



HER MAJESTY'S PRISON **SWANSEA**

ANNUAL REPORT **2011 – 2012**

COMPILED BY: MR BRIAN THOMPSON (Chairman)

DATE: Submitted August 2012. (Covering period end May 2011 – end May 2012)

SECTION 1 The statutory role of the IMB

1.1

The Prisons Act 1952 and the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 require every Prison and Immigration Removal Centre (IRC) to be monitored by an Independent Board appointed by the Secretary Of State for Prisons 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 the right of Access to every prisoner and every part of the Prison and also to see prisoner's records.

SECTION 2

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SECTION 3 Description of the Prison

Her Majesty's Prison Swansea is a Category B local Prison, which holds adult males and older young offenders. These males are either remanded into Custody from the Courts, awaiting trial, or sentencing, or are convicted prisoners in the main serving less than two years.

The Prison was built in 1861 and has remained substantially unchanged since then although some parts have been modernised and upgraded. Swansea was designed to hold 219 prisoners but due to the increasing Prison population nationally, Swansea has a current operational capacity of 435.

Swansea has a true community feel about it where respect for individuals is paramount. Relationships between staff and prisoners are at the heart of this and they contribute to maintaining a stable and above all, safe environment. The aim for the prison through the varied and positive activities on offer is to help the prisoners' resettlement back into their communities, by developing effective partnerships with statutory, private and voluntary organisations which effectively contribute to reduce re-offending.

SECTION 4 Questions for the Minister

GENERAL ACCOMMODATION

The Board are for yet another year disappointed to report that Swansea is still one of the five most overcrowded prisons in the country. This has been included in every report produced by the Board for many, many years and whilst we as a Board expect the usual reply from the Ministry of Justice it does no harm in keep bringing the issue up. The Victorians who built the prison in 1861 obviously had a greater conscience than the present day politicians about providing adequate accommodation for inmates even though their attitudes to prisoner treatment left a fair bit to be desired. It is unacceptable for prisoners in this day and age, in a civilised country, to be expected to share cells where they have to eat, without having access to private toilet facilities. We would once again therefore ask the minister **IF THERE ARE ANY FUTURE PLANS TO REDUCE THE OVERCROWDING.** Despite this Swansea is ranked in the top group of all prisons nationally which is exceptional for a small local prison with such a high turnover of population.

DEATH IN CUSTODY

There has yet again been a death in custody to report during the period covered by this report. In addition there have been two very serious attempts to commit suicide which have been thwarted by the prompt and extremely professional actions of the staff on duty at the time.

Last year both the Board and Prison reviewed the process of induction that seemed to be failing to pick up problems quickly enough with newly arrived vulnerable prisoners. As a result money was spent to improve the Induction wing facilities and a new “Early Days” programme introduced which provides a multi departmental approach to the review of all prisoners arriving at the jail. This has unfortunately not prevented yet another death. As the Coroner has not yet reported on this incident it would be inappropriate to comment further on this matter except to ask the authorities if there are **ANY MEASURES THEY INTEND TO PUT IN PLACE TO TRY AND PREVENT THESE SAD DEATHS.**

The Board accepts that if someone is absolutely determined to commit suicide it is almost impossible to stop them but feel many attempts are, in one form or another, a “cry for help”. These are generally brought on by the feeling of frustration and inability to control, often personal relationships and situations, going on in the inmate’s life, often because of the simple fact that they are in prison. These situations are often exaggerated due to drug addictions but like it or not, in locking people up, the Authorities and in the end the Minister, take on the responsibility for their safe keeping. The death in custody record at Swansea is not acceptable.

SECTION 5- The Report

5.1 IMB AT SWANSEA

The Chair, Vice Chair and Training Officer (BDO) took up their appointments in January 2011. Talks on the work of the IMB continue to be given locally. This year the Board has had three new members appointed by the Minister and will be one above its designated full complement when their training period is completed. This additional member will be useful as almost half the Board members will be forced to step down within twelve months due to the implementation of the recent OCPA code of practise, pertaining to length of service on Public Bodies.

5.2 DIVERSITY

The Board are pleased to report that HMP Swansea is fully committed to fulfilling its duties under the Race Relations Act.

5.3 GENERAL ACCOMMODATION

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5.4 LEARNING AND SKILLS

The profile of HMP Swansea is changing. This has been driven by the Population Review of the Welsh Prison estate by NOMS during the last year and although not implemented in full is intended to try and make Swansea principally a resettlement establishment with the main focus on getting prisoners to integrate successfully back into their communities. This has been held up somewhat by budget restraints and the establishment seems to be in a halfway situation between the old and new roles. Obviously to succeed as a resettlement prison it will need a fair bit of investment in training courses designed to help inmates back into society. Many of the inmates have been failed by the education system and society for the first 20 years of their lives and it is a big ask for the prison staff to begin to address this task often in only a short period of time.

The average length of stay for around two thirds of the Prison population is less than 12 weeks, with around a quarter staying between four and five weeks. A small percentage of the total population around 10% remain within HMP Swansea for 6 months and attend classes regularly.

During 2011/12, courses delivered by HMP Swansea's Learning & Skills Department have met the development requirements of the Service Level Agreement (SLA) and the needs of the learners

The ECDL qualification was successfully introduced into the curriculum. HMP Swansea is currently the only Welsh prison to offer this qualification and has subsequently gained a Grade A during its first audit by the British Computer Society. The use of prisoners as peer mentors to support learners remains a priority for the department. They are an integral part of our delivery and provide excellent support during the Learning and Skills induction process.

The Unique Learner Number has been introduced and is being allocated to all learners. This Number will provide the learner with a record of all accredited learning which will be stored in the Learner Record Service.

Workshop 4 re-opened in May 2012. Prisoners are now able to achieve vocational training in bathroom and kitchen fitting. These are level 1 courses which give skills for continued training in the community and qualifications for potential college courses.

5.5 HEALTHCARE AND MENTAL HEALTH

The structure and focus of HMP Swansea is moving towards providing a real focus on reducing reoffending and resettlement and health has a significant contribution to make in both fields. The Head of Healthcare is now also the Head of Reducing Reoffending, so Health as an agenda will remain a key priority within the establishment but with a greater focus on multi departmental/agency working.

The health care department consists of, two Band 7 nurses, two Band 6 nurses and twelve band 5 nurses. There is a good level of health care provided, without an inpatient facility. As required local hospitals are used, and the Health care wing at HMP Cardiff is meant to be available if required.

There is a daily visit from a local GP, every morning for 3 hours, and 1.5 hours at weekends. Health care is provided over a 24 hour period by nursing staff and the prison also has access to an out of hour's service if necessary. There is a strong link with the local Health Board, with a wide range of health promotions available. There is an In reach Team and input from the both local psychiatric establishments, Caswell Clinic and Cefn Coed Hospital. Regular visits from a Consultant Psychiatrist and Dental surgeon also take place.

All new prisoners, and transfers are screened on arrival in Reception, they are seen again the following day, on the Induction wing, by the Doctor. Health care staffs administer supervised medication to prisoners and deal with all minor medical problems.

5.6 SAFER CUSTODY

Safer Custody of all inmates is perhaps the greatest test for a healthy prison. During the visit from HM Chief Inspector of Prisons in early 2010 Swansea was assessed as

“performing well” against this healthy Prison test and reflects the good practice throughout the establishment.

The Board are encouraged to report that the majority of prisoners’ spoken to on visits feel safe during their stay in the establishment.

5.7 DEATH IN CUSTODY

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5.8 ADJUDICATIONS

All Board Members take the opportunity to sit in and observe Governors Adjudications and Independent Adjudications during their rota visits whenever possible. The Board monitors and verifies that the hearings are carried out in a fair and concise manner with the offender understanding all aspects of the proceedings. The Board also ensures that hearings are disseminated evenly and are conducted by all the Governor Grades.

5.9 RECEPTION AND INDUCTION

The Reception Area is generally understaffed. All prisoners arriving at Swansea are seen by a health professional before they leave the reception area. Their needs are assessed and those prisoners with incoming medical issues and drug issues are dealt with appropriately and swiftly. All prisoners are given the opportunity to shower. For non-English speaking prisoners there is a telephone translation service available. There are posters and captions clearly visible in the area to help prisoners understand

the prison system. Listeners are available in the Reception area from 16.30 until the last prisoner has been received. The Listeners mix with the new arrivals in an informal way, unless otherwise requested. Prisoners arriving earlier in the day would have to request the services of a listener.

One of the concerns of the Board is the late arrival of prisoners from distant courts due to the inability of other closer establishments to take them. This often results in a hurried arrival procedure taking place in the evening when the prison is preparing to “lock down” for the night. This needs to be addressed by the Authorities as the reception process is an important experience for any prisoner.

All prisoners arriving at Swansea after leaving Reception are initially located on the Induction Wing. The Induction Wing is extremely busy and this inevitably impacts on staff. The officers working on this wing need to be able to spend time with prisoners who are experiencing their first few days in custody. Currently this is difficult to achieve. Officers on this wing are very committed and experienced however the wing has recently been relocated and is bedding in. This has had an impact on the induction process. The wing also has no shower facilities although there are showers nearby. This year has seen the introduction of a new Drug Reduction Wing within the prison in the hope of being able to target more effectively the problems of drug addiction in inmates which are often imported into the prison from the surrounding city area which has a known serious drug culture.

5.10 CATERING

The Catering department continue to produce over 1200 meals per day at cost of around £2.00 per day per prisoner. Prisoners are trained in various tasks resulting in them obtaining certificates, which will assist them in securing jobs on release.

Swansea has been inspected by the Local Authority Environmental Health department and received the highest possible classification for hygiene standards.

There have been no staff changes over the past 12 months and the team is working well. All prisoners complete their level 2 food safety within 2 weeks of being employed in the kitchen and all workers must complete the Manual Handling course. A quarterly Food survey is undertaken to ascertain prisoner views.

New lifts have been installed in the kitchen area and new flooring for the delivery area is due to be laid.

In conjunction with the London Olympics the Gym will host a number of events and the kitchen will provide a variety of dishes from healthy option to food from various competing countries.

5.11 BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Swansea works team have ensured, despite the establishment being a listed building and old Victorian shell, with all the restrictions that places on them, that few major capital works projects are required in the short term. This has been a major factor, along with the prison’s performance in ensuring that it has remained open during the current government reviews and cuts.

5.12 FOREIGN NATIONAL AND IPP PRISONERS

Foreign National prisoners held in Swansea Prison make up a small percentage, less than 5% of the population. None are now being housed past the completion of their court sentence.

5.13 CHAPLAINCY

The Chaplain leads a vibrant team committed to supporting all prisoners at Swansea. During the year many projects and initiatives are facilitated by the team. The Sycamore Tree project is continuing to change lives at Swansea and is proving very successful. This is a powerful course focusing on restorative justice. The project comes under the umbrella of Prison Fellowship. To date two courses have run with another two planned for the autumn.

Sunday services continue to be very well attended and prisoners respond well to the varied program of worship provided.

5.14 COMMUNITY CHAPLAINCY

The Community Chaplaincy project continues to move forward, adjusting always to cater for the changing needs of the prisoners it supports. A new initiative is planned whereby the outreach chaplains at Swansea will engage with prisoners in H.M.P. Eastwood Park and H.M.P. Parc. The prisoners at these establishments must meet certain criteria and have defined links with prisoners at H.M.P. Swansea. The project continues to be successful and is highly valued by those who wish to be involved and need the support provided by the team.

SECTION 6 Work of the IMB

6.1 IMB AT SWANSEA

CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

The Chair, Vice Chair and Training Officer (BDO) took up their appointments in January 2011. This year the Board has had three new members appointed by the Minister and will be one above its designated full complement when their training period is completed. This additional member will be useful as several members will be stepping down within twelve months due to the recent OCPA code of practise, pertaining to length of service on Public Bodies, coming into force.

BOARD MEMBERS

Chair	Mr B Thompson
Vice Chair	Mrs J Michael
Board Development Officer	Mr G Morgan
Information Officer	Mr M Beake
	Mrs K Andrew JP
	Mr P Owen JP
	Mr P Dwan JP
	Dr Y Mathur
	Mrs S Kanish
	Mr B Maskell JP
	Mrs J Osborne JP
	Mr C Walters
	Mr D Bentley Miller
Clerk to the Board	Mrs Lisa Jee

6.2 APPLICATIONS TO THE IMB

All prisoners have a right to address grievances to the IMB and may request referral to the full Board. During the period of this report there have been no applications to the full Board. There have been 33 applications to the IMB, which is a increase on the 22 received last year but still extremely low and reflects the commitment of staff at Swansea to deal with most problems being raised by prisoners. In addition to formal applications Board members accept and deal with verbal applications on their rota visit or at any other time they are in the Prison. The Board has marked and locked IMB boxes on all wings for Prisoners to post their applications, which are emptied daily during the working week.

Applications have been analysed by category

Category	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	
Food	3	0	1	1	0	
Property	4	0	4	0	4	
Medical	14	6	13	4	8	
Visits	0	5	4	4	6	
Transfer	5	3	2	2	1	
Adjudications	0	0	1	0	0	
Mail	0	1	1	1	0	
Cell Conditions	3	1		1	2	
Sentence	5	5	4	0	1	
Racial Abuse	3	0		0	1	
Bullying	1	3	2	0	4	
Miscellaneous	18	17	11	9	6	
TOTAL	56	41	43	22	33	

6.3 ATTENDANCE AT BOARD MEETING

All Board members attended the required number of monthly Board meetings throughout the year with the exception of one member who has been ill.

6.4 TALKS

Talks are given in the local community about the work of the Independent Monitoring Board although all attempts to obtain equipment to help with these talks via the Secretariat failed.

6.5 BOARD STATISTICS

Recommended compliment of Board Members	12
Number of members at start of reporting period	10
Number of Members at end of reporting period	13
Number of new Members joining within the reporting period	3
Number of Members leaving within the reporting period	2
Total number of visits to the Prison (excl Monthly Meetings)	140
Total number of written applications received	33