

HMP LONG LARTIN

INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD

ANNUAL REPORT

For the year 1.2.13 to 31.1.14

SECTION ONE The Statutory Role of the IMB

The Prison Act 1952 requires every prison to be monitored by an independent Board appointed by the Secretary of State from members of the community in which the prison is situated.

The Board is specifically charged 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 commitments placed on it and what impact these have on those placed 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 TWO Contents

Section Three	Description of HMP Long Lartin	page 4
Section Four	Executive Summary	page 5
Section Five	Reports on Aspects of the Prison	page 7
5.1	Education, Learning and Skills	page 7
5.2	Equality and Inclusion	page 7
5.3	Healthcare and Mental Health	page 7
5.4	Purposeful Activity	page 9
5.5	Resettlement	page 10
5.6	Residential Services	page 11
5.7	Safer Custody	page 12
5.8	Segregation	page 12
Section Six	Other Aspects of the Prison Regime	page 15
6.1	Current Organisation of the Wings	page 15
6.2	Detainee Unit	page 16
6.3	Drugs	page 16
6.4	Gymnasium	page 17
6.5	Managing Challenging Behaviour	page 17
6.6	Prisoners' Consultative Committee	page 18
6.7	Telephones	page 18
6.8	Visits	page 18
Section Seven	The Work of the Board	page 20
Appendix One	The IMB Year	page 21
Appendix Two	Analysis of Applications	page 22

SECTION THREE Description of HMP Long Lartin

- 3.1 HMP Long Lartin is a dispersal prison within the High Security Estate. It is situated in the Vale of Evesham. The original premises date from the early 1970s, although they have been modified by successive programmes of adaptation and improvement. There have also been two substantial phases of expansion. The first, around a dozen years ago, brought a new houseblock and a large segregation unit. The second, completed five years ago, replaced two of the original wings with a new houseblock.
- 3.2 The prison has a CNA of 622. About a quarter of these men will typically be from Category A; almost all of the remainder are from Category B. From time to time there may be a small number of remand prisoners, all of them provisionally Category A. In addition, there are usually about a dozen men who are High Risk Category A. All of the prisoners are accommodated in single cells.

The education contract is with Milton Keynes College; the Worcestershire Health and Care Trust provides healthcare and DHL has the canteen contract.

SECTION FOUR

Executive Summary

- 4.1.1 Long Lartin is required to hold over 600 of the most serious offenders in conditions of security, safety and decency, to engage with their individual circumstances and to create the possibility of progress through a long sentence. This is a formidable task.
- 4.1.2 The Board reports that, broadly speaking, this extensive remit has been carried out effectively. HMP Long Lartin remains a decent institution and one which is ambitious to improve. The Board offers this general endorsement, however, with some significant qualifications. These are implied in the recommendations which follow and developed in the body of the report.
- 4.1.3 The Board recommends that attention be given to the following:

By the Minister

- a) Effective measures to curb the misuse of prescribed medication (see paragraphs 6.3.1 – 6.3.8)

By the Deputy Director of Custody

- a) A reassessment of purposeful activities provided for long term prisoners (see paragraphs 5.1.3 and 5.4.1- 5.4.3).
- b) Consideration of whether every prisoner aged over 50 still requires conditions of high security (see paragraph 5.2.4).
- c) Reconsideration of the division of the prison population (currently 50:50) between vulnerable and mainstream prisoners (see paragraphs 5.4.7 and 6.1.3-6.1.9).
- d) To ensure that OASYS reports are not delayed by late contributions from the National Probation Service.(see paragraph 5.5.4).
- e) To reassess all Category B prisoners currently refusing to engage with programmes and check that each one still requires conditions of high security. (see paragraph 5.5.7).
- f) To create a better balance between the number of Category A High Risk prisoners and the facilities for them to be visited. (see paragraph 6.8.9).

By the Governor

- a) Completion of the End of Life suite (see paragraph 5.3.5).
- b) A careful reassessment in the light of experience of the implications for staffing of the new treatment hatches on the wings (see paragraph 5.3.7).
- c) A reassessment of the practicality of the Integrated Drug Treatment Strategy in the light of the difficulties it has experienced this year (see paragraph 5.3.8).
- d) Consideration of the lessons to be learned from the new core day and their relevance to its replacement (see paragraphs 5.4.5 – 5.4.13).
- e) To ensure that reviews of Category A status are not delayed by late contributions from departments (see paragraph 5.5.4).

- f) To ensure that a Food Book is readily available on each wing (see paragraph 5.6.6).
- g) To ensure that the Listeners scheme is prepared for the implications of the new IEP policy (see paragraph 5.7.4).
- h) Routinely to e-mail minutes of the Rule 45 Review Board to every department which participates (see paragraph 5.8.5).
- i) To remain alert to every instance of a segregated prisoner being on an open ACCT. (see paragraphs 5.8.7-5.8.9).
- j) To consider whether lessons are to be learned from the delays in refurbishing damaged cells in the segregation unit (see paragraph 5.8.10).
- k) To ensure the attendance of a forensic psychologist at all Managing Challenging Behaviour meetings (see paragraph 6.5.3).
- l) To continue to improve awareness of the Managing Challenging Behaviour Programme among all staff who work with the prisoners concerned (see paragraph 6.5.4).
- m) To remain alert to the need to provide timely responses to points raised by members of the Prisoners' Consultative Committee (see paragraph 6.6.2).
- n) To ensure the rapid processing of all applications for approval of telephone numbers made by newly received prisoners (see paragraph 6.7.1).
- o) To improve the toys and games available to visiting children (see paragraph 6.8.4).
- p) To ensure that offers of voluntary help in Visits are given a prompt and courteous response (see paragraphs 6.8.5-6.8.6).
- q) To ensure widespread awareness among prisoners of Family Visits (see paragraph 6.8.7)
- r) To revive the work of the Family Forum (see paragraph 6.8.8).
- s) To take full advantage of the potential of the facility for video links (see paragraph 6.8.10).

SECTION FIVE

5.1 Education, Learning and Skills

- 5.1.1 The preparation of prisoners for their release is now a national priority. No one can dispute the desirability of this for society at large and for the individuals concerned. Within a dispersal prison, however, there are many men for whom release is a very distant prospect. Week by week and even year by year these prisoners need to be offered stimulus and engagement, opportunities to register achievement and increase their sense of self-worth.
- 5.1.2 Education can play a central part in investing a long sentence with purpose and humanity. But to do this effectively it needs the freedom to work towards goals different from those of neighbouring prisons where most men are within sight, even if only distantly, of release.
- 5.1.3 Elsewhere in this report the Board recommends – and not for the first time – a thorough reassessment of the various activities currently provided for long-term prisoners. Education, Learning and Skills should be part of this. The department has the potential to make an even greater contribution to the quality of custodial life and thereby to the stability of the establishment.
- 5.1.4 The Board regrets that one consequence of the new core day is to reduce the time in Education by about 15%.

5.2 Equality and Inclusion

- 5.2.1 Very nearly a quarter of the prisoners currently at Long Lartin are foreign nationals. They are drawn from 43 different nationalities, with Jamaican and Pakistani having the highest representation.
- 5.2.2 The length of sentence typically being served by these foreign nationals means that there is only a little movement involving the UK Border Agency. During the year under review there were only two deportations and one extradition; there were no repatriations. Nonetheless a representative of the Home Office visits in alternate months to hold surgeries on the wings and attend the Foreign Nationals meeting. This official carries a high level of credibility among the prisoners and the service is appreciated.
- 5.2.3 The number of formal complaints about discrimination made during the reporting year was 104. This is an increase of 29 on the total for 2012-13. For its own part, however, the Board received just four as open applications, a similar total to 2012-13.
- 5.2.4 It is noteworthy that, as the reporting year closed, 162 of the prisoners at Long Lartin were aged 50 years or older. The Board questions whether every single one of these men requires a place among all the expensive apparatus of a high security prison.

5.3 Healthcare

- 5.3.1 The loss of some experienced staff has had a substantial effect on the day-to-day work of Healthcare during part of the past year. Agency staff, however strong their formal qualifications, do not always have a good knowledge of the particular features of working within a prison. The Board suspects that this underlies a certain loss of confidence among some prisoners in their relationship with the department.
- 5.3.2 On the other hand, the Board has observed the success of Healthcare staff in dealing with some complex and long-term cases requiring psychiatric care. This has been true of certain in-patients. It has also been evident in the thoughtful and compassionate contribution which Healthcare staff have made to ACCT reviews.
- 5.3.3 The department, for entirely understandable reasons, does not allow smoking within its in-patient section. The Board knows of some prisoners, reportedly with psychiatric issues, who have refused to accept admission because of this policy. This is in spite of the fact that nicotine substitutes are readily available and that smoking in an outside yard can be allowed by arrangement.
- 5.3.4 The small number of prisoners who are in-patients normally rely upon a single telephone for direct contact with their families. The Board was disturbed by the length of time which it took to repair this telephone when it had a fault. An alternative was offered, but this required escorting staff to be available and the negotiation of a flight of stairs.
- 5.3.5 In a previous annual report the Board welcomed the construction of a specialised end-of-life suite at Long Lartin. It is, however, still not ready for use. Minor snags in the design and fittings have yet to be overcome.
- 5.3.6 An important development this year has been the opening of treatment hatches on the wings. This has allowed dispensing, such a prominent feature of the Long Lartin day, to be decentralised.
- 5.3.7 This change, however, has not been without its problems. The Board has had a good many reports from prisoners of prescribed medication not being available at a particular hatch when it was needed. This could have very significant implications. Additionally, the new treatment hatches are a call upon the time of Healthcare staff which has yet to be fully absorbed by the prison as a whole. The Board is aware of some meetings, notably ACCT reviews, which have had to be held over as a result.
- 5.3.8 The Integrated Drug Treatment Strategy [IDTS] has been handicapped by the absence of its coordinator and some other staff for part of the year. The programme currently faces difficulties in moving prisoners from a maintenance stage to a recovery stage.
- 5.3.9 The location of the IDTS unit also brings its own problem. It almost inevitably generates a sense of isolation during what is, in any case, a difficult personal experience for the men involved.

5.3.10 The Board understands that Healthcare at Long Lartin met most of the criteria which were assessed in its recent audit. That is indeed good news. It would be wrong of the Board, however, not to report its own impression that there has been a loss of confidence in the department among some of its prisoner patients.

5.3.11 There are also matters relevant to Healthcare in the sections of this report dealing with Purposeful Activity [paragraphs 5.4.7 and 5.4.10] and Drugs [paragraphs 6.3.3 to 6.3.8].

5.4 Purposeful Activity

5.4.1 In 2013 the Board reported its concern about the suitability of some of the work which is undertaken by prisoners at Long Lartin. That concern remains. When prisoners are serving sentences of many years, even a number of decades, the realities of release are very distant. Purposeful activity during the early years in custody has much to offer, but it is disingenuous to maintain that it is equipping these men directly with the skills and knowledge which will attract some future employer.

5.4.2 The time for that will come later and for many it will come in a different establishment. Purposeful activity within a dispersal should serve other purposes. Beyond experience of a disciplined routine, it should offer a degree of stimulus and opportunity to uncover new talents or develop new skills for their own sake.

5.4.3 This is partly a matter of decent and humane treatment. It would also serve other purposes. Activity which is more engaging and less desultory, which is more obviously purposeful, will contribute to the stability of the prison. It will also encourage an outlook more responsive to the training in specific skills which will follow in the years to come,. The Board would like to see some fresh and fundamental thinking in the area of purposeful activity among long term prisoners.

5.4.5 Turning more specifically to the year under review, the arrangements for purposeful activity have been shaped by the introduction of the new core day. In principle this could be presented as a straightforward change. In line with the new national policy, prisoners allocated to workshops would remain there over lunch, instead of returning to the wing. A cold meal would be brought to them instead of the one served from the hotplate.

5.4.6 In reality, however, the new regime has created a complexity of detail that has come close to frustrating the best efforts of those required to put it into practice. It appears to the Board that these practical difficulties fall under three main headings.

5.4.7 The first is the inescapable problem of handling two separate streams of movement – the mainstream and the vulnerable prisoners – within buildings that were designed for only one. The more movements there are in the daily routine, the more complex that becomes. The second is the intricate relationship between the regularities of the regime and the less predictable work of outpatients and dispensing. Thirdly, the new core day was introduced at a time when staffing was being reduced and before new patterns of working had been able to settle down.

- 5.4.8 Initially, the difficulties could be regarded as transitional, as problems of adjustment in the short term. But succeeding months brought little improvement. In late November the Board decided to focus upon one particular week in order to sample the new regime in practice. The results describe only the events of the single week, but they are broadly consistent with the Board's understanding of the situation which prevails.
- 5.4.9 This experience rapidly confirmed three observations which the Board more generally had already made. The first concerns the intricacy of the arrangements needed to direct two flows of prisoners – the vulnerable and the mainstream – through the business of the morning without coming into contact. Carefully choreographed as these arrangements are, they each require the previous step to have been carried out as planned.
- 5.4.10 The second observation, almost inevitably, was that such close co-ordination was frequently not possible. On one day monitored, for example, dispensing on two wings did not begin until ten minutes after the planned time and on one of these the whole business of dispensing took fully three quarters of an hour. The implications of these delays then ripple out across the prison day.
- 5.4.11 Contingencies such as these emphasised a third point, the crucial role of the movements officer. Upon the resourcefulness and energy of these members of staff rested any hope of recovering from the unexpected or ensuring the punctual appearance of prisoners for their appointments in Healthcare.
- 5.4.12 A separate measure of the difficulty of operating the new core day is the experience of the Kitchen. Prisoners in the workshops are provided with a filled baguette for their lunch; a similar meal is available to those who remain on the wing. The daily requirements for these are booked in advance. Yet so ambitious are the arrangements for each morning that the food and its consumers frequently find themselves in different locations. The Kitchen reports being called upon, almost daily, to provide an additional 60-70 baguettes for men who would otherwise go without.
- 5.4.13 It is good to know that the new core day does not have much longer to run. The Board trusts that its shortcomings will be taken into account by those who plan its successor.

5.5 Resettlement

- 5.5.1 It is seldom that a prisoner walks through the Gate of Long Lartin on completion of his sentence. Indeed it should be a matter for concern when this does occur, for it implies that a man has required a place in highly secure conditions right up to the moment when he re-joins the public.
- 5.5.2 The contribution of the prison to the process of resettlement is generally made at a much earlier stage of a sentence. Long Lartin needs to be a place of security and engagement, one which holds out the promise, albeit cautiously qualified, of progression to a less secure institution.

- 5.5.3 The processes which support and permit progression are therefore of particular concern to the Board. It is good to be able to record that at the time of writing a critical one of these, the production of reports for the Parole Board, was entirely up to date.
- 5.5.4 The situation in two other key areas, however, is much less favourable. There are 30 individuals whose cases should have been before the local panel which reviews Category A status, but which are now overdue. The Board's information is that 27 of these cases are awaiting contributions from Healthcare. It is also disturbing that the 50 OASYS reports currently out of date are, reportedly in every single case, still short of their contribution from the National Probation Service.
- 5.5.5 There is one group of Long Lartin's prisoners for whom any notion of progression is only a remote possibility. These are the sex offenders who, although convicted, remain in denial of their offences. Their refusal to engage with relevant programmes creates a stalemate, one where the prisoners are merely incarcerated until such time as they change their minds. This stalemate does protect the public in the short and medium term, but inevitably it can provide little by way of rehabilitation.
- 5.5.6 In 2013 the Board was pleased to note the introduction of the A-Z Programme. This is designed to encourage sex offenders in denial to reassess their situation and open the way to some constructive work with other programmes. A year of experience has dulled the edge of that early optimism. The programme is entirely voluntary and its participants are all self-selected. Only 11 have completed it over the past year; the history of any subsequent engagement on their part appears to be unknown. At the time of writing the course is suspended because of constraints in funding and staffing.
- 5.5.7 The Board would be reassured if a rigorous assessment of these men in denial, conducted case by case, were to conclude that every one of them required conditions of high security. Without such reassurance, it can only remain sceptical.

5.6 Residential Services

- 5.6.1 Year after year the Board has reported the fact that all of the cells in the four original wings lack integral sanitation. Successive ministerial replies have set out the reasons why this situation has to be allowed to persist.
- 5.6.2 Nevertheless it is the Board's duty to continue to draw attention to this unpalatable fact of life for around half of the men at Long Lartin. The Nightsan system does allow prisoners to book their place in a queue for use of the recesses during the night. This queue moves at a rate of about four prisoners an hour. Many appreciate the opportunity for an unharassed shower which this system allows.
- 5.6.3 But the shortcomings of the system are plain to see. The parcels – as they are euphemistically called – which litter the ground below the cell windows every morning are a most graphic demonstration. Although cleared daily by prisoners, they are a most unpleasant and insanitary consequence of a system which is surely outdated.

- 5.6.4 The interior of the prison, on the other hand, is routinely cleaned to a high standard. The work of those who achieve this, day in and day out, is commended by the Board.
- 5.6.5 It is an eloquent fact that only five of 323 open Applications to the Board in 2013-14 were concerned with food. Credit must go to those in the Kitchen who can achieve this implied level of satisfaction in the face of increasingly stringent budgets.
- 5.6.6 The Board's recent survey of entries in the Food Books provided a broadly similar picture. It must be noted, however, that one wing did not have its Food Book available and another seemed unaware of the need to provide one.

5.7 Safer Custody

- 5.7.1 During the year under review four men died while they were prisoners at HMP Long Lartin. Two of these deaths occurred at an outside hospital. All four remain subject to investigation, although in one of the cases the circumstances of the prisoner's death have already been established in a public hearing.
- 5.7.2 This forum was a murder trial. It ended with the conviction of two Long Lartin prisoners for the murder of a third. They are now serving additional sentences.
- 5.7.3 This shocking event was all the more disturbing for its context. It took place on a support wing, one where all the men are deemed to be vulnerable. It illustrated the potential for violence which exists even within the apparently more sheltered areas of Long Lartin. It underlines the importance of the more nuanced handling of vulnerable prisoners (VPs) which is now part of the prison's policy. Situational VPs – those who need support because of their custodial history rather than their index offence – are now monitored and assessed under separate arrangements. At the time of writing there were 35 such prisoners on the support wings, two thirds of them on wings A and B.
- 5.7.4 The Listeners at Long Lartin have important responsibilities and their work is highly valued. Most of these men have enhanced status, but a minority has remained on standard. Typically this is because they will not engage with programmes which are predicated upon an acceptance of their guilt. When the new national scheme for Incentives and Earned Privileges comes into effect they are likely to drop to basic, thus depriving their fellow prisoners of an important service.
- 5.7.5 During the year under review 194 ACCTs were opened on prisoners held at Long Lartin. A further six were received on transfer with an open ACCT. Remarkably, no less than 28% of the overall total of 200 concerned men who were in segregation.
- 5.7.6 This is an extraordinarily high proportion. The acute difficulty presented by many of these complex individual cases is recognised in the discussion below (See paragraphs 5.8.4 – 5.8.6), but overall it has to be concluded that 56 separate ACCTs in the segregation unit is too high a figure.
- 5.7.7 By contrast, only 13 prisoners on open ACCTs were in the hands of Healthcare. A further 93 were on the four support wings and 32 on mainstream normal location.

5.8 Segregation Unit

- 5.8.1 Monitoring of the segregation unit has been a prominent feature of the IMB's work this year. A Board member visits there more days than not. It is the critical and demanding nature of the unit's work which warrants such close attention. Numbers are high: usually in the twenties and sometimes into the thirties; seldom do they fall into the teens. The prisoners concerned, moreover, include some who are very challenging and even actively threatening. Others need protection from themselves or their fellow prisoners. A small proportion awaits the transfer to some other form of secure intervention which they so patently need.
- 5.8.2 All of this combines to create a very demanding environment for those who work there. This could generate its own temptations, but the Board is pleased to report that the operating culture of the unit remains open and accessible. Staff are secure in their control and well briefed about those in their charge. They extend clarity, patience and good humour, frequently to a remarkable degree.
- 5.8.3 The high numbers of segregated men with whom they have to work are naturally a matter of concern. The Board does sometimes believe that a particular prisoner has been segregated for too long – and a dialogue about such cases has occasionally culminated in a letter to the Governor – but only rarely does it doubt the initial justification for a new segregation. The roll in the unit, for all the continuing measures to reduce it, is a barometer of Long Lartin as a whole. The high roll is generally a measure of the pressures on normal location.
- 5.8.4 Since July the prison has been giving a higher priority to the work of the Rule 45 review boards. Even after some fine tuning of the new arrangements, it is not unusual for the two regular meetings to occupy six hours of each week. That is a substantial commitment by all directly concerned.
- 5.8.5 Such thoroughness has to be commended. The Board is convinced that this considerable investment of time would yield greater dividend if the record made at the meeting were emailed routinely to the various participants. This would be a convenient preparation for the subsequent meeting, allowing those detailed to represent a department to brief themselves beforehand.
- 5.8.6 After a long period in abeyance, the Segregation Monitoring and Review Group was revived at the very end of the reporting year. This development, although overdue, is to be welcomed.
- 5.8.7 During the reporting year the Board has been frequently concerned by the number of men who are held in segregation whilst on an ACCT. At the extreme, over a period in late March and early April 2012 there were five such cases and in late July there were four. Returns of one or two have not been uncommon.
- 5.8.8 All of these instances are to be regretted, but in a good proportion of them it has been very difficult to see a practical alternative. The prison has a very limited range of responses to men who are not only a threat to themselves, but also to other prisoners and to staff.

- 5.8.9 One wider consequence of this practice could be a subtle shift in the operating culture of the prison, an acceptance of open ACCTs in the Segregation Unit that becomes uncritical. Consequently the Board was pleased, as this report was about to be written, to see an emphatic statement by the Governor that such cases must remain truly exceptional.
- 5.8.10 During the year there was one extended episode of challenge to the unit's regime. It was quite evidently co-ordinated and resulted in severe damage to several cells. They remained out of use long after order had been restored, reportedly because some of the necessary fittings had become very difficult to obtain. It would be as well to learn lessons from this experience.

SECTION SIX

6.1 Current Organisation of the Wings

- 6.1.1 A place of longer-term imprisonment inevitably becomes a place of relationships. Those between prisoners and staff play a very large part in shaping the experiences of prisoners held at Long Lartin. Much of the Board's reactive work arises from cases where those relationships have not worked as reliably or efficiently as they should. It is important to credit, however, the many occasions when Board members are aware of staff using their knowledge of individual prisoners to calm men who are angry or to unravel the problems of the confused. Relationships such as these are central to maintaining stability within a very demanding environment. They should not go unacknowledged.
- 6.1.2 Relationships among prisoners will always be somewhat elusive to the outside observer. It is clear to the Board, however, that these range from the thoughtfully supportive to the profoundly threatening. They have the potential to be dangerous to individuals and destabilising to the entire establishment.
- 6.1.3 This makes the Board acutely aware of the risks created by the current arrangement and distribution of the prison's population. Long Lartin has approximately equal numbers of vulnerable and mainstream prisoners. The former are held on the four original wings, the latter on the four newer wings.
- 6.1.4 The original wings, for all their inherent limitations, do involve staff in much of the normal business of the prisoners who live there. This oversight is very far from being complete, as abundant evidence can demonstrate. But when visiting these wings dynamic security does not seem to be a remote concept.
- 6.1.5 The situation on the four mainstream wings is significantly different. One is broadly for men with an enhanced status; another, distinctly smaller, houses a mainly older or more settled population. The two remaining wings, both large, are left to hold the majority of the mainstream prisoners.
- 6.1.6 This has two prominent consequences. The first is a lack of flexibility in responding to imminent threats and pressures within one of these two mainstream wings. Transfers out of the prison are of course an option. But the relocation of prisoners to a different wing, once a tool of day to day management, is far from easy when the alternative is effectively the other of the two large wings. Such a move may simply be replacing one set of risks by another.
- 6.1.7 The second prominent consequence is that the largest group of mainstream prisoners is living on a wing where adequate engagement is difficult. This is fundamentally a feature of the design of the wing; in turn, it has encouraged a working culture which has caused the Board some concern.

- 6.1.8 From time to time governors have assured the IMB that change is in the air. Redistribution of mainstream and vulnerable prisoners was apparently a possibility; so too has been the reversion of the entire prison to an establishment for mainstream prisoners.
- 6.1.9 It is not for the IMB to have an opinion about these different options. What it can do, however, is to emphasise the limitations of the current arrangements. A change in these has the potential to make Long Lartin a safer prison.

6.2 Detainee Unit

- 6.2.1 The Detainee Unit has not been occupied for most of the reporting year. It has been emphasised by the prison, however, that the unit has not closed. The Board remains alert to the possibility of its reoccupation and particularly to a resumption of the regime that has caused it such concern in the recent past.

6.3 Drugs

- 6.3.1 For a good many years Long Lartin has invested much effort in restricting the supply of illegal drugs into the prison. These measures have become increasingly rigorous and increasingly effective.
- 6.3.2 Month by month over the reporting year the Board has received summaries of the results of the drug testing programme. These are a measure of the use of illegal drugs within the prison and the figures are impressively low. They represent a major long-term achievement. Taken by themselves, they are strong evidence for the success of the prison's measures to control illegal drugs. They invite the conclusion that the whole complex enterprise of obtaining and smuggling illegal drugs has all but ended and that the consequent trading, taxing and indebtedness among prisoners has been correspondingly minimised. The prison should be, both literally and metaphorically, a healthier place as a result.
- 6.3.3 Regrettably, however, that is not the case. Long Lartin continues to have a drugs problem, albeit one of different character. The abuse and misuse of prescribed medication has become the dominant concern. To put it more plainly, there is now a market within the prison for drugs which were originally prescribed – at the taxpayers' expense – by general practitioners.
- 6.3.4 The extent of this problem is difficult to gauge as the drug testing programme does not routinely test for the substances most commonly concerned. But none of the parties involved – Healthcare, the prison management, staff on the wings or the prisoners themselves – appears to dispute that the abuse and misuse of prescribed medication is a prominent feature of life at Long Lartin.
- 6.3.5 In the first instance this practice is a threat to the health of those who take unregulated doses of powerful medication. That alone should be a reason for bringing this abuse under control. But it also carries with it the corrosive pressures previously associated with the trading of illegal drugs. Prisoners are pressurised to present a well-researched case for one of the relevant drugs to be prescribed. If successfully concealed, each dose becomes a

commodity to be traded in a clandestine market with its own hierarchy of suppliers and dealers. Bullying is part of the currency which drives these transactions.

- 6.3.6 This is not a problem which emerged during 2013. It was described in the Board's last annual report and addressed in the Minister's reply. There is no evidence, however, that the evident efforts to bring it under control have had any significant effect. It appears to the Board that there can be no real easing of this problem without a change in the pattern of prescribing.
- 6.3.7 The solution to this malignant feature of prison life surely lies with the general practitioners. Their professional assessment of need are, of course, beyond the Board's remit, but the implications of them profoundly affect the lives of prisoners on certain wings.
- 6.3.8 Finally, the Board cannot but remark on the changed character of the drugs problem within Long Lartin. The expense and hazards involved in smuggling illegal drugs into a high security prison have largely been replaced by a system in which the desired substances are brought in by an NHS courier and supplied at the tax payers' expense.

6.4 Gymnasium

- 6.4.1 Organised physical activity has a very important part in the lives of many long-term prisoners. It brings a sense of purpose to their week, contributes to their health and helps to maintain stability within the prison.
- 6.4.2 For Board members a monitoring visit to the Gym is usually a heartening experience. This is partly because it is a busy department, one where the involvement of prisoners is plain to see. It is also because the range of activities is designed to have a broad appeal. The Board is as pleased to note a game of indoor bowls as it is to observe a crowded hall of prisoners working at weights.
- 6.4.3 A certain amount of Gym apparatus is provided on the wings. In its last report the Board drew attention to delays in maintaining and repairing this equipment. Twelve months later it is good to be able to acknowledge that it is all now in working order.

6.5 Managing Challenging Behaviour

- 6.5.1 During the year under review the prison has been working to make the Managing Challenging Behaviour [MCB] programme into an effective tool for managing some of its less compliant prisoners. This work, which certainly needed doing, has essentially been in three phases.
- 6.5.2 The first of these was a reassessment of the men on the local MCB list. It had grown too long for any effective focusing of effort or thoroughness of review. For some prisoners, MCB had become little more than a label. This reassessment brought the list down to a manageable total of about a dozen.
- 6.5.3 The second phase was improving the quality of the monthly review of the individuals concerned. Crucial to this is a flow of relevant information from the departments able to contribute. Wing reports are now much more thorough and Security is invariably well

briefed. It is disappointing however, that the requirement for a forensic psychologist to be present is seldom observed. The Board also notes that it has not been possible for any prisoner to contribute in person, nor can it be for as long as the monthly review has its current place in the schedule.

6.5.4 The final phase – and probably the most difficult to carry through – is translating the management plan for individual prisoners into resources and rewards which really do impinge upon their daily behaviour. Diffused though this is across the wings and involving as it does many staff and several departments, this part of the programme is now the one which needs to be carried forward.

6.5.5 Encouragement can be drawn from the recent history of the 18 prisoners who have appeared on the local MCB list since it was revised almost a year ago. In seven cases there was sufficient improvement for the man concerned to be taken off the programme. Each was a highly individual case, often deeply complex, and it would be wrong to attribute the improvements solely to the integrated approach of the MCB. But surely it has made at least some contribution. Of the remaining MCB cases, six are still open, four have been transferred to other prisons and one released on completion of a determinate sentence.

6.6 Prisoners' Consultative Committee

6.6.1 The committee meets monthly, bringing together wing representatives and members of the prison management. At its best it has an important role in prison life. It allows difficulties on the wings to be brought forward and is one way of gauging opinion among prisoners.

6.6.2 If the wing representatives are to maintain their local credibility, however, there does need to be a timely and cogent response to the points which they raise. In the latter part of the year that had, more often than not, become the case.

6.7 Telephones

6.7.1 Very few of the men who are received at Long Lartin are new to custody. Many of them arrive from elsewhere in the high security estate. Nevertheless, it is the prison's policy to cancel all previous approvals of particular telephone numbers and require a further process of application, checking and approval. This can take some time. The Board has been aware of some cases where men have remained without their telephone contacts for far too long.

6.8 Visits

6.8.1 Visits are a crucial and sensitive aspect of the work of any prison, not least in an establishment where sentences are long and where visitors typically travel across the length and breadth of the country. The introduction of the new core day at Long Lartin had an adverse effect on the service which can be provided. The loss of visits on Fridays is regrettable in itself; it has also put more pressure on opportunities at the weekend.

6.8.2 The Board has observed that reprofiling has broken up the teams of staff which were thoroughly familiar with the procedures involved with visits. The introduction of staff new to the work has inevitably been a distraction.

- 6.8.3 A new code of dress for visitors has been introduced. It is being applied quite strictly and it appears to be meeting the concerns which have been expressed for some time. The Visits Hall itself is bright and cheerful. The Board continues to be aware that some children put themselves at risk by climbing and sliding on the back of the seat dividers.
- 6.8.4 The reopening of the serving hatch has been very popular. The more recent introduction of warm food has been especially well received. This service now runs at a healthy profit and the Board suggests that some of this money could be put into providing or replacing toys and games in the Visits Hall and the Visitors' Centre. An improvement in this area is badly needed.
- 6.8.5 The visits department would be very much poorer without the work of its volunteers. They serve at the hatches in both the hall and the visitors centre, visit some prisoners whose families are estranged or far away and are vital to supervision of the play area.
- 6.8.6 Several have left during the year and the Board has been very concerned by the apparent delay in replacing them. It inevitably takes some time to obtain the necessary clearances, but this frustration can be offset by courtesy and clear communication. The Board is aware of at least one instance where this was certainly not the case.
- 6.8.7 Family visits have now been reduced to six occasions during the year. Having observed these events for some years and admired their quality, the Board is surprised that fewer prisoners are now applying to take part. It questions whether the opportunity has been energetically promoted on the wings.
- 6.8.8 Family visits have been organised and overseen by the Family Forum. Its meetings, formerly so well run and strongly supported, have evidently become a lower priority during the year under review. The Board would like to see forward planning and the fostering of contact with outside agencies again given some prominence through the Family Forum.
- 6.8.9 Special visiting arrangements apply to prisoners who are Category A High Risk. They have a separate Visits Hall and additional staffing. When there is only a handful of such prisoners the facilities are perfectly adequate, but that has not always been the case this year. For a considerable period there were eight times as many High Risk Category A prisoners as there are places in their Visits Hall. It is not possible to accommodate any overflow, putting some of the families concerned at significant disadvantage.
- 6.8.10 The video link is also part of this department. The Board has noted some occasions when outside consultations have not taken place, reportedly because there are not enough staff trained to operate the equipment and processes. The benefits of consulting outside bodies, such as offender managers, by video link should not be overlooked.

SECTION 7 The Work of the Board

- 7.1 It is good to report that, for the third successive year, the Board has received a relatively low number of applications. A comparison with the preceding five years puts the most recent total into context.

Reporting Year ending	Applications to the IMB (Open and Confidential Access)
31.1.2009	621 (582 + 39)
31.1.2010	667 (590 + 77)
31.1.2011	413 (358+55)
31.1.2012	409 (359+50)
31.1.2013	359 (330+29)
31.1.2014	363 (323+40)

- 7.2 There are two important implications of this change. It allows the Board to be less reactive and to devote more time to exploring the varied custodial experiences of prisoners. More fundamentally, the change is evidence of an overall improvement in the working of the prison's own processes.
- 7.3 The induction and training of newly appointed members has absorbed a good deal of the Board's time in recent months. The relative inexperience of the Board as a whole was acknowledged by the exceptional decision to extend the tenure of the Chair and Vice-Chair. This is allowing for a longer period of preparation and transition.

David Waters

Chair

APPENDIX ONE

THE WORK OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD

BOARD STATISTICS 1.2.2013 TO 31.1.2014	
Recommended complement of Board members	18
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	11
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	13
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	5
Number of members leaving within the reporting period	3
Total number of Board meetings during the reporting period	12
Total number of visits to the Establishment	736
Total number of segregation reviews held	97
Total number of segregation reviews attended	94
Date of Annual Team Performance Review	30.10.13

APPENDIX TWO

Analysis of Applications

Code	Subject	Year ending 31.1.2014
A	Accommodation	10
B	Adjudications	2
C	Equality and Diversity (inc. religion)	4
D	Education/employment/training inc. IEP	41
E 1	Family/visits inc. mail and phone	39
E 2	Finance/pay	30
F	Food/kitchen related	5
G	Health related	29
H 1	Property (within current establishment)	29
H 2	Property (during transfer/in another establishment)	13
H 3	Canteen, facilities, Catalogue shopping, Argos	5
I	Sentence related (inc. HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-cat etc.)	31
J	Staff/prisoner/detainee concerns inc. bullying	15
K	Transfers	28
L	Miscellaneous	42
	Confidential Access	40
	Total number of IMB applications	363

