



H M PRISON LOWDHAM GRANGE

ANNUAL REPORT

1ST FEBRUARY 2013 – 31ST JANUARY 2014

Section 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 (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.

Section 2

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Section 3

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

As at 31/01/13 the prisoner population was 885 and the average for the year was 883. The Certified Normal Accommodation was 900 with an Operational Capacity of 888. During the year the number of prisoners serving life sentences has raised slightly. All Indeterminate Sentence prisoners are fully integrated within the prison population.

The prisoners are held in five house-blocks. House-blocks 1 and 2 are standard cross design of four wings with communal showers whilst the other 3 house-blocks each consist of two wings and have en-suite shower facilities. There are telephones in all the cells in the prison.

All of the exercise yards and the wings have a variety of exercise equipment installed for the use of prisoners. Gym facilities are also available.

General healthcare is provided by Serco Health whilst secondary mental healthcare is provided by Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust. General Practitioners and the Dentist are subcontracted by Serco Health.

The prison provides the Integrated Drug Treatment System and substance misuse programmes.

Education is provided by Serco with outside contractors providing IT Media based cover.

The buffet bar in the visits area is run by volunteers from Haywood House, a local hospice.

The prison and grounds are well maintained looking modern, clean and tidy.

Section 4

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The IMB is satisfied that the HMP Lowdham Grange has been managed and operated well. The prison endeavours to treat all prisoners with respect and decency.

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

The Healthcare Unit have made significant reductions in waiting times for GP and Dentist work, this is still ongoing. This was brought about by the appointment of an effective manager.

Provision of secondary mental healthcare is still a source of some concern. The waiting times for treatment are far too long

A Prisoner Advice Line, manned by 3 prisoners, continued to provide high quality advice and help to prisoners'.

The time spent by prisoners in purposeful activity has reduced as the impact of the recession has made it more difficult to acquire work for prisoners.

Questions for the Minister

1 The loss of prisoners' property in the prison and on transfer between prisons continues to be a serious problem.

In last year's report we raised with The Minister the question of why so many Prisoners' property goes missing. His answer did not state what action he was going to take to remedy this nationwide problem.

The Prisons and Probation Ombudsman has raised the same issue repeatedly.

The Minister must address this issue as a matter of urgency and ensure that Governors and Directors follow PSI 12/2011

2 The Board are concerned about the number of prisoners who "go over the railings" and then come down when the National C & R Team arrives... This causes the prison maximum disruption with minimal consequences for the prisoner. Has The Minister considered creating a separate offence for this sort of behaviour that would attract a punishment of added days and/or the prisoner having the costs of the incident deducted from his income?

Section 5

REPORTS

5.1 Equality & Inclusion

Equality and Inclusion at HMP Lowdham Grange is driven by national policy as expressed in the 2010 Equalities Act and the subsequent NOMS policy.

Work in this area is led by a knowledgeable and effective Equalities Officer who takes wide ranging steps to ensure that equality of opportunity is offered to prisoners with any of the 'protected characteristics'. These steps include:

- The development of a detailed Equalities Action Plan
- The designation of an Assistant Director to lead work on each of the 'protected characteristics' represented in the action plan
- Seeking the views of prisoners on a regular basis
- The development of a detailed 'Equalities Monitoring tool' for use in conjunction with the quarterly RAG rating of performance linking protected characteristics and prisoner activity and produced by PNOMIs. This is innovative work which has been demonstrated to other prisons in the SERCO group.
- Progress on this work is monitored on a regular basis via an internal team led by the Prison Director.

The IMB are satisfied that the prison takes this work seriously and are seeking ways to ensure that all aspects of the Act are promoted effectively.

5.2 Education, Learning and Skills

The Education Department has offered a wide range of courses this year, many with an emphasis on rehabilitation, including Life Skills and Employment Skills.

With the younger population there are still many literacy needs and entry level English courses have been increased. There are a number of Basic Skills courses and the importance of progression is recognised. Maths and English are studied at GCSE level and now also at A level.

Media and music have been the main growth area this year as a centre has been set up in the Events Room Amenities 3 for media, digital music and storybook dads as well as guitar lessons.

There appears to be a good support from managers and liaison with the Psychology Department to cover courses in the prisoners' sentence plans.

The department was fully staffed with 29 Tutors. The 'on the job' NVQ courses in Industries are working well and qualified assessors ensure qualifications up to level 2

can be achieved, with a College offering with accreditation for higher level courses. There are at least 20 prisoners' studying Open University courses. Industrial cleaning, bricklaying, electrical and plumbing courses continued in Vocational Training which now includes painting and decorating.

Prisoners opting for vocational courses have to be educated to Entry level to ensure that they are qualified before starting the course which comes with NVQ status in preparation for employment upon release.

The Gym Academy was set up and had prisoners gaining NVQ qualifications which should offer future employment prospects.

5.3 Healthcare & Mental Health

The prison population during this reporting period was approximately 885 and continued to make heavy demands both physical and mental on the Healthcare services provided by Serco Health. These services are provided in accommodation that suffers from lack of natural light and poor ventilation in many treatment areas and offices. This causes problems for staff who have to work in these areas all day. During the year the Board raised concerns to management about the lack of ventilation, natural light and high room temperatures which impacted on prisoners and staff alike. No action has been taken to date.

This is the second year that we report no action has been taken!

The GP services were covered by a local NHS practice providing GP cover 3 days per week and Advanced Nurse Practitioner 2 days a week.

The long waiting times reported for earlier years have been improved. This was brought about by the appointment of a dedicated healthcare manager who, inter alia, ensured that the number of "no shows" by prisoners was reduced and cover was put in place for clinicians' absences.

WAITING TIMES

Dates	General Practitioner	Dentist	Primary Mental Health	Secondary Mental Health	Optician
April 2012	2 weeks	25 weeks	2 weeks	Not available	6 weeks
February 2013	2 weeks	15 weeks	2 weeks	Not available	4 weeks
February 2014	1 week	2 weeks	2 weeks	Not available	3 weeks

Primary Mental Health

This team functions with 1 full time Lead and 2 Full time Mental Health Nurses.

Secondary Mental Health

This team is lead by a Forensic Psychologist who is supported by:

A senior Manager Psychology Forensic Psychologist

A deputy Manager Psychology Forensic Psychologist [in training]

2 Counsellors, a TSP treatment Manager, 7 OAB Facilitators/Psychological Assistants and 3 Forensic Psychologists in training.

At the time of reporting the number of Secondary Mental Health care professionals has not increased in line with the prison population increase of 400 over the past few years.

Mental health problems continue to increase year on year. Self harm incidents follow an upward trend. A high proportion of these are due to single individuals inflicting repeated acts of self harm.

5.4 Purposeful activity

All prisoners arriving at HMP Lowdham Grange are expected to participate in either work through Business Enterprises or Residential work within the establishment.

During the induction week for prisoners coming to Lowdham Grange, their employment needs or suitability for work and/or their educational requirements will be assessed. Prisoners are informed of all activities and vacancies they can apply for. They may then apply for any positions within the prison and they are also placed on the unemployed waiting list.

Prisoners are allocated employment by either reaching the top of the waiting list for the position they have applied for or the top of the unemployed list. Every work placement is dealt with in date order to ensure that it is a fair and decent system.

At the end of the reporting period there were 125 unemployed prisoners, 9 long term sick and 1 retired prisoner at Lowdham Grange.

All prisoners have the opportunity to engaged in education or in sessions in the gymnasium.

Business Enterprise employed prisoners for a total of 4238 hour during the year.

Residential work was the predominant activity, be it cleaning (64), or servery work (23), with a total of 580 on other activities such as Buddys, PIAC Representatives, Painters, and Orderlies

5.5 Resettlement

During the reporting year 82 prisoners were released from HMP Lowdham Grange. Care has been taken in each case to try to ensure that the prisoner had accommodation to go to and a prospect of a job... There was a 94% success rate in this.

A very successful resettlement course was run during the previous year which the prison had hoped to repeat but, regrettably, this proved to be too expensive. It was replaced by a course run by the prison and ATLA until a change in nature of the prison population which in turn resulted in fewer releases from Lowdham Grange. A much reduced course is now being run internally.

A good relationship has been built up with outside agencies and a well attended open day has been held for prisoners. This has resulted in further good links being created. Members of the psychology team were closely involved in these activities

5.6 Safer Custody

The Safer Custody Team is a small well managed unit giving support to prisoners on ACCTs, prisoners who self harm and other vulnerable prisoners. Many of the reported 'self-harms' are due to single individuals inflicting repeated acts of self harm.

The Safer Custody Team co-ordinate and manage the Buddy system as well as dealing with violence reduction and suicide awareness. Victims of bullying are well supported and the perpetrators challenged. The Team also manages a Prison Support Diary where individual prisoners can be supported over memorable difficult dates.

During October 2013 the Ministry of Justice audited the safer custody department to ensure all policies and procedures are being adhered to, the result achieved was a green score which is the highest result that can be achieved.

Staff of the Psychology Department have worked hard within the prison to establish a Multi Agency Safety & Health Group (MASH). This requires input from many different departments including Safer Custody for vulnerable prisoners, or those who find it difficult to cope, but who are not necessarily suicidal or have thoughts of self harm. This encourages the consistent, cross-departmental management of these prisoners.

There was one Death in Custody on 5th September 2013. This was dealt with very professionally by the prison.

5.7 Reintegration, Care & Separation, Close Supervision

This separate unit consisting of 25 cells, office accommodation, kitchen, showers and 3 separate exercise yards continues to be the most challenging part of the prison.

The conditions, facilities, staffing and management of the unit are of a high standard.

The paper work is readily accessible and is usually up to date.

Reviews are carried out on Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons and the Board attended 93% of them.

The Board is free to speak to each prisoner in the unit and carries out a weekly round in addition to the 3 Review Hearings.

The Board are usually advised of prisoners being taken to RIU, the use of Special Accommodation and the use of mechanical restraints.

During the summer of 2013 there were a number of extremely violent prisoners in the RIU who were managed by means of 3 officer unlock in full personal protection equipment plus shield. The staff always acted very professionally.

5.8 Residential Services (includes accommodation, food, catering and kitchens)

The prisoners are housed in five house blocks.

House blocks 1 and 2 have 4 wings on each house block in a standard cross design with a control room at the centre. These 8 wings are about 15 years old. There are communal showers on each wing.

House blocks 3, 4 and 5 consisting of 2 wings each have en-suite shower facilities in each cell. These wings were built more recently.

Approximately 65 prisoners are housed on each of the 14 wings. There are in-cell telephones in all the cells in the prison. Each wing has its own exercise yard with gym equipment installed in the yard. There is also gym equipment on each wing.

There are also numerous ancillary buildings comprising workshops, kitchen, administration, reception, sports hall, healthcare, visits, work department, and a segregation unit.

Section 6

ADDITIONAL REPORTS

6.1 Drugs/Substance Abuse

Hooch still remains a problem in the establishment and Mandatory Drug Testing figures continued to show that drugs are available in the prison. There have been a number of targeted lockdowns and searches which have been successful.

6.2 Prisoner Property

We repeat what was said in our last report.

“The issue of property is still a major concern to the Board. When a prisoner is transferred from another establishment they are often separated from their property. The problems occur particularly when the sending prison is slow or even unresponsive to the receiving prison over lost property issues thus causing unnecessary frustration and anxiety for the prisoner. This is a fundamental problem which requires serious attention”

This problem has been exacerbated by new volumetric restrictions and Geoamy response.

6.3 Serious Incidents

Whilst classed as “serious incidents” those which occurred during the year were of a relatively minor nature and were managed in a professional manner. However, there was a marked increase in prisoner’s going over the railings apparently to cause the maximum disruption to the prison, with the minimum of consequence to the prisoner. Over the year the profile of the prison population has changed. The population is now much younger, more challenging and violent.

6.4 New I.E.P Regime

The new I.E.P. regime was implemented promptly and efficiently and the Board will continue to monitor the effectiveness and fairness of the new regime.

Section 7

7.1 The Work of the Independent Monitoring Board

<u>BOARD STATISTICS</u>	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	16
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	13
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	11
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	0
Number of members leaving within reporting period	2
Total number of Board meetings during reporting period	12
Total number of visits to the Establishment	511
Total number of segregation reviews held	141
Total number of segregation reviews attended	132
Date of Annual Team Performance Review	16/01/2014

7.2 IMB Applications

Code	Subject	Year 2010-11	Year 2011-12	Year 2012-13	Year 2013-14
A	Accommodation	4	0	1	2
B	Adjudications	5	3	4	12
C	Equality & Diversity (inc religion)	17	4	7	4
D	Education/employment/training inc IEP	12	8	12	20
E 1	Family/visits inc mail & phone	8	14	16	12
E 2	Finance/pay	0	0	0	14
F	Food/Kitchen Related	3	3	6	0
G	Health related	47	46	39	30
H 1	Property (within current establishment)	121	77	71	70
H 2	Property (during transfer/in another establishment)	In total	In total	In total	In total
H 3	Canteen, facilities, Catalogue shopping, Argos	0	0	0	2
I	Sentence related (inc. HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-cat etc)	12	9	16	2
J	Staff/prisoner/detainee concerns inc bullying	8	20	7	13
K	Transfers	8	11	8	2
L	Miscellaneous	80	87	76	70
	Total number of IMB applications	325	280	280	253
	Of total: number of IMB Confidential Access was:	27	20	17	32
		18	27	20	17
		18			