

H M PRISON SWALESIDE



ANNUAL REPORT

**From: 1st May 2011
To: 30th April 2012**

Section 1

STATUTORY ROLE OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD (IMB)

The Prisons 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:

- 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 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

The Prison was opened in August 1988 and now forms part of a group with HMPs Stanford Hill and Elmley.

Sheppey prisons have separate Governors, but one overall Lead Governor. Some administrative services are still shared such as Finance, Industries and Human Resources.

The establishment is primarily a Category B Lifer Main Centre training prison which accepts first and second stage lifers, section two automatics and IPP (Indeterminate Public Protection) prisoners. However at this point there are 276 C category, 29 D category and seven other as yet uncategorised Prisoners in the overall population.

The normal criterion for acceptance of determinate prisoners is that they are serving more than four years with a minimum of eighteen months to their parole eligibility date.

The certified normal accommodation is 1112 in single cells over eight wings.

Section 4

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For the last year, Swaleside has functioned as an independent prison within a group of three with Elmley and Standford Hill, whereas previously it had been part of a Cluster. Each prison has its own Governor, but the Governor of Standford Hill is the Lead Governor. Swaleside continues to use shared services such as Finance, Industries and Human Resources.

Swaleside has had a difficult year, not only because of the budget cuts that have meant difficult decisions having to be made by the Senior Management Team (SMT), but also because the SMT have not worked as a cohesive unit this year. It is to be hoped that these cuts will not lead to much increased "lock up" time which will be an added frustration for prisoners. Changes and adjustments have taken place to the SMT which should lead to more effective management.

The Board has observed that the Swaleside staff have always worked well together and supported each other - this has been illustrated by relatively low sick leave figures even though the morale of the staff has been low. The introduction of the new Prison Service structure under the heading of "Fair and Sustainable" will be challenging. Staff satisfaction is a very important part of the functioning of a prison - staff shortages have a debilitating effect on the delivery of programmes, the maintenance of regimes and most importantly on the morale of staff and consequently this may lead to unrest and frustration among the prisoners.

The establishment has experienced considerable difficulty progressing Category C and D prisoners through the system and this was highlighted in the unannounced follow-up inspection by HMCIP in July this year.

Employment has been improved radically in the last year by a very efficient Industries Management Team. The Board has been informed that there will be a cut in wages in the near future, due to budget constraints and this could lead to increased tension among Swaleside's prisoners.

It is sad to report that there have been four deaths in custody this year, three of which appear to be from natural causes and one which would seem to be self-inflicted. There are still seven outstanding Coroner's inquests - one dating back to 2009. This situation is not satisfactory for the prison or to the relatives involved.

Great strides have been made in connection with recycling and major savings have been made. The general cleanliness in the corridors has also been improved - particularly outside the kitchen area. As a result, together with the cell windows being covered with a screen, so that rubbish cannot be thrown out of the windows, the rodent infestation problem has decreased.

The Rolls Inn, the staff mess, continues to be a great asset to the establishment and staff. The quality of the service and food is excellent.

The Board is disturbed to report an increased number of weapons, hooch and mobile phones being found and that the level of violence has continued to be unacceptably high.

The numbers of Gym staff will be reduced, due to Budget constraints. The Gym has been a Centre of Excellence for its work skills awards. It is sad that the high level courses might be threatened.

Although the kitchen has had a small rise in budget the Board is concerned that with increasing cost of foods this may result in the quality of food suffering.

The Board is concerned that the GPs working within the prison do not understand the impact of prescribing Tramadol so freely. It has now been established that there is a trade in this drug.

The clerical support for the Board has been inadequate. A permanent trained Clerk is required.

4.1 Particular Issues Requiring a Response

- 4.1.1 The Board's fear of an unsatisfactory regime following the budget cuts mentioned in the Executive Summary is already beginning to happen. Although this is, strictly, outside the timeframe of this report, it is important enough to be mentioned now. The changes in staffing levels already mean that each wing in turn is subjected to five nights without association. The Board do not believe it appropriate that prisoners are subjected to five consecutive nights without the opportunity of association.
- 4.1.2 There continues to be too many category C and D prisoners at Swaleside who do not have the opportunity to progress through the prison estate – this leads to prisoners being discharged directly from Swaleside. (*Section 4. Executive Summary*)
- 4.1.3 The failure to hold Inquests within a reasonable timescale (*5.5 Safer Custody*)
- 4.1.4 Failure by the Inspectorate to acknowledge their errors with reference to Learning Skills. (*5.2 Learning and Skills*)
- 4.1.5 The effects of Budget restraints on the Gymnasium, a Centre of Excellence. (*6.6 Gymnasium*)
- 4.1.6 Lack of a permanent Anglican Minister. (*6.5 Chaplaincy*)
- 4.1.7 The number of mobile phones found at Swaleside continues to be high. (*6.16 Security*)
- 4.1.8 The dismantling of the Industries Management Team (*6.7 Industries*)
- 4.1.9 The impact of Tramadol prescriptions (*5.4 Healthcare and Mental Health*)
- 4.1.10 Lack of Healthcare representation at Segregation Reviews (*5.6 Segregation/ Separation and Care Units*)
- 4.1.11 Late arrivals at Reception (*6.11 Reception*)
- 4.1.12 Failure to give substantive answers to RCFs in a reasonable time (*6.12 Requests and Complaints*)
- 4.1.13 Lack of ACCT Assessors (*5.5 Safer Custody*)

4.1.14 Loss of 50% of £2.50 at Adjudications as an award (6.1 Adjudications)

4.1.15 There is a regular shortfall of Offender Supervisors (6.8 OMU)

4.2 Other issues of concern or excellence not requiring a response

4.2.1 Increased violence and use of weapons (6.16 Security)

4.2.2 Use of VR policy to combat violence (5.5 Safer Custody)

4.2.3 Reduced numbers in the Segregation Unit (5.6 Segregation)

4.2.4 Recycling (6.14)

4.2.5 Introduction of the Induction Portfolio (6.15 Residential)

4.2.6 Achievement of the Drug Free Wing (6.15 Residential)

4.2.7 Achievements of the Industries Management Team (6.7 Industries)

4.3 Over all judgement

Swaleside has maintained a good standard of care in most areas of the establishment despite the Budget constraints, but at times, the leadership of the SMT has been dysfunctional. The return of the Offender Management responsibility to the Governor of Swaleside has produced better information reporting and understanding between officer and prisoner.

The Gym, which is a Centre of Excellence, is an area where Budget cutbacks should be minimised. The effect of "well-being", produced by the Gym activities and the pioneering training courses, is of great importance to the stability of Swaleside.

The outlook of further Budget constraints will be challenging to Swaleside, for example, prisoners are already having five days without association.

The Board are concerned that the prison appears less safe.

Section 5

AREAS THAT MUST BE REPORTED ON

5.1 Diversity

There was a full time Manager from May to October but for the rest of the year one Senior Officer was covering three departments - Equality, Safer Custody and Violence Reduction, which was not satisfactory. However, at the time of writing, Swaleside now has full time Equality and Safer Custody Officers, the latter embracing Violence Reduction.

Regular meetings are held with representatives from each residential wing and issues of concern are discussed. The representatives' photos are clearly posted on the wings. An Older Prisoners and Disabled Prisoners forum is held regularly to discuss their particular issues - Swaleside houses an increasing number of older prisoners. The Equalities Manager ensures that prisoners and other stakeholders, particularly those from minority groups, are consulted and involved appropriately in the management of Equality issues.

Prisoners with disabilities, including learning disorders are identified and assessed in Reception. There is a newly instituted sequencing programme, put together by Swaleside staff, which is being used as a National model. This identifies diversity, health, employment, training, and educational needs from the time of arrival at Swaleside. Lifts and stair lifts are positioned in the prison so that there is access to all areas. Special Over 50's Health Days are held in the Gym. Monitoring data is examined regularly for evidence of disproportionality. All incidents of discrimination, harassment and victimisation are reported using the DIRFs (Discrimination Incident Reporting Form). The investigations are carried out thoroughly and a community representative examines 20% of these reports - but this process was a little lax during the latter part of the year due to the workload of the manager. This has now been addressed. It is emphasised that wing staff have a responsibility to respond to equality issues appropriately at the time - many incidents can be resolved by prompt staff action.

All religious festivals are celebrated and the Kitchen is to be congratulated on enhancing these festivals by the individual food menus they produce for each. The Chair of the Board was invited to the Chinese New Year - a wonderful Chinese meal had been cooked by the Chinese prisoners - the food having been specially ordered and endorsed by the Governor.

Swaleside has an updated Equalities Policy which is an informative and detailed document covering all the issues of Equality.

The UK Border Agency has visited Swaleside on a regular basis and holds surgeries every month to update or advise on current cases - 21.5% of the population at Swaleside are Foreign Nationals.

5.2 Learning and Skills

There continues to be concern about the erroneous statement contained in the HMCIP/OFSTED Inspection Report of July 2011, which repeats the original error of the Inspection Report in 2008. It is a matter of regret that when the error was pointed out to HMCIP in 2008 there was no acknowledgement or acceptance that an error had been made.

Currently, in the first nine months of the 2011-2012 academic year, there have been 1546 qualification starts which compares extremely favourably with the total of 1200 starts in the whole of the academic year, 2010-2011. This reflects very well on the continued

determination by the Department, as a whole, to offer the highest standard of provision for as many prisoners as possible. For example, this academic year has seen the successful introduction of an 'Economic Well Being' course and expansion of IT provision.

Library staff are very positive about the evidence of higher readership amongst prisoners and the 'footfall' has doubled over the past year.

A new Head of Learning and Skills has been appointed but his time is split across three sites which encompass over 2,500 prisoners.

The eventual introduction of OLASS 4 will determine the future provision of Education at Swaleside. This will include the recommendation that Vocational Training provision should be restricted to offenders in the last three years of their sentence and that resource allocation should, generally, reflect this. The new funding model will become more in line with Further Education funding in the community, that is, via enrolment, retention and achievement.

Announcement of a new contractor for the Sheppey Group is scheduled for the end of July, 2012. Initially the OLASS 3 contract was due to expire at this time but has been extended until 31st October, 2012, with Manchester College continuing to be the provider. It is regrettable that this exercise has taken so long given that the expiry date of the Contract had been known for a long time.

5.3 Attitude, Thinking and Behaviour Training (ATB).

This department runs courses to help prisoners to address their offending behaviour.

Concerns had been expressed throughout much of the reporting year about the lack of a full complement of trained staff to enable all targets to be met. The Department is now fully staffed for the first time for several years. It is to the credit of the staff during the period of these shortages that so many courses were successfully delivered.

Because staff had to run back to back Thinking Skills Programmes there was difficulty in producing reports assessing the prisoners' performances.

Despite all of the staffing issues the targets for Sheppey (Elmley and Swaleside) for TSP and CALM was under by only three places. In addition, five Victim Awareness courses were delivered for 38 prisoners at Swaleside. The Focus on Re-Settlement programmes could not commence until towards the end of August 2011.

Staff were able to deliver Staff Awareness Training to meet the audit requirement and were able to give Induction talks to all new prisoners arriving at Swaleside during the reporting year.

In the circumstances, performance has been excellent.

5.4 Healthcare and Mental Health (HC)

This is the second full year of commissioning a GP practice, based in Sheppey to provide GP services. This continues to be popular with prisoners as they have a certain amount of choice as to who they see, as is the case with the general public.

This has been a year of uncertainty for staff because of the re-tendering of the primary healthcare service and HMP decision not to bid for the contract. Staff morale has been low

this year because of the uncertainty over their jobs and the prospective loss of officers in the Healthcare Unit, but it is to be hoped that it will improve once the new regime is in place. The contract has been awarded to South East Health – a private company which currently provides Out of Hours cover for GP services in Kent. SE Health takes over on the 2nd July 2012 for all of the prisons in the Eastern and Coastal Kent PCT area - covering the Sheppey Cluster, HMP Canterbury and Dover IRC. Existing nursing and administrative staff have the opportunity to transfer to the new provider under TUPE regulations. Healthcare officers are excluded from this process. Shortfalls in staff have been identified and a recruitment campaign is taking place - however, history shows that recruitment of nurses on Sheppey has always been difficult. Many agency nurses are employed in Swaleside. The new contract will need to be monitored closely. A member of the IMB attends the Partnership Board Meeting with the Commissioners.

New services provided this year are:

- Ultrasonic scanning service contracted from Care UK. This has proved to be very effective in reducing external escorts. Negotiations are taking place with the new provider about extending this contract.
- Abdominal Aortic Screening for the over 65 has commenced.
- Increased access to Psychological Therapy (IAPT)

Patient Representative Meetings continue to take place bi-monthly. There is a Healthcare representative on each wing and they have proved to be an asset and have improved communications between Healthcare and the Residential Units.

Dentistry continued to be a problem at the beginning of the reporting year with a waiting list close to 300. The commissioners have finally agreed to increase the number of sessions from six to ten per fortnight to reflect the rise in population. To reduce the waiting list the commissioners have agreed to an additional 20 sessions over and above the regular 10 sessions. This is to be applauded. The NHS Community Dental team are now providing a service in a newly updated surgery.

Mental Health continues to be an area of Healthcare that provides many challenges. There are a large number of prisoners with mental health problems, some very severe. It takes a long time to obtain a place in a Secure Unit or some other establishment specialising in treatment of mental health problems. Kent Council on Addiction has now been given approval to commence planning delivery of primary care "talking therapies" for those with mild to moderate mental health issues. This part of phase 2 of the mental health service provision remains at the planning stage.

IDTS takes place in Healthcare - at the time of writing this report there were 15 prisoners under treatment. The ultimate aim for the IDTS team is to detox all prisoners. Time scales for detoxing vary according to the needs of the client. Swaleside often inherits prisoners that are on high doses and therefore expect more long term treatment. There is to be a new service provider in October and this provider will also act for CARATS and other programmes. The IDTS team hope that this will enable them to provide a more holistic approach to the care of prisoners on IDTS.

Another issue that has concerned the Board is the high numbers of prisoners prescribed Tramadol. The Board believes that the GPs working in the prison do not understand the implication of prescribing the drug so freely. It has been shown there is a trade in the drug. MDT tests have shown that some prisoners, not prescribed Tramadol, have tested positive.

All areas of Healthcare are very clean and the staff are extremely helpful and cooperative when approached about an issue with a prisoner. The staff deal with some very difficult prisoners.

It is encouraging to report that the number of healthcare applications to the Board has reduced from 114 to 80, a decrease of 30%.

5.5 Safer Custody

There have been four Deaths in Custody in the reporting year, one appears to be self-inflicted. There are still seven outstanding Coroners Inquests, one dating back to 2009. Even allowing for the change in Coroner following retirement this is unsatisfactory. The delay puts an unacceptable strain on the families involved and any staff required to give evidence at the inquest. There is only one trained Family Liaison Officer which is a situation needing to be addressed.

There was a need for better training for managers and officers dealing with prisoners on an ACCT. The Board has observed that some ACCT documentation has not been completed correctly. There is also concern that the Governor, who originally decides to place a prisoner on a Constant Watch, does not necessarily attend the subsequent reviews. Whilst it cannot be guaranteed, there is a need for as much Management continuity as possible

The policy of daily reviews, intended to ensure that a prisoner in the Segregation Unit on an ACCT is receiving effective supervision, has never been fully implemented. This is a serious concern as Segregation, although sometimes necessary, is not suitable for prisoners on ACCT. A total of 166 ACCTs were opened during the reporting period.

The existence of 'Team Based Self Rostering' in the prison means that a sufficient number of ACCT assessors cannot be guaranteed on each wing. Steps need to be taken to address this situation. It, therefore, requires the training up of a sufficient number of staff on each wing to complete all assessments.

The role of the Violence Prevention Prisoner Representative remains undefined. Currently, there is insufficient initial training for the Reps and no on-going training to keep them aware of any policy changes or amendments. This lack of clarity of their specific role can result in lost opportunities for effective liaison between wing staff and VR Reps in tackling and ultimately reducing violence on a wing.

The Safer Custody Manager has now put into place a system of regular meetings with the VR Reps which gives them the opportunity to discuss current concerns. The Manager, in liaison with the Reps, will produce a comprehensive job description for the role and produce a training pack to be delivered to current and new Reps. The Manager is also in the process of ensuring that each wing has a VR Liaison Officer who will hold regular meetings with the VR Prisoner Reps.

Too often, the victim of violence has to be moved because he will not name the perpetrator(s). This is against policy recommendations but the safety of the victim takes precedence. However, this approach does not address the problem of recurring violence.

Use of the IEP scheme, loss of use of Gym, limitation of visits and restriction of movements within the wing has proved an effective tool in reducing violence.

5.6 Segregation/Separation and Care Units

A serious incident on a residential wing in January 2011 resulted in the necessity for the Segregation Unit to be emptied to make room for those involved in the incident. There was then a determined effort by Governors and staff to adopt a policy to reduce the number of prisoners under Rule 45 segregation for Good Order and Discipline or their own protection who used the Unit as a means to be transferred - thought to be an easy option - and to make it a place for discipline and genuine prisoners on Rule 45. This change was implemented and worked well during the early part of the reporting period. In February 2011, a prisoner smoking ban was introduced in the unit. An amended smoking policy was introduced in February 2012 to remove the blanket ban. Prisoners on cellular confinement following adjudication or prisoners on Rule 45 - where their case was judged to be unwarranted - were still not permitted to smoke.

Prior to the arrival of the new Deputy Governor these policies had not been followed and the occupancy of the Segregation Unit was high much of the time. At the time of writing this report, numbers in the Segregation Unit have reduced, with a clear message sent to the prisoners, that the Segregation Unit is a place for punishment or for genuine Rule 45 prisoners and not a means of getting a transfer. It was interesting to note that prisoners elected to return to residential wings when the Champions League final was to be televised!

In February 2012 there was an organised destruction of six cells in the Segregation Unit by Prisoners who thought they would be transferred out as a result of their action. The Board applauds the Governor's decision to retain them at Swaleside and transfer some compliant prisoners that did not take part in the incident.

Segregation Reviews are held twice weekly with the IMB usually attending. Healthcare is not always represented at these reviews although it is a mandatory requirement. This is unacceptable.

Special accommodation is infrequently used - 26 times this year - but when it is the Board is notified by the staff.

There have been a number of assaults on staff and the Board senses that there is an increasing amount of violence (see 6.1) within Swaleside. However, it is encouraging to see a modest reduction in the level of C & R and use of Special Accommodation as shown in the table below. There has been no use of the body belt to restrain prisoners.

	Use of Force	C&R	Special Accommodation
2008/9	44	29	10
2009/10	29	49	32
2010/11	32	87	39
2011/12	36	81	26

The Board are very impressed by the hard work, compassion and dedication of the Segregation Unit staff. Their work is not easy - they regularly have to deal with violent and abusive prisoners, many with mental illness, and dirty protests as well as other difficult situations. They show extreme patience when confronted by these difficult situations and are very professional in the way they deal with them.

The Segregation Unit needs a continuing nucleus of well trained staff.

Section 6

OTHER AREAS OF THE PRISON ON WHICH THE BOARD HAS ISSUES TO REPORT:

6.1 Adjudications

Members of the Board continue to monitor adjudications on a regular basis. As the Board has commented in the Annual Report for several years, it remains a concern that there are regularly awards of 50% of earnings for prisoners earning only £2.50 a week rather than leaving their pay intact and increasing other sanctions.

The level of adjudications is comparable to last year at just over 1100, including as follows:-

360 cases of possessing an unauthorised article (up 60),
170 for administering a controlled drug (down 50),
240 for refusal to obey a lawful order (down 50),
115 for threats to staff (up 25),
80 for violence (no change)
45 for breaches of Health and Safety (up 20).

Adjudications for both possession of drugs and mobile phones are up some 10%. There has been a significant increase in adjudications for possession of a weapon, particularly since November which, coupled with increases in those for both threats to staff and damage to property (eg wrecking cells), causes the Board increasing concern about the safety of prisoners and staff within the prison.

6.2 Canteen

DHL is the major employer of prisoners at HMP Swaleside with up to 120 prisoners available at any one time depending on requirements. DHL not only supplies canteen services to HMP Swaleside, but to 11 other establishments in London and the South East, supplying in all an average of 8,120 prisoners per week.

There are plans for DHL workers to have packed lunches in their workplace instead of returning to the wing at lunchtime, which would increase productivity and allow further expansion of DHL services to other prisons, providing a suitable eating and rest area can be found. There are also proposals for all DHL workers to be housed on one wing which with Bank Holiday working would allow extra association at other times without impacting on normal prison routine.

Across the Swaleside prison population the general reduction in earnings may have a serious impact on canteen sales and it is to be expected that profits from sales will fall.

There has been a general reduction in applications about canteen problems.

6.3 The Care Team

The Care Team are always available to Swaleside staff. It has been a busy year for the Care Team - many staff have made contact, both in working time and outside of working time, with numerous problems, wanting advice or practical help or simply wanting someone to listen to them in confidence. The Care Team provide outstanding support for the staff of Swaleside and are to be applauded.

6.4 Catering and Kitchens

Following last year's report, regular inspection of the main kitchen by works' staff has been instituted. This appears to have had some effect in ensuring that basic maintenance issues are identified.

The uneasy atmosphere which followed the introduction of a revised work regime for prisoners employed in the kitchen has passed. Manning levels in the kitchen now appear to strike a reasonable compromise between the provision of employment opportunities within the prison, and the effective and efficient operation of a large commercial kitchen.

The Board is concerned that while the kitchen continues to produce a sufficient quantity of acceptable food, it is doing so against a background of ever increasing budgetary restraint. Reduced flexibility in sourcing commodities has already resulted in short term non-availability of basic items, such as bread and fruit.

Endless tightening of the financial constraints on the kitchen will inevitably compromise its operational capability to an unacceptable degree, and place staff in an untenable position. Historically, issues with food in prison have been linked with discontent and instability, and the Board is concerned at the possibility of such a scenario arising at Swaleside.

6.5 Chaplaincy

The Chaplaincy Team has continued to minister the spiritual needs of prisoners. The retirement of the full time Anglican chaplain this year has been a position difficult to fill.

In addition to 243 Church of England, 179 Roman Catholic and 300 Muslim prisoners other faiths are present and the department has visits from Pagan, Mormon, Quaker, Jehovah's Witness, Buddhist, Sikh, Jewish, Hindu, Salvation Army, Free Church and Methodist chaplains.

New prisoners are seen by one of the Chaplains. During the last year the Chaplaincy department has liaised with prisoners families where there has been serious illness (56) and bereavement (64)

Major Religious Festivals have been recognised and special catering arranged where appropriate. Four Weddings have taken place and memorial services held in the prison for Prisoners who died in custody for family and prisoners to attend.

6.6 Gymnasium

There was a 4000 hour increase in the use of the Gym with a total of 317 (239 last year) work skill awards to prisoners. The Gym is well used throughout the day, evening and weekend and support was given to both Education and Healthcare courses. Over the past few years the Gym staff have enabled the prisoners to gain high level qualifications and it is a Centre of Excellence. The removal of this quality of service due to budget constraints would be regrettable.

6.7 Industries

The small but highly efficient Industries management team are again worthy of praise for the work they have carried out over the last 12 months. The workshops are working to maximum capacity with prisoner unemployment reduced. Many of the enterprises are able and willing

to expand if space becomes available. The vacated paints and computer workshop spaces are available and should be used for Industries.

As previously reported, lack of foresight when expanding the prison population with the building of extra wings, failed to take into consideration the need for extra workshop space leaving many prisoners unemployed who are able and willing to work.

Customer confidence has been gained by producing first class quality work at Swaleside. A great deal of effort has been put into ensuring that there is a constant supply of work available through the building of a professional bond between the commercial customer and the Industries team.

It seems surprising to the Board that such a successful highly committed team that has managed the Industries across the group should be dismantled. This cannot be to the benefit of Sheppey Prisons and Prisoners.

During the period 2011 to 2012 the combined income of the workshops was £724,635 (excluding VAT). The target for the period 2012 to 2013 is £905,000.

There was welcome news of a major development for the Woodwork shop of a contract for the manufacture of a more efficient Fire Resistant door which will be used throughout the prison estate. In addition all wood shavings and saw dust generated is being compressed into briquettes for sale in garden centres

In our report last year it was recommended for Health and Safety reasons that prisoners who fail drug testing should not be allowed to operate machines but this does not appear to have been implemented.

There are planned cuts to prisoners' pay in the workshops which may have a negative effect.

6.8 Offender Management Unit (OMU)

The department is profiled to have 20 Offender Supervisors but there has been a regular shortfall and rarely, if ever, has that number been reached. The shortage of staff impacts seriously on the preparation of prisoners' reports for the Parole Board and can delay re-categorisation and assessment of risk factors.

The various Clinics, which were being run by OMU staff and helped to reduce paperwork and kept prisoners informed of their progress, are still taking place. Some are being cancelled on occasions or having their frequency changed due to staff shortage.

In 2011, HMCIP raised concerns that there were too many category C prisoners at Swaleside (270 peaking to 335) and 25 category D prisoners. This was unacceptable then and remains a problem now. Prisoners who have kept to their sentence plan are finding that their progression in the system is being delayed due to population pressures in category C prisons. The principle of holding prisoners in the lowest suitable category is not being met.

6.9 Probation

Probation is in a state of transition with four staff soon to leave but only two replacements planned.

6.10 Psychology

There is a heavy workload for the department that serves the Sheppey Group. It is well resourced despite a nationwide shortage of experienced analytical psychologists and this is being addressed by an internal recruitment campaign.

6.11 Reception

The level of movements through Reception continued to be higher than profiled which placed a strain on the dedicated staff in that area. Because Reception in Swaleside is not profiled to provide 24 hour cover, the agreement with the transport organisation Geo Amey is to arrive before a 16.30 hrs cut-off. On several occasions a large number of prisoners (10 to 12) have arrived after the cut-off meaning that the staff remain until processing had been completed. Similar instances occurred in lunch periods. For a prison such as Swaleside, this meant processing prisoners through to the Induction Wing as there is no overnight Reception accommodation. It is to the credit of the reception staff that this number of movements was achieved successfully.

Applications related to property issues, which are dealt with by the Reception staff, have also been very high. Delays in responding occurred during 2011/2012 but the backlog has now been cleared. Property applications include, not only applications from prisoners but also property in and out on visits, catalogue orders and telephone queries.

6.12 Requests and Complaints (RCF)

Almost 3,000 complaint forms were submitted during the year with 2,853 answered within the prescribed timescale. It appears that RCFs stay with some Governors a longer time than is prescribed. However, these figures include holding responses, which masks the fact that the level of definitive responses is much lower. For example, holding letters are sent to OMU complaints, allowing five extra days to respond. More effort should be made to give a proper response within the prescribed timescales. Responses to complaints to other prisons about property, not received when prisoners are transferred to Swaleside, continue to be late despite chasing by the RCF clerk. Prisoners understandably get frustrated.

6.13 RAPt and CARAT

Reports from both the RAPt and CARAT teams highlight the concerns raised about prisoners on medication, particularly Tramadol, being housed on H wing. There had been no CBDTs since October 2011 owing to an unacceptable lack of availability of testing kits.

During the reporting period, the dedicated testing team carried out all MDT and CBDT tests until the team was disbanded in October 2011. Two officers attached to Security then carried out MDT duties - after October all MDT targets were met on two occasions. Since October 2011 the only CBDT testing has been carried out by an officer attached to RAPt.

Currently RAPt offers a 12 step Substance Dependency Treatment Programme (SDPT) which lasts for 5 – 6 months but without the necessary testing kits it has proven impossible to monitor prisoners going on to H Wing or during their time there. Of particular concern was the transfer of prisoners from the Induction Wing who were on prescribed medication not acceptable to RAPt.

Staffing levels have meant that of 672 CARAT's clients only 154 are actively being seen. In addition, some CARAT courses have had to be cancelled owing to the volume of work elsewhere.

The introduction of an Alcohol Dependency Treatment Programme, delivered by RAPt on H Wing, is seen as addressing an issue that has caused concern for a significant amount of time.

The Relapse Prevention programme run by the CARAT team on G wing is also a positive move to help prisoners who have finished one of the accredited programmes from any subsequent relapse and to maintain their recovery.

The CARAT team play an important part in the IDTS programme to help prisoners achieve a substance free status. On completion of IDTS treatment, clients have been encouraged to apply for a referral to RAPt's SDTP.

The success of the IDTS programme is helped significantly by the integrated way in which the CARAT and RAPt teams operate.

6.14 Recycling

It is always encouraging to report good news. The Board is able to write, that in these times of austerity, savings have been made within Swaleside that are positive.

The recycling project started as a trial on A wing and one spur of H wing. Every cell was issued with a blue plastic bin (alongside the metal waste bin) which would make the separation of waste easier. Each landing had a recycling station; this consisted of designated bins for mixed recycling and general waste. With the exception of E wing, where there was a problem with the location of the bins – all the wings were involved by December 2011. There were a few teething problems but this was to be expected with change. Each wing now has their own wheelie bin for the disposal of mixed recycling: cardboard, paper, plastics, prison clothes and batteries. Last year this generated an income of £24,000 from these streams of waste across the cluster.

Food waste is collected twice a day from the serveries. At the moment this is sent away to be composted. Two machines, which convert food waste into a soil enhancer, were inherited. Unfortunately, they were left in storage for some time and the control panels went missing. A business case is being put together to purchase the missing parts and hopefully have them up and running soon.

Several skips around the prison were removed and in some cases were replaced by caged trailers, which are used to move the waste to HMP Stanford Hill for sorting. This included wood from the Woodwork Shop that has been used on a wood burner in the Work Shop – “waste to energy”. In total the saving across the cluster came to £98,000 for the year.

Metal items that cannot be repaired or re-used are sold, reducing landfill costs. There was a saving of £44,000 across the cluster by salvaging items and re-using them. There are plans to open a sorting station at Swaleside.

To encourage the recycling project the Gym staff are allowing a session of football to be made available to the wing that shows the most commitment to recycling.

6.15 Residential

A Wing - Despite the best efforts of staff, this wing has developed an air of volatility during the year. This has been characterised by an increased turnover of prisoners, and underscored by a number of prisoner-on-prisoner and prisoner-on-staff assaults. There was a death in custody towards the end of the period under review.

B Wing + Kainos - The presence of Kainos continues to confer a degree of relative stability to this wing, and an anti-violence initiative underpinned by the IEP regime appears to have been effective. However, officers have recently reported an increasing incidence of weapon finds, often following a transfer from other accommodation.

C Wing - The refurbishment of showers has been reported in previous reports and they still need attention.

D and E Wings – A fairly settled year.

F Wing - Behaviour of prisoners on F Wing was variable leading to periods of instability. There was a more unsettled period through the Summer with an improvement in the Autumn. There was further unrest during November before a return to stability in recent months. The improvements are due to staff enforcing prison policy more strongly and removal of certain prisoners.

G Wing - This is the induction wing and great strides have been made in ensuring that health, educational, employment, training, diversity and disability needs are identified when prisoners undergo their induction. This has been achieved by the creation of an Induction Portfolio, part of the successful pilot 'Sequencing Project', which is designed to ensure that from week one, the prisoners needs are identified and catalogued. This work forms an essential part of the sentence plan.

H Wing - This wing is the 'drug free' wing and is having considerable success in achieving that drug-free environment. The existence of a drug-free wing is attracting a great deal of attention and this is now regarded as a national pilot project. The wing is able to offer some incentives to the prisoners achieving drug-free status and these include additional 'family' days and additional gym equipment in the exercise yard. The RAPt course is run on one of the wing spurs and this also is achieving considerable success.

However, it is of some concern that H wing seems to be attracting more than its fair share of violence and that many of the cell fires have taken place on that wing, particularly the East side.

6.16 Security

The staff in Security continue to do excellent work. Statistics have shown that random searching is not an effective use of resources, so there is now a policy of intelligence led searching using security information more precisely. The level of mobile phones, drugs, "hooch" and distilled liquor found in the prison continues to be a concern to the Board. A number of visitors have been prevented from passing unauthorised articles to prisoners and a number of arrests have been made. The success of security operations continues to be based on good intelligence. Given the numbers of phones and SIM cards found in the Prison the Board remains very concerned at the apparent infrequency of searching staff, visitors, contractors and other authorised visitors.

6.17 Visits

The Visits Centre is the first point of call for families and friends visiting prisoners. The centre is clean and user friendly with information available about transport etc. Books and toys are available for children. A number of successful family days have taken place in the Visits Hall and Gym. The staff and prisoners involved are to be commended.

6.18 Works

Major projects, such as the re-roofing of the original accommodation wings and administrative buildings, and upgrades to the fire fighting installation, have proceeded on schedule.

Minor works still present a significant problem, due to a combination of demand and restrictions on recruitment to certain trades. The Board is aware of one situation where fallen wall tiles in an administration washroom have been awaiting replacement for over one year.

The Board is appreciative of the improved flow of information on works related issues. It is concerned that increasing uncertainty over the future of facilities management does nothing to improve staff morale.

Section 7

THE WORK OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD

Apart from the main duties of the Board, members have areas of special interest where they attend meetings as observers and report back to the Board.

The IMB Chair attends quarterly meetings with the lead Governor of the Sheppey Group as well as quarterly meetings with the Area Manager, the latter being chaired by the IMB Area Representative, who at the time of writing this report, is a member of the Swaleside Board.

7.1 Membership

The Board comprises 10 members, two of whom are in training, against an establishment of 19. There are four women and six men including one JP. Only one member lives on the Isle of Sheppey. Our nearest member lives seven miles away and the furthest, 47 miles.

7.2 Recruitment

The Board participates in the Kent Recruitment Cluster. Advertising for members is done jointly for the participating prisons in local newspapers and other publications, thus reducing costs.

All members of the Board are white as it has not yet proved possible to recruit members of ethnic minorities.

7.3 Visits to the Prison

Members of the Board made 441 visits to the prison in the reporting year. Apart from Board meetings, one member was usually in the prison on weekdays. Compromises continue to be made as to which areas of the prison are monitored, though Members attempt to visit at least their areas of special interest as well as the Segregation Unit, Healthcare and the Kitchen and to attend Segregation and ACCT Reviews.

7.4 Training

This year the Board has reinstated the practice of having informative talks before Board meetings. Presentations have been given by a prisoner on Support for Veterans, from a member of Samaritans and from staff on ACCT, CARATS and Kainos.

Two members of our team attended the National Conference and five members attended Personal Safety Training. Later this year, the two members in training will be attending the Foundation Course.

The Annual Team Performance Review Questionnaire revealed overall satisfaction with the way duties are performed, relationship with senior management staff and prisoners and with training and communications. However the results also revealed unanimous considerable concern at the clerical support that had been received and with the office facilities.

7.5 Applications

The Board received 997 applications during the reporting period compared to 931 last year. The number of applications regarding Segregation has increased threefold and is reflective of a number of very difficult prisoners who have been resident there during the year and also to the fact that the Unit was a no smoking area for much of the year. The level of applications about property remains a concern but there have been marked decreases in the numbers relating to Education/Employment and Healthcare.

Of the miscellaneous applications 76 (52 last year) were about late or non-answers to Request & Complaints Forms submitted. 362 of the applications were taken 'on the hoof', the remainder being written. Details of all applications are fully recorded by the Board.

7.6 Confidential Access

We received 16 confidential access applications (17 last year). As was the case last year, most were not worthy of the Confidential Access procedure and several appeared to be an attempt to bypass the normal system. These applications were returned to the sender with an appropriate message. All others were investigated and where appropriate, were referred to the Governor.

7.7 BOARD STATISTICS	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	19
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	10
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	10
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	2
Total number of Board meetings during reporting period	12
Average number of attendances at Board meetings during reporting period	7.5
Number of attendance at meetings other than Board meetings	24
Total number of visits to the prison (including all meetings)	441
Total number of applications received	997
Total number of segregation reviews held	315*
Total number of segregation reviews attended	246

*Prison Service figures

Section 7 (continued).

Statistics on Applications

Code	Subject	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
A	Accommodation	15	35	34	109
B	Adjudications	26	38	36	36
C	Diversity related	13	14	16	9
D	Education/employment/training	32	46	100	79
E	Family/Visits	30	59	59	75
F	Food/kitchen related	6	19	10	19
G	Health related	70	76	114	80
H	Property	207	160	206	197
I	Sentence related	149	161	146	113
J	Staff/prisoner/detainee related	4	28	32	31
K	Transfers	46	60	71	84
L	Miscellaneous	159	120	107	165
	Total number of applications	757	816	931	997

Section 8

GLOSSARY OF PRISON-RELATED ABBREVIATIONS USED

ACCT Assessment, Care in Custody & Teamwork (replacement for F2052SH)
C & R Control & Restraint
CALM Crisis & Aggression Limitation & Management
CARATS Counselling, Assessment, Referral, Advice & Throughcare Scheme – drug & alcohol team
CBDT Compact Based Drug Testing
CC Cellular Confinement – a punishment
GPs General Practitioners
Gym Gymnasium
HC Healthcare
HMCIP Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Prisons
IDTS Integrated Drug Treatment System
IEP Incentives and Earned Privileges – Prisoners can be on Basic, Standard or Enhanced
IMB Independent Monitoring Board
LSC Learning & Skills Council
MDT Mandatory Drugs Testing
OASYS Offender Assessment System – computerised risk & needs assessment
OLASS Offender Learning and Skills Service (part of LSC)
OMU Offender Management Unit – work on sentence planning & progress
PCT Primary Care Trust – National Health component responsible for healthcare
RAPt Rehabilitation for Addicted Prisoners Trust
RCF Requests and Complaints
SMT Senior Management Team
SDPT Substance Dependency Treatment Programme
TSP Thinking Skills Programme
TUPE Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) – staff transfer
VR Violence Reduction