with a staff shortfall of around 25% for much of the year.

5.3.3 New prisoners routinely received a health assessment and an assessment by a member of the mental health team. The electronic information systems (SystemOne and Rio) worked well for prisoners entering from the local health area, but there were often delays in accessing the records or assessments of prisoners from outside the area, such as those in the care of the Avon and Wiltshire Partnership.

5.3.4 The HMCIP inspection in July noted good access to all healthcare services and minimal waiting times, with primary care well managed with an appropriate range of clinics.

5.3.5 There were difficulties with pharmacy provision which had undergone another change of provider. Initial supply problems were resolved, but HMCIP raised concerns with the storage and dispensing of medication.

5.3.6 The Healthcare Inpatient Unit closed in August. Prisoners, not requiring hospitalisation, were subsequently treated on the wings with day care provided within the healthcare unit. The use of a cell within the Segregation Unit to house patients requiring isolation was not ideal, but an unavoidable expedient.

5.3.7 A high demand for primary mental healthcare continued, but there was latterly an emphasis on improved initial triaging and wing staff training, to improve the appropriateness of referrals.

5.3.8 The unit piloted two courses of the Increasing Access to Psychological Therapies programme. Subsequently prisoners were offered group sessions on the Personal Well-being Course (located in Learning and Skills) and individual sessions with the mental health team.

5.3.9 The HMCIP assessed health promotion as robust, with several prisoners working as health care trainers. A nurse was designated as the health promotion lead and developed good links with the gymnasium and programmes to support and develop healthy lifestyles.

5.3.10 Following a recommendation from the HMCIP, a Service User Focus Group was founded but the decision to close meant its work was never fully developed.

5.4 Purposeful Activity (including Work)

5.4.1 An unannounced HMCIP inspection in July 2012 made the following comments about Purposeful Activity in item HP48 of the main concerns and recommendations section in its report published in November 2012. (Those appropriate to educational and vocational aspects are addressed in Section 5.2 of this report.)

Concern: The range of educational and vocational opportunities for prisoners was poor, there were insufficient work spaces to meet demand, and the prison did not have enough support staff and education management expertise to lead ongoing improvement.

Recommendation: The prison should urgently increase the provision of education, vocational training and work to engage as many prisoners as possible in purposeful activity, ensuring that there are sufficient staff resources and educational expertise to support the effective management and development of the learning and skills and work provision.

5.4.2 These comments also reflect the Board's considerable concerns during the year about work provision. However, there was a gradual improvement and an action plan was put in place to address the issues raised above. As a result, the bicycle repair workshop was relocated and offered a suitable learning environment, a new waste management workshop became operational and work was completed in preparation for a mattress recycling workshop operating by mid January 2013. An IT workshop, to be run in conjunction with a local charity "IT for Africa", was also

planned for 2013. As a result of these improvements the Prison Workshops Performance Summary for South West Area for Quarter 2 of 2012/13 showed a highly satisfactory score of 90.16 compared with a score of 45.78 for the same quarter in 2011/12.

5.4.3 Other work on offer remained limited with only catering, cleaning, painting and orderly duties available, but more options for part time working were being actively considered before the notice to close. The Activities Board continued to meet weekly to decide work allocation, and issues over delays were being addressed to ensure that work was allocated to prisoners within seven days of arrival.

5.4.4 In evaluating the regimes in general, the Board has been concerned to note the impact of staffing shortages on the availability of programmed activities. Prison management has pointed to various internal organisation issues that have created unnecessary shortages from time to time, but the Board remains concerned that the staffing model may be so lean that it demands an organisational machine with little scope for inevitable occasional human error and the unhappy coincidence of irregular aspects of life, (for example, unexpected levels of sickness in number or length, delays in recruitment and what former Prime Minister Harold Macmillan famously termed 'events, dear boy, events'). The Board fears that the detailed national scheme of staffing that the prison was moving towards, entitled 'Fair and Sustainable', may not be sustainable without undesirable impacts on regimes, eg limitations of planned periods of prisoner association or attendance at courses etc. Unscheduled limitations of this kind put at risk the legitimacy of the scheme's other descriptor, namely 'fair'. That the Prison Service nationally, before the full implementation of 'Fair and Sustainable', has launched a pilot of another scheme ('Competitive Benchmarking'), likely to result in yet further reorganisation and cutbacks, suggests that the impact of staffing levels on the prisoner experience will need very careful monitoring.

5.4.5 In terms of the overall monitoring of Purposeful Activity in the establishment the Board noted with concern a notice stating that from 1 April 2012 the Purposeful Activity Group (PAG) would no longer be collecting the data feed for the heading CU 10 - Purposeful Activity from the Regime Monitoring System, or reporting this through the NOMS hub. This activity previously provided statistics to indicate that offenders spent an average of 20 hours per week in Purposeful Activity.

5.4.6 The same instruction made the following additional statements:

- that the central mandate for prisons to operate the Regime monitoring system ended on 31 March 2012;
- that, due to contract arrangements and the non-availability of Prison NOMIS and My Detail, it will be necessary for this system to remain in place locally for the juvenile estate and for privately contracted prisons;
- that a new commissioned regime return is incorporated on the NOMS Hub for the 2012/13 commissioning year;
- that the Regime monitoring process should remain running for Q1 2012/13; and, finally,
- that local management checks against the heading CU10 Purposeful Activity should be put in place for Deputy Director Custody(DDC) assurance visits for the remainder of the reporting year.

As a result of this last directive local management checks continued at Gloucester and indicated that there were 17 weeks during which the 20 hour target was not met,

5 weeks of which were consecutive over the period Aug to Sept 2012, mainly due to difficulties over the implementation of the new Offender Learning And Skills Service (OLASS) contract.

5.4.7 Regardless of the closure of HMP Gloucester, the Board is concerned that this important target and monitoring activity did not continue after the end of the Financial Year 2011/2012. It understands that thereafter the planned return is simply a spreadsheet to capture data specifically on Workshop activity. It will consequently not provide assurance that offenders are spending an average of 20 hours per week in purposeful activity. The Board would like assurances from the Minister and NOMS that a reasonable level of Purposeful Activity continues to be a priority and will continue to be monitored as an important indicator and target in Prison Service operations.

5.5 Resettlement

5.5.1 The Offender Management Unit underwent major restructuring during the period since the Board's last report. The Senior Prison Officer previously responsible for the Unit left and was not replaced. A new Case Administration model being developed amalgamated the Custody and the Offender Management Units, with all personnel located together under one roof. This amalgamation resulted in logistical issues with limited availability of office equipment, desks and computers and further problems with training and staffing issues. Some Case Administrators were not trained in custody issues and no up to date training was initially available. Training subsequently was put in place, some on site to improve the learning experience and to speed up training and some externally at Newbold Revell. In addition to training problems, there were transitional issues with seconded Probation staff.

5.5.2 In working towards the 'Fair and Sustainable' Model, the optimum level of staff would be seven fulltime Case Administrators, and four Seconded Probation Staff, of whom some would require training in OASys completion and offender supervision work.

5.5.3 Throughout the reporting period a Restorative Justice Officer was in post to integrate the Restorative Justice Scheme into Offender Management. Historically this position was funded nationally, and more recently by the Governor. However, under 'Fair and Sustainable', this role might have ceased to be funded. The scheme has latterly experienced difficulties with a lack of approved volunteers and an appropriate venue to meet within the prison. On the occasions the work was completed it was reported as being worthwhile and powerful.

5.5.4 The introduction of the Basic Custody Screening for sentences of under 12 months doubled the workload of the unit. Prior to the announcement of closure, the backlog was not considered significant, but there were fears of increases if an influx of prisoners arrived from 'out of area' with incomplete OASys documentation.

5.5.5 A new contract negotiated with the Probation Service resulted in improvements, though the length of time probation staff spent in the prison was limited by the rotation process each April which enabled staff to experience community working.

5.5.6 A significant number of Licence Recall prisoners were returned to the prison. The majority were dealt with in a timely fashion although some did not receive the relevant documentation within 28 days. This was an improvement on the previous

year, the centre in Croydon, which provides the management for the Licence Recall population, having recovered from its previous difficulties. The greater efficiency reduced some of the individual frustration of recalled prisoners.

5.5.7 During the last year the 'move on' process for the lifer population, received from HMP Leyhill, continued to improve with only a few cases involving delay.

5.5.8 The "Drop-in" Centre based in the Old Chapel which began in November 2011 giving advice on accommodation and benefits issues ceased to exist in this form. Recently accommodation issues were dealt with using a triple approach: through the applications system; as part of the Legal Services interview; and as part of the six week pre-release Discharge Board (held weekly) which incorporated public protection issues. Offender managers from the community were invited to attend. While a national accommodation shortage exists it is inevitable that prisoners will experience difficulties upon release thus adding to their vulnerability. This is most relevant for prisoners with short sentences who can become involved in the revolving cycle of homelessness, offending and imprisonment. It was not unexpected that the survey by HMCIP in July found that roughly three quarters of those surveyed anticipated needing help with accommodation on their release.

5.5.9 The Independent National Careers Service was of late based in the Old Chapel and offered employment advice; this function was undertaken previously by a member of the OMU staff. Though attempts to make maximum effective use of the Old Chapel were on-going, the full potential of this valuable and centrally located resource showed no sign of being achieved.

5.5.10 Since the HMCIP visit, local procedures started to allow for release on temporary licence (ROTL). These decisions were always based on risk assessment. Another gradual change was the exploration of the potential, within individual Sentence Plans, for Offending Behaviour Work to take place within a community setting. Immediately prior to the closure of the prison, one prisoner was working in the community.

5.5.11 The OMU at the time of closure was very much a department in transition in anticipation of a changing role for the prison. It was showing signs of rising to the challenge.

5.6. Safer Custody

5.6.1 The Board was not surprised that the survey by HMCIP found that more prisoners at Gloucester reported that they felt safe in the prison than is usually the case in similar prisons. In its experience, as well as that of the visiting team of Inspectors, it was the norm for staff to take quick action to keep individuals safe and also, for the most part, challenge inappropriate behaviour. Indeed, it is probably the very impressive relationships that generally obtained between staff and prisoners that enabled so many prisoners to speak well of a prison with such limited and – in some aspects – demeaning facilities. The formation of such relationships seems, from experience as well as research, to be easier in smallish prisons such as Gloucester.

5.6.2 Steps were already in place before the HMCIP inspection to improve monitoring of bullying and supporting victims of bullying, to improve care maps and Assessment, Care in Custody and Treatment (ACCT) training and to recruit more Listeners. Progress continued thereafter.

5.6.3 Throughout the reporting period the Violence Reduction and Safer Custody Management Team continued to meet monthly under the chairmanship of the Governor. The meeting was attended by senior staff from all areas, a Listener, and representatives from the Samaritans and GEOAmev (Escort provider).

5.6.4 At each meeting, the team examined reports on violence reduction, aspects of Safer Custody and reviewed the Continuous Improvement Plan. This plan provided the framework enabling closer monitoring and was important in ensuring that the prison's Suicide and Self Harm policy was fully implemented.

5.6.5 The Safer Custody Support Group (SCS) resumed its weekly meeting schedule after a period of hiatus due to a shortage of mental health nurses. The SCS Groups provided valuable peer group support. Attendance was optional, but staff could refer prisoners as part of the care map process within ACCT procedures. The group aimed to provide prisoners with coping strategies and there was some evidence that prisoners valued it.

5.6.6 The anti-bullying programme had been updated again and was used to monitor identified bullies by addressing their behaviour. Within this programme there was a Victim Support Document which was used to support vulnerable victims.

5.6.7 The incidence of self harming was on average four per month (the most common self-harm being cutting and scratching), a decrease on last year's reported monthly average of seven.

5.6.8 The Induction process was greatly improved and streamlined during the year. Six prisoners were trained as Peer Mentors to work in the FNC to help new prisoners integrate. Using a briefing prepared by the Equalities Officer, they not only dealt with immediate routine matters but also covered equality issues. The next day an extensive Induction presentation was made by one of the Mentors, usually augmented by a member of the Chaplaincy Team and one of the PE staff. The Centre staff and mentors aimed, successfully, to provide a generally supportive environment and most prisoners moved to wing locations within a day or two. However, there was flexibility over timing. Several less robust prisoners were supported by the offer of an extended stay in the Centre and were assisted by a more gradual integration into prison life. Board members, on their weekly rota visits, frequently commended the Centre's excellent ambience.

5.6.9 Suitable prisoners were trained to act as 'Listeners', available day and night to listen and talk to prisoners needing support whether on the wings, or in the special-equipped Listeners' Suite. A Listener routinely gave an oral report to the Violence Reduction and Safer Custody Management meetings and two Listeners worked permanently in the First Night Centre. Shortly before the announcement of closure, the prison had eight trained Listeners and was hoping that the Samaritans, once existing pressures on their resources allowed, could have trained more. It valued greatly their help, not only in training and debriefing Listeners, but also providing a direct line facility which on occasion proved invaluable.

5.6.10 An interactive ACCT guide was available on the intranet for all staff and an ACCT training programme was ongoing. The inclusion of Care-map training as part of the initiative resulted in a noticeable overall improvement in the ACCT documents, which the duty member of the IMB reviewed weekly. The latest audit showed a Green/Amber score continuing, whilst the recent HMCIP inspection resulted in a rating of 4 (out of 5) for prisoner safety.

5.6.11 IMB attendance at ACCT reviews increased during the year, though it would not have been practicable nor desirable for the IMB always to be present. There was some welcome improvement in the attendance of appropriate staff at the reviews.

5.6.12 The Prisoner Consultative Committee continued to meet monthly, attended by staff from the Wings, Healthcare, Finance, Kitchen, OMU, and the Gymnasium together with prisoner representatives from the three wings. Issues raised by prisoners were seriously addressed.

5.6.13 In the extended period of this report there were two deaths in custody (October 2012 and January 2013) for which Prison Probation Ombudsman (PPO) action is ongoing. Inquests were held in 2012 for two of the three deaths in custody in 2011 and found that all appropriate actions had been taken by HMP Gloucester although that for the death in custody in Bristol Royal Infirmary did make certain recommendations relating to Healthcare procedures. The remaining inquest for the 2011 period is scheduled for April 2013. The two inquests outstanding from 2005 and 2008 were held in September 2012 and concluded that all actions necessary were taken by the prison and that the families were supported by Family Liaison Officers.

5.7 Segregation, Care and Separation, Close Supervision

5.7.1 At the beginning of this reporting period, the Segregation Unit and the VPU were staffed by the same officers and were both housed on the first floor of B Wing (B1) with only a security door and metal partition between them. The Board had, for several years, raised this as a concern in its annual reports. The Board had also expressed its dissatisfaction with the lack of separate VP and Segregation Units with no separate exercise yard, showers or telephones. Sharing facilities disadvantaged both groups of prisoners. The Board believed that these arrangements were inconsistent with the Prison Service's fairness and respect agenda.

5.7.2 The HMCIP visit in July generated a recommendation that the environment and regime for vulnerable prisoners should be improved and that there should be consistent and direct supervision of the four cells in the Segregation Unit. The prison's response to these recommendations involved imaginative, major changes.

5.7.3 During August, the Vulnerable Prisoner Unit was closed and current prisoners allocated to other establishments. Subsequently HMP Gloucester no longer accepted prisoners identified as vulnerable because of the nature of their offences and they were normally sent directly to a purpose-built VP unit at HMP Bristol. The small number of other prisoners identified early in their time at Gloucester as vulnerable for other reasons were then transferred to Bristol as soon as possible. These changes undoubtedly solved a major problem for HMP Gloucester. They should also have greatly improved the care of vulnerable prisoners who would previously have been there.

5.7.4 The second drastic change was an experimental move towards closing the Segregation Unit. Under this system, all prisoners who needed to be segregated were normally kept on their normal wing under a restricted regime, and, where this was not possible, transferred to HMP Bristol. On occasion, that meant they spent a short period (though never more than 24 hours) in the Segregation Unit. As the number of prisoners segregated at Gloucester was usually small, over a short period it was hard to come to a firm view of the change. However, in general, the results

were positive.

5.7.5 Nevertheless, there were several occasions when segregated prisoners with serious mental health problems were held for longer than the ideal, despite considerable efforts by the prison management and Healthcare to arrange transfer to more appropriate locations. The Board was impressed by the patience, tenacity and compassion of the prison and healthcare staff in their contacts with these prisoners.

5.7.6 Board involvement in Segregation reviews remained patchy (see Section 7). Reviews were not held at fixed times and, on occasion, re-arranged at very short notice, making IMB attendance difficult or impossible.

5.7.7 The Segregation Monitoring and Review Group (SMARG) met quarterly. The quality of data presented at the meeting improved during the year and monitoring and analysis of trends was good. However, despite efforts by its Chair, the meeting was often poorly attended.

SECTION 6

6.1 Accommodation

6.1.1. The major accommodation issues that have concerned the Board (and HMCIPs) for many years past have been well documented in official reports and, in view of the closure of the prison, need only outlining as a reminder of what has been reported to successive Ministers and successive heads of the Prison Service. By far the most concerning was the living accommodation:

A & B Wings: with cells *“dark, dingy and invariably overcrowded”* (HMCIP 2012), *not designed to hold two prisoners* and *“nearly all contain[ing] bunk beds that took up half the space as well as a single table and chair(s)”* (HMCIP 2007).

They contained a single toilet that, despite the then Minister’s assurance in his response in May 2012 that the screening was *“intended to meet the decency agenda in line with PSO 1900”*, was two months later described by HMCIP as *“inadequately screened and offered insufficient privacy”*. It was here that two men had to eat all their meals and spend much of every day.

C Wing: operated *“‘night sanitation’ access to toilets, in which individual cells were unlocked remotely and electronically during periods of lock up. ...this arrangement is flawed and demeaning”* (wrote HMCIP in 2012, repeating a view expressed both by the Board and the Inspectorate many times previously).

The Board remains astounded that, with accommodation so poor, in 2012 described by HMCIP as *“among the poorest in the prison system”*, those controlling the system year on year, judged that an organization with *“fairness and decency”* as its public lode stars could find other higher priorities than rectifying these problems. It would be advantageous to the whole rehabilitation process if expenditure relating to ensuring conditions of basic human dignity was, along with security, given the highest priority.

6.1.2 Prior to the decision to close the prison, the Works Department again made

an enormous effort, with the help of many prisoners working as painters, to keep the accommodation in as good a condition as possible. New furniture was bought, flooring was renovated and communal showering and other facilities upgraded. Most impressively, the actions taken in response to the HMCIP's recommendations concerning the accommodation of Vulnerable Prisoners and Segregated prisoners largely answered the Board's concerns over many years about their accommodation. (See 5.7.3- 5.7.4.) Concerns about the accommodation provided for YO's were similarly lessened by an organizational change. (See 6.5.1.)

6.1.3 Undue limitations to other non-residential accommodation also beset the prison and in each case the prison was active during the reporting period in ameliorating and in some cases virtually solving the problems. These are some of them:

- Disabled access to the first floor Reception Area: a chair lift was installed, though plans to reorganize the Reception Area and to improve the facilities were put on hold.
- Learning and Skills Building: with most classrooms upstairs, it lacked a chair lift and narrow corridors limited ready access for the disabled, but during the year imaginative steps were taken to ease the problems. (See 5.1.5.)
- Lack of workshops: for many years, the prison had only one workshop. Largely by moving staff facilities outside the prison perimeter wall, another two workshops were created. (See 5.4.2.)
- Cramped facilities for physical education: though a small inner city site provided no opportunity for activities requiring grassed areas, the PE department, through careful organization, cooperation with other departments and an imaginative approach, maximized its use of the limited physical facilities. (See 6.4.)

6.2. Catering

6.2.1 Within increased budgetary constraints, the general standard of food was high with varied menu choices. Special menus were provided to celebrate cultural events and these were highly praised. (See also 5.1.8.) Despite of 'Fair and Sustainable' changes which affected all staff, the kitchen continued to be a very efficiently run area with good management and staff who took great pride in achieving high standards.

6.2.2 Issues related to food were dealt with at the point of service as catering staff were always highly visible. With rare exceptions, the Comments Book was available on the servery and entries were often highly complimentary about the quality and variety of the food. Comments made to members on rota duty were consistent with those entries and with the findings of the Inspectorate survey that 63% of respondents, against the mean in similar prisons of only 23%, regarded the food as good.

6.2.3 However, it must be noted that the introduction of baguettes and soup as standard lunchtime fare had not produced any real budget savings and certainly reduced variety. With the daily allowance of £2.10 per day per prisoner, a further budget cut of 12% to be introduced as a result of some price reductions was of

concern, given that costs for other items are rising rapidly. The Board continues to be unconvinced that restricting catering officers from taking advantage of local sources of catering supplies is in the best interests of quality and economy.

6.2.4 The Board continued to be concerned about the delay and inconvenience of repairing old kitchen equipment not included in the asset replacement programme. Funding and servicing issues not readily resolved lead to items of equipment being out of commission for unacceptably long periods of time and menus being affected.

6.3 Chaplaincy

6.3.1 Following its inspection in July 2012 HMCIP reported favourably on the work of the chaplaincy. The Board equally appreciates the full part which the chaplaincy played in the life of the prison and the significant contribution which it made to the overall care, support, and resettlement of prisoners.

6.3.2 The new Anglican chaplain was in post from February 2012, and the chaplaincy developed as a fully integrated team under the leadership of the Muslim co-ordinating chaplain. It made good provision for all faiths including corporate worship and pastoral care. HMCIP described the chaplaincy as 'adequately resourced, visible throughout the prison and well regarded among prisoners'.

6.3.3 The chaplaincy provided a wide range of religious study groups and other activities including a new Young Offenders focus group run by the Anglican chaplain in co-operation with the Head of Residence. Prisoners had unrestricted access to these groups and activities and to corporate worship.

6.3.4 The Anglican chaplain, with the staff of Gloucester Cathedral, organised the annual Prisons Week service there in November 2012, at which he preached.

6.3.5 The chaplaincy assiduously developed links with local churches and faith communities to support and resource its work with prisoners – for example in providing literature for group and individual use, live music for worship, Christmas presents for prisoners' children, and contact points for prisoners on discharge. The past year has been a time of considerable reinvigoration of chaplaincy work.

6.4 Physical Education

6.4.1 Since the last report the new leadership and staffing levels of the Physical Education department resulted in considerable advances in the regime available to prisoners.

6.4.2 In January 2012 a Well Being Day held in the PE Department was attended by 56 prisoners. It was organised in conjunction with the Healthcare Department and Community Health Trainers with the aim of alerting prisoners to health issues through monitoring tests, exercises, advice and guidance. Twenty percent were highlighted as having high blood pressure and 47% were over the recommended ideal range for body fat.

6.4.3 A similar day was held for staff in May, with 75 staff attending the event with 90% requesting further such days.

6.4.4 First aid courses for prisoners were incorporated into Healthy Living sessions. In addition, three Healthy Living sessions were held in the gymnasium where prisoners underwent a range of tests including blood pressure and weight assessments. As a result, some were referred to Healthcare for further testing and some offered individual programmes run by the Physical Education Department. These achieved some notable successes. One participant, for example, who started in April at 16st, within a 5 month period lost 42lbs.

6.4.5 Of those attending the facility regularly over the year, the average extent of purposeful activity was 800 hours.

6.4.6 The Department trained seven prisoners as Level 2 Health Trainers. One subsequently assisted with induction in the FNC and acted as a link to the gymnasium's activities.

6.4.7 In October, the gymnasium hosted a Family Visits Day, following the success of a similar function in 2011. This Day was especially welcomed by prisoners as it enabled those with children to enjoy much closer interaction and contact with their families in a less formal environment than the visits hall.

6.4.8 Amidst all the gloom and anxiety surrounding the closure of the prison five men were presented with awards on 23rd January for achieving the qualification of 'Health Trainers' Champions'. Three other men had already moved on and sadly missed the event. Staff who had worked with the men to achieve their goal were there to celebrate their success. The qualification provides transferable skills and improved opportunities for employment. For the men, their families, and the staff it was a proud moment and a wonderful example of how imagination and commitment can improve the opportunities for rehabilitation.

6.4.9 The initiatives of all the staff involved were highly commendable but could not disguise the limitations of the overall accommodation and facilities for physical activities and for classroom sessions. The Board was particularly concerned that the PE facilities did not provide adequate facilities to meet the needs of YOs.

6.5 Young Offenders

6.5.1 The number of YOs held varied over the year and was as high as 20 at one time. Whilst they were integrated from time to time throughout the prison, they were most often located on B wing.

6.5.2 There was an increase in incidents involving young adults in early and mid 2012, with a disproportionate representation in the number of adjudications and use of force. This however declined to a proportionate level in the latter part of the year.

6.5.3 The implementation of a post-Inspection strategy to support young adults was limited by a lack of budget. Outside agencies and voluntary organisations willing to work within the prison were unable to do so when the prison was unable to offer even reimbursement of expenses. However, latterly two members of staff ran weekly hour long sessions to work at problem solving and team building. A short focus group at the end of each session provided an opportunity for feedback on any issues worrying YOs.

6.5.4 As stated in many previous reports, the Board continued to have concerns about YOs being in HMP Gloucester. In the Board's view this was an inappropriate

location for YO's whose needs are different from those of older prisoners. HMP Gloucester was not able to provide the appropriate facilities for this age group, particularly as there was too little purposeful activity on offer. Their experience at Gloucester was not, given the limited facilities available, sufficiently supportive for their rehabilitation. The Board trusts that, while the closure of the prison should lead to more appropriate programmes, a high priority will be given to accommodating YO's from the Gloucestershire and Herefordshire courts in YO's that will enable family contacts to be readily maintained. It was routine for YO's after sentence, to be sent to YOI Portland, a location to which families found difficulty in making visits because of the distance and costs. The likelihood of prisoners keeping out of serious trouble on release is accepted to be significantly higher for those with strong, supportive family relationships. The Board thinks it important that the geographical spread of YOI provision should take account of the importance of this factor.

6.6 Substance Misuse

6.6.1 The Substance Misuse service was provided by the Counselling, Advice, Referral and Throughcare System (CARATS) team and the Integrated Drug Treatment System scheme (IDTS). The two teams were working closely together and preparing for imminent amalgamation.

6.6.2 Around 70 prisoners with drug and or alcohol problems were identified at reception each month and prisoners requiring detoxification were located in safer cells in the FNC.

6.6.3 Both teams ran group work programmes. IDTS ran a rolling group work programme focusing on harm reduction, alcohol awareness and motivation to change. CARATS offered a locally developed course called *Moving On* focusing on recovery and providing peer support and the opportunity to develop links with support services in the local community.

6.6.4 Both teams noted a change during the reporting period in the types of substance misuse being identified. More prisoners were presenting with use of a range of 'legal high' drugs (an ever-evolving category) and steroid misuse. Alcohol dependency was also markedly higher.

6.6.5 The HMCIP assessed the care offered by the CARATS and IDTS teams as good quality, accessible, and providing treatment appropriate to individual need. Participant evaluation was subsequently collected from prisoners attending the *Moving On* course and the Drug Recovery Unit used a prisoner questionnaire to address the recommendation for service user consultation.

6.7 Visitors and Visitor Centre

6.7.1 There were some changes in the management of the prison visits process over the period of this report. From September 2012 the processing of visitor applications was carried by a uniformed member of staff rather than a member of the Probation Service as formerly. The role from that point involved arranging prison visits as well as interacting and liaising with families and with other groups such as Prison Visitors and Charities. The Visitors Centre accommodation, located in the Castlegate Centre, continued to provide a friendly waiting area with facilities and information relating to available services.

6.7.2 The Visits Area within the prison continued to be well run and welcoming during the reporting period and the drug dog was in use for 85% of visits. However, with the introduction of the Fair and Sustainable staffing system in April 2013, the likely effectiveness of this protection was due to be reduced as the staff concerned would have been required also to service another prison.

6.7.3 Funding for the Castle Gate Trust, since its foundation in 2003 based on the Castlegate Centre, ceased mid-year and the Castle Gate Gloucestershire programme was eventually taken over by the charity InfoBuzz, supported by the Nelson Trust. Providing new arrangements for funding were finalized, it was expected that, for the next three years, facilities such as the play area and the snack bar could continue and that employment of a family outreach worker for the children of offenders from within Gloucestershire would recommence. It is still of concern that such important services are dependent on a hit-or-miss system of funding. Experience at Gloucester is that the Government's expectation that charitable funds will support a hugely increased range of services across society has made previously available funding sources harder to access, even when (as with the work of the Castlegate Trust) they relate to key government policy areas, such as the reduction of reoffending by former prisoners. Encouraging and enabling the maintenance of stable and supportive family relationships during imprisonment and thus helping reduce reoffending should not be regarded as an optional extra for the Prison Service. It is something for which funding should be guaranteed.

SECTION 7 The Work of the Independent Monitoring Board

7.1.1 The membership of the Board changed significantly during the year. The Secretariat was very helpful in allowing the recruitment of some new members in anticipation of planned retirements from the Board. The Board was also much helped by the fact that two of the new members had already significant experience of IMB work elsewhere and so could widen perspectives.

7.1.2 The membership of the Board, though reasonably balanced in gender both overall and in those holding senior offices, continued to lack ethnic mix despite varied and repeated attempts to remedy this. However, as a result of recent appointments a better balance was achieved between the retired and those in full or part-time employment.

7.1.3 The new system of funding the Board made it easier to manage the Board's work and the eventual outcome of national (and local) representations about proposed changes to the expenses scheme ensured that concerns about limiting the range of people applying for membership have been removed.

7.1.4 Members benefited during the reporting period from a number of informative briefing sessions provided by senior staff on their particular responsibilities. Several members attended nationally-provided Foundation Training and the incoming Chair and Board Development Officer both attended national training related to their roles. In addition, the Board was represented at the National Conferences and appreciated that, after some doubt about funding for staging the 2012 Conference, the then Minister demonstrated his appreciation of its importance by ensuring funding was available.

7.1.5 This year the clerical and administrative support the Board received was notably less consistent than previously, though not through any lack of willingness in the people concerned. As Clerks always have other responsibilities within prisons and workloads can vary, the potential for clashes in priorities is clear. It is a situation that usually the Board and its successive Clerks were able to manage. However, this year the greatly increased workload within those other responsibilities, eventually made a change of personnel inevitable and latterly responsibilities were jointly held by two members of staff. Fortunately, one of them had previously served with distinction as the Board's Clerk.

7.1.6 Shortly before the closure of the prison, the Board was told that the implementation of the 'Fair and Sustainable' staffing structures might well entail Clerking duties shortly having to be shared among the 7 staff in an Administrative Support Hub. Though now the Board will not itself be involved, it would express the hope that whatever arrangements are made at other establishments, the complex nature of the role and the delicacy of its nature will be fully recognized. The efficiency with which the Clerking role is fulfilled has a direct influence on the effectiveness of a Board.

7.1.7 Finally, the Board would pay tribute to the help and support it received over many years from generations of staff at the prison, a range going far beyond those who gave much appreciated service as its Clerk. There must scarcely have been a member of staff, uniformed or non-uniformed, who at one time or another had not been asked for assistance by a member on rota duty seeking to deal with an application from a prisoner. With comparatively few exceptions, the help was given readily, even when the timing of the question was less than ideal. The Governor (and those various other staff of Governor-grade deputizing for her on occasion at Board meetings) was helpfully open in explaining policies and issues when responding to Board concerns. The quality of inter-personal relationships at HMP Gloucester, at many levels, was one of the strengths of the prison throughout the time that any member of the Board at the time of the prison's closure can remember. The IMB benefited from it and so did the prisoners. In a physical environment that left much to be desired, it enabled the general atmosphere usually to be remarkably civilized. It provided the context within which safety could be the norm and the preliminary work of rebuilding shattered lives could tentatively be begun.

Table 1 Board Statistics

BOARD STATISTICS	2011/13
-------------------------	----------------

Recommended Complement of Board Members	11
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	11
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	13
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	5
Number of members leaving within reporting period	3
Total number of Board meetings during reporting period	16
Total number of visits to the Establishment	321
Total number of segregation reviews held	45
Total number of segregation reviews attended	4
Date of Annual Team Performance Review	5.12.2012

Table 2 IMB Applications December 2011- March 2013

Code	Subject	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/2012	2012-2013
A	Accommodation	4	5	13	7	2
B	Adjudications	3	2	1	6	0
C	Equality and Diversity	4	1	5	7	0
D	Education/employment/training	3	7	13	12	1
E1	Family/visits inc mail and phone	17	13	17	18	0
E2	Finance/pay				14	1
F	Food/kitchen related	4	3	3	0	0
G	Health related	19	40	36	38	2
H1	Property (within current establishment)	37	59	34	12	0
H2	Property (during transfer/in another establishment)				12	0
H3	Canteen, facilities, Catalogue shopping, Argos)				6	0
I	Sentence related	4	17	30	23	2
J	Staff/prisoner/related	50	9	49	19	5
K	Transfers	20	38	19	37	4
L	Miscellaneous	39	90	18	18	3
	Total number of applications	204	284	238	228	20

APPENDIX A: Public and Private Sector Partners

Organisation	Provision
Action for Education (A4E)	Learning and Skills. Contract ended July 2012
Age Concern	Advice and guidance for prisoners over 50
Alcoholics Anonymous	Referrals
Avon and Wiltshire Partnership	Drug treatment and intervention for drug users
BASS	Housing support
Blue Sky Development and Regeneration	Employment for ex-prisoners
Changing Tunes	Engaging prisoners through music
Clinks (prison-community links)	Improving links between prisons and the voluntary and community-based sector
Combat Stress	Assistance for Ex Service personnel
Cruse Bereavement Care	Private interviews for prisoners who have requested assistance
Drug Interventions Programme (DIP) Team	Support for prisoners post-release
Equality South West	Advice and guidance to staff and prisoners on Diversity
Fair Shares Partnership	Allows prisoners to earn points which their families can redeem within the local community or donate to Victim Support
GAPS	Housing advice
GEOAmev	Escort provision
Gloucester City Housing	Advice worker specializing in housing under 25s
Gloucestershire Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers (GARAS)	Advice and support for foreign national prisoners and prison staff working with them
Gloucestershire Libraries Service	Library provision within the Learning and Skills department
Gloucestershire Probation Trust	Working with prisoners to reduce re-offending
Gloucestershire Race Equality Council (GlosREC)	Representative attends REAT meetings periodically and assists with the impact assessment programme
Gloucester Mosques	Support to prisoners and families
Holy Trinity Church	Support to prisoners and taking services
Homecare Optician Services	Optician service
House of the Open Door	Monthly Chaplaincy Service
IAG – Connexions Gloucestershire	Information, advice and guidance to prisoners aged 20+ to maximize chances for work, education or training
InfoBuzz/The Nelson Trust	Family/Visitor support
John Sidwell	Basic numeracy project
Jole Rider	Project to refurbish bicycles for supply to third world countries
Leonardo's	Support to prisoners whilst in prison and

	upon release with driving skills and associated paperwork
NACRO	Guidance to staff and prisoners on issues for older prisoners
Narcotics Anonymous	Referrals
New Dawn	Offender Support
Nextstep (Gloucester)	Advice on jobs and training
Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)	Information, advice and support on health care matters
Prison Fellowship	Assistance in provision of pastoral care
Prison Visitors	Available to prisoners who do not have family visits
Prolific Offending Team	A multi disciplinary approach working with prolific offenders
Restorative Gloucestershire	A Restorative Justice project working with prisoners on the effects of their offending in the community
Restorative Solutions	Providing specialist Restorative Justice support
Salvation Army	Music for services and support to prisoners and their families
Samaritans	Training of prisoners as listeners to offer peer support to persons in crisis
Shannon Trust	Sponsorship of the Toe by Toe scheme, and support to prisoners and coordinators
Shelter	Advice and assistance to prisoners with housing problems
St Mark's, Cheltenham	Chaplaincy Services
Stonham Housing Association	Advice on housing
The Big Word	Telephone Translation Services
The Haven	Family support centre for homeless
The Vaughan Centre	Homeless centre
Tribal	Information and Guidance and basic skills training
University of Gloucestershire	Placements and research within the prison
2gether NHS Foundation Trust	Provision of Prison Healthcare services and IDTS
Weston College	Learning and Skills. Contract awarded 1 August 2012

There were also numerous individual volunteers who attended the prison to offer their time to help address the prisoners' needs, working mainly with the Chaplaincy and InfoBuzz/The Nelson Trust.