



# **Annual Report**

## **HMP High Down Surrey**

**December 2011 to November 2012**



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## **HMP HIGH DOWN IMB DIVERSITY STATEMENT**

*The members of High Down IMB have all read and understood the HMP High Down Diversity Statement below. We recognise our work should be consistent with that statement, and behaviour which conflicts with it is not acceptable.*

*“HMP High Down is fully committed to all Diversity and Equal Opportunities Policies and procedures.*

*Discrimination, prejudice, harassment, bullying and negative stereotyping on the grounds of colour, ethnic or national origins, religious belief, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, gender or any other factor is unacceptable.*

*Everyone who lives, works in, or visits HMP High Down should treat each other with respect, decency and kindness.*

*We do not accept, and aim to change, any behaviour that does not meet these high standards.”*

## **Section 2 STATUTORY ROLE OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD (IMB)**

*The Prisons Act 1952 and the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 require every prison and Immigration Reception Centre 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 concern it has; and*
- (3) report annually to the Secretary of State on how well the prison has met the standards and requirements placed on it and what impact these have on those in its custody.*

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

### **Section 3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON**

*3.1 HMP High Down is a Category B male local prison, serving the Crown Courts of Guildford and Croydon, and the surrounding magistrates' courts. It holds Category B and C prisoners, sentenced and on remand. With the expansion in 2008/9 it is now certified to hold 999 prisoners, though with the doubling up of some single cells it can currently hold 1103. During this past year the prison has again held a large number of foreign nationals and young offenders (YOs).*

*3.2 High Down is the only adult male prison in the Greater London area holding YOs. The categories of YOs held are sentenced, remand, Rule 45 (own interest), lifers and those with indeterminate sentence for public protection (IPPs).*

*3.3 A large number of prisoners coming in to High Down have mental health problems, legal and illegal drug use problems and/or physical and learning disabilities. Many have a low level of literacy and numeracy.*

*3.4 Healthcare was managed by the Surrey Primary Care Trust (PCT) until April, then passed to Virgin Health. The naming of the new education and training contractors was delayed for reasons outside the Prison Service's control and therefore Manchester College continued to run education for most of the reporting year, handing over to A4E only in August. Voluntary and community sector organisations play a significant part in underpinning the work of the prison.*

### **Section 4 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

#### **Overall judgement**

4.1 The Board is satisfied that High Down treats prisoners humanely and fairly. It is a well-run prison, with continuing commitment to safety and security. The prison has maintained its active and innovative approach to developing resettlement: an essential component in reducing reoffending. This is a key element of government penal policy, and High Down continues to take a dynamic, independent lead. Partnerships have been developed with a range of organisations to help prisoners, both in prison and on release.

4.2 In August 2011 Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons (HMCIP) made an announced visit to High Down. The resulting report of their findings agreed in many areas with the IMB's own view of the prison, both in overall good performance and shortcomings. As a result the

senior management team formulated an action plan to deal with areas they accepted needed addressing. The Board has been monitoring the implementation of this over the past 18 months and many references to the HMCIP inspection will be found below.

4.3 Last year the Board said that the picture regarding budgetary cuts was bleaker than that of the preceding year. In fact, this has been the situation, year on year, for as long as this Board can remember, as more and more efficiency savings have been required. This year the bite has been far worse. In line with demands from central government to slash budgets in all areas of public life the prison service has been asked to make huge savings. Despite the best efforts of all concerned, this is seriously jeopardising the ability of High Down to meet its obligations towards the men in its care and achieve the targets of training men to reform their lives and re-enter society as contributing members. There will be many examples given below where the prison has struggled to give men their time out of cell for exercise and association and keep up to date with visits, mail, sentence plans, public protection interviews, etc. Cross-deployment of officers has become a norm rather than the exception: they are moved from one function to another to cover more pressing operational needs, leaving their original task undone. Staff have inadequate time to perform their role as personal officers, which is where so much good work can be done to encourage prisoners to change their lives.

4.4 The situation will be further exacerbated by the forthcoming implementation of ZeBRA, the latest approach to savings which is likely to signify a further 20% budget cut. The Board will be monitoring the situation anxiously. The implications of ZeBRA for staff are unknown but it is certain that there will be enormous changes to working practices. It is a worrying and stressful time for all staff and, understandably, morale is very low. Highly trained, experienced and motivated staff are essential to the effective running of any establishment. The situation will require wise management.

4.5 It is not the IMB's role to pass judgment on the need for cuts or to comment specifically on the staffing situation. However, when these impinge on the treatment of prisoners it becomes so. There is a fundamental question as to whether short term cuts lead to long term problems.

4.6 Once again little progress has been achieved since last year in addressing the significant underuse of the Stephen Pryor Education Centre (SPC) (5.29-39). Dental waiting lists are reducing, but still too long (5.19). Overcrowding has resulted in prisoners sharing 'doubled up' single cells in unhygienic conditions (6.14). Specific groups of prisoners, such as YOs

and Vulnerable Prisoners (VPs) are held in High Down with little in the way of facilities to meet their particular needs.

4.7 The Board has observed many examples of fine work by staff and outside organisations encouraging men in High Down to develop responsibility towards their prison community. Examples of these include: the Listeners who meet first-timers in Reception to reassure and explain, or turn out in the middle of the night to listen to a disturbed man; Induction workers who run the groups introducing newcomers to prison life; Toe by Toe workers supported by the Shannon Trust who guide men with poor literacy on a one-to-one basis; the Healthcare prisoner representatives who act as go-betweens for men who feel their medical needs are not being met; the St Giles representatives who advise on resettlement issues; Foreign National representatives who support their fellows to understand complicated immigration procedures; and there are others. The IMB at High Down are very aware of the role these prisoners play in the life of the prison community and of the value both to themselves and to those they assist. The Board also warmly commends the volunteers and staff in the Visitors' Centre and the play workers in the Visits Hall who engage the children in play. Together they make a real difference to families arriving for the first time. One of the joys and privileges of our monitoring is to observe all these interactions.

4.8 Finally, the Board must mention the unexpected resignation of Peter Dawson, the Governor, in October. His long-standing presence and relentless enthusiasm despite the inevitable setbacks of public service did much to steady High Down through tumultuous times. Many exciting initiatives started under his aegis. His sudden departure was yet a further blow at a difficult moment and senior management, especially the Deputy Governor who herself is fairly new to the prison, and all the staff deserve much credit for pulling together and coping. The Board wishes his successor, Governor Ian Bickers every success in guiding High Down through the troubled waters ahead.

### **Issues for the Minister**

- **The Impact on prisoners of further budgetary cuts (paras 4.3-5,6.15-16).**
- **Continuing placement of mentally ill people in prison (para 5.22).**  
**The Minister referred to the Diversion programme in his answer last year but the Board remains unconvinced this is having a significant effect.**
- **Overcrowding, leading to doubled up single cells (para 6.14).**

## **Issues for the Prison Service**

- Failure to transfer vulnerable prisoners to prisons where there are accredited courses for them to progress their sentences (paras 6.37-45).
- Failure to transfer indeterminate sentence prisoners to prisons where there are accredited courses for them to progress their sentence plans (paras 6.17-22).

## **Issues for the Prison**

- Underuse of the Stephen Pryor Education Centre (paras 5.29-39).
- Equivalency of treatment for vulnerable prisoners (paras 6.37-45).
- Attention to the needs of young offenders (para 6.46).
- Dentistry waiting lists (para 5.19).
- Problems associated with staffing levels in the laundry and the repair and maintenance of equipment in the laundry and kitchen (paras 5.42-3, 6.3). The Minister told us in his answer to last year's report that a third instructor would be available to staff the laundry but this has not happened.
- Lack of support for the Toe by Toe Literacy Scheme (para 6.35)

## **Section 5 SPECIFIC AREAS**

### **Equality and Foreign National Offenders (FNOs)**

5.1 The Board finds that High Down works effectively to promote racial equality and diversity within the prison. We have seen little evidence of discrimination and those tasked with Equalities are diligent and have an in-depth understanding of related issues. Nevertheless, the Chief Inspector reported a loss of focus in the area of Diversity in 2011 and the Board feels this is still the case.

5.2 There has been a slight fall in the number of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) prisoners, though they still represent 44.0% of its population. The number of FNOs remained relatively static throughout the year, with start and year-end figures showing 226 prisoners, 20.5% of population. There are currently 143 prisoners with a declared disability, 13.8% of the population; while there are 129 older prisoners (over 50 years), 12.5% of the population.

### **Equality**

5.3 The monthly HEAT (High Down Equality Action Team) meetings are chaired by the Deputy Governor or, more usually, a senior member of staff fully versed with the issues at hand. Staff attendance at the monthly meetings was high at the beginning of the year.

However, as a result of budgetary constraints and as officers were pressured with other demands levels of attendance fell. On several occasions the meeting was either cancelled or rescheduled. Towards the end of the year, and in line with many other prisons, meetings were reduced to bi-monthly.

5.4 At the start of the year meetings were well attended by prisoner orderlies and representatives. Again, shortages of staff in operational units and redeployment had a detrimental impact on prisoner attendance by the end of the year. Of concern at the end of the period is that through natural attrition (prisoner release, prisoner transfer, job change and security issues), only one prisoner representative was available to cover all house blocks and work areas. Notwithstanding this, those prisoner representatives spoken to throughout the year were fully engaged with their role and believed that where issues were being raised, their arguments were listened to and action taken where appropriate. The IMB are confident that management will address the current shortage of representatives whose role is valued.

5.5 Following the HMCIP report, managers have attempted to make the Equalities meetings more strategic. The main areas scrutinised continue to be: age, disabilities, nationality, race and religion, gender reassignment and sexual orientation. A new challenge this reporting year was the presence for the first time of prisoners on the house blocks undergoing gender reassignment. The Board considers management and the Equalities team handled this complex issue in an exemplary way.

5.6 A recent document from the IMB National Council has made Boards' aware of the particular needs and difficulties of Travellers in custody. High Down held a Gypsy and Traveller Awareness event in early summer which included a discussion on the disadvantages and perceptions of being a Gypsy or Traveller in prison. Problems raised were: the difficulty in sending out Visiting Orders; support from resettlement groups such as St Giles; difficulty in gaining employment on release; and employment in prison due to poor literacy skills. The Board undertakes to look with care at this area in the coming year.

5.7 Older prisoners are becoming a significant proportion of prison populations nationally and it is important that their particular needs are identified and met. At the end of the reporting year there were 129 prisoners over 50: 85 between the ages 50-59; 31 aged 60-69 and 13 over 70 years old. High Down is aware and taking steps to tackle this area of need.

5.8 Similarly the prison continues to assess and address the needs of disabled prisoners. Of the 143 prisoners who declared a disability on arrival in the second part of the year, the top

three categories disclosed were: reduced mobility (35); mental illness (29); and dyslexia (25) More than one disability was declared by 22 men. The number of disabled prisoners had increased this year, though this could be attributed to improved vigilance and data collection by the Equalities Team. The prisoner orderlies can play a significant role in identifying those who have slipped through the net.

5.9 This year 224 Discrimination Incidents (DIRFs) were reported to the Equalities Manager. This is an increase of 32% over the previous year. The IMB has been unable to establish a satisfactory explanation. One reason was multiple complaints submitted by a very few prisoners. Management asked for these to be checked by an independent agency.

### **Foreign National Offenders**

5.10 The number of FNOs remained relatively static throughout the year with start and year-end figures showing 226 prisoners; 20.5% of High Down's population. These represented 63 disclosed nationalities – an increase of twenty on 2012. The top five nationalities were: Jamaican (12.9%); Roma (8.5%); Polish (6%); Nigerian (5%); and Lithuanian (5%).

5.11 The attendance of UKBA Immigration Officers continues to be sporadic and this year they withdrew from attending the weekly resettlement clinic. However, they do attend one day a week, when possible, to deal with individual cases and to serve necessary paperwork. Decisions continue to be made by UKBA case workers based elsewhere, and there is no discernible improvement in the length of time taken for their decisions to be made. The onus still rests with High Down staff to contact UKBA when a FNO nears his release date, to establish whether he should be released or his continued detention authorised under immigration powers. At the end of the reporting year there were 23 Time Served FNOs held at High Down, four of whom were close to, or over a year past their release date. As colleagues have said before; this may be legal but it is not right.

5.12 The Facilitated Return and Early Removal Scheme is explained to all FNOs during their induction on arriving at the prison. High Down had no accurate figures of the numbers applying for this as some apply directly to UKBA Immigration Officers. Before a decision is reached by UKBA, prisoners may be moved to another prison or Immigration Removal Centre, or released on Home Detention Curfew or other early release arrangement.

5.13 For the above reasons the Board judges that the Equalities Team has largely kept up to date with requirements though there has been slippage in some aspects. Nevertheless, there was no discernible evidence to suggest that prisoners had been adversely affected.

The two clerks involved in Equality and Foreign Nationals should be praised for providing a stabilising influence through a difficult year.

### **Health and Mental Health**

5.14 The Board continues to judge the provision of healthcare at High Down as excellent with progressive improvements in all areas, despite budget constraints. In April this year healthcare for the four Surrey prisons was transferred from the Surrey PCT to Virgin Assura (rebranded Virgin Health in December). The Head of Healthcare has reported the transfer as being seamless with no disruption to service delivery.

5.15 There have been significant changes to the management structure. The Head of Healthcare now has a remit Surrey-wide with new responsibilities for specialist support services, including dentistry, diabetes and breast screening. To assist her, a new Head of Healthcare for High Down is expected to take up post early in the New Year. Operational staff have been largely unaffected, while some strategic changes to service delivery are planned; for example a trial of Telemedicine (5.21).

### **Out-patient Services**

5.16 The Board is satisfied that the primary care department continues to provide a high level of medical attention to prisoners. There was a change of manager over the summer, the successful candidate coming from within the experienced team of nurses. August saw a period of serious staff shortages due to annual leave and resignation. At its worst this meant that house block nurses could only cover the daily dispensing of medications and emergencies. This had improved by the autumn with additional recruitment.

5.17 Nurse-led weekly clinics cover diabetes, sexual health, eye care, heart disease, asthma and epilepsy. New clinics have been introduced for lactose intolerance and infection control. The Pain Relief Clinic continues to thrive with four weekly sessions run by the local practice of GPs in consultation with the prison pharmacy. This initiative has built on last year's success in reducing prisoners' dependency on strong painkillers by promoting the benefits of a healthier life style, physiotherapy and exercise. To provide continuity one GP runs the clinic for three months and then another takes over for the next three. There is also a new Skin Complaint Clinic, run by one of the resident pharmacists who is a qualified prescriber. This has reduced the drug budget for prescribed skin remedies, as prisoners may be recommended to buy creams on the canteen list. Finally, nurses also cover the reception area of the prison to undertake the routine medical assessments and drug/other screening of new arrivals (6.25).

5.18 The Board is happy to report that the local practice of GPs contracted to Healthcare continues to provide a satisfactory service. This is not the case with the out-of-hours' service. There have been reports of doctors reluctant to attend emergencies or delaying arrival, unacceptable recommendations that a prisoner be taken to A&E rather than the doctor attending to assess and, even more seriously, incidents of mis-prescribing. The contract is due for renewal next year and there are hopes that the local GP practice might bid to take on the out-of-hours service.

5.19 Over the years numerous attempts to tackle the problem of 'no-shows' (DNAs) for medical appointments have had intermittent success. A recent initiative has been the distribution of reminder slips to wing staff and patients the night before by the healthcare prisoner orderlies and this has resulted in a welcome reduction in the number of DNAs.

5.20 In last year's annual report the IMB had a major concern with the unacceptably long waiting lists to see a dentist. Many prisoners typically have a high level of need because of their previous lifestyles. Problems continued through the early part of this year with dental staff absence and ill health. There has been some improvement since the Head of Healthcare was allowed to take over direct management of the dental service. Two dentists are now contracted to run clinics on a weekly basis and provide the necessary specialist dental services and steps have been taken to cut down on DNAs. From the figures available to the Board, waiting times for a routine appointment has fluctuated around 11-13 weeks, still well beyond the national target of six weeks, with numbers on the list rarely below 100.

5.21 Telemedicine is one of the exciting new plans for High Down. A six-month trial of video-conferenced medical consultations is due to commence in April 2013, reducing the need for prisoners to attend outside hospital. The budget for hospital escorts and bed-watches is overspent; and the prison cannot afford to lose the officer hours without affecting the regime. Other considerations are security for the public and decency for the prisoner. Every attempt is made to meet the NHS target of 18-week waiting times for hospital appointments but limits have had to be placed on daily hospital appointments. If the trial proves successful Telemedicine should be a real benefit.

### **In-patient Services**

5.22 High Down provides 22 beds in its 24-hour manned Healthcare Centre (HCC). There have been fluctuations in staff levels during the year but currently the HCC is well-staffed by nurses. The unit provides a therapeutic environment for the range of patients, mainly with

mental health problems. The regime is very flexible with prisoners being allowed out of their cells for longer day-time periods, subject to sufficient staff being available. The IMB observes that staff, both nurses and officers, are very supportive of, and interested in, the progress of those in their care while it acknowledges the challenges presented by the many prisoners with serious mental health and behavioural problems. As in previous reports the Board questions the propriety of dealing with these often highly disturbed men in a prison environment.

5.23 The Board reported last year that far too often VPs were temporarily housed in HCC until space could be found on the VP Unit. This has largely ceased. However, cross-deployment of discipline staff to other areas of the prison has escalated and the part-time cover provided by the one Senior Officer has reduced. Patients no longer have association during the evening because there are no officers to supervise. Officers tell the Board they often have to make quick judgements on how to deal with difficult and potentially dangerous situations in the absence of senior staff. Given the regularity of officers running several regimes during a shift, the need for multiple unlocks (e.g. Senior Officer + 3 officers) and the relentless pressures of managing disturbed prisoners the Board believes that the present staffing arrangements may be unsafe and should be reviewed as a matter of urgency.

5.24 The Board wishes to commend the Head Pharmacist for the excellent pharmacy department, run across the four Surrey prisons. It considers it well-managed, with all the correct policies and paperwork in place and a constant search to improve its practice. Subject to a risk assessment prisoners are encouraged to be responsible for their own medication, with the exception of some controlled drugs and benzodiazepines. As mentioned above, the Head Pharmacist operates the Pain Relief Clinic and acts as a check on prescribing.

5.25 Prison healthcare has been without a PALS/Complaints Manager for most of this year but a new post-holder arrives in December for one day a week. The system previously worked well to resolve complaints at an early stage and the Board expects that the new manager will re-establish this good practice. During the absence of a PALS Manager the healthcare orderlies have ensured that complaints have been dealt with appropriately.

### **Mental Health Inreach**

5.26 The Inreach team continues to play an important role in High Down where so many prisoners have significant mental health issues. It is well-staffed and takes referrals from across the prison, working with prisoners to improve their symptoms and with nurses and

officers to help manage some very difficult situations. During the year 26 prisoners were diagnosed as needing the specialist care of mental health establishments and most were transferred within the eight-week guidelines. The Chief Inspector commented on the lack of counselling provision in 2011 and some sessions are now available to help prisoners with anxiety and trauma issues.

5.27 Last year's report mentioned a new development in the appointment of a learning disabilities specialist, under the auspices of Inreach. This has enabled the prison to give more attention to identifying prisoners with learning difficulties and provide them with the necessary care and treatment. Since it is a completely new initiative in prisons nationally it has taken some time to design an effective screening tool and a range of leaflets on learning disabilities to inform staff and prisoners. 59 prisoners have so far been identified and some work has been done with individuals, such as helping autistic prisoners cope with the prison environment. Clinics are due to start in the New Year, and other plans include involving the Education department and contributing to staff training.

5.28 In conclusion the Board is pleased to report once again that Healthcare in High Down has maintained its high standard and provides at least equivalent care to that in the community. The Healthcare Manager and her strong team of specialist and nursing staff are continually reviewing their service provision with a view to introducing new and more efficient ways of working within the constraints of the budget. Relationships between the Head of Healthcare, the Governor and the commissioners are good. Both the Partnership Board and Clinical Governance bi-monthly meetings are well attended, providing a forum to share ideas and initiatives across the Surrey prisons.

## **Learning and Skills**

### **Education**

5.29 The Stephen Pryor Education Centre (SPC) is an excellent educational facility and includes a range of classrooms and workshops with facilities to improve literacy and numeracy and to provide training in work-place related skills. There are approximately 210 spaces available with a further 56 in the computer studies workshop.

5.30 There is much to commend. Staff work hard to provide a broad spectrum of courses. These range from basic literacy courses to a wide selection of skills and interests, including instruction in construction techniques: brick laying, carpentry, painting and decorating. The main emphasis is to teach skills that will help prisoners to re-integrate into society and earn a living on their release. Creative work is also encouraged: the music course was praised by

HMCIP and contributions were submitted for both the annual Art and Poetry exhibition at Sutton Library in March and the Koestler Awards in October. The exceptional standard of the entries is a credit to the help and guidance the prisoners receive from their tutors in the SPC and workshops.

5.31 The IMB has noted in its last three annual reports that the resources for educational and vocational training while good are vastly under-utilised. The Chief Inspector agreed. On average most classes have around 60% occupancy. The Board considers the poor take-up of the educational opportunities to be one of the most disappointing aspects of the prison.

5.32 In 2012 empty and half-full classrooms were a regular feature. Numbers were monitored through the year and we consistently saw a substantial difference between those expected and those who turned up. Large numbers of prisoners left classes soon after their arrival. The numbers registered first thing often bore little relation to those actually observed in the SPC by mid-morning. While some had finished their induction assessments and for others there were undoubtedly good reasons to leave, such as other appointments, the IMB doubts if so many had valid reasons for leaving early. Yet all early leavers were still being paid for their attendance. Furthermore, while about 360 prisoners have some engagement in education, most are part-time for only one or two sessions a week. These factors do not encourage the development of a work ethic. The Board looks forward with optimism to management's future plans which will involve moving to a more work-related core day, such as men will experience in the community

5.33 The Board believes that one of the main reasons for this under-utilisation is that courses could be more usefully tailored to prisoners' needs. At its inception, limits were put on the SPC in respect of the courses it could offer. The practical courses in construction appeal to the men and always appear to be busy, with a waiting list. However, they are only available to prisoners who are convicted and have at least six months to a year to serve. Remand prisoners are excluded and yet High Down is a remand prison. VPs are another group for whom there are limited educational options and yet High Down has a large VP unit. With the implementation of the new OLASS4 contract, which concentrates on the link with employability, a major review in the curriculum is currently taking place in the SPC. This surely is an opportunity to work out the needs of the many categories of prisoners who come through Reception, and fit education to them rather than try to shoehorn the prisoners in to what is on offer in the SPC.

5.34 Another factor in the underuse of the SPC is the substantial backlog of applications from prisoners willing to engage in purposeful activity. Allocation to the various courses and work places is carried out by the Job Shop. Understandably risk assessments must be made as to a man's suitability for a particular role but backlogs and delays have occurred. There was confusion in late summer as to whether a man needed a full sentence plan before he could be assigned. Also, at various times in the year Job Shop's task has been hampered by staffing problems. Staff have been absent for a variety of reasons and there is no slack in the system to provide cover.

5.35 There have also been continuing problems with the lack of cover for teachers and instructors during leave or illness and the Board has noted the many classes that have been cancelled through the year. The construction classes were particularly affected. The Chief Inspector recommended there should be sufficient staffing to provide cover for absences in education and workshops. When a class is cancelled the prisoner is paid but left locked up in his cell for the session. Clearly the prisoners suffer. Surely there must be a way of organising a bank of substitutes such as the IMB has observed in other establishments.

5.36 Pay rates are poor both for education and work and do not motivate prisoners to leave their cells. Both HMCIP and IMB have mentioned in the past the cumbersome and unfair pay structure for prisoners. While it is understandable that there is no extra money available at this time the Board are pleased to note that new rates are to be introduced soon which will rationalise the pay for different tasks and act as an incentive towards education.

5.37 On top of the above shortcomings the prison cancelled education classes on Wednesday afternoons from January, in response to an operational need. This was in addition to the cancellation of Friday afternoon activity already in place.

5.38 The SPC staff and the prisoners have had a very unsettling time over the past years, first with the change to Manchester College as provider in August 2009 and again this past year with the re-tendering of the education contract. The new provider should have taken over in August 2012 but political considerations intervened and the chosen company, A4E, was not in place until November. This has created considerable uncertainty for the education staff at High Down. A4E had an initial meeting with staff in the beginning of September when they gave their presentation. Despite A4E's initial reluctance to allow them to attend, IMB members made it clear they had a right and duty to do so.

5.39 In conclusion, the Board recognises that High Down has a transitory population and men on remand cannot be obliged to participate. Nevertheless, it is surely essential to the Government's declared intention for prisons to aim to reduce re-offending that major steps are taken to increase the numbers taking advantage of the excellent training opportunities available in the SPC. We stressed this in last year's report and the Board feels that senior management must address this issue as a matter of urgency.

### **Library**

5.40 The Library is now well-resourced and fully staffed. The Library opening hours are satisfactory and around 40% of the prison population use its facilities. During the last year prisoners have been coming from all house blocks in good numbers. This is good news as last year attendance from some house blocks was problematic. The VPs have just the one, often short, session in the Library per week though they also have access to their own library on the VP unit. All other prisoners have two sessions per week. A few sessions were cancelled for staff ill-health or occasionally because officers were not available as escorts. Due to problems with the waiting list to see the optician a solution was devised for the Library to provide prisoners with one pair of reading glasses at a cost of £1. When these ran out, and at the IMB's prompting, the Governor agreed to fund more, though delivery took forever. The Library runs a popular reading group once a fortnight for eight to ten prisoners, funded by Roehampton University which sends a volunteer to lead the session and organise the annual exhibition at Sutton Library. The reduction in the loss of books since last year is good news.

### **Laundry**

5.41 The Laundry continues to provide an essential service for High Down and in addition has run contracts for several other prisons. Sadly, a significant one with HMP Wormwood Scrubs will be lost at the end of the year.

5.42 Throughout the year the Board's rota visits revealed that the Laundry was very often working to half-capacity. The significance of this is that the Laundry is the main area of employment for VPs. While 34 prisoners can normally be provided with employment, there must be a ratio of one member of staff to 17 prisoners. One instructor absent on annual or sick leave means 17 men remain locked in their cells on the VP unit. In his answer to the Board in 2011 the Prisons' Minister stated that "the recent employment of an additional instructor as officer will reduce the number of occasions on which this happens". This does not reflect reality. On their weekly visits IMB members have frequently found only 17

prisoners working and the reason given as the absence of one instructor. Uncertainty about the Laundry's future prevails when the two instructors both leave in the New Year.

5.43 As in 2011 the Laundry is still hampered by failing machinery and pipe-work leaks. Despite sterling efforts by the civilian managers and the prisoners who operate it there have been backlogs, even with High Down's own washing, and the prison has been obliged to operate weekend overtime. The Laundry is in fact one of the prison's few profit centres. It would be a shame to lose this facility but the question of staffing and the replacement and maintenance of equipment needs addressing urgently if it is to function effectively.

### **Workshops and Recycling**

5.44 The Board continues to be extremely impressed with the workshops and recycling unit which provide excellent opportunities for training in a friendly and supportive environment. All the tutors must be praised for the part that they play.

5.45 Particular mention this year is deserved by Woodwork. This was built up from scratch over the past years and now teaches prisoners accredited skills, produces articles, often from recycled wood, and repairs prison furniture. High Down beehives have gone to HMP Cardiff and the Surrey Beekeepers' Association as well as providing the wherewithal to start bee keeping at High Down. Among the commendations received from the Koestler Awards was a platinum award for a bench made in the workshop. Visitors to High Down can now see this bench outside the prison entrance. The workshop had to be closed for seven weeks earlier in the year due to the instructor's ill health, making 12 prisoners unemployed. As with education, it must be possible to create a bank of tutors and instructors, perhaps volunteers from the community, who could be called in to cover these unfortunate absences.

5.46 A significant development has been the experimental introduction of some VP prisoners into the Industrial Sewing workshop as well as some VPs working in the Laundry on sewing tasks. This appears to be successful and the Board must applaud anything which gives VPs a more meaningful existence in High Down.

5.47 The Recycling workshop offers up to 14 places to prisoners. Everything possible is recycled: from cans to clothing. Used cooking oil from the kitchen is turned into diesel fuel to run prison vehicles. The cardboard baler can handle bulk quantities which are more attractive to commercial purchasers. The composter recycles all food refuse, providing compost for Farms and Gardens where they produce vegetables for the prison restaurant. Items of clothing, towels and bed linen, plates, cutlery and furniture are all recycled with the

help of the other workshops, saving the prison considerable sums of money annually. The workshop has had to operate through the year with two staff short reducing the amount of work it could undertake. The provision of an area where prisoner workers can eat their lunch extends the effective working day.

### **Safer Custody**

5.48 Safer Custody remains a high priority within High Down and staff continue to make the effort required to maintain an environment that is safe for both prisoners and staff. The team have put considerable effort into revising the procedures for monitoring, reporting and analysing all aspects of a prisoner's custody. This has continued despite personnel changes and the increasing cross-deployment of the Safer Custody team. Data collection and presentation has been refined and the reporting of all incidents has improved considerably, albeit some completed late. Successful safer custody processes in other prisons have been examined as a means of developing new initiatives for High Down. It is unfortunate that the last three months of the reporting period has seen three changes of governor responsible for this area, which has resulted in some aspects of changed emphasis in direction.

5.49 Meetings are held regularly once a month with a structured agenda and there is good attendance by prisoner representatives from Safer Custody, Violence Reduction and Listeners all present and contributing to the first half of the meeting. Senior officers from each house block, HCC and the Separation and Reintegration Unit (SRU) are also expected to attend but it is rare to have a full representation, which dilutes the meetings' efficiency.

5.50 Self-harm documents (ACCTs) are opened when staff have reason to consider a prisoner likely to harm himself. They assess the risk of harm and document the on-going action plan developed with the person to help him through his difficulties. During 2012 548 ACCTs were opened. The need to raise the standard of ACCTs, and ensure action plans are followed and documented is regularly highlighted between the Safer Custody team and the house blocks. A large number of prisoners in Healthcare are on ACCT documents and there can be disagreement as to whether the HCC or the house block is the appropriate place to manage them. A few prisoners in SRU have an ACCT opened on arrival, though rarely more than two per month. Anecdotal evidence suggests that, at times, prisoners were using self-harm and ACCT documents to manipulate transfers between house blocks.

5.51 There were 207 self-harm incidents between December 2011 and May 2012 and 216 between June and November 2012, compared to 169 for the last six months of 2011. The self-harm rate has increased significantly during the last 12 months. Adult white prisoners

dominate the statistics of prisoners self harming, with cutting being the preferred method. Self-harming amongst the VP population is low though that also increased in the second half year. Analysis does not suggest any clear explanation as the spikes are often due to one prisoner self-harming multiple times. The procedure of notifying the Samaritans and the IMB of all incidents of severe self-harm requiring a hospital visit has not always been followed.

5.52 The Listener programme continues to be well-run, well-supported and highly utilised by prisoners. Calls range between 70 and 140 per week. Listeners are recruited and trained by the Samaritans and are on call 24-hours. It is not easy in a local prison to maintain the optimum number: 24 at High Down. The Listeners and Samaritans liaise well with the Safer Custody team to iron out niggles both in recruitment and in functioning. Mental health training for Listeners was a new initiative introduced in 2012. Both Samaritans and the Listener peer workers are to be warmly applauded for their contribution to keeping the prison a safer environment.

5.53 Anti-bullying dossiers are opened when officers or prisoners suspect or report incidents of bullying among prisoners on the house blocks. Although there was a decrease in the number opened in 2012 compared with the same period in the previous year, the Board is not convinced these reflect the reality. Officers do not universally perceive these documents as useful. There is sometimes a reluctance to add to paperwork by opening them. An Anti-Social Behaviour document is likely to replace them early in 2013. Following a training talk earlier in the year, the Board was made aware of the possibility of bullying centred around mealtimes. However, active monitoring by the IMB during its rota visits raised no concerns of endemic bullying at High Down.

5.54 The Complex Case Management system put in place last year has proved to be an effective way of highlighting and managing more the challenging prisoners safely. This is the procedure by which prisoners can be referred to a multi-disciplinary team, including Mental Health, Healthcare, Safer Custody, house block officers and management to develop a coherent approach.

5.55 The total number of violent incidents for 2012 was 17% up on 2011 (255 v 218). The months of February and August were recorded as significantly higher than the monthly average, with the spikes mostly during association periods and involving house blocks 1, 3 and 4. The use of weapons was constant with 19 recorded in each six month period. There were 40 assaults on staff recorded in 2012 compared with 45 in 2011, spread fairly evenly

through the year. Serious assaults reduced to 23 from 36 the preceding year. There were no serious assaults on staff in the reporting period.

5.56 The Board is pleased to report there were no deaths in custody during this period and just one “near miss” in August.

### **Separation and Reintegration Unit (SRU)**

5.57 The SRU is a large unit with twenty two standard cells and two Special Accommodation cells, used only in extreme circumstances and for the shortest time possible. The unit is reasonably well maintained. For most of the reporting year it was running to nearly full capacity. One factor was the need to house VPs as overflow when there was no space in the VPU. The situation improved when the VPunit was extended to a second spur. A further factor was the number of Rule 45 GOOD (good order and discipline) prisoners held.

5.58 Prisoners may arrive in SRU directly from Reception or from within the prison after an incident. Strip searching of prisoners arriving on the unit only takes place with the authority of a governor or when there are reasonable grounds. The Senior Officer will explain the reasons for segregation and a nurse assesses each prisoner on arrival. Prisoners on a self-harm document (ACCT) are only located in the SRU if it is justified and authorised by the duty governor. It is vital that the reason a prisoner is held in the unit is clearly stated on the initial segregation paperwork. This is not always the case. On occasions the Board has also noted paperwork authorising certain actions in the unit has been out of date or incorrect: e.g. basic reviews, multiple unlocks, ACCT reviews and OTO 13 paperwork.

5.59 Prisoners placed in the SRU are reviewed after 72 hours and then again after seven or 14 days. The Board attended nearly all SRU reviews during the reporting period. It is the IMB’s view that a coordinated and consistent approach to the review process has sometimes been hampered by different governors attending a prisoner’s successive reviews, by the absence of representatives from the multidisciplinary team managing the prisoner, by the absence of relevant information and by agreed actions not always being implemented.

5.60 The Segregation Monitoring and Review Group (SMARG) met quarterly during the reporting period. Its terms of reference are comprehensive and include the implementation of and adherence to PSO 1700 on Segregation and the use of separation. It looks at overall trends in the use of segregation throughout the prison and the training and educational needs of the officers. Its analysis of prisoners held in the SRU has recently become

dependent on statistical information and graphs which, while demonstrating that the mean performance of the SRU is satisfactory, neglects the individual prisoner.

5.61 A deep and on-going concern to the Board are the prisoners who spend weeks and months in segregation. Throughout the year there have been instances of men held for long periods before a transfer has been achieved. At the end of the reporting period there were three prisoners whose individual start dates of continuous segregation were: 27 December 2011 (eleven months), 21 February 2012 (nine months) and 3 May 2012 (7 months). The Board has raised their concerns on numerous occasions with governors and with the Area Manager. None of the three cited prisoners have personal visitors or much, if any, contact with the outside world. Exercise is limited; one man chooses not to speak; they have no care plans in place.

5.62 The high numbers held in the SRU and the length of stay of some has been discussed many times during the reporting period without resolution. The Board was pleased to hear the Acting Governor say that the current practice of keeping problem prisoners in the SRU and managing them is not working and is out of kilter with the rest of London. The Board will continue to monitor and report on the segregation of prisoners and is hopeful that there will be a shift away from keeping prisoners segregated from the main-stream for many months.

5.63 The Board has a close involvement in the SRU and knows the management of this area is not easy. The officers not only have to manage prisoners with challenging and difficult behaviour but also, as illustrated, those who have been there for months without hope of a transfer. The officers run a safe, decent and respectful unit and have the support of the Board.

## **Section 6 OTHER AREAS OF THE PRISON**

### **Catering and the Kitchen**

6.1 As always, the IMB continues to have great admiration for the kitchen staff and the work they do producing over 2000 meals a day, including catering for many different dietary requirements, under difficult conditions and often with broken-down equipment

6.2 Default meals are served when a prisoner's menu sheet cannot be read by the computer. This causes tension at mealtimes when prisoners find they cannot have their preferred option. The kitchen has worked with house block orderlies to reduce errors and the number of default meals has decreased. Numbers of complaints have also reduced,

suggesting an improvement in the quality of food. Given their budget of £2 per prisoner per day, which includes 45p for breakfast alone, this is a great achievement by the kitchen.

6.3 Unfortunately the kitchen is often not running at full capacity, with consistently broken machines, including ovens, steamers, fryers and trolleys being out of action at different times through the year. The engagement of a sole contractor to fix any broken equipment has not improved matters. The contractor is not seen to be reliable and has been noted to fix one piece of equipment at the expense of something else. It is a constant struggle for staff and affects morale and stress levels.

6.4 An interesting development has been the final divorce between the management of the Clink restaurant and the prison kitchen. As happens with new people in charge there have been some positive changes for the kitchen. A survey was conducted to ask prisoners for their opinions on the catering. A new menu was launched in November. This has given the prisoners a wider variety of dishes and staples, such as the introduction of mash, roast potatoes and pasta. The prisoners now also get a greater choice of fruit and home-made puddings. The new menu is more labour intensive and there were a few teething problems, but feedback taken over the last few weeks has been positive and there are fewer complaints going back to the kitchen.

6.5 The kitchen staff strive to provide a high level of training for all prisoners working in the catering area. This enables them to gain a variety of qualifications to help secure permanent employment on release. These include City and Guilds courses in food preparation and cooking; in food and beverage service; basic food hygiene; and food premises cleaning. In the last six months a total of 186 qualifications have been achieved at the different levels. Hot plate workers serving meals on the house blocks also receive qualifications after six weeks of employment. Each prisoner who works in the kitchen must join in training.

6.6 Recently the kitchen has had two external audits, one from environmental health and one from regional prison management, both achieving very good and positive results. Overall it has been a most successful year for the High Down kitchen.

### **Chaplaincy**

6.7 The Board acknowledges the important role this department plays in supporting and comforting those who need spiritual help. The full-time and other part-time chaplains, under the lead Anglican Chaplain, represent most faiths, providing pastoral care and regular services for worshippers. This year High Down has lost both the full-time Roman Catholic

Chaplain and the Imam, and replacements are currently sought. One of the largest groups in High Down is that of Muslim prisoners who have averaged 170 during the year. The Muslim fast of Ramadan is a challenge in a prison context. Special flasks were provided to keep food hot for the required length of time so that prisoners could have a hot meal at the end of their daily fast. The Imam worked with the kitchen, and specially trained Muslim prisoners, in preparing and serving the meals according to religious requirements. The Chaplaincy is also seeking to develop further links between prison and community, with plans for local churches and mosques to become involved. It hosted two courses on victim awareness for prisoners this year, facilitated by the Sycamore Trust. This course is free to the prison and it is hoped will bridge the absence of some Forgiveness Project courses lost on grounds of cost.

### **The Clink**

6.8 The Clink, a public restaurant set within the grounds of the prison, has been a highly successful venture since its tentative beginnings six years ago and is now developing nationwide. From its inception it has been financially detached from the prison kitchen and runs under its own charitable trust. A Clink has already opened at HMP Cardiff and others are planned. Prisoners receive a high level of training in kitchen and front-of-house skills and considerable efforts are made to find its graduates employment in suitable restaurants on their release. This year 99 prisoners have been trained, with 21 graduates being released from High Down into paid employment, 19 of whom are still working and have not reoffended. Meanwhile the frequently fully-booked restaurant attests that the public continue to enjoy the best of cordon bleu dishes.

### **Drugs Legal and Illegal Use**

6.9 The number of prisoners who are addicted to drugs and or alcohol continues to be a major issue for the prison service as a whole. Rehabilitation of Addicted Prisoners Trust (RAPt) works successfully to deliver the Bridge programme on High Down's Drug Recovery wing, in conjunction with the in-house CARATS drug workers. Courses with up to 12 prisoners are held approximately every eight weeks, the majority of whom graduate. The success rate in 2012 was 86%. Prisoners serving longer sentences can go on to complete the full six month Bridge programme at HMP Coldingley with the potential benefit to them of a reduction in categorisation.

6.10 It is well known that drugs still enter the prison illegally and in considerable quantities. Prescribed drugs are also diverted from their legitimate recipient. Officers and medical staff in many departments are involved in preventive action. The Security department works hard

to tackle the problem with drug tests and searches, including some major exercises with the support of Surrey Police. High Down's team of trained dogs and their handlers work indefatigably. Nevertheless, nobody pretends the battle is even half-won.

### **The Gym**

6.11 The Gym provides an essential service throughout the year; one of the few activities which can channel prisoners' energies and allow them to "let off steam" within an encouraging environment. Prisoners have proper access to its facilities and are encouraged to use them. The atmosphere is positive. Rules about participation are clear cut and readily understood, and provide a strong incentive towards good behaviour. It is a popular venue for those who choose to attend and in a survey conducted by the Gym last January most were happy with their sessions and the equipment and activities available.

6.12 Exercise and equipment sessions are organised for the house blocks, with extra sessions for house block workers. Remedial courses are available – in conjunction with Healthcare the Gym runs a Back Clinic; and specific sessions are offered to VPs, YOs and older prisoners. Football competitions are run with outside teams providing the opposition. Following the Chief Inspector's advice the Gym now offers a part-time PE assist gym instructor qualification, completed by 29 men in 2012. It would be good news if funding were found for this to continue in 2013 and extended to include Level 2, making this a real pathway to a career in the fitness industry.

6.13 Unfortunately the Gym has been one of the departments most affected by the cross-deployment of officers. Operational requirements have meant it has often been closed while gym officers were needed elsewhere. This peaked in August and September with cancellations of sessions on roughly 75% of the days. The Gym has done its best to mitigate the effect on prisoners by offering extra sessions.

### **House Blocks**

6.14 The prison consists of six house blocks, some with specialised functions, such as the VP unit, Drug Recovery and Induction wings. It remained technically overcrowded with a certified number of 999 spaces but a maximum of 1103 prisoners. The need to convert many single cells to double occupancy has been mentioned by the IMB previously as being far from ideal. There is insufficient room for two men's property and furniture, and the plastic privacy curtain round the WC is inadequate protection when two must eat, sleep and perform all their functions in the same space for long periods of lock-up. Generally the standard of accommodation has been maintained at an acceptable level, though since winter began

there have been frequent complaints to the IMB about the heating, especially on house blocks 2 and 5.

6.15 There are references throughout this report to the effects of the budget cuts. Last year the Annual Report referred to the feeling of inevitability. That time seems a distant dream on the house blocks now. The harsh reality as the cuts bite home is that they are provoking angry and de-motivated staff. They say they no longer have time to use their skills, to spot vulnerable men who might self-harm, to de-escalate situations of conflict, to act as role models or to develop the much-vaunted Personal Officer scheme. Throughout the year members of the Board have recorded frequent occasions when prisoners were unable to have their full association or exercise periods. This peaked in July with 30% of association and 27% of exercise periods cancelled. That month there were 24 medical escorts and 47 bed watch shifts to cover. On each house block spurs were left locked up rotationally, so men had long, long periods in their cells while officers were moved around to try to maintain a fair though poor regime. The Board as a whole cannot remember a worse atmosphere. Nevertheless, and despite the pervading gloom, many individual officers are still trying their best to do a good job and deserve praise and support.

6.16 The Personal Officer scheme has, of necessity, largely gone to the wall because officers hardly have time to perform their basic tasks. This is disappointing as the interaction with High Down's excellent body of officers can give a head start in the battle to rehabilitate a prisoner. Though officially "facility time" is provided, there are usually too many other demands on an officer's time.

### **Indeterminate Sentence Prisoners: IPPs and Lifers**

6.17 During the past year there has been much press interest in Indeterminate sentence prisoners. The Chief Inspector of Prisons, The Prison Reform Trust and IMBs have all expressed concern about the national lack of accredited courses available to enable this group of prisoners to progress through their sentence plan. Although High Down is a local prison, at the end of November 2012 it housed 34 men in this category: eight of whom were serving a life sentence with tariff and 26 indeterminate sentences for public protection (IPPs). The Board questioned why these prisoners were held at High Down when there are no facilities. What was holding up their progress? Two IMB members have investigated and their findings follow.

6.18 Considering first those cases that appeared most anomalous, at year end there were seven IPPs still in High Down well beyond their tariff date and two lifers who have been in

High Down a long time and are past their tariff date. Thirteen IPPs or lifers have been in High Down for more than a year. An offender assessment plan (OASys) has to be done for all these prisoners on arrival and should be renewed annually. In the sample groups all OASys were complete and only two renewals overdue. Therefore, this is not a significant factor in impeding the progress of the sentence.

6.19 PSI 36/2010 (para 1.2) states that sentence plans for IPPs must be 'realistic' and 'achievable' rather than 'aspirational'. These plans determine the decision of the Parole Board as to whether a prisoner is suitable for release. Since relevant courses are not offered at High Down, by definition it is in default and the prisoner should be moved to a prison that fulfils this requirement.

6.20 The Board has identified various recurrent significant factors beyond the control of High Down. These are: medical hold, impending Parole Board hearing, non-co-operation of the prisoner, the receiving prison not accepting the prisoner, FNO awaiting UKBA decision, and security issues. One of the major impediments is the ability of other establishments to choose which prisoners to accept. PSI 36/2010 (para 1.4) allows for 'regional and local flexibility' in the movement of prisoners but the IMB believes this flexibility can work against the interests of prisoners. Simply expressed: no move = no course = no release. As the European Court for Human Rights' judgement in the case of James, Wells and Lee / the UK (September 2012) made clear, there is a statutory duty to provide reasonable provision for rehabilitation. This might be better served by a non-local management of IPPs, matching prisoners to available courses.

6.21 The problem that the Board has long recognised has recently been addressed in PSI 41/2012 issued after the end of our reporting period. It aims to set out clear expectations on the sentence planning process and how it is central to ensure an offender progresses through his sentence. It acknowledges how important this is in particular for those whose release is at the discretion of the Parole Board. Evidence will be required that offenders have actively attempted to address their behaviour and reduce the risk they pose. One way in which this may be demonstrated is through engagement with the sentence plan.

6.22 The Board has not found that High Down was actively obstructing the progress of prisoners. Rather, problems associated with transferring them to a more appropriate establishment are holding back the implementation of sentence plans. The Board intends to monitor the progress of IPPs with particular care in the coming year.

### **Offender Management (OMU)**

6.23 Last year the Probation Department joined with the Sentence Management Unit bringing all related areas under the umbrella of one Offender Management Unit. Towards the end of the year there was a huge backlog in the completion of sentence plans. This has a direct effect on prisoners, holding up the allocation of jobs and courses as well as re-categorisation and transfers on to prisons where men can start to address their offending issues. This is much to be deplored.

6.24 The IMB attends the monthly meetings of the prison's Public Protection Committee (formerly MAPPA). All those prisoners deemed to present a serious risk of harm to members of the public are, from the fourth month prior to their anticipated release, quizzed as to their intentions, living arrangements etc. on their return to society. Meetings are attended by prison officers familiar with the prisoner, his in-house social worker – working with the community social worker, staff familiar with his personal behaviour (i.e. mental and physical health, drug workers etc.), agencies able to help with accommodation and a police representative who can liaise with the police force in the prisoner's local area. The Board is impressed by the thoroughness of these preparations to assess and reduce the risk of releasing potentially dangerous men into the community.

### **Reception**

6.25 As in all other parts of the prison this department has been affected by the reduction in the number of staff available on any day. Late arrivals from court, particularly at the end of the week, continue to cause late arrivals on the house block. This is a serious issue, particularly for vulnerable first time prisoners who may have just been sentenced. Relations between the escort contractor, GeoAmey, and reception officers have improved recently with data on expected arrival times often given at a reasonably early stage. To speed up the throughput of new arrivals, a significant part of the medical assessment has, this year, been moved to the "front end" of the reception process. This has gone some way to reducing the occasions when new prisoners are late arriving on the induction house block, enabling them to be settled on their wing before the main shift of officers goes off duty.

### **Remand Prisoners**

6.26 Alerted by a critical review on remand prisoners from the Chief Inspector in August the IMB investigated the situation at High Down. As is to be expected prisoners on remand have rights and special privileges over and above those of the sentenced man. The question was whether these are respected by the prison. Figures were not available but officers on the Induction house block estimate that about 50% of prisoners there are on

remand, representing about 15% of the prison population.

6.27 Not all remand prisoners are aware of their rights – notably, the right to as many visits as they like without Visiting Orders, and the right not to engage in work. Too much reliance is being placed on the induction process where huge amounts of information are given in a very short space of time. Plans are under way to spread the induction process over several days which should improve the quality of information and men's ability to absorb it.

6.28 One of the main concerns of the HMCIP review was that remand prisoners should be kept separate from those convicted. Using the provision in PSO 4600 that 'operational need and practical considerations' can affect special privileges senior management took the view that it would not be practicable for remand prisoners to be kept separate. Officers agreed with this position and said that their job was to manage those remanded into custody by the courts with equal fairness to all. The Board was told that all new remand prisoners were asked as part of the reception process if they were willing to share with a convicted prisoner and has found no evidence of sharing being a problem.

6.29 Another major problem in the management of remand prisoners is the fact that they are held for a short and unpredictable amount of time. This affects what courses are available to them and impacts negatively on preparation for re-settlement on release. The education provider has agreed to put more short courses on the curriculum, for example, life skills. Partnerships with local colleges are being pursued so that a practical course begun in the prison, such as plastering or brick-laying, can be continued on release. This is a positive and exciting response to the problems of helping remand prisoners. Remand prisoners also find it harder to gain enhanced status on the earned privileges system, as they are in prison for a short time and may be exercising their right not to engage in employment. In High Down all remand prisoners are now given a sentence plan and encouraged to take part in re-settlement courses. These count towards gaining enhanced status.

6.30 The Board is satisfied that High Down has been actively working to address the difficulties inherent in managing the custodial experience of remand prisoners and is finding ways of providing suitable purposeful activity.

### **Resettlement**

6.31 This has been a year of development for Resettlement within High Down, aimed at building for the future. At the end of the reporting year the Board was pleased that funding

had been confirmed under the Payment by Results programme to provide resettlement courses for prisoners. This will enable staff to run courses without seeking outside donors. VPs have historically been excluded and it was good news to hear that they will in future be included.

6.32 Various charitable agencies continue to work with offenders at High Down, including Surrey Jobmatch, Sussex Pathways and St Giles. Prisoners are able to visit the weekly Resettlement Clinic prior to release to make contact with these agencies as well as Job Centre Plus, Citizens Advice Bureau and caseworkers from the UKBA. Specialist courses such as the Forgiveness Project, Time for Families, Stress Management and Rehabilitation Training (SMART), Domestic Violence & Anger Management courses have seen 346 completions this year. High Down is also in talks with Calm Mediation, a restorative justice charity which becomes involved after a prisoner has attended the Forgiveness Project. It is hoped to commence mediation between offenders and victims, where appropriate, in the New Year.

6.33 A pilot scheme in conjunction with Unlock and the HSBC Bank to allow prisoners to open a bank account began in the last year. All British citizens with between six weeks and six months to serve were entitled to apply for an account. While initially it was to be a basic account with no credit facilities, an application could be made after six months to upgrade it to a full account. A prison manager provided proof of identity. The one stipulation was that the prisoner should go to the nearest HSBC bank on release and amend their address. 72 bank accounts were successfully opened before, regrettably, this facility was put on hold while the scheme was re-considered.

6.34 The Board has been impressed over the last years by the initiatives taken under the Resettlement umbrella to promote positive outcomes for prisoners being released. It has to be money well-spent. Since August, High Down has been working with outside agencies on a 'through the gate' resettlement scheme whereby prisoners are met on release and mentored in all areas of resettlement. The project is in its infancy so the IMB is unable to gauge its success but considers it a positive step towards reducing reoffending.

#### **Toe by Toe Literacy Programme**

6.35 This excellent scheme is run by the Shannon Trust to enable prisoner mentors to assist others with poor literacy on a one-to-one basis, both parties to the arrangement reaping

great satisfaction. At one time there might be eight mentors working on short daily sessions with 40 men. The Board must report a sad lack of support for the scheme from the prison this year and fervently hopes this is rectified.

### **Visits**

6.36 Major problems continued through the reporting period with the booking of visits. The Visits Line was often understaffed particularly in the latter part of the year, partly as a result of staff sickness, but more usually because this is a favoured area for redeployment when operational needs demand. The issuing of Visiting Orders by the Mail Room was also subject to errors and delays. A recent visit to the Mail Room revealed a backlog of three weeks in processing them, once again due to staffing difficulties. Rumours some months ago about the possible withdrawal of prisoner booked visits have not been confirmed but the Board understands that consideration is being given nationally to the creation of central booking lines. This will cause concern to the large number of families who use the current process to arrange visits. The IMB has received many complaints from prisoners and their families about the difficulties they experience. Visits are a high point for men and the importance of maintaining family links is known to be integral in preventing re-offending.

### **Vulnerable Prisoners**

6.37 The lack of equivalent treatment for the VP population at High Down has been of concern to the IMB for some years, as for the Chief Inspector, especially as their numbers increase.

6.38 During the year more cell space was gained by adapting another spur to house VPs, making a total of 122 spaces. This has eased the problem of overflow VPs kept in SRU and Healthcare, often for days, while awaiting space on the VP unit. Even so during the latter part of the year these two spurs were usually full. Approximately 80-85% of the VPs in the unit were sex offenders and the remainder considered vulnerable for other reasons. This year has also seen the need to develop working practices to deal with two trans-gender prisoners. The Board congratulates the prison on their response (5.5).

6.39 Though a local prison, the reality is that many of these men will spend most, if not all, of their sentence at High Down. Transfer on to more appropriate prisons is often impossible for prisoners categorised as Category B and YOs. The Board has raised this with the Area Manager. There is the worrying instance of five YOs who were stuck for months awaiting transfer to a prison which could provide the sex offender programmes (SOTP) they must

complete before release. The IMB has been told that the main cause is lack of space elsewhere in the prison estate and that this is unlikely to change in the near future.

6.40 The Board laments that historically there has been a lack of purposeful activity for the VP at High Down. The reason given in the past is that VPs are only housed at High Down temporarily, but this is obviously no longer valid. The laundry has been the principal source of work for up to 34 prisoners but struggles to take the full complement, due to absent staff (5.42). A further 20 work places are available on the house block. It is pleasing to report that new initiatives are being introduced, albeit slowly. We have seen the integration of a few VPs into the Industrial Sewing workshop; sewing repairs in the Laundry and some work in Farms and Gardens at the weekend.

6.41 There are still only five choices of Education classes being provided for VPs and their frequency can be erratic. The Board are reassured to hear that the new education provider will be looking to deliver the most appropriate classes for each category of prisoner. A missed opportunity is the absence from the VP curriculum of the Preparation of CV & Disclosure course, which would aid the sex offender to find work and re-establish himself in the community.

6.42 Induction for newly arrived VPs is done by peers on the house block and as far as the IMB can ascertain is taking place. Additional induction/education issues are covered by the National Careers Service (formerly Tribal), but reduced funding means their resources will only provide three visits per prisoner whilst in custody, and three after release.

6.43 PSO 4400 regulates communication between a man and his family or others where there are public protection concerns. There have been frequent backlogs in dealing with the interviews and paperwork as officers have many other demands on their time. The Board understands the need for care in this delicate area but has received numerous complaints from prisoners about the delays in getting clearance to contact their families and is aware of the distress it can cause.

6.44 For the last few years daytime electricity has been turned off in all cells with the intention of encouraging men out to work. The Board, and indeed the Chief Inspector, felt this particularly unfair for VPs, who have few opportunities for any purposeful activity and many of whom are elderly. We were relieved to hear there had been a change of heart and the electricity went back on in October.

6.45 Resettlement still remains an issue as the only course that has been run for VPs has been one on Stress management and Rehabilitation. The Board was told that no courses for VPs to address their reoffending behaviour could be funded as they were expected to move on to more appropriate establishments. This is clearly not going to be the case for the foreseeable future. Category B or YO places for sex offenders are in very short supply in the prison estate. The Board appreciates that Segmentation research shows that only a minority of offenders in this category benefit from courses addressing offending behaviour. Nevertheless, it feels strongly that those requiring this type of intervention should be highlighted and moved to a more suitable prison as soon as possible, and that those remaining receive the relevant assistance by way of resettlement courses.

### **Young Offenders**

6.46 YOs, 18 – 21 year olds, are considered a distinct group of prisoners by the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) in acknowledgement of their particular needs and demands. While the youth justice system for the under 18 year olds has been transformed by the strategic work of the Youth Justice Board, the 18-21 year olds in custody have been largely neglected. Given the unacceptably high rates of offending and re-offending of this group it would seem sensible to build on the success of the Youth Justice Board by introducing a similar multi-agency approach to the older age group. This has not occurred. There is no NOMS national director for the young offender population. The lack of national direction will inevitably affect what happens in prisons. This is a designated group, but no provision has been made for them outside Young Offender Institutions. Remand and sentenced YOs are held at High Down which is an adult category B local prison. They compete with adult prisoners for work and education. They are given no special remedial help which might influence their future prospects and rehabilitation. Their progress through the prison system remains haphazard and unchartered. This group has the highest re-offending rate of all ex-offenders, so the rewards are potentially greatest if rehabilitation courses were successful.

## **Section 7 THE WORK OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD**

7.1 Board meetings take place monthly. The Governor prepares a report for the Board, and either he or the Deputy Governor attends the meeting. Four members of the Board monitor the prison every week on rota. Their duties involve talking to prisoners and staff, looking at all aspects of prison life, and ensuring that prisoners are held in a fair and decent environment. Individual prisoners apply to see a Board member if they have any concerns. Rota members cover these applications. Members also have special areas of interests linked to the Annual Report. They attend relevant meetings and report back to the Board.

7.2 Training usually takes place before Board meetings. It includes helpful presentations by either prison staff or representatives from other services within the prison. In addition, all members attend appropriate National IMB courses. New members receive in-house training in the form of shadowing experienced members and each is assigned a mentor. A formal review of the Board's work takes place annually, when working practices are reviewed. Board members also visit other establishments during the year.

7.3 The recommended full board membership is 20. For most of the year there have been 17 members which has proved adequate. Two new members were successfully recruited and welcomed to the Board during the year. However, with a new ruling on length of tenure obliging the departure of some long-standing members the Board is once again engaged in recruitment. The Board is committed to continue broadening its membership to reflect the population. The Triennial Review process was completed in September and the board reappointed for a further three years.

**Table 1**

<b>BOARD STATISTICS</b>	
Recommended Complement of Board members	20
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	17
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	18
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	2
Number of members leaving within reporting period	1
Number of attendances at meetings other than Board meetings	104
Total number of visits to the prison (including all meetings)	864
Total number of applications received	681
Total number of segregation reviews held	396
Total number of segregation reviews attended	392

**Table 2 Applications to see the Board**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>2008/9</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/2011</b>	<b>2011/2012</b>
A	Accommodation	27	13	9	21
B	Adjudications	7	10	7	19
C	Diversity related	16	8	2	8
D	Education/employment/training	62	33	50	36
E	Family/visits	126	79	108	116
F	Food/kitchen related	18	18	20	31
G	Health related	77	54	60	77
H	Property	204	111	115	114
I	Sentence related	88	61	80	71
J	Staff/prisoner/detainee related	84	80	83	60
K	Transfers	56	32	22	22
L	Miscellaneous	73	57	54	106
	<b>Total number of applications</b>	838	556	610	681

## **Section 8 GLOSSARY OF PRISON-RELATED ABBREVIATIONS**

**ACCT** Assessment, Care in Custody & Teamwork – replacement for self harm document F2052SH (see below)

**BME** Black & Minority Ethnic

**CARATS** Counselling, Assessment, Referral, Advice & Throughcare Scheme – drug & alcohol team.

**FNO** Foreign National Offender

**GOOD** Good Order or Discipline – Segregation under Rule 45/49

**HEAT** High Down Equality Team

**HCC** Health Care Centre

**HMCIP** Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Prisons

**IMB** Independent Monitoring Board

**IPP** Indeterminate Sentence for Public Protection

**MAPP** Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements

**OMU** Offender Management Unit

**OI/OR/OP** Own Interests/Request/Protection – Segregation under Rule 45/45

**PALS** Patient Advice and Liaison Services

**PCT** Primary Care Trust – National Health component responsible for healthcare

**PSI** Prison Service Instruction

**PSO** Prison Service Order

**SPC** Stephen Pryor Centre

**SCT** Safer Custody Team

**SIR** Security Information Report

**SRU** Separation and Reintegration Unit

**VO** Visiting Order – sent out by prisoners

**UKBA** United Kingdom Borders Agency (Immigration)

**VP** Vulnerable Prisoner

**YO** Young Offender