



HMP WINCHESTER

The Independent Monitoring Board Annual Report 2010/2011

HMP WINCHESTER

IMB ANNUAL REPORT: JUNE 2010 – MAY 2011

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Topics shown in **bold** below are areas that must be reported on, according to current guidelines.

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2. INTRODUCTION

In this document the Board's aim has been to describe the workings of the Prison in a logical manner, while still addressing the five areas that must be reported on, according to current guidelines (Safer Custody, Healthcare, Diversity, the Care and Supervision Unit, Learning and Skills). These are identified in bold in the table of contents.

Winchester Prison is of typical Victorian design with radial wings plus a gatehouse. It is a local Category B prison with several additional buildings inside the prison walls, including a Healthcare wing and two further blocks - West Hill and the Hearn Unit - which hold Category C prisoners nearing the end of their sentence. The present total population is 686. The Board is pleased to note that during the year the Prison regained its Level 3 status.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

3.1 Issues for the Minister and Prison Service HQ

- On very many of the pages of this report, there are to be found specific examples of the inescapable impact that pressures on budgets and thus staff numbers are having on morale and the ability of the prison to fulfil its function and meet its objective to reduce re-offending.
- During the year further changes to management responsibilities have been deemed to be necessary, and the Board remains concerned that constant changes have had an adverse effect on the morale of staff and their ability to do their job efficiently. (Pages 3, 8, 10 and 11)
- Restrictions imposed by BT on the use of phone cards/phone codes which give access to cheap rates for overseas calls have resulted in Foreign Nationals in prison having to pay a disproportionately high cost for calls to their families. (Page 8)
- The fact that some prisoners seem to be able to opt for long stays in the CSU and then are moved to a CSU in another prison is a cause for concern. That this can and does happen, notwithstanding the provisions of PSO 1700, is to be regretted. (Page 10)
- The Board remains very concerned at the inordinate time taken (over a year in some cases) to recruit and security clear new staff in a number of important areas, notably in the Chaplaincy (page 7), instructors in the Carpentry and Bricklaying areas (page 12) and in Works (page 14).

3.2 Issues for the Regional Custodial Manager and Governor

- Property and its management has been a cause for concern throughout this period. The process of handing all property is simply not fit for purpose, and we have seen no evidence of progress in the establishment of an updated system that is accountable and works. (Page 3)
- Association is being curtailed far too regularly, often as a result of insufficient staffing levels. (Pages 5 and 6)
- The Incentives and Earned Privileges system (IEP) has not been used consistently. (Page 5)
- The Personal Officer scheme has an increasingly important part to play in the management and good order of the prison; it is still not working in an acceptable manner. (Page 5)
- The number of formal complaints by prisoners continues to be very high, some 50% greater than historical average. One of the main reasons for this appears to be the continuing lack of effectiveness of the prisoner applications system. (Pages 5 and 14)

- The Board is alarmed at the apparent lack of urgency in the prison procurement process – not least in the repair of washing machines on C wing that have been out of action for almost the entire reporting period. (Page 5)
- The introduction of the new role of Matron has helped to improve the smooth running of the Healthcare unit. Nevertheless, for a variety of reasons the number of medical or dental appointments not being kept remains high. (Page 6)
- Consideration is being given to relocating kitchen workers from West Hill to the main prison. The Board recognizes that there would be efficiency gains (page 6) but is also conscious that these could be at the expense of Purposeful Activity opportunities in West Hill (page 13).
- We are worried that the particular needs of Foreign National prisoners (lack of language skills, distance from family, fear of the unknown) are not given sufficient weight; it is important to ensure that appropriate staff time is specifically allocated to cover these needs. (Page 8)
- There remains an overall lack of consistent Purposeful Activity in the workshops. It is particularly disheartening that Bricklaying and Carpentry courses have been non-existent because suitably qualified Instructors have not been recruited. (Page 12)

4. SIGNIFICANT CHANGES SINCE THE LAST REPORT

The last year has seen a reduction of at least 3% in real terms in the funding for HMP Winchester. Following the Governor's examination of ways to make best use of people within a reduced budget, five principal core functions have been established: Rehabilitation; Custodial Care; Security & Public Protection; People, Culture, Communications; Finance and Performance.

5. THE CARE AND TREATMENT OF PRISONERS

RECEPTION AND INDUCTION

The new layout for Reception is now firmly embedded and the throughflow of prisoners has improved. Staff are now familiar with its workings and it is generally accepted that the whole area is a safer and more efficient part of the prison.

Yet again, a new management structure has been put in place. There is still concern that constant changes have had an adverse effect on staff morale and their ability to do their job efficiently. Several reorganisations have taken place during this reporting period and it is to be hoped that the new team will be reassured that their concerns are listened to and necessary procedural changes are introduced.

The use of combined Orderlies and Insiders continues to be useful and their input at Stage 1 Induction is welcomed.

Property and its management has been a cause for concern throughout this period. The process of handing all property is simply not fit for purpose, and we have seen no evidence of progress in creating a system that is accountable and works. Too often prisoners' property takes too long to reach the prisoner on the wings and the system at present in place for property handed in at visits is neither acceptable nor consistent. The Board has been assured that a reform of these protocols, which will be fair and transparent, is under consideration, but as yet no new system is in place.

Stage 2 Induction continues to be rather hit and miss; the venue is to be moved, in the meantime prisoners are talked at during their session and the video/tv presentations have not been used for months as minor repairs have not been carried out on the equipment. There has been a real effort made to ensure that prisoners needing basic literacy and numeracy skills are readily identified.

It seems impossible to produce a differentiated induction for those prisoners already familiar with the systems in place in HMP Winchester and for those who are in the prison for the first time. Induction for Vulnerable Prisoners now only takes place weekly, but the quality and venue are more satisfactory.

Staff delivering Induction are fully trained and aware of the importance of the job that they do. Perhaps once the move is complete greater use will be made of audio and visual resources and there will be more effort made to ensure that prisoners understand fully the information that they are given.

SAFER CUSTODY

Safer Custody has benefited from consistent staffing and management by a small but dedicated team. It is noted that the team displays high standards of professionalism coupled with a pragmatic approach in an extremely challenging environment. All members of the team show compassion towards the care of individual prisoners identified "at risk of self-harm or suicide". When identified, these prisoners are placed on a care plan (Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork programme, an ACCT plan).

The weekly multi disciplinary ACCT meeting continues to provide a reliable platform for both review and support from a broad cross section of disciplines within the prison involved with opening, reviewing and appropriate closure of ACCTs.

The number of ACCTs opened remains high, consistently averaging 30 on a monthly basis. "Cutting" continues to be the most significant method of self-harm, with the highest levels arising from the Vulnerable Prisoner wing. These numbers continue to be inflated by multiple acts by serial self-harmers. Often, these prisoners have mental health issues (as do many others) and it is to the credit of staff that, despite receiving no formal training in mental health, they do a good job in looking after these vulnerable prisoners.

This year has seen significant improvements with reporting and recording of incidents on the Prison Service data base (P-NOMIS). The Safer Custody team has introduced additional Violence Reporting using a wing manager based system which allows tracking and audit of these problems.

The external Safer Custody audit (May 2011) highlighted two shortcomings - both of which have been acknowledged by the Winchester team. Case reviews were too often conducted with minimal multi disciplinary involvement, and some Care Planning fell below the required standard.

During the reporting year, one prisoner died in custody (due to natural cause). This death will still be subject to investigation by the Prison and Probation Ombudsman. It remains frustrating that the reports and lessons to be learned from deaths in custody can still take more than a year to be published (as highlighted in our 2010 report). It should however be noted that the Ombudsman's last two reports (both deaths were due to natural causes) were complimentary on standards and procedures which Winchester prison has in place for dealing with deaths in custody.

A number of prison officers do a very professional job of interacting/engaging with prisoners in general, and those on ACCT in particular.

OPERATION OF THE WINGS

Prisoners and officers have frequently been moved around the wings and there has been a lack of consistency in staffing teams and in wing roles. The regime has suffered as a result.

Prisoners have almost always had the "Golden Hour" (8-9am) when their cells are unlocked for association, but the hour has often shrunk to 45 minutes and it has sometimes been the only

opportunity for phone calls, exercise, showers and collecting medication. There have been many complaints from prisoners trying to contact their families who may work/go to school, for whom evenings are the only time it is possible to get in touch by phone, and evening association has often been cancelled due to insufficient staff levels. It is essential that the length of association achieved is accurately recorded on each of the wings.

In 2011 a new system of work allocation was introduced, offering most prisoners the chance to work part-time, but because this also meant half pay it has not been popular. The labour allocation board has not been held regularly, and there have been many complaints about inconsistency in wage rates; we understand that new systems for work and pay will be introduced shortly. The Incentives and Earned Privileges (IEP) system has not been used consistently and prisoners have not been assessed regularly; very few prisoners have been put on the basic level.

The Personal Officer scheme has still not been implemented in an acceptable way. Prisoners often claim not to know who their Personal Officer is, and the quiet prisoner can easily be overlooked by the system. Every Personal Officer is scheduled to have a fortnightly meeting with his "mentees" but this does not happen, so problems are not always being picked up; however, many officers do have good relationships with prisoners.

There is often a problem with prisoners getting to work/education on time, and this is attributed to lack of officers free to unlock and escort prisoners. (Similar difficulties are noted in respect of prisoners attending for medical or dental appointments in Healthcare.) These problems clearly need addressing as a matter of urgency.

The wing application system is still not working, and there are issues relating to applications being delayed or lost.

There is a serious problem with prison procurement: as an example, washing machines on C wing have not been working for almost the entire reporting period despite endless prompting by the Board. The machines themselves were very expensive, and the projected repair costs bear no comparison with those that would be expected outside. It is a similar case with computers, where the purchase price outside is reducing by the minute but within the Prison Service is disproportionately high.

Although there are many excellent and thoughtful officers, it seems that because of short-term staff shortages they are moved from their normal work setting to cover absences elsewhere. This leads to lack of knowledge of specific prisoners, lack of interest in the wing they find themselves on, and lack of recognition of need for timely actions.

PRISONER COUNCIL

Following up the system which was started last year, the Prisoner Council has met in the main prison at approximately monthly intervals. It is well attended by governors and representatives from Kitchen, HCC, Education and Finance staff, and by prisoner representatives. There are always frank views expressed, and in general there is a reasonable follow-up of points raised each month. There is a Prisoner and Staff Consultation meeting held monthly at West Hill: these were a bit sporadic in the early part of the year but now there is a new governor, there is full attendance and good response to questions raised.

VISITS

As we go to press a pleasant, newly converted suite of rooms with excellent facilities for the disabled (including adjacent parking bays) is about to open. This should address most of the current difficulties with the reception area for visitors: no indoor waiting room, inadequate and often dirty toilets, poor baby-changing facilities and just a sandwich van for refreshments.

There are, however, shortcomings in the visits hall itself. The children's corner is only intermittently staffed by volunteers because security vetting takes so long. A second group of volunteers dispenses refreshments and there are two complaints; prices are too high (10p for a paper cup of water) and there is little on sale apart from crisps and sweet snacks. Bearing in mind that some visitors have come a long way, this is inadequate.

This year West Hill visits have been transferred to the main prison which has meant a saving in staff but has been achieved without loss of visits time for the prisoners. Staff who make the bookings do so efficiently and politely, and the atmosphere in the visits room is pleasant, orderly and decent.

HEALTHCARE

There have been many improvements in Healthcare in 2010/11, not least, the introduction of the new role of Matron, and the Board is very pleased at the work he has put in to date which has improved the smooth running of the Healthcare unit.

The introduction of a bi-monthly Healthcare newsletter for all prisoners and staff is welcome. We also highly commend the end of life care and the dedication shown by the staff concerned.

There is now daily nursing cover in West Hill in marked contrast to the hit and miss system of last year, and the increase in nursing staff numbers has much improved, although numbers are still down on complement.

The increased emphasis on improving the health of prisoners is welcome, although some clinics are not being held, as it can be too expensive to use Agency staff for them. The sexual health screening clinic no longer takes place, although the GP will screen any prisoner who requests it.

The number of prisoners not attending medical or dental appointments remains high, (although some improvement has been noted with GP appointments), and this may be partly due to discipline officers being unavailable to escort prisoners to Healthcare. There is also a serious problem relating to the Saturday morning GP Surgery, which runs from 10am to 12pm. The doctor may not see his first patient until 10.45am due to staff not being available to escort prisoners from their cells. As a result, some prisoners on the doctor's list for that day are not seen until the following week; frequently the doctor fails to complete his list during the week as well. The Board considers that this is unacceptable and that all patients listed should be seen on the day specified.

The question of nursing staff being able to prescribe emergency medication such as Paracetamol and antibiotics has still not been resolved despite appropriate training being provided.

Association in Healthcare is very hit and miss and frequently days can go by without any. The Board considers that more emphasis should be put on prisoners getting regular association.

The Board is concerned that not enough is being done to ensure the continuation of healthcare for prisoners when released, particularly where there is no family support and especially in the case of prisoners with mental health problems.

Nevertheless, the Board would like to congratulate the Matron, medical team and the discipline officers in Healthcare for the dedication they give to the prisoners in their care.

KITCHENS

With the Catering Manager now in place at long last, manning levels are to budget and as a department it is a very effective and motivated area of the establishment.

Agency staff have all been replaced by prisoners, which is more cost effective. Consideration is being given to introducing prisoners from the main prison to ensure reliability on timing, rather than moving prisoners from West Hill which takes time and manpower to supervise (but see page 13).

The West Hill finishing kitchen is again now closed in response to budgetary constraints; the Board considers this to be disappointing as there is a loss of work places for prisoners. The Staff Mess kitchen is also closed long term.

The RARPA Programme (Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement) in non accredited Learning is up and running, and every effort should be made to ensure that it continues. It has effectively created another 26 training opportunities and was an in-house idea by the Kitchen management which could and should be launched nationally.

The previously-held monthly Food Forums have now been absorbed into the Prisoner Council (with results depending on whether or not a member of the kitchen staff is in attendance). It is apparent that many prisoners in the kitchen are showing a very positive attitude behind the serveries, with a sense of "ownership" and inbuilt enthusiasm and confidence.

Catering for Ramadan proved to be a success, with good initiatives taken to ensure that both Muslim prisoners and representatives of other faith groups were consulted. As a result, the preparation of all foods for the period worked well. The dishes were kept hot for up to seven hours through use of insulated containers.

Service areas are very clean, although there are still issues with some antiquated equipment; in particular, transportation trolleys need to be properly repaired or replaced.

Food leaving the main kitchen is of good quality and is hot. Lunch with sandwiches has achieved its objective and allows more flexibility within the budget restraints; victualling provision is now increased due to savings being made. The 28 day Menu cycle has proved a success and choice is substantial. Portion control is being applied effectively.

CANTEEN

The process of off-site bagging up of canteen purchases has now been accepted and is working well with very few complaints. Delivery by wing officers is being carried in a disciplined fashion, and minimal shortages have been reported within the deliveries. The two-week lead time is now accepted by prisoners and there has been very little disruption to the service. The transition, which was well supported by the Catering Manager has freed up an extra two people to allow support in other areas of the establishment.

CHAPLAINCY

The past year has not been at all easy for the Chaplaincy. Following the retirement of the Anglican Chaplain in 2010, the recruitment of his successor has proved to be extremely difficult and, to date, no one has been appointed.

The shortfall of one Chaplain from what is a small team anyway put considerable extra loading on the other members, not least the Acting Co-ordinating Chaplain, and this was exacerbated when the Church Army Chaplain was dismissed. This was particularly unfortunate as the Chaplain concerned had been running the highly successful SORI restorative justice courses which, as yet, have not been able to restart.

Despite all these setbacks, the Chaplaincy team has pulled together with commendable spirit and continues its pastoral work very successfully, while church attendance has remained encouragingly good.

LIBRARY

The libraries in the main prison and West Hill are an excellent resource for the prison population, and there is also a small stock of books in Healthcare. In addition, books can be reserved through the Hampshire County Library Service. The library orderlies provide excellent support, and frequently comment on how much they enjoy their work.

The layout of the main prison library has been improved, and now provides a much more open and welcoming environment. Earlier in the year, the Librarian assumed responsibility for providing the "Toe by Toe" programme for prisoners with literacy difficulties.

The provision of DVDs from the County Library Service has ceased, although prisoners with televisions can now access the Film Four channel in addition to the main terrestrial programmes. Those prisoners entitled to DVD players are able to use their own money for the purchase of DVDs from an authorised supplier.

Some 10% of books borrowed have been lost during the year, but the Librarian and her staff have introduced new measures in an attempt to ensure that books are properly returned to stock.

DIVERSITY

A new PSI issued in April 2011 no longer makes mandatory the existence of a Race Equality Action Team, nor a local disability policy, nor the existence of a disability liaison officer. A new Equalities Working Committee has been formed, but the Board fears that this may be another change which makes demands on time and effort but yet results in less effective supervision.

The Foreign Nationals clerk has been able to structure the administrative side effectively, producing a weekly list of all FNs (remaining at 50-70, with those sentence-expired prisoners held solely under IS91 similar to last year at a maximum of 7), and ensuring that all Immigration aspects of their cases are registered. However, inevitably the FNLO has much less time to spend actually on the wings. There used to be a monthly meeting held to monitor FN prisoner welfare and concerns, but this has not been held during 2011.

An Embassy Day was held in November (with another due in June 2011) to which all FNP's were invited, and it was attended by representatives from Embassies, the UK Border Agency (UKBA) and other interested parties. The Detention Advisory Service, although unable to attend this, is now contracted to provide additional support in the prison but this has not been used so far.

There have been problems with members of staff from UKBA attending the prison: the local Immigration offices have been overworked and understaffed, and prison rules seemed to indicate that UKBA staff were not automatically cleared to draw keys to enter prison. This has, to some extent, been addressed and a member of UKBA usually attends the prison every couple of weeks, (although nobody from UKBA attended for three months from December).

The telephone interpreting service (Big Word) has been used 85 times during the year, but it seems the majority of calls were made by Induction /Reception rather than by officers on wings.

BT (because of its monopoly) has been able to stop the Prison Service making use of any of the many phone cards/phone codes which give access to cheap rates for overseas calls. This means that Foreign Nationals in prison are paying a disproportionately high cost for calls to their families.

It is of concern to the Board that the specific needs of FNs (lack of language skills, distance from family, fear of the unknown) are not given sufficient weight, and we see it as important to ensure that appropriate staff time is specifically allocated to cover these needs.

REAT meetings have been held more regularly over the last year, probably due to the active involvement of the No 1 Governor, and Winchester is fortunate in having few racist issues. There were only 94 recorded racist incidents in the year, a fall on the previous year of almost half. It is probable that this is partly due to a couple of problem prisoners in the previous year and is an indication that one prisoner making complaints can skew the prison figures.

The problems with Cell Share Risk Assessment (CSRA) reported last year seem to have diminished considerably. From the end of March there have been significant changes to the process with now only standard risk or high risk prisoners: this makes it easier to identify if there is potential risk with a prisoner who has previous history of racism, but it is another change which will need further monitoring.

Finally, disabled prisoners are now assessed for fitness to work by the head of Healthcare. The figure of approximately 35% who are now in employment is likely to rise as the new employment allocation group works on this.

FORMER ARMED FORCES PERSONNEL IN PRISON

The number of former Armed Forces personnel serving sentences in HMP Winchester has increased from 25 in 2010 to 41 (current figure for 2011). This increase represents all three Services with the majority coming from the Army. The Board has continued to monitor the work of the Veterans in Custody Support Officer (VICSO) who has continued to do an excellent job in identifying Veterans as they arrive at HMP Winchester, following up on their particular needs and arranging for help and support to be given to them as necessary.

The Board sent a representative to the Veterans in Prison Association (VIPA) Annual Conference in April 2010 which was addressed by HMCIP and the Chief Executive of NOMS. It was clear that HMP Winchester was to the forefront in the way that Veterans are identified and helped. The Board welcomes the initiative to hold a Forum for all former Armed Forces personnel currently serving at HMP Winchester in the late Summer 2011 which will also involve outside agencies such as the Royal British Legion, SSAFA Forces Help and Combat Stress. We are also pleased to note that the VICSO has been given additional hours in order to deal with his increasing workload.

LIFERS & INDETERMINATE SENTENCE PRISONERS

At the end of May 2011 there were 24 lifers accommodated at HMP Winchester, of whom 14 were subject to an Indeterminate Sentence for Public Protection (IPP)(CJA2003). It is this group that has previously been a major concern for the Board. Winchester is a local community prison and as such does not operate any Offending Behaviour Programmes. The majority of those subject to IPPs are required to undertake a range of rehabilitative programmes before they can be considered for release. The development of provision available nationally for IPPs and the efforts of prison based probation staff in relocating prisoners have improved and facilitated the transfer of such prisoners to other more appropriate establishments.

Whilst there remain some individual cases where relocation is delayed, particularly where the prisoner is accommodated in CSU, overall the transfer time has steadily improved; during the last year some 65 prisoners (21 life sentence and 44 IPP) have been transferred to more appropriate training establishments enabling them to engage with rehabilitative programmes. In addition a regular meeting has been established to engage with the lifer population at the prison and has sought to address some of the unique difficulties and issues experienced by this group, thus offering a more positive environment in which to develop and progress sentence plans.

VULNERABLE PRISONERS (VPs)

D wing is nearly always fully occupied by VPs, which has the advantage of a more consistent management of their regime. The Board is pleased to note, once again, that the VP classrooms are staffed by a committed team of tutors, and their work is much appreciated by many prisoners.

During the year, the computer refurbishment work formerly carried out in the VP (No 5) Workshop was transferred to another non-VP workshop, where the programme continues to benefit schools in Africa. Part-time work has been introduced in No 5 Workshop in order to provide work opportunities for a greater number of prisoners and, despite some initial concerns, the inflow of contracted light assembly work continues to be maintained.

The workshop instructors and the IT course tutor demonstrate a high level of professional commitment to the quality of work produced and to the supervision of vulnerable prisoners.

DRUG TREATMENT

Winchester continues to offer effective programmes to address substance related behaviours. Key Performance Targets relating to drug treatment commencement have been exceeded with 1205 Drug Intervention Records (assessments) being completed. Targets relating to commencement and completion of treatment have also been exceeded; this is a considerable achievement during a testing time of reorganisation and integration of clinical and therapeutic treatment.

In line with priorities set by the National Treatment Agency, implementation of an Integrated Drug Treatment System (IDTS) is almost complete with policies and protocols now agreed for integrated working. The movement of services to C wing has taken place with clinical, CARATs and prison staff now offering a fully integrated service which provides opportunities for detoxing, short term maintenance, drug testing and group and individual work to address social and psychological issues. Prisoners with substance related issues are gradually being moved onto C wing accommodation which will facilitate full engagement with the phased treatment programme.

The allocation of resources also enables vulnerable prisoners to be offered weekly sessions, raising awareness of the services available and opportunity to engage with provision.

IDTS provides opportunities for alcohol interventions and is currently delivering an awareness programme which seeks to educate prisoners about the consequences and potential dangers of alcohol abuse. The clinical team can initiate alcohol brief interventions for those requiring additional support. Where the clinical team assesses that a prisoner has more complex needs or there are clear links with offending, the CARATs team offers a structured and focused intervention which seeks to secure change. This is a positive development and one that can be built on as IDTS is fully rolled out.

CARE AND SUPERVISION UNIT (CSU)

The Care and Supervision Unit has again been subject to managerial changes during this reporting period. It now has a dedicated team of staff who carry out their very difficult job with professionalism and care. They often have to deal with the most intransigent prisoners, who are used to manipulating the system, and they do this with good humour and tolerance.

There have been fewer long term prisoners in the CSU and the Board sees this as a positive step. However, the fact that some prisoners seem to be able to opt for long stays in the CSU and then are moved to the CSU of another prison is a cause for concern. That this can and does happen, notwithstanding the provisions of PSO 1700, is to be regretted.

The physical siting of the CSU in HMP Winchester makes it almost impossible for there to be any sort of regime that will help in rehabilitation. At best it is a holding area where prisoners are

confined until they return to normal location. Whilst there, they are treated with decency and respect by all of the staff. Too often during this reporting period, staff have been taken off duty in the CSU and deployed elsewhere in the prison. The inevitable effect is that all efforts to run a regime within the CSU fail until the full complement of staff return.

Reviews continue to be held whenever possible on Tuesdays and members of the Board attend. Adjudications are carried out efficiently and sensitively.

6. REHABILITATION & OFFENDER MANAGEMENT

A marked change has occurred with Offender Management during the past year. Following the Governor's examination of making best use of people within a reduced budget regime, Rehabilitation has been created as the principal core function of five at Winchester Prison with effect from 1 April 2011. The other core functions are: Finance and Performance; People, Culture, Communications; Custodial Care; Security & Public Protection.

The senior manager who had been very capably running Offender Management prior to the change has been put in charge of Rehabilitation, with Offender Management plus nine other functions under him. These are: Resettlement (BETA); Drugs Services; CARATs; Learning and Skills; PASRO; IDTS; SDP; Foreign Nationals; Purposeful Activity. As yet, there has been insufficient time to gauge the effectiveness of this major reorientation of functions.

The head of the restructured Offender Management is very able and enthusiastic about her new role which augurs well for the future. Within the Resettlement function, BETA has been innovative and enjoyed considerable success. For example, in July 2010 a Resettlement Officer was allocated to each prisoner and, despite staff reductions, BETA still managed to achieve the housing target of 84% overall, with a high of 90% in April 2011. In December 2010, a Resettlement Unit was set up in the Hearn. This has resulted in referrals to Learn Direct in the Community, enabling access to education and training on release. In April 2011, funding was received for three fulltime staff working to support prisoners and their involvement with families. The support will continue on release, providing links to community based services. In the PAU, some difficulties are still being experienced with P-NOMIS, which is not felt to be particularly user-friendly. Despite this, the staff provide a consistently high quality service, a crucial element of the prison's administrative task.

7. THE GENERAL REGIME

SECURITY

The Board is pleased to note the recent comments of the Deputy Director Custody for South Central that she regards Security at Winchester as a "Beacon of Excellence whose working practices will be rolled out across the region". Also, the Chief Inspector of Prisons most recent report states that "Winchester remained a reasonably safe prison with good security".

Over 2900 Security and over 300 Police Intelligence Reports have been received this year. This has led to a move to intelligence-led searches rather than random ones, although all cells will still be searched to achieve targets. Covert testing was introduced in July 2010 which aims to test procedures and keep staff alert. A schedule ensures that Contingency Plans are reviewed and updated regularly. There is a very good relationship with the Police Intelligence Officer responsible for the flow of information from the Police to the prison and vice-versa.

As in all prisons, drugs, mobile phones, and other illegal items, together with bullying, which is often related, continue to be a problem. Over 300 finds were made, nearly double those of last year, illustrating the benefits of the daily intelligence briefings. 61% of these finds were mobile phones, SIM cards and chargers, 21% drug related, 10% weapons and 8% hooch. Sources are:

visits, new receptions, mail, staff (two arrested this year) and solicitors (one arrested). Rule 39 'legal' mail items are now x-rayed. Other mail is regularly searched by the Dog Section.

It is regrettable that the control of access to mobile telephony and of the ramifications of drug dependency is likely to remain a major challenge occupying many resources which could otherwise be better employed. There are Child Protection issues in visits resulting from continued under-resourcing in the PPU, and there is still a lack of trained observers for the visits camera.

A Security Audit by external Prison Service auditors was conducted in May 2011. HMP Winchester achieved an overall score of GREEN (91%), made up as follows: Tools, Equipment and Property 93%; Communications and Surveillance 89%; Categorisation and Assessment 91%. The Board congratulates the Security team on this outstanding result.

LEARNING AND SKILLS

Prisoners' literacy and numeracy are assessed on admission. This assessment is thorough and links well with education. Attendance is voluntary, however. As such it is possible that those prisoners with the most to gain can avoid being assessed. Every effort should be made to find ways to assess all prisoners admitted to Winchester.

Prisoners wishing to improve their literacy are able to follow the "Toe by Toe" programme. During this year the librarian has assumed responsibility for this. The Board hopes that this move will see "Toe by Toe" better established.

Following a Prison Service review, 80% of the curriculum courses now deliver a nationally recognised qualification. The Board recognises the need for improved efficiency and outcomes. However, although not quantifiable, we remain concerned that examined courses can put prisoners off, fearing failure. Plans to combine education with work (eg bricklaying, carpentry and practical mathematics) show vision and genuine potential. If successful this strategy could well be a means of introducing education in a more relevant format.

The regime is being altered such that prisoners combine part-time education with work. However, operational problems are being encountered in allocating prisoners. The Board hope this development is supported and any problems with allocations are quickly resolved.

Twelve prisoners are undertaking distance learning courses. Such courses require a small amount of administrative support. There is, however, no identified budget for these prisoners. Any support they receive is a result of goodwill. As budgets are further constrained, such support may be less forthcoming. Distance learning is clearly appropriate for certain prisoners. Were it to be unavailable at Winchester this would represent (albeit for a small number) a significant loss.

In the Carpentry and Bricklaying areas, the well motivated instructors have both left this year and have yet to be replaced. Despite having two excellent working spaces (one built a year ago) and prisoners keen to gain qualifications, these areas have lain vacant for nearly a year and represent a dreadful lost opportunity and waste of resources. Workshops 6 and 4 both undertake light work for industry, but currently do not have as good a supply as Workshop 5.

The gardening corner continues to be bright and beautiful, manned by well-managed prisoners who enjoy their work. There is evidence of a real effort to provide a good working environment, and this deserves due congratulations.

WEST HILL AND THE HEARN UNIT

During the past year, West Hill and the Hearn Unit have generally remained stagnant. It is a fact that there is a difference between Category C prisoners as defined by NOMS and Category C West Hill Protocol prisoners. For some reason, this cannot be managed satisfactorily and is at

the root of some of the problems which have beset West Hill, evidenced by the continuing low successful ROTL applications and an unworkable IEP system. Added to this is the on-going "Wall Syndrome" (on which we reported last year) and the resulting sense of frustration and feeling of isolation felt by the SOs and officers who often have been moved at short notice to other parts of the prison to cover staff shortages with the consequent knock-on effect for the regime in West Hill and the Hearn Unit.

The Board has been concerned about the overall lack of consistent Purposeful Activity. As noted above, Bricklaying and Carpentry have been non-existent because suitably qualified Instructors have not been recruited; the Barbering and Cooking classes were transferred to the main prison (on the grounds of non-cost effectiveness) and there was some delay in getting replacement classes up and running – however now the Education provision for West Hill and the Hearn Unit has been re-modelled to take account of the needs of those prisoners who are serving short sentences including an Employability course aimed at improving prisoners' CVs and helping them to find work on release; the Kitchens Party (normally 22 per day) has stayed in West Hill but should it move to the main prison then it would increase the difficulty in finding meaningful employment for those prisoners especially as the finishing kitchen in West Hill was de-commissioned earlier in the year.

The Board noted with regret that the dedicated CARATs worker was withdrawn to the main prison due to the changeover to IDTS. Thus her invaluable work in West Hill and the Hearn Unit was reduced by 80% - one afternoon per week to deal with PASRO referrals and an afternoon (Friday) to deal with general problems and facilitating the Alcoholics Anonymous meeting. It is hoped that the original support will be restored once IDTS has settled down.

On the positive side, the Board has noted the much improved provision of Healthcare cover as well as the work done to the West Hill windows overlooking the all-weather sports pitch. What is needed now is the money for the kickboards and then the three-year wait for this important asset to meet Health and Safety standards will be over and it can be used properly. Once again, the Works department has done an excellent job in keeping the buildings in a good state of repair.

In summary, this has been a disappointing year for West Hill and the Hearn Unit. The staff has done its best to maintain the regime; the staff/prisoner relationships are on the whole good, and the Personal Officer Scheme here does work. There are still some outstanding HMCIP recommendations which have not yet been addressed but the Board has welcomed the recent appointment of a new governor for West Hill and the Hearn Unit who is only too well aware of the problems which need to be resolved if the establishment is to improve its effectiveness as a "Closed Category C Resettlement Unit for 129 Prisoners".

WORKS

The Works department has carried out a continuous programme of alterations, improvement and repairs to keep the prison functioning. This year the major projects have been:

- a new Visitors' Centre with disabled facilities in the Guymer Centre
- a Staff Mess Room created in a disused paint store
- completion of 80% of phase 3 of Reception refurbishment
- completion of replacement of perimeter lights
- replacing West Hill cell windows with double glazed units
- a new PBX room to upgrade the communication systems

Smaller but important projects have included:

- replacing the toilet seats on B wing with a more robust model
- replacing the faulty lift for the heated food trolleys
- improving CCTV coverage at West Hill

The department is committed to improving the energy efficiency of the prison. The new windows in West Hill brought about an immediate reduction in fuel consumption which was further improved by the replacement of the old and unreliable boilers.

A major irritant is the slowness of recruitment and security vetting for new staff and in at least one case a good candidate was lost because he could not afford to wait for clearance. The department has been short of a plumber and an electrician for many months.

There are some Health and Safety concerns. Training has improved and a new system for reporting accidents has been introduced but there have been 26 litigation claims (both staff and prisoners), an increase on last year. The H&S officer states that prisoner accidents are not always reported promptly, which makes it difficult to establish the facts.

GROUNDS

Over the year, there has been an improvement in the general cleanliness and tidiness of the prison external areas. Some problem areas do remain particularly alongside B wing and the void between A wing and B wing. The flat roof above the kitchens is always covered with debris thrown from the wings, as is the gully leading to the CSU. Decorative beds are maintained, but it remains unclear why more cannot be done to grow and to use vegetables.

COMMUNICATION

The Board has continued to monitor the work of the Staff Consultation Committee (SCC). During the reporting period, the SCC has held monthly meetings which have resulted, inter alia, in the setting up of a course for Stress Awareness and the endorsement of a Communication Strategy for 2010/2011. The Board has noted that overall there has been some improvement in communication at all levels but it is generally agreed that there is still scope for better use of the established channels of communication in the prison. In January 2011, the SCC invited all staff to complete an anonymous Questionnaire following expressions of concern about low morale of staff in HMP Winchester. Following the Questionnaire, a sub-committee of the SCC produced an Interim Report which was accepted in principle by the Senior Leadership Team in May 2011. The No 1 Governor has established an SLT/SCC Working Group to produce a strategy for addressing, and resolving where possible, the causes of low morale as highlighted in the Interim Report. The Board has taken note of this valuable work and will continue to monitor it.

PRISON PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Though the prison met most of its performance targets, it is of concern that, as last year, important areas where targets were not met have a direct impact on prisoner welfare:

- the high level of staff sickness. Staff shortage has had a major impact during the year on failures fully to deliver the prison regime eg cancellation of association
- the failure to meet the target for purposeful activity
- the failure to meet the target for time unlocked

It is of great concern that targets for response time to complaints, serious assaults, purposeful activity and time unlocked have been downgraded from national to local targets. These targets directly relate to prisoner welfare and, arguably, rehabilitation and their diminished importance appears directly to conflict with the Prison Service's commitment to rehabilitation and reduction in re-offending.

The number of formal complaints continues to be very high, some 50% greater than historical average. One of the main reasons for this appears to be the continuing lack of effectiveness of the prisoner applications system, a matter which the Board has raised many times during the year.

The Board is concerned that the same failures to meet target and high level of prisoner complaints were highlighted in last year's report and that nothing appears to have been resolved.

8. EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

- Safer Custody has benefited from consistent staffing and management by a small but dedicated team, which displays high standards of professionalism coupled with a pragmatic approach within an extremely challenging environment. The weekly multi disciplinary ACCT meeting continues to be extremely worthwhile.
- Regular Prisoner Council meetings are providing the opportunity for open and effective discourse between governors, other staff and prisoners.
- The end of life care provided in Healthcare is excellent, and the dedication of the staff involved is highly commended by the Board.
- The RARPA Programme launched in the Kitchen (Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement) is proving to be very worthwhile. This was an in-house idea by the Kitchen management which could and should be launched nationally.
- We welcome the initiative to hold a Forum for all former Armed Forces personnel currently serving at HMP Winchester in the late Summer 2011 which will also involve outside agencies such as the Royal British Legion, SSAFA Forces Help and Combat Stress.
- The Board welcomes the establishment of a Resettlement Unit specifically serving West Hill and the Hearn unit.
- We are pleased to note that the recent Security Audit by external Prison Service auditors gave HMP Winchester a very high overall score (of 91%).

9. THE WORK OF THE BOARD

The Board currently has seventeen members divided into four teams; each team deals with all issues on their duty week, and rota reports are sent to the Governor. Members all have areas of special interest, and these have been reported on as appropriate. Within the Board's monitoring role, members have attended a number of prison committees. A total of 636 individual visits have been made to the prison during the year, and members regularly attend reviews and adjudications in the CSU. Nine serious incidents were monitored.

During the year there has been no training specifically provided by the prison for members, although individuals have attended Manipulation & Conditioning and ACCT training. Provision has also been made for annual Board training on the use and security of prison keys.

It is now a policy to have a speaker from within the prison to talk to members at the beginning of most Board meetings, and sessions have included speakers from the Education, Human Resources and Mental Health areas. The Board has carried out its annual Team Performance Review which provided a thoughtful analysis of strengths and weaknesses.

Two members attended the 2010 Annual IMB Conference which they found disappointing in content and quality.

There was a Board visit to the Isle of Wight prisons, focusing on Albany and Parkhurst. Visits were received from the IMBs of Ford and Wandsworth prisons.

10. CONCLUSIONS

In this report we have endeavoured to present a balanced picture of those areas in which the treatment of prisoners is working well and those over which we have significant concerns.

In successive reports the Board has recorded that Winchester, like many other prisons, has to deal with the effects of overcrowding and the constant churn of prisoners. We see very little evidence of change in respect of these key issues for the Prison Service.

As noted at the outset, there can be no doubt that budget cuts are undermining the level of service provided in a wide range of the prison's activities, and thus inevitably threaten the Prison Service's ability to meet its fundamental objective to reduce re-offending.

APPENDIX: NUMBERS OF VISITS, ETC

	2009/10	2010/11
Full complement of members	16	16
Actual members	17	17
Board meetings held	11	12
Visits to other prisons	2	2
Rota visits	311	322
Total number of visits to the prison	622	636
Serious incidents attended	7	9