



H M PRISON LOWDHAM GRANGE

ANNUAL REPORT

01 February 2010 – 31 January 2011

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1. INTRODUCTION

This is the 13th Annual Report from the IMB on HMP Lowdham Grange, a Category B male training establishment operated by Serco, where respect, decency and zero tolerance work together to provide a positive regime for all involved within the prison.

There were 667 prisoners held at the beginning of the reporting period and 922 prisoners held at the end of the reporting period.

2. 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 (and lately the Secretary of State for Justice) from members of the community in which the prison or centre is situated.

The Board is specifically charged to:

- (1) Satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody within its prison and the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release.
- (2) Inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom he has delegated authority as it judges appropriate, any concern it has.
- (3) Report annually to the Secretary of State on how well the prison has met the standards and requirements placed on it and what impact these have on those in its custody.

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.

3. DIVERSITY STATEMENT

The IMB at HMP Lowdham Grange (The Board) is committed to an inclusive approach to diversity which encompasses and promotes greater interaction and understanding between people of different backgrounds including but not limited to race, religion, gender, nationality, sexuality, marital status, disability and age. We recognise that a fully inclusive approach to diversity must also respond to differences that cut across social and cultural categories such as but not limited to mental health and literacy.

The Board values this approach to diversity within its recruitment and board development practices with the aim of increasing the repertoire of skills and awareness amongst its members so that it can more appreciate and understand the diverse needs and perspectives of the prisoners, visitors, management and staff at HM Prison Lowdham Grange.

All members of The Board will undertake their duties in a manner that is accessible and inclusive to everyone within the prison.

The Board will monitor the prison to establish and confirm that all persons at the prison act fairly to each other within the spirit of this statement.

Where this is not the case The Board will alert the appropriate party including Senior Management, the Director, The Area Manager and the Minister for Prisons at the Department of Justice.

4. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The IMB is satisfied that HMP Lowdham Grange has been managed and operated well during the year and that prisoners have been treated with appropriate respect.

During the course of the year there have been highlights and concerns worthy of mention below.

4.1 Level 4 Rating

The prison has retained its Level 4 rating during the reporting period. This is an indication of the level of dedication and hard work of both management and staff throughout the prison.

4.2 Zero Tolerance

As recorded in the previous Annual Report, the prison continues to operate a Zero Tolerance policy in relation to drugs, mobile phones, hooch and assaults, which is aimed at all who enter the prison

4.3 New Build

2 new houseblocks and extra facilities have been built providing an extra 260 cells on 4 wings. There was no disruption to the prison regime during this time.

4.4 Healthcare

Healthcare has given rise again to concerns. These are being addressed, the Board will continue to monitor the progress.

5. **QUESTIONS**

There are no questions for Serco this year.

Question for the Minister:

The Board have concerns regarding their ability to continue to monitor the prison effectively given the proposed reduction to our budget plus the 30% cut in travel allowance. Will the Minister please comment on the need to maintain a high level of morale and motivation when relying on volunteers to provide a vital service to the Criminal Justice System?

6. REPORTS

6.1 New Build

The new build consisting of house blocks 4 and 5, a kitchen, an amenities block (Amenities 3) and the extensions to Health Care, Reception, Reintegration Unit (Segregation) and Business Enterprises were completed in February 2010.

House Blocks 4 and 5 provide an extra 260 cells on 4 wings.

Amenities 3 provides more office accommodation, a second gym a second library and electrical and plumbing training workshops.

6.2 Foreign Nationals

At the beginning of the reporting year the prison held 90 foreign nationals

At the end of the reporting year the prison held 115 foreign nationals.

Those Prisoners awaiting deportation are transferred to another Establishment at the end of their sentences.

The United Kingdom Border Agency held 4 surgeries at the Prison during the year when the various repatriation schemes were explained to prisoners.

6.3 Safer Custody / Self Harm.

Towards the end of the reporting year there has been a sharp rise in the number of incidents of self harming which is proportionally in excess of the increased population of the prison. This is mainly due to a number of prisoners inflicting multiple minor acts of self harm on themselves.

6.4 Reintegration Unit. (Segregation)

The Reintegration Unit was doubled in size as a part of the new build programme. The new part of the Unit was opened for use early in the year and the original accommodation has subsequently been refurbished to bring it up to the standard of the new build. The exercise areas have been improved and provided with exercise equipment. There is also an ongoing programme for minor improvements in the Unit.

Following the change of name from the Segregation Unit last year, we have noted a change in the underlying philosophy of running the Unit. This has resulted in approximately 30% of prisoners brought into the Unit being reintegrated back onto the prison's wings as opposed to the previous situation where almost 100% were moved out to other prisons.

The prisoners who find themselves in the Reintegration Unit are mainly difficult, 'high maintenance' prisoners. They are well managed by a dedicated and caring group of staff.

6.5 The Gatehouse.

Whilst not having undergone any major restructuring, the Gatehouse has been modified to permit the staff and other key holders on the route into the prison to visit

a new automatic key vending arrangement. There they are identified by their fingerprint allowing one of a number of key cupboards to open and for them to remove an appropriate set of keys and to return them prior to leaving the prison. This has reduced the problem of 'bottlenecks' particularly at times of shift changes.

6.6 Health Care

Healthcare is provided by Serco Health.

The Healthcare department has had an extension in size plus an increase in staffing levels.

During the reporting period GP cover was contracted to a NHS practice. This provided consistent GP cover 4 days per week with advanced nurse practitioner cover on the 5th day.

Appointments are now booked via the computer terminal on each landing.

The Dentist is in attendance 2 days per week.

There were long waiting lists for the Dentist and Doctor.

Prisoners have made numerous complaints about Health care during the reporting period including:

- Long waiting times to see the doctor and the dentist.
- Lack of communication between Health Care and prisoners concerning treatment, appointments and referrals.
- Inconsistencies of GP cover.
- Failure to escort prisoners in Health Care.
- Inadequate psychiatric provision.

With an increase in the prisoner population there is a higher number of prisoners requiring mental health support. However, there is only the following psychiatric support available:

- 2 full time psychiatric nurses provided by Serco Health. They are primary care nurses.
- 2 "In Reach" psychiatric nurses provided by the local PCT one for 2 days per week and the other for 4 days per week.
- A forensic psychiatrist is provided for a half day one week and a full day the following week.
- There is inadequate psychiatric support.

This year has seen a high number of reported self harm incidents however, a high proportion are due to single individuals inflicting minor acts of self harm

6.7 Business Enterprises

Lowdham Grange Business Enterprises employs approximately 180 prisoners per week. They do a variety of work including:

- Furniture design and manufacture.
- Conversion of video tape to digital format to enable the media to be archived.

Prisoners are able to do NVQ level 2 and 3.

6.8 Amenities, Learning and Skills.

The Education Manager resigned in August 2010 to date the position has not been filled. Despite this education continues to operate efficiently and has met all targets set.

6.9 Diversity

As a privately run prison Lowdham Grange has to adhere to The Race Equality Action Group (REAG) policies. They also have an internal Diversity and Race Equality Action Team (DREAT) which meets monthly where prisoner representatives and senior managers can deal effectively with any issues that may arise

7(a) BOARD STATISTICS

BOARD STATISTICS	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	15
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	15
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	15
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	0
Number of members leaving within reporting period	0
Number of attendances at meetings other than Board meetings and Reviews	49
Total number of visits to the prison/IRC (including all meetings)	666
Total number of applications received	351

7 (b) APPLICATIONS

Code	Subject	2010/2011
A	Accommodation	4
B	Adjudications	5
C	Diversity related	17
D	Education/employment/training	12
E	Family/visits	8
F	Food/kitchen related	3
G	Health related	47
H	Property	121
I	Sentence related	12
J	Staff/prisoner/detainee related	8
K	Transfers	8
L	Miscellaneous	80
M	Confidential Access	26
	Total number of applications	351

7. (c) MONTHLY STATISTICS REPORT

DESCRIPTION	Feb-10	Mar-10	Apr-10	May-10	Jun-10	Jul-10	Aug-10	Sep-10	Oct-10	Nov-10	Dec-10	Jan-11	MONTHLY AVERAGE FOR THE LAST 12 MONTHS
AVERAGE POPULATION FOR EACH MONTH	667	743	779	829	860	884	913	924	927	936	929	922	859
No. OF PRISONERS ON BASIC	24	19	32	20	19	18	14	15	26	23	15	35	22
No. OF PRISONERS ON STANDARD	110	120	154	120	122	129	119	127	105	126	100	131	122
No. OF PRISONERS ON ENHANCED	542	604	635	694	733	753	792	783	803	792	809	752	549
No. OF PRISONERS IN PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY	592	671	686	760	765	801	812	815	814	811	809	800	758
No. OF PRISONERS UNEMPLOYED	67	69	130	65	94	83	96	96	95	94	100	103	90
No. OF PRISONERS MEDICALLY EXCUSED	17	14	14	14	15	14	15	8	20	14	15	15	15
No. OF ACCT's OPENED	12	16	23	14	18	14	19	19	19	25	16	11	17
No. OF STAFF WHO LEFT DURING MONTH	2	3	8	13	3	6	7	5	4	8	6	6	6
No. OF STAFF WHO JOINED DURING MONTH	4	14	11	10	6	1	11	4	12	0	0	16	7
NUMBER OF IMB APPLICATIONS	12	13	15	12	27	33	13	27	27	34	31	55	25
NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS	332	347	415	426	423	563	479	562	501	385	398	380	434
NUMBER OF OCCASIONS REQUIRING THE USE OF FORCE	6	7	16	12	13	11	17	16	14	7	16	20	13