



Independent Monitoring Board

HMP &YOI Thorn Cross

**Annual Report
May 2012– April 2013**

Section 1

STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB

The Prison Act 1952 and the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 require every prison and IRC to be monitored by an independent Board appointed by the Secretary of State 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 PRISON

- 3.1.1 HMP &YOI Thorn Cross is located on the outskirts of Warrington. It was purpose built in 1985 as an open establishment for male juvenile and young offenders and has a capacity for 322 prisoners in 6 units. It was re-rolled in 2008 to become a prison for 18 to 25 year old men. Due to the decrease in numbers of prisoners aged under 25, the upper age limit was removed near the beginning of the period covered by this report. Thorn Cross now receives prisoners from across the full age range, with one 60 bed unit retained for Young Offenders. In January 2013 the Care and Separation Unit (CSU), which had 10 cells, was closed and a secure unit is now only staffed when required.
- 3.1.2 There is a variety of workshops and the education department provides general education, art, computer skills, life skills and a variety of specialised courses. Additional and evening programmes are offered in Thinking Skills, Anger Management, and Parenting etc. These have undergone some revision in response to the changing population. Counselling for drug use is provided by Pathways; this was previously done by Counselling, Assessment, Referral, Advice and Throughcare (CARATS) and there is a comprehensive resettlement programme. Additional work opportunities are being introduced to reflect the needs of the older population. Max Spielman has opened a workshop and negotiations are underway with Timpsons for the provision of new on-site work resources.
- 3.1.3 The gym and weights room and the playing fields offer a wide variety of sports
- 3.1.4 Training and education is provided by Manchester College. Healthcare is commissioned by Warrington Health Consortium and provided by the Bridgewater Community Health Care Trust. Escorts are provided by GeoAmey.

Section 4

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 4.1.1 2012-2013 has been a year of enormous change for Thorn Cross and this will be the focus of the annual report. Any hope that the removal of the upper age limit could be managed gradually proved unrealistic and Thorn Cross rapidly gained a much older population. As the prison had been organised to respond to the needs and demands of the 18 – 25 year age range this inevitably brought teething problems. At the same time, the prison was having to respond to the requirements of Fair and Sustainable and undertook other major changes such as the closure of the CSU. Cumulatively this placed significant demands on staff. It is a tribute to the governors and staff that throughout this period Thorn Cross continued to provide a fair and decent environment for prisoners within a positive and purposeful culture. There were many challenges but these were met with a positive and pro-active approach.
- 4.1.2 In the early stages of being open to the full age range, older prisoners frequently complained of being “treated like kids” and not being given the full freedom they expected at a category D prison. Some of these complaints had some justification, others did not and could be seen as examples of prisoners trying to push necessary limits in a period of change. The governor established a series of consultation meetings with the new prisoners to hear their views and changes which were acceptable and easy to implement were introduced quickly. Changes which were acceptable but needed time to put in place were agreed and prisoners updated at the regular prisoner representative meetings. Ideas which were not acceptable were dismissed with reasons given. This pro-active approach meant that prisoners felt listened to and could see difficulties getting resolved. Consequently complaints about age-inappropriate treatment significantly decreased as the year went on.
- 4.1.3 Whilst Thorn Cross has now adapted well to providing for the full age range, the IMB is concerned that the excellent practice developed over the years of working with young offenders in an open environment could be lost to the prison system. It is important that the one unit reserved for YOs remains at capacity and that YO establishments continue to identify prisoners suitable for Thorn Cross.
- 4.1.4 The changes in the age profile at the prison and the introduction of Offender Learning and Skills Service 4 (OLASS 4) has led to both disruption and very positive progress within the prison regimes, particularly where the areas of education and training, workouts and resettlement are concerned. These will be reported on in the relevant sections below.
- 4.1.5 For the attention of the prison service
- Young Offender institutions with prisoners whose homes are within a reasonable geographical distance from Thorn Cross should be encouraged to identify prisoners suitable for an open regime and ensure they can transfer to Thorn Cross. (ref section 5.8.5)

- The Facilities List (items which prisoners are allowed to hold in their possession) should be consistent across prison categories. (ref. section 5.8.4)
- Prisoners are arriving at Thorn Cross from other establishments without complete documentation and training certificates which are often difficult and time consuming to obtain later. (ref. section 5.2.3)
- The education and training budgets severely limit the amount that can be spent at Thorn Cross to improve literacy and numeracy skills. While these issues are supposedly addressed at previously attended establishments, this is not always the case, and increased provision at Thorn Cross is required. (ref section 5.2.3)
- Transfers between prisons in the north and south of the country appear to be increasingly difficult to arrange. The detrimental influence this has on maintaining family relationships and the consequent negative effect on successful rehabilitation is of concern. (ref section 7.2.5)

4.1.6 Update on previous year's concerns

- Prisoners continue to arrive at Thorn Cross from geographically distant areas but not as frequently as in the previous year.
- Education and training provision has been revised under the new OLASS 4 regime to be outcomes driven, but it is still disappointing to find many vocational and education courses under occupied and prisoners missing sessions through other higher priority appointments. (ref. section 5.2.4)

Section 5

REPORT ON REQUIRED AREAS

5.1 Equality and Inclusion

- 5.1.1 The Diversity and Equality Action Team (DEAT) meets monthly and monitors Equality and Diversity targets and oversees relevant policy development. Each area of diversity has an allocated staff member reporting to the DEAT and efforts have been made to ensure staff are identified and prepared for the roles despite Fair and Sustainable personnel changes. Meetings are chaired at senior level, which endorses the importance of equality work. Discussions appear open-minded and determined to tackle issues seriously rather than pay lip-service. Issues are being combined into an action plan and care is taken not to lose sight of actions required.
- 5.1.2 Data reviewed at the DEAT meeting primarily relates to race, perhaps reflecting the fact that low numbers of minorities of most other social identities would mean figures would not be statistically meaningful. However, now the age range has changed, there is active consideration of monitoring by age and of conducting an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) in respect of age. This arose in context of open discussion of potential areas for EIA in the subsequent annual work-plan.
- 5.1.3 In the early part of the year there was serious concern over the persistent under-representation of Black and Minority Ethnic prisoners accessing Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL). Fortunately by the later months of the year the figures consistently indicated that this was no longer an issue. This welcome change appeared to follow a change in ROTL policy and procedures rather than a complete understanding of the roots of the previous problem.
- 5.1.4 DEAT expressed concern that the reason for relatively few Discrimination Incident Report Forms (DIRFs) being received might be that prisoners were not all clear when or how to submit one, and steps were taken to publicise the process.
- 5.1.5 Prisoner representatives attend DEAT meetings and contribute fully, in addition to quarterly prisoner DEAT meetings. They raise concerns on behalf of others and their points are given a good hearing, even when not strictly on equality and diversity.
- 5.1.6 A less positive development is the (nationally driven) replacement of face to face group training for staff (and IMB members) in Equality and Diversity by online material, which may risk losing some of the benefits of staff interaction and mutual challenge in the former sessions.

5.2 Education, Learning and Skills

- 5.2.1 OLASS 4 is based on the Manchester College agreement to achieve outcomes rather than just to provide time, and this has enabled more focus on ensuring that the qualifications gained are relevant and achievable and that records of these are properly maintained. Non-OLASS activities have been similarly targeted, with suitable qualifications identified for the Gym, Farms and Gardens etc. Coupled with this have been significant budget cuts and staff redundancy or redeployment, so morale has had its ups and downs, and staff are to be congratulated on maintaining a high level of enthusiasm in these difficult times.
- 5.2.2 The older prisoner population requires different approaches; many already have a considerable skill base and work ethic, and the old approach of cycling through courses is inappropriate. The focus is now on an initial assessment, identification of training needs, provision of this training, followed by work outs, either through Community Voluntary Service (CVS) or paid work placements, which may be able to continue after release. Some of these have been outstandingly successful, and most do lead to prisoners leaving Thorn Cross with worthwhile skills and certificates.
- 5.2.3 Disappointingly, prisoners are still arriving at Thorn Cross without the certificates gained at other establishments and the basic literacy and numeracy skills, which are now supposed to have been addressed before arrival, can be still lacking. The one-to-one tuition in this area is now no longer funded, but efforts are being made to improve the competence of the disadvantaged prisoners in this key area.
- 5.2.4 The Individual Learning Plans, which it was hoped would have made recognition of achievement and recording of progress for prisoners clearer, do not appear to have achieved their expectations and the scheme is to be revised. While the new target-orientated delivery of courses can allow for absences of both prisoners and tutors on an occasional basis, it is still disappointing to find that many of the workshop sessions are under occupied and prisoners are frequently diverted elsewhere. The use of block modules where priority is established and attendance virtually guaranteed will help to ensure that tutor and prisoner time is used effectively. The 'learner journey' plan which is established between the prisoner and his offender supervisor depends much more on the input from the prisoner in terms of needs and wishes, and it is at this stage that any learning difficulties have to be identified and actioned if already known to the prison.
- 5.2.5 The Virtual Campus, which will provide an important capability within education and training has still not been commissioned, the speed of the internet connection being inadequate, and alternative arrangements are being pursued. A number of the evening sessions have been stopped for lack of funding, but others are proposed which may make better uses of resources and appeal to the older generation.

5.3 **Healthcare and Mental Health**

- 5.3.1 The Healthcare unit has continued to provide services throughout the year rising to the challenge of the changing age profile of prisoners. The impact on the service necessitated reducing the number of consultations by the General Practitioner to allow more time per consultation as older prisoners bring more complex medical history and problems. To enhance the service there are now sessions at Thorn Cross by the Advanced Nurse Practitioner based at HMP Risley to complement the General Practitioner service. There are also clinics by the Diabetic Nurse Specialist and the Specialist Hepatitis C Nurse. Bridgewater Community Services provides a Sexual Health Clinic every two weeks. The closure of the CSU has released more clinical time as health staff no longer need to hold medical reviews following admissions to the unit.

- 5.3.2 A problem arose during the year due to the retirement of the Dental practitioner which resulted in long waiting times for dental care. This has been managed by using locum dentists which has maintained the service. A new Dentist has been appointed due to start in August.
- 5.3.3 The Healthcare Manager deals with all complaints relating to healthcare according to the NHS policy and practice. There have been 13 complaints received in a 5 month period, half of which were relating to dentistry, all were resolved in house.
- 5.3.4 The impact of the changing age profile has seen an increase in the numbers of patients being referred out to hospital for treatment for long term conditions and an increase in spending on medications.
- 5.3.5 The staff within the unit are actively working towards developing Chronic Disease Management clinics to respond to the needs of the older prisoners. This will include the development of Cardio Vascular Disease, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease and Epilepsy specialist clinics. It is planned that staff will attend the appropriate training to implement these developments. Staff have attended all the appropriate mandatory and statutory training.

5.4 **Purposeful Activity**

- 5.4.1 The comprehensive training and education opportunities described above, along with increasing work activities provide sufficient places for the population and prisoners spend most of their time engaged in these activities. Prisoners in Thorn Cross spend most of the time out of their cells.

5.5 **Resettlement**

- 5.5.1 As a category D prison, resettlement has always been a strong focus of the work in Thorn Cross. This is being further strengthened through the development of the 'prisoner journey' and a more focussed role for the Offender Supervisors. The intention is for all prisoners to follow a path of town visits, home visits, CVS placements in the community and work placements in the community. A clearer and streamlined process of Release on Temporary License (ROTL) is being developed to enable this. A rigorous risk assessment process accompanies this.
- 5.5.2 Thorn Cross is particularly successful at ensuring that prisoners have stable accommodation on release. Good use is made of agencies such as Working Links, Next Step, New Bridge, Shelter and Jobcentre Plus.

5.6 **Safer Custody**

- 5.6.1 The experience of the IMB is that prisoners feel safe in Thorn Cross and certainly violence levels are very low. Bullying and antisocial behaviour is identified quickly and dealt with rigorously and creatively. Support for victims is good and responses include violence reduction workshops, restorative justice and mediation.
- 5.6.2 The number of Assessment Care in Custody Teamwork (ACCT) designations is low and excellent support is offered to vulnerable prisoners. The Peer Mentor scheme provides advice and support to new prisoners and those who may be vulnerable. The mentors themselves gain confidence and self-esteem and give talks to people in the prison and outside. These are always very well received.

5.6.3 One example of good practice is encouragement for mentors to offer support to prisoners having their first town visits or home leaves as it had been noticed that some long-term prisoners were finding the experience unsettling.

5.7 Care and Separation

5.7.1 Thorn Cross operated a Care and Separation Unit until January 2013. Prisoners were confined to the CSU following some misdemeanour or for their own protection – due to risk of self-harm or threats from other prisoners. All prisoners on arrival in CSU were seen by Health Care immediately after admission and then on a daily basis, and daily by a Governor. Numbers in the CSU varied considerably from day to day, but decreased significantly as growing emphasis was placed on retaining prisoners in their units wherever possible. Lengths of stay in the CSU were short with 10 days usually the longest stay and that only rarely. Staff in the unit provided a high standard of care and maintained good relationships with prisoners.

5.7.2 The IMB were contacted whenever a prisoner was located to this unit and a Board member met with each prisoner as soon as possible – usually within 24 hours. Prisoners in CSU were usually calm when seen by the IMB and rarely complained about the adjudication or their treatment in CSU. They had access to a shower, some of their property and an outside yard for exercise or a smoke.

5.7.3 The decision to close the CSU was taken after much thought and in response to a number of issues. The population of older prisoners tend to be calmer and less volatile than younger ones. Numbers in the CSU were declining with the unit sometimes being empty. Thus maintaining the unit ceased to be a good use of resources. Most Category D prisons operate without a closed unit and from January 2013 Thorn Cross has also done so.

5.7.4 Whilst understanding the reasons for the decision the IMB had some concerns that the closure might result in more prisoners being shipped out back to closed conditions. Happily to date this does not seem to be the case and the use of other penalties such as ROTL bans and withdrawal of privileges is proving effective.

5.7.5 Adjudications are routinely observed by members of the Board and are seen to be conducted fairly with appropriate punishments awarded. The prisoners have sufficient time to prepare and are given every opportunity to speak for themselves at the adjudication.

5.8 Residential Services

5.8.1 The residential units are generally clean and well-maintained. The IMB received some complaints about the heating but, when checking with the Works Department, usually found that temperatures were at the required levels.

5.8.2 In previous years the IMB has received very few complaints about food. However in the early part of 2013 there was a significant escalation in these. The complaints concerned both quality and quantity. The kitchen responded to these complaints by introducing a system of individual portion control and increased consultation with prisoners. . In the later part of the year the level of complaints decreased as rapidly as it had risen and any problems appear to have been resolved. Changes were made in March when a cooked meal at lunchtime (as well as in the evening) was replaced by sandwiches and rolls. Initially there were complaints about there being insufficient quantity but again these have now stopped. It has to be said that, alongside complaints about food, there are always positive comments as well and attitudes are

often determined by the experience of prisoners at previous establishments. Whilst seeing that there were problems earlier in the year, the IMB's recent observations on rota visits are that food is adequate and of good enough quality. In response to the views of the new older prisoners at the consultation meetings, changes have been introduced which allow prisoners to make their own snacks on the landings.

- 5.8.3 A further change introduced during the year was to allow prisoners to wear their own clothes. This had some teething problems as laundry facilities did not always meet the demand from prisoners to wash their clothes. This was resolved by an increase in the clothing allowance. The system now runs smoothly.
- 5.8.4 The IMB regularly receives complaints from prisoners that they are not allowed to bring in items which they have been allowed at previous prisons. On investigation it is usually found that Thorn Cross is operating effective risk assessments and taking reasonable decisions. The problems are caused by the fact that previous prisons have taken different decisions. This understandably causes confusion and resentment for prisoners.
- 5.8.5 The change in age range has resulted in Thorn Cross operating nearer to capacity and this is pleasing. One unit is retained for Young Offenders and the IMB would like to see this always operating at capacity to ensure that YOs continue to benefit from the considerable experience and skills with this age group which have been built up at Thorn Cross.
- 5.8.6 Further developments are planned in Residential Services. The Independent Living Unit has been redecorated and is now in full use and the conversion of the old CSU into a unit for prisoners on work-out is planned. This will increase the capacity of Thorn Cross and further the focus on resettlement.

Section 6

OTHER AREAS OF THE PRISON REGIME

6.1 Staff-prisoner relations and Incentives and Earned Privileges (IEP)

- 6.1.1 Staff – prisoner relationships are generally good and the Board observe many relaxed, good-humoured and supportive interactions between staff and prisoners. The atmosphere is usually calm and tension virtually non-existent. However in the early months following the expansion of the age range the IMB was inundated by complaints from older prisoners of being ‘treated like kids’. The transition from YOs to older prisoners was rapid and it was understandable that there was some time lag in the response. The IMB dealt with these complaints by suggesting that prisoners contribute to the consultation meetings being organised by the governor, exercising some patience in the meantime. The consultation meetings were effective; prisoners felt listened to, even though they did not always get what they wanted. Staff also adjusted to the different needs and demands of older men and, after a couple of months, the specific complaints of being treated like kids diminished as quickly as they had arisen.
- 6.1.2 There are inconsistencies between staff in the use of IEP warnings and this causes frustration leading to applications to the IMB. Changes to the IEP system are being considered along with the national proposals for changes which are likely to come into effect in the coming year.

6.2 Substance misuse

- 6.2.1 The past year has seen the contract for drug treatment and testing within Thorn Cross move to Crime Reduction Initiatives (CRI) from Lifeline. As a result the team is now called ‘Pathways’ (short for ‘prisons pathways to recovery’) rather than ‘Carrats’. This has led to staff changes and new responsibilities as recovery workers now also have responsibility for conducting prisoner drug tests (previously this was done by officers). The staff have been trained and procedures put in place to allow this. The service is commissioned by the local Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT).
- 6.2.2 The raised age profile of the prison has seen changing drug treatment requirements and needs: whereas the younger population required a focus on education and harm reduction, the arrival of older prisoners has seen a shift of focus towards abstinence. There is now more need for alcohol and opiate treatment and the team is trying to get NA (Narcotics Anonymous) and AA (Alcoholics Anonymous) in to support those who could benefit from their services. There are only a few prisoners on methadone treatment programmes. The most popular drugs for use prior to custody remain alcohol, cocaine and cannabis with some ‘legal high’ use. The most common drugs used whilst in custody are steroids, cannabis and ‘legal highs’.
- 6.2.3 Alongside established recovery workers (who have caseloads either in Risley or Thorn Cross) there are 5 new specialist worker posts covering both prisons. These

are 'peer mentor and volunteer coordinator', 'family worker', 'employability worker', 'bridging coordinator' and 'independent living worker'.

6.3 Chaplaincy

- 6.3.1 The Board would like to note the positive contribution made by the Thorn Cross Chaplaincy team. As well as catering for a wide range of faiths and providing invaluable individual support to prisoners when needed, their work in providing Family Days and Restorative Justice programmes greatly enhances the life of prisoners. The Sycamore Tree programme continues to be successful and the Chaplaincy team is particularly enterprising in obtaining sources of funding to enable this to continue. Chaplaincy have involvement with DEAT, Safer Custody and Child Protection. They help to organise activities and concerts provided by outside groups. Two retirements have meant a diminished team, which has seriously stretched the remaining chaplain and it is commendable that such a high level of activity has continued. Recruitment for a Roman Catholic chaplain is now underway.

Section 7

THE WORK OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD

7.1 Board Statistics

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Recommended Complement of Board Members * | 12 |
| Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period | 11 |
| Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period | 10 |
| Number of new members joining within the reporting period | 0 |
| Number of members leaving within reporting period | 1 |
| Total number of Board meetings during reporting period | 12 |
| Total number of visits to the Establishment | 363 |
| Date of Annual Team Performance Review | 30 October 2012 |

*Although the official Board complement is 12, the Board consider 10 to be the optimum number in present circumstances and is not currently seeking to recruit for the two vacant places.

7.2 Applications to the Board

7.2.1 Statistics

| Code | Subject | 2011-12 | 2012-13 |
|-------------|--|----------------|----------------|
| A | Accommodation | 4 | 6 |
| B | Adjudications | 0 | 4 |
| C | Equality & Diversity (inc religion) | 1 | 2 |
| D | Education/employment/training inc IEP | 8 | 10 |
| E 1 | Family/visits inc mail & phone | 3 | 2 |
| E 2 | Finance/pay | 0 | 5 |
| F | Food/kitchen related | 2 | 8 |
| G | Health related | 2 | 5 |
| H 1 | Property (within current establishment) | 4 | 5 |
| H 2 | Property (during transfer/in another establishment) | 2 | 8 |
| H 3 | Canteen, facilities, Catalogue shopping, Argos | 0 | 1 |
| I | Sentence related (inc. HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-cat etc) | 18 | 24 |
| J | Staff/prisoner/detainee | 31 | 13 |

| | | | |
|---|---|----|-----|
| | concerns inc bullying | | |
| K | Transfers | 2 | 11 |
| L | Miscellaneous | 2 | 5 |
| | Total number of IMB applications | 79 | 109 |

- 7.2.2 These applications were not received uniformly throughout the year, with a large spike in the months immediately following the change in age-range. In the latter part of the year numbers decreased significantly. It is not always easy to categorise applications as many of them cross the definitions, e.g. a prisoner might believe that a difficult relationship with an officer results in an unfair use of IEP warnings or leads to a ROTL ban. Where this is the case, applications have been categorised under the core issue. The list includes both written applications and those which are picked up 'on the hoof' and written up by the IMB member with the prisoner.
- 7.2.3 As reported earlier, in the initial months of taking older prisoners, the Board members on rota were often approached by large numbers of prisoners with long lists of complaints. As these related to the different needs and demands of older prisoners compared to young ones, the advice given was to be patient and give the prison time to adapt to the huge changes it was having to deal with, whilst encouraging prisoners to participate in consultation meetings and prisoner representative meetings. At the monthly Board meetings, the governor discussed how the changes were being managed and was responsive to matters and concerns raised by the Board. This in turn helped the Board members to feel confident in the advice they were offering to the older prisoners.
- 7.2.4 Where IMB members were approached by groups of prisoners about the same issue, which was the case with complaints about food (ref. section 5.8.2), the issue was raised with the Governor at the Board Meeting rather than individually recording each complaint separately. The statistics therefore do not necessarily reflect the number of prisoners who approached the Board during the short initial period of having older prisoners.
- 7.2.5 The significant rise in applications regarding transfer reflects the increasing problem in obtaining a transfer between prisons in the north and south of the country. This can result in some prisoners experiencing great difficulty in maintaining family contacts, which has a detrimental effect on rehabilitation.

7.3 The Monitoring Process

- 7.3.1 Rota visits take place each week usually by a pair of Board members and a written report is completed, which goes to the Governor. Findings are shared at the monthly meetings and discussed with the Governor. If there are matters of significance, a Governor is contacted immediately and the response received is usually excellent. Most issues raised by prisoners can be sorted out during the rota visit or within the following few days.

- 7.3.2 The change in age range presented challenges for the IMB as well as prison staff. Many older prisoners come to Thorn Cross towards the end of a long sentence and are very familiar with and knowledgeable about the prison system. Whereas young offenders often prefer to approach a Board member in person, whilst on rota, and need time to explain their problem, older prisoners usually make a formal written application and are clearer and more articulate about their issue. The Board has had to adapt to having more written applications from more knowledgeable prisoners, sometimes raising more complex issues.
- 7.3.3 Board members have individual responsibilities for areas of special interest and attend meetings as observers, e.g. Safer Custody, DEAT, Prisoner Representatives etc.
- 7.3.4 Until spring 2013, a Board member participated in the induction programme for new prisoners. Changes in the induction process mean this is no longer the case and it has not been possible to find a way for the IMB to meet with all new prisoners. Whilst older prisoners on longer sentences usually know about the IMB and its role, this is not the case for Young Offenders. In order to fill this gap in knowledge, the Board members on rota now ensure that they always visit the unit for YOs, finding out how many new prisoners have arrived that week and trying to be as visible as possible. Leaflets are being produced for distribution to all prisoners at induction. This is not ideal but seems to be the best that can be done to fill the gap. No longer attending induction has resulted in slightly fewer visits being made to the prison by the IMB but not to the extent that it has a detrimental impact on the work.

7.5 Training and Development

- 7.5.1 The National Training programme is used as the basis for training members of the Board. Members have attended the appropriate courses as their roles change and develop. Two Board members attended the National Conference. Board meetings usually start with a short presentation by a member of the prison staff on their area of activity and the issues which they face. These have proved very informative and useful, especially during such a period of change. Various internal courses arranged at Thorn Cross have also been attended. The Team Performance Review in October helped to develop a plan to meet the new challenges being faced by the change in age range.

7.6 Support

The Board is grateful for the efficiency, hard work and cheerful support from the Clerk to the Board and all the support staff at the prison who are always eager to help with information and advice.

