



Annual Report

HMP&YOI Stoke Heath

1st May 2011 – 30th April 2012

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The Statutory Role of the IMB

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

The Board is specifically charged to:

- (1) satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody within its prison and the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release.
- (2) inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom he has delegated authority as it judges appropriate, any concerns it has.
- (3) report annually to the Secretary of State on how 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.

Description of the Prison

HMP/YOI Stoke Heath is situated near Market Drayton in Shropshire. It was originally built in 1964 as a Category C prison for adult males and was converted to a Borstal 2 years later. Stoke Heath doubled in size in 1997 with two new wings and another wing was built in 2008. Until 2011 it was used to hold young offenders. The establishment now houses 548 Category C prisoners and 202 Young Adults. Accommodation is in 8 wings: three for young adults and five for adult prisoners.

Executive Summary

Particular issues requiring a response

1. We are very concerned about the amount of time foreign nationals remain in prison after their release date and while awaiting deportation. (page 12)
2. Another serious concern is the amount of time prisoners with mental health problems are held in Health Care awaiting hospital treatment. (page 9)

Other issues of concern or excellence not requiring a response

Since the re-role both the gardens and the cleanliness of the prison have improved greatly. The grass and flowerbeds are well cared for and the wings are mostly spotless. We are pleased to report the gardens are now being fully utilized to provide work in horticulture. It is hoped the raised vegetable beds will provide surplus produce that can be marketed locally.

Waiting times in outpatients appear to be lengthening with an 18 week wait for the dentist.

The prison has taken a lead in training Officers in Restorative Justice. This has received a very positive response from all involved and the Board would like to comment this excellent beginning.

Overall Judgement

We are pleased to report we have no major concerns about this prison this year.

Two serious incidents occurred. We were fully informed about both incidents and board members were present as observers.

The major factor affecting the prison over the past year has been the re role from Young People to adult male prisoners. The staff made major adjustments in their style of working and a very successful inspection report does justice to their efforts. Two concerns came to light during this period. The first involved the quality, quantity and type of food available to adult prisoners. The second was about the number of work placements available. Prison staff rose to both demands with great speed and competence and the Board would like to commend their achievements.

Diversity

The Board is pleased to report that following the intake of adult prisoners the bi-monthly meetings involving staff and prisoners have taken on a more positive role with constructive results. The meetings are chaired by the Governing Governor and are well attended by wing representatives and staff from all sections of the prison. These meetings are preceded by a focus group, chaired by the Diversity Manager and carried out in a less formal but productive way. Investigations into diversity complaints are dealt with by the Diversity Manager in a vigorous manner.

All Protective Characteristic Lead Reports are received and investigated thoroughly at each meeting. There have been problems with some Foreign National prisoners who speak little or no English and feel isolated. Any actions required are followed up.

In our opinion Stoke Heath continues to make good positive progress in promoting harmony within the estate concerning Black Minority Ethnic (BME) prisoners and this is reflected in the very few applications we receive involve BME incidents.

Learning and Skills

Stoke Heath subscribes to the Learner Record System where individual records of achievement and course studies are recorded. Each individual has a unique ID enabling other prisons or colleges to access the record when prisoners transfer. Unfortunately not all prisons use this system requiring reassessment for new entrants. Those assessed to be below NVQ Level two are required to attend Literacy and Numeracy courses.

Courses offered by the Education Department include Art, Creative Writing, Electronics, Cooking Skills and Welsh. Some popular courses have waiting lists, the longest being cookery. It is hoped the new Bistro opening in the Education Department due to replace the Staff Mess will provide additional scope for those wishing to work in Catering.

Prisoners speak positively of their experience of Education. They particularly appreciate the small class sizes and the support and individual attention they receive from teachers. There is a need for more higher level courses to respond to the requirements of an adult population. Distance Learning is a popular option but funding is limited. Grants are available through the Prison Education Trust.

JHP Employability provides excellent guidance and support both in prison and after release.

Vocational Training

In November an Employment Fair was held where 20 – 25 employers and 250 prisoners took part. This served to strengthen community links with Stoke Heath.

Adults and young adults have been integrated in manufacturing and this has gone smoothly. Efforts to remedy the shortfall of 100 work places, highlighted by the HMCIP Inspection in February, are already being made. Unfortunately the motor vehicle repair facility is idle as there is no tutor. It is hoped a tutor will be appointed soon.

Links with outside businesses are being actively sought and two new contracts have been agreed to supply parts to local engineering firms. Wall planters have been made for a local council and friendship benches produced for use by local schools.

At present not all jobs in engineering are certificated but it is hoped this will be remedied in the future.

The textile department is now producing jogging bottoms and the horticulture Department is beginning to grow vegetables in addition to maintaining the

grounds and gardens to a high standard. By the end of March 2012 also, 46% of waste was being recycled.

Courses in plastering, bricklaying, carpentry, woodwork, welding, plumbing and tiling are City and Guilds accredited. National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ's) are available in manufacturing, warehousing and catering and a British Institute of Cleaning Services (BIC) certificate in industrial cleaning and car valeting can be obtained. All courses appear to be well attended and expertly run.

Healthcare and Mental Health

An experienced member of the IMB attends the Clinical Governance meetings and Health Care Provision is regularly visited by members on the Rota. Concern at the number of incidents involving Health Care staff administering medication on the wings has led to closer working relations with wing officers. There is also concern that the reduction in Health Care staffing will lead to difficulties in administering medication 4 times a day on the wings. In the Annual Report for 2010/2011 we highlighted worries about the possible closure of In Patient facilities as a result of the re-role. This has now happened and as a Board we are aware of the possibility of prisoners requiring in-patient facilities being placed inappropriately in the Separation and Reintegration Unit.

Stoke Heath has a 24 hour Health Care Unit. Prisoners are seen by a health care worker on arrival at Reception and any documents relating to health care from a previous prison are read. Outpatient care is available from visiting dentists, opticians, physiotherapists, chiropodists, primary and secondary mental health services and a range of nurse-led clinics. Since the re-role waiting times have increased due to high numbers requesting out patient services. The number of prescriptions has also increased. Questions have been asked in relation to GP's attending the prison not always reading case notes from a previous prison. Additional queries relate to the accessibility of Shropdoc for prisoners after hours and the importance of a prison policy agreed with Shropdoc and the Community Health Care Trust.

In-patient care was available prior to the re-role. In the last annual report the IMB raised concern that the in-patient care would be lost and our fears have been realised. Two beds are available for Detox and at present the inpatient facility is used for constant watch. B and D wings have had cells adapted to enable constant watch for vulnerable prisoners to take place and a dispensary for Integrated Drug Treatment System (IDTS) has been installed on B wing. An escort and bed watch budget is in place and is monitored by the partnership board.

The treatment of prisoners with mental health problems presents an ongoing problem. We question whether such prisoners have regular and sufficient professional care and support and if those who cannot be suitably treated in the establishment are transferred out within a reasonable time limit.

The Psychological Service is currently under review resulting in a reduction in treatment courses. Mentors, Listeners and Samaritans are available but there is no specific counselling service other than support from the Chaplaincy.

Safer Custody

The Board continues to monitor the role of the Safer Custody Team and attends Safer Custody and Violence Reduction meetings. Prisoners provide information in an exit questionnaire and Prison and Ombudsman reports are regularly reviewed against Stoke Heath practice. The Safer Custody Team undertakes regular monitoring of the Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) process in operation in the prison and a number of staff including non-prison officers are trained assessors. Issues recognized as needing attention include identification of a named person to carry out action on the Care Map, the Care Map not being signed, reviews not always being multiagency and entries not being of a consistent high quality. All issues have been raised with the wing managers and corrective action taken.

Some concerns have been raised about the quality of information in the ACCT documents accompanying 'transferred in' prisoners. This has been taken up with the prisons concerned.

There is also concern about the extent of self-harm both in the Adult and Young Adult estate. This matter continues to be addressed by the Health Team.

The Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour (TAB) system is used within the prison and wing staff report that it works well. The Psychology Department has introduced a forward thinking programme for young adults to help address problematic behaviour and is also looking at support programmes for those on TAB. There are also plans for a peer support system.

The Board is pleased to report the number of Adults approved as Listeners is increasing, however there is a lack of Young Adults coming forward. Adult Listeners are available to support young adults if required.

The Board monitors discrimination through prisoner applications and attendance at Violence Reduction meetings. The number of instances of racial abuse has reduced but alleged discriminatory practices are still reported by prisoners. The Board has found no evidence to suggest discrimination is taking place.

Separation and Reintegration

The Separation and Reintegration Unit (SRU) continues to undertake its work in an effective and efficient manner. Staff provide a caring and supportive environment despite new demands placed on them due to the re-role from Young People to Adults. Three members of the Unit have trained in Restorative Justice and this has been well received by both prisoners and victims.

Prisoners have access to library books and the Education Department can provide work yet still too much time is spent in or on beds. Prisoners are now able to choose food on a daily basis.

During the past 12 months there have been two dirty protests, both concluded within a short time. There have been no incidents of use of special accommodation or mechanical restraints.

The records concerning ethnicity showed an average of 22% non-British were held between July and September. An internal review has taken place in relation to discriminatory practices but no evidence of discrimination was found.

The Board is pleased to report the reduction in the use of SRU for minor matters. These are increasingly dealt with on the wings.

Adjudications

The Board has been concerned about a lack of consistency from and between the Governors chairing adjudications and reviews. This has been brought to the attention of the Governor and the problem has been resolved.

Bullying

The prison applies a proactive anti-bullying procedure through Tackling Anti-social Behaviour (TAB), designed to assist both target and aggressor. Staff have developed an internal system supported by visits to other establishments. This is under review and will be monitored for effectiveness. Initial results indicate a reduction in bullying.

Catering and Kitchens

Numerous complaints about portion size and quality followed the re-role. Adults felt the regime was treating them as Young People. Since February the number of complaints has decreased dramatically and food quality and quantity have markedly improved though this improvement is not always consistent. A monthly catering forum has been established with IMB representation. The unit provides work placements for prisoners and a number have obtained NVQ qualifications.

Accommodation

The Board is concerned about the quality of prisoner clothing. It is often of poor quality, incorrectly sized and deteriorates fast when laundered.

The problem with drinking water on E wing, as reported in previous reports, is still unresolved.

Induction

A member of the Board attends adult inductions and advises on issues regarding the work of the IMB. Attendance at Young Adult and staff induction courses has proved more difficult as these are not timetabled on a regular weekly basis but according to demand.

Deportees

The Board is extremely concerned at the length of time prisoners awaiting deportation are held in prison after their release date. At the time of writing this report (May 2012) a prisoner whose release date was September 2011 is still being detained.

Drugs

The prison is diligent at monitoring and preventing the entry of drugs to the prison.

Chaplaincy

The current team continues to provide a high level of pastoral care throughout the prison for those of all faiths and none,. There has been a huge increase in bereavement work and arrangements have been made at short notice for relatives to visit.

The aim of the centre is to provide a peaceful and calm atmosphere where individual or group work can take place uninterrupted.

The Chaplaincy organises the 'Being Dad's' course which includes two family visits and is followed by a Dad's Club where further family visits are arranged. There is a firm belief that a stable family life reduces reoffending. The Pre School Learning Alliance is no longer able to help with funding and the Chaplaincy Centre is now looking to find alternative sources of financial help to enable these courses to continue.

The Community Chaplaincy project attached to the prison gives help and support prior to and after release. The help includes mentoring, housing, employment and family support.

Reception

The reception area has been extremely busy during the re-role, dealing with discharges, courts, increased release on temporary licence and large numbers of new adult prisoners arriving from other establishments to facilitate a re-role.

Staff working in reception are courteous and relationships between staff and prisoners in this area are good. New arrivals are offered reception phone calls, hot drinks and showers. The reception area is generally clean and tidy.

The first night care process now takes place on the induction wing which has reduced the time prisoners need to spend in reception.

Health screening for new arrivals takes place in reception in a private office to ensure that prisoners' immediate healthcare needs are catered for.

There has been additional pressure on reception staff with the adult population now making large amounts of catalogue orders. This is a new pressure on the establishment that needs to be managed effectively.

Resettlement

This year the Board has seen the prison make great strides in resettlement despite the re-role. The change in prisoner population has led to changes in provision as adult prisoners have very different resettlement needs to the young people.

The prison has developed in many areas but most significantly in the opportunities for release on temporary licence. There are in the region of 40 different placements available and the feedback from all has been extremely positive. The Board are pleased to report that the system at Stoke Heath has been cited as an area of good practice in the latest Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons (HMCIP) inspection.

The Board's main concern is in the area of offending behaviour programmes where The Social Partnership and Control of Violence, Anger and Impulsive Drinking (COVAID) courses are still running but the P-ASPO course for drug users has been withdrawn. This leaves a gap in provision that will need to be filled in order for prisoners to be able to reduce their likelihood of reoffending.

Applications

		2008/9	2009/10	2010/1	2011/12
A	Accommodation	01	06	02	09
B	Adjudications	01	08	11	04
C	Diversity related	00	02	01	09
D	Education/ employment/ training	03	08	04	11
E	Family Visits	00	13	12	15
F	Food/ kitchen related	01	06	02	71
G	Health related	07	06	04	33
H	Property	22	46	47	55
I	Sentence related	13	30	06	25
J	Staff/prisoner/ detainee related	23	43	40	38
K	Transfers	19	37	25	47
L	Miscellaneous	31	43	18	26
	Total number of applications	121	248	172	343

The work of the Independent Monitoring Board

Board Statistics

Recommended Complement of Board Members	20
Number of Board Members at the start of the reporting period	14
Number of Board Members at the end of the reporting period	12
Number of new members joining	1
Number of members leaving within the reporting period	3
Total number of Board meetings during the reporting period	12
Average number of attendances at Board meetings during reporting period	11.6
Number of attendances at meetings other than Board meetings	105
Total number of visits to the prison	492
Total number of applications received	343
Total number of segregation reviews held	156
Total number of segregation reviews attended	147

GLOSSARY OF PRISON-RELATED ABBREVIATIONS

ACCT	Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork
BIC	British Institute of Cleaning Services
BME	Black Minority Ethnic
COVAID	Control of Violence, Anger and Impulsive Drinking
HMCIP	Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons
IDTS	Integrated Drug Treatment System
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
SRU	Segregation and Re-integration Unit
TAB	Tackling Anti-social Behaviour
TSP	The Social Partnership