



HMP LONG LARTIN

**Annual Report of the
Independent
Monitoring
Board**

01.02.11 / 31.01.12

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1. STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB

The Prisons Act 1952 and the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 require every prison and IRC to be monitored by an independent Board appointed by the Home Secretary from members of the community in which the prison or centre is situated.

The Board is charged specifically to:

- 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.
- Inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom he has delegated authority as it judges appropriate, any concern it has.
- 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.

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3. Description of the Prison

HMP Long Lartin is a dispersal prison within the High Security Estate. It is situated in the Vale of Evesham.

Long Lartin was opened in 1971 as a Category C establishment and upgraded to receive dispersal prisoners in May 1973. Since then successive programmes of investment have renovated and adapted the original premises. The first substantial extension to the prison was a new house block and Segregation Unit; these were opened 10 years ago.

Further work has since been completed. Two of the original six wings have been replaced by new accommodation. This was occupied from June 2009 onwards. In the medium term,

During the year under review Long Lartin has operated with a CNA of 622. These men will normally be in Categories A or B, with a small number drawn from High Risk Category A. From time to time there are provisional Category A prisoners held on remand before trials in the South West. A discrete unit accommodates some unconvicted men who are held pending arrangements for their deportation. They are deemed to be Category A or High Risk Category A.

Responsibility for healthcare lies with the Worcestershire Primary Care Trust. The Education contract is with the Manchester College Canteen is provided by DHL Booker.

4. Executive Summary

There were several serious incidents, of which one exemplifies the underlying tensions and potential for violence that constantly exist in the High Security Estate.

The prison had 2 deaths in custody both of which appear to have been by natural causes, though the delays in waiting for a coroner's result continue to make learning lessons and taking remedial action less effective.

Previous concerns raised about the Detainee Unit and reiterated here have since been investigated by an unannounced visit from HMIP, whose report is awaited with interest

It was good to note that the prison achieved the Investors in People award in September 2011.

1. Matters for the Minister

1.1 The Detainee Unit, its raison d'être and its fitness for purpose [6.5.6]

2. Matters for the Director

2.1 The Board has concerns about the limited number of Special Needs beds available for prisoners with learning difficulties in the High Security estate. Furthermore, the Board understands that this number will be reduced during the coming year. [5.3.2]

2.2 The Board, whilst appreciating the complexities of the issues involved, is troubled by the lengthy periods of segregation imposed on some individuals. [5.2.6]

3. Matters for the prison

3.1 The availability of outdoor exercise to all Healthcare patients [5.3.7]

3.2 The suitability of Healthcare arrangements for very long stay patients [5.3.1 and 5.3.8]

3.3 The monitoring of Category B prisoners whilst in Healthcare overnight. [5.3.5]

3.4 The Board has received many applications from prisoners concerned about delays in preparing the mandatory reports for the assessment of Category A prisoners. [5.4.1.3 and 5.6.1]

5. Areas upon which the Board is required to report

5.1. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

5.1.1. This active department was enlarged and reformulated during the year and rebranded as the Equalities Group. This was to ensure the full implementation of the equality ethic within Long Lartin.

5.1.2. This group meets monthly and is normally chaired by the Governing Governor or his Deputy. Its stated aim is to provide equality awareness and it is responsible for delivering the Equality Action Plan. It also tries to develop and further links with appropriate outsider agencies, working with the Community Engagement Officers to deliver this.

5.1.3. The composition of the Equalities Group has been enlarged to include every area of diversity. There is a prisoner representative from each wing and the meetings are imperatively attended by representatives from all areas of the prison, both residential and administrative.

5.1.4. The Equalities Group also aims to support the Respect and Disability Staff Networks.

5.1.5. Towards the end of the year it was decided to include Safer Custody under the umbrella of the Equalities Group. This will be covered in a separate section of this report.

5.1.6. The Board has been impressed by the energy and commitment shown by the Equality Department to improving accessibility into every aspect of prison life. In this, they have had the complete support of the Governing Governor and his Management Team.

5.2. LEARNING & SKILLS

- 5.2.1. In the past year two new vocational workshops were opened teaching painting & decorating, and electrical installations. Prisoners are able to work for City & Guilds Level 1 qualification. The workshops have separate training rooms for theory development and they are also used for supporting prisoners in obtaining literary and numeracy skills up to level 2.
- 5.2.2. The feedback from the instructors about how the courses were progressing was good. Courses in these workshops were well-attended.
- 5.2.3. All prisoners have good access to education. Vulnerable prisoners attend classes in the mornings and mainstream prisoners in the afternoon, for five days a week except Friday afternoons.
- 5.2.4. The way basic skills are taught is being reviewed. The second basic skills level will now be done in the prisoners' work areas so that they can be assessed as to how they are practising the basic skills taught in the classroom.
- 5.2.5. There are 113 prisoners on Open University courses and distant learning programmes. OU prisoners are allowed two sessions per week in education. Some want full time sessions but this is not possible or desirable as OU courses are designed to be part-time. Funding for these courses comes from P.E.T. There is a proposal that funding in the future will be prisoners' responsibility. Some prisoners have problems with laptop usage.

5.3. HEALTHCARE

5.3.1. The I.M.B. recognises the important and demanding work which the Healthcare Department carries out at H.M.P. Long Lartin. It sees an extremely high number of patients on a daily basis, amounting to some 3,000 appointments per month. In -patients likewise have a variety of diverse clinical needs and in addition the unit frequently caters for remand prisoners often requiring a particular and high level of protection. It is not unusual for certain prisoners to be located in this Unit for periods exceeding 12 months. At the current time one prisoner with complex age related issues has been in Healthcare longer than 12 months. Furthermore, the position of patients awaiting placements in Specialist Hospitals often results in them spending long periods in Healthcare which brings into question whether the facilities are suitable for long stays. It is not unusual for the Healthcare Unit at any given time to provide care to one or more such patients in this category.

5.3.2. The Board recognises the close working that exists between the prison and Healthcare on a number of matters. One example is that both the prison and the P.C.T are addressing the long delays in accessing beds at specialist hospitals and have been in discussion with a member of the commissioning team in order to highlight this particular issue. This has been identified as a particular delay between assessment and admission to a specialist hospital despite assurances by the commissioner that urgent cases will be acted upon within 14 days . Furthermore difficulties have been highlighted concerning the limited number of Special Needs beds available for prisoners with learning difficulties and who find themselves in the High Security Estate and it is a cause of concern to the Board that we understand that there will be a reduction in such beds planned over the coming year nationally.

5.3.3. Close working between the prison staff and Healthcare personnel over the issue of the misuse of medication by prisoners has been a feature of this year's work. Given that the prison population is known to frequently misuse

5.3.4. The opening of the I.D.T.S Unit within the prison has now come to fruition at the start of 2012; this has been long awaited and now very welcome ; it has been noted when a vulnerable prisoner is in fact the only patient in the Unit his situation can produce feelings of isolation and loneliness. This undoubtedly has been a temporary initial state of affairs. This past year also has seen the dispensing of medication on the wings which is a marked improvement due to the elimination of walking to a central point with all the associated difficulties.

5.3.5. The Board has noted the ongoing situation whereby there is no visual check of prisoners by prison staff at night other than Cat. A prisoners in Healthcare resulting in there not being any regular check of Cat. B prisoners by officers until early morning. Category A prisoners are individually monitored on a 2 hourly basis but given the complex needs of some of those category B prisoner patients it is of concern to the Board that such eventualities as particular health traumas, severe pain or simply a man disabled by age and illness falling out of bed who may not come to the attention of staff until early morning when prisoners are first checked. Nursing staff are available at night to respond to calls but would need to summons officers to open up should they become aware of any crisis. Particular mention has to be made however of the particular arrangements put in place for one terminally ill man whereby he was offered the highest quality care in his final weeks.

5.3.6. The Board had identified a potentially inadequate choice of food on menus for Vegans who opt for such a lifestyle diet. There has been much

5.3.7. A further concern in relation to prisoner patients is the low number who avail themselves of the exercise yard and access fresh air. The known effects of prolonged deprivation of sunlight on health make this facility essential. Consistently prisoners express ignorance of the process by which they can apply for this and more than one has not been outside for months at a time. These concerns relate particularly to those prisoners who are suffering from terminal illness, complex disabilities, psychiatric conditions which mean they are in the unit for often very long periods of time. Of more specific concern are those dependent on wheelchair use who require additional help to access the exercise yard particularly if they are Cat. A prisoners. Access to the outside area is in such cases by arrangement with healthcare staff involving the use of a lift and the need to pass through a particularly sensitive area of the prison. This cannot be regarded as a convenient or ideal situation. It is also noted that within the unit the association room is very small; it is not well equipped and could be improved at least with the provision of a television.

5.3.8. Despite other commendable features such as a high quality of treatment areas and overall a high standard of cleanliness, we question whether the unit is suitable accommodation for the purpose of housing very long stay patients. Unfortunately Long Lartin suffers from the disadvantages of the time it was built but has to be compared with other recent purpose built Healthcare developments in the Prison Estate which can boast far more appropriate facilities in current times.

5.3.9. Despite certain reservations about the facilities in which prisoners are housed within this unit it must not detract from the unstinting efforts by all staff and the P. C. T. to deliver a high quality service of Healthcare to prisoners. Demands are great on this service and year on year improvements are continually being made which also have to take into account the demands of a High Security Prison .

5.4. SAFER CUSTODY

- 5.4.1. A new head of Safer Custody (managerial grade F) was appointed in September 2011, since then the Department has been re-profiling itself.
- 5.4.2. There is a staff of 5 working full time in new much larger offices within the main prison.
- 5.4.3. 15 listeners provide a valuable help in the prison. They are supported and trained by a team of Samaritans who meets once a week in the Chapel.
- 5.4.4. In July 2011 the Samaritans celebrated 20 years working at HMP Long Lartin.
- 5.4.5. A team of 9 insiders is getting a much higher profile in the prison from the management.
- 5.4.6. Carats now works under the N.H.S group. They have a case load of 80 to 100 prisoners.
- 5.4.7. On January 16th 2012 the I.D.T.S Unit opened, where at the moment 2 prisoners are undergoing detoxification in a controlled environment.
- 5.4.8. There were two deaths in Custody, both apparently from natural causes.
- 5.4.9. A new ACCT training pack has been released in late autumn for new assessors.
- 5.4.10. A violence reduction survey was produced by the Psychology department in July but received a poor response.
- 5.4.11. At the time of writing this report the new team is addressing the issues surrounding violence reduction and unacceptable behaviour.
- 5.4.12. Talks are in progress about enabling the Equality team, Safer Custody and Violence reduction to work together.

5.5. SEGREGATION UNIT

- 5.5.1. The Segregation unit's work is to look after the divergent needs of the 20 to 30 or so prisoners usually accommodated there. During the reporting period strenuous efforts have been made to reduce the numbers in the Unit. The Board notes that the totals have been significantly lower towards the end of the year, usually less than twenty. They include dangerous and disturbed as well as deficient, fearful and inadequate men. The population is split between men being punished for offences against Good Order or Discipline and those held there for reasons of their own safety. Additionally there are usually a small number of prisoners controlled by Headquarters under Rule 46.
- 5.5.2. The unit continues to manage sympathetically and well some of the most challenging and demanding men in the prison system. Despite this one cannot help but be struck by the deterioration in the morale of prisoners whose behaviour or safety warrants prolonged stays in segregation or to reflect on the appropriateness of segregation for some of them. Some prisoners are stuck in a cycle of behaviour which hinders their coping on normal location. They return to segregation because the prison system has no better way of looking after them. The prison service could perhaps seek more suitable provision than segregation for such prisoners.
- 5.5.3. Related to and overlapping with this issue is the recurrent problem of persuading some prisoners to leave the sanctuary of the unit and return to normal accommodation where they can enjoy association, undertake work, education and (not least) programmes to progress towards their eventual release. It is well understood that prolonged segregation tends to harm the mental health of prisoners. Efforts have continued to return prisoners to the Wing. These have involved establishing safer areas within the Vulnerable Prisoner Unit. This has met with some success but the problem persists. The Local Strategy for Managing Challenging Behaviour has played a useful part in helping difficult prisoners to cope in these safer

5.5.4. Fortnightly Rule 45 Board meetings are held to make the decision to retain or return to normal location every segregated prisoner held under this rule. They are well managed with approximately half of the prisoners invited to attend on alternate weeks. Most prisoners take advantage of the opportunity to attend and contribute to the proceedings. The Board has been effective and properly constituted with the relevant facts before it. Not all agencies who contribute members to the Board within the establishment have attended every Board meeting. We believe this has sometimes hampered the decisions taken by the Boards. Nevertheless the Board has taken rational and just decisions, respecting the needs of segregated prisoners while taking account of the disciplinary requirements of both prisoners and the establishment.

5.5.5. The Board has welcomed the installation of a hotplate in the Unit. Prisoners now collect their meals from the hotplate instead of having them delivered to the cell door. We see this development as offering an improvement on the system which preceded it of prepared meals plated up in the central kitchen and taken on the long journey to the Unit in plastic containers. Temperature control and hence hygiene has been improved. Cooked meals are hotter and fresher and prisoners' dignity is better respected.

5.5.6. In the reporting year the issue of some prisoners exceeding six months in segregation has vexed both IMB and prison governing staff. Four prisoners whose segregation had reached this point in October were still in the Segregation Unit in mid-January. All four have been properly referred to Headquarters by the prison. While the Board understands that each of these men present the prison service with extremely difficult decisions concerning finding suitable accommodation the fact remains that these men have exceeded their legal time limits in the Unit by a significant

6. Areas upon which the Board chooses to report

6.1. CENSORS

- 6.1.1. Not a lot has changed from last years' report. Cross employment means there might only be one, two, or three members of staff on at one time instead of the usual six.
- 6.1.2. Censors had not however received too many complaints about the lateness of mail reaching the wings.
- 6.1.3. The Board has not become aware of complaints about delayed mail, an issue of importance to prisoners.

6.2. CHAPLAINCY

- 6.2.1. This has been a year of great challenge for the Chaplaincy. With eighteen registered faiths, a depleted team has coped valiantly to provide daily pastoral care and appropriate religious services.
- 6.2.2. During a three month period three of the longest serving Christian Chaplains retired and, although the Roman Catholic Chaplain was replaced reasonably soon, it has taken some time to fill the other two vacancies. Their security clearances are now awaited. In the meantime, the depleted Chaplaincy Team have been faced with ever increasing pastoral duties, including an unusually heavy number of recently bereaved prisoners.
- 6.2.3. The Board would like to commend the dedication and extreme hard work shown by this temporarily diminished department.

6.3. CHILDREN AND FAMILY FORUM

- 6.3.1. This effective and committed group meet regularly and is chaired to date by the Mother's Union / Family Matters Worker attached to The Chaplaincy.
- 6.3.2. The last year has seen changes and vast improvements in the Visits Hall. New carpet and very smart furniture give the overall impression of a relaxed and more lounge type appearance. However, The Board has noted a couple of areas of concern in this. The main problems are that the chairs are too close and the gangways between them are too narrow. This is presenting a few hazards as some older and disabled people have difficulty getting up from their seats. The Board has also expressed concerns over security and decency issues as the seating arrangements are so close together.
- 6.3.3. The Visitors Centre is cheerful and welcoming with an upgrade of the children's area. The YMCA have reapplied to run this centre from April and, although at the time of writing we have not had confirmation of this, we anticipate that this move would have a positive impact upon how the centre is run.
- 6.3.4. The problem of inadequately maintained vending machines in the Visits Hall has continued during the years. The Board understands that the Governor is looking at the possibility of opening a type of small staffed canteen provision here, which would be very much welcomed.
- 6.3.5. A vital part of this forum is the setting up and running of family visits. Eight were held during the last year, including two in Christmas week. During the last year applications for Family Time have been extended to standard prisoners. The take up from the support wings is still very low and it is hoped this will increase in the future. Prisoners and their families really appreciate Family Time and the Board would like to commend the dedicated group of people who set up and run these events. The Board is also pleased to note that the Governor is very supportive and hopes that, in time, he may be able to lend his support to an increased number of these visits. However,

6.3.6. Under the umbrella of this Forum is a number of activities, including book share, with Story Book Dads, and the very popular and effective card making group. Relationship Counsellors have proved popular and worthwhile and are ongoing when time permits.

6.3.7. The Board has noticed a great improvement in the time taken to unite prisoners with their visitors in the Visits Hall. Whilst recognising that unexpected events will continue to crop up to alter the smooth running of the operation, we acknowledge the tremendous efforts made by staff in this area.

6.4. **DETAINEE UNIT**

To its acute disappointment, the Board finds itself obliged to report for the fourth time upon the extraordinary regime of the prison's Detainee Unit. For several years Long Lartin has held a small number of men who are being detained pending the outcome of proceedings to ensure their extradition or deportation. Although they face serious charges overseas, none of them is to be brought before a British court. They are unconvicted prisoners, a status which most of them have held for a disturbingly large number of years.

On 6th December 2008 a new regime was instituted for the unit. Its residents were, in effect, sealed off so that they had no contact with any prisoners on normal location. Their location in a former segregation unit made this a simple practicality. It was presented as a short term measure, a pause to allow a careful reassessment to be carried out.

More than three years later the essentials of that extraordinary regime are still there. Steps have been taken to soften some of its rougher edges, but this small group of men is still held almost entirely apart from other prisoners. In monitoring this situation the Board has had to rely upon its own sense of what is right and what is appropriate. There appears to be no set of national standards specific to this situation, nor any examples of good practice with which the work of the prison can be compared. The thoughtful and respectful work of many individual officers is willingly acknowledged; the Board's fundamental concern is the group isolation which was, it seems, invented as an expediency and has since been allowed to take root.

This isolation is all the more surprising when it is appreciated that the remainder of the prison's population includes men serving very long sentences for the most grave offences. Some of these men continue to present an acute risk, yet the successful management of such cases, in ways consistent with established standards, is part of Long Lartin's stock in trade. It is very difficult to accept that the individual detainees present such a challenge to the prison that it can only be met by creating a regime beyond the scope of normal operations. If it is indeed the settled policy of the Prison Service to make this isolation more than a short term expedient – and that is what has already happened – a proper set of standards and expectations should be published and an appropriate system of scrutiny and review devised. The Board leaves it to those with a wider remit to consider whether the current policy in this unit has helped to make Britain a safer country.

6.5. FOREIGN NATIONALS

- 6.5.1. At the beginning of 2012 there were 101 foreign nationals with 50 nationalities represented.
- 6.5.2. Complaints about delays in the translation of letters and cards are still an issue.
- 6.5.3. At HMP Long Lartin Foreign nationals can only exchange letters or V.Os for telephone credit if they are enhanced prisoners

6.6. OFFENDER MANAGEMENT

- 6.6.1. There have been considerable delays in progressing prisoners' sentence plans mainly due to the lack of support from the external Probation Service. The process for Determinate and Indeterminate Sentence prisoners is presently led by a Probation Officer acting as the Offender Manager with the support of an in-house Offender Supervisor. It is anticipated that from April 2012 this process will be brought wholly inside and be under the responsibility of the prison. This should speed the process but may lead to resourcing problems.
- 6.6.2. Staff are still being taken out of the department at short notice for other duties in the prison. This can be very disruptive
- 6.6.3. Due to resource problems in Psychology there have been delays in preparing mandatory reports for the assessment of Category A prisoners
- 6.6.4. In a co-operation with Whitemoor Prison, a new database has been installed which has enabled the re-categorisation (RCI) forms for Category B prisoners to be brought up to date.
- 6.6.5. CSCP courses for vulnerable prisoners were introduced during 2011 and are on-going. CSCP has been reshaped and is now known as SCP (Self Change Programme). This is a shortened, more intensive programme and adds some more skills-based elements. SCP runs for 6 months.
- 6.6.6. The Board understands that the voluntary drug treatment provision will be outsourced during 2012. This includes the CARATS team and FOCUS. We are concerned about the possible disruption this may cause and hope that the skills and experience are maintained. FOCUS can deal with up to 10 prisoners at any one time and at the beginning of 2012 there are 12 mainstream and 16 vulnerable prisoners on the waiting list.
- 6.6.7. There is no Sexual Offender Treatment Programmes (SOTP) run at Long Lartin although there is a relatively high number of sex offenders in the prison. Many of these are in denial and in an attempt to address this it is intended to introduce the A-Z programme in the coming year. This runs for 8

6.7 PRISONER CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

6.7.1 The PCC has met monthly during the last year. Frequently chaired by the Governing Governor, this active and participative group has had its brief strengthened and refined. It has been felt that despite the fact wing issues were being dealt with at the wing level some of these issues, or even subjective issues, were still surfacing at the PCG. The Governing Governor emphasised early in the spring that he wished the PCG to be, essentially, a consultative group.

6.7.2 The emphasis on these meetings therefore has been to raise and discuss items which may even be pending and not yet implemented. Having been discussed informally at the PCC, the prisoners' representatives take these issues back to the wing to consult with their fellow inmates. Feedback is then sought and given at the next hearing. Equally, the prisoner representatives bring to the meeting issues which cannot appropriately be dealt with at wing meetings and in this spirit of participation and consultation that a great deal has been achieved.

6.7.3 The Board has been really impressed by the way in which management and prisoners have tackled and taken forward the whole process of consultation.

6.8 PSYCHOLOGY

The department has lost several members of staff during the year (about half the team) who are proving difficult to replace. The department has concentrated on Category A mandatory reports and IPP parole reports.

6.8.1 However, a new member of staff experienced in the assessment of sexual offenders joined the team during 2011. This experience will be invaluable to the prison.

6.8.2 It is the intention that services for the learning disabled prisoner group can be progressed in the coming year.

6.9 THE WORK OF THE BOARD

2011-12 has been a difficult period for Board members. With 14 listed out of a complement of 18, 3 of whom were in training during their probationary period, the monitoring load fell heavily on the experienced members.

The time taken for security clearances continues to be an issue, as does the [seemingly] ever changing and more complex routines for claiming travelling expenses.

A large dispersal prison is not an easy institution for members of the public to monitor. In doing this work the Board relies upon staff for its safety, for information and for a host of informal insights into life across the prison. Board members do not only value the readiness with which such support is given; they also appreciate that it is not offered in exchange for a loss of independence.

Our thanks go to our Clerk, who manages with good humour to fit in our needs with what seems to be more than a full time job as well.

Richard West
Chair

7. Appendix – Board Statistics

	2011/12	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9
Recommended complement of Board members	18	18	18	17
Numbers of Board members at the start of the reporting period	14	14	17	15
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	14	14	14	17
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	0	3	1	2
Number of members leaving within the reporting period	0	3	4	0
Number of attendances at meetings other than Board meetings	29	23	27	28
Total number of visits to the prison (including all meetings)	803	694	1025	999
Total number of open applications received	348	358	590	582
Total number of confidential access applications received	47	55	77	39
Total number of segregation reviews held	52	52	52	52
Total number of segregation reviews attended	52	52	52	52