



**Independent Monitoring Board
HMP Wymott**

ANNUAL REPORT

**Reporting Period
June 2010 - May 2011**

Statutory Role of the IMB

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

The Board is specifically charged to:

1. Satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody within its prison and the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release.
2. Inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom he has delegated authority as it judges appropriate, any concerns it has.
3. Report annually to the Secretary of State on how 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 the prison's records.

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Section 1

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

- 1.1 HMP Wymott is a male Category 'C' closed training prison which houses both vulnerable prisoners and prisoners on main location.
- 1.2 The vulnerable prisoners are held in separate accommodation that has its own range of workshops and education and training facilities. Wymott is, therefore, to all intents and purposes two separate prisons within one compound.
- 1.3 The prison opened in 1979. Prisoners on main location are housed in relatively new accommodation built in 1996 with a high standard of facilities and security. Vulnerable prisoners are mainly housed in the two remaining original house blocks. Unlike the new blocks these do not provide integral sanitation; there are adequate arrangements, however, for night sanitation.
- 1.4 In 2004 the prison opened a new residential block of two wings (G and H). These were initially used as the prison's Induction Unit but are now used as standard residential units. G Wing provides lock-up cellular accommodation for vulnerable prisoners (as distinct from the older style VP accommodation on A and B Houses) and H Wing houses main location prisoners.
- 1.5 In September 2008 the prison opened a further residential unit, K Wing, with 64 cells and an operational capacity of 70. The Drug Therapeutic Community (TC), which was previously located on F Wing, moved to the new unit. The layout of F Wing was modified to make it suitable for use as the prison's induction unit with separation of vulnerable and main location prisoners.
- 1.6 During the reporting year a number of double cells on I Wing were closed with additional cells being opened on the Category C side to compensate. The current operational capacity of the prison has not changed from 1176 with certified normal accommodation (CNA) of 1113. CNA represents the good, decent standard of accommodation that the Prison Service aspires to provide for all prisoners. The prison operated at or close to its operational capacity throughout the year. This means that the prison is generally operating at 105% of decent capacity.
- 1.7 The prison has two specialist residential units, a drug therapeutic community and an elderly and disabled community.
- 1.8 The Central Lancashire Primary Care Trust provides healthcare services at HMP Wymott. Education (Offender Learning and Skills Service – OLASS) is

provided by The Manchester College. Phoenix Futures run the drug therapeutic community.

N.B. The information given in Section 1 above refers to the reporting year and may not be currently accurate

Section 2

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(a) Issues requiring a response (note: numbers refer to paragraphs in the report)

For the attention of the Justice Secretary

- The Board urges the Justice Secretary to review the continuing injustices of the IPP sentence. (4.6.3)
- Specifically the Justice Secretary is also asked to review the current delays in the transfer to open conditions of IPP prisoners for whom he has approved that progression (4.6.4)
- The Board draws to the attention of the Justice Secretary its concerns at the continuing ability to deliver an effective regime in the face of continuing and increasing financial constraints. The effectiveness and decency of the regime are dependent on sufficient staff being available to maintain that regime (3.4.7, 4.2.8, 4.3.1 and elsewhere)
- Consider extending Adult Social Service provision to include elderly prisoners in its remit (3.2.18)
- Re-consider improvements in the poor condition of A and B Houses (4.3.3)

For the attention of the Director of NOMS

- The Board urges the Director of NOMS to address issues concerning the transfer of IPP prisoners, some of whom are sent to HMP Wymott with a specific sentence plan target to complete an offence focused programme which is not provided by the prison (4.6.3 and 4.2.5)
- Relevant NOMS staff are asked to review urgently the provision of information in foreign languages and the quality of the translations used (3.2.24)

For the attention of the PCT

- The PCT is asked to address urgently the continuing delay in appointing a general practitioner to the prison (3.1.1)

For the attention of the Governor

- Consider the refurbishment of and increased seating in the visits holding area (4.5.7)
- Consider an increase in the number of closed visit cubicles (4.5.8)

- Consider the month's eligibility start date of Prison Visiting Orders to be concurrent with the issue of Orders not at the beginning of the following month (4.5.2)
- Consider an increase in the number of operators handling bookings (4.5.9)
- Consider an improvement of ventilation in the visits area (4.5.8)
- Consider the separation of the roles of Diversity Manager and Race Equality Officer (3.2.1)
- Seek external involvement in RIRF audits and diversity impact assessments as a matter of urgency (3.2.10).
- Consider an increase in the time provision for the role of Disability Liaison Officer (3.2.15)

(b) Overall Judgement

The general view of the Board is that the prison has maintained the good standard that we described in our report for 2009-10. Generally staff maintain a good standard of decency in their work with prisoners, especially when dealing with them as individuals. Regime pressures and financial constraints, however, tend to erode the time and opportunities for such individual contact.

In the Board's view, where the prison falls away from an acceptable standard it is often for reasons outside the direct control of the management and staff of the Prison. The Board has previously raised concerns regarding the inappropriate double occupancy of single cells. It has noted previous responses to its comments on this topic but holds to the view that the practice does not conform to published international or national standards or basic standards of decency. The fact that the cells are officially designated for double occupancy does not in any way justify the practice.

The Board has noted a number of improvements in the provision of healthcare in the Prison, largely as a result of the efforts and initiative of the staff. The Board remains concerned, however, at the lack of a permanent solution to the provision of GP services and considers that this should be an urgent priority for the senior staff of the PCT.

Although Prison staff are maintaining a good standard the Board would wish to emphasise its view that this position cannot be maintained indefinitely in the face of escalating financial constraints. It is already apparent to the Board that, in order to maintain core services, other services, which may be seen as peripheral, are vulnerable. As a small illustrating example, the Board has received a number of applications from prisoners concerning the difficulty they experience in securing prompt delivery of ordered articles. Investigation suggested that this may be because the Reception staff, who would normally deal with this during evening association, had been diverted to cover a staffing shortfall elsewhere. It would be easy to dismiss this as a minor inconvenience, or even as

insignificant. In the Board's view that would be a mistake since these are matters which are significant to prisoners and a cause of unnecessary frustration. In a service where the budget is overwhelmingly committed to human resources, continuing financial constraints can only lead to further sources of frustration for managers and increasing unrest amongst prisoners as their regime becomes more constricted.

Section 3 Statutory Reporting Areas

a. Healthcare

3.1.1 The Board has noted a number of positive developments in the provision of healthcare in the Prison during the reporting year. It is of continuing concern, however, that those improvements still do not include the provision of a permanent GP appointment to the prison. The Board understands that posts were advertised 12 months ago for provision of GP services to a cluster of prisons but a full set of appointments has not yet been made. The GP service at HMP Wymott is provided by a group of locum doctors. Whilst acknowledging some improvements in this area during the reporting year the Board remains of the opinion that current arrangements are unsatisfactory, regardless of the quality of the individual doctors providing the locum service.

3.1.2 Current provision of GP services is equivalent to seven sessions per week and at the end of the reporting year the estimated waiting time for non-urgent GP appointments was approximately 4 weeks. At the end of the reporting year the Healthcare Department was in the process of appointing a practitioner nurse, with the anticipated benefit that prisoners will be seen by the nurse within 24/48 hours.

3.1.3 During the year the Healthcare Department has addressed one particular problem, which was seen as exacerbating the GP waiting times. During the first part of the year the problem of prisoners failing to attend GP appointments without prior warning had reached acute levels with about 500 missed appointments over a four-month period, equivalent to the GP waiting list. Frequently prisoners used the excuse that they had not received an appointment slip. The simple expedient of now requiring prisoners to sign to indicate that they have received an appointment slip has had the effect of reducing the number of missed appointments from a high of 162 in March to 50 in May.

The new strategy has been backed up by the use of IEP warnings for failure to attend appointments without good cause. The Board does not have a view on the general question of using IEP warnings in this way but it has expressed concern that the warnings are being issued by Healthcare staff. Both the Governor and the Acting Healthcare Manager are giving the Board's concerns their serious consideration.

3.1.4 Elsewhere, there have been encouraging staff developments with recent appointments bringing the number of nursing staff almost up to its full permanent complement. The appointment of a dental hygienist and dental technician has had the effect of enabling the department to meet its 18-week target for dental appointments.

3.1.5 A number of positive initiatives have been introduced during the course of the reporting year. Screening is being introduced for cardio-vascular disease and, for smokers, for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease. The Acting Healthcare Manager has also been responsible for co-ordinating the development and introduction of a tool to identify prisoners with learning disability at the point of entry to the Prison, the need for which had been identified earlier in the year in the report of a Coroner's inquest. By the end of the reporting year all prisoners were being screened within three days of their arrival at

the prison. The process was also applied to targeted individuals within the existing prison population. It is anticipated that individualised Learning Disability Care Plans will be in place by October 2011.

b. Diversity

3.2.1 During 2010 the role of Diversity Manager and Race Equality Officer (REO) were combined into a single post. The combining of the two posts into a single role has meant that the Diversity Manager is predominantly occupied with responding to and investigating race and diversity complaints, producing SMART data and maintaining the system. This range of tasks may lead to the opportunity for development of the system. The Board acknowledges that combining the roles may lead to a more inclusive approach to diversity, but given the time demanded by RIRF investigations alone, urges that the two roles should be separated unless administrative support can be provided. The Impact Assessment for Diversity acknowledges that there is a need to return to separate roles. However the effectiveness with which complaints are dealt with is shown by the lack of applications to the Board regarding diversity issues.

3.2.2 At the end of the reporting period the prison population consisted of (rounded percentages) 82% White British, 5% Asian/Asian British, 3% Black/Black British, 3% Chinese or mixed race. The ethnicity of 6% of prisoners had not been stated.

(i) Race Equality

3.2.3 Within the reporting year the REAT, chaired by the Deputy Governor, has met regularly, with each meeting working to a set agenda covering all of the important diversity issues, including broad discussion of SMART data and RIRFs. All functional heads are invited but attendance is observed by the Board to be sporadic. Prisoner diversity representatives are in attendance and their comments and observations are regularly sought. The Diversity Manager provides a verbal monthly report on race and diversity issues to the Deputy Governor.

3.2.4 The Diversity Manager chairs a regular monthly Prisoner Race Representatives' meeting. However for various reasons not all wings are represented at each meeting. A Board member also attends these meetings as observer. Each meeting had a published agenda and is minuted, with the race diversity representatives receiving copies. The Board has observed that the representatives take an active part in raising and discussing race-related issues. There is a good rapport between prisoner representatives and the Diversity Manager and representatives are well-supported in their role.

3.2.5 Early in 2011 the prisoner race representatives were re-titled to become 'diversity' representatives but to date they have yet to receive the appropriate and necessary training for them to operate effectively within the wider spectrum of diversity.

3.2.6 A visual inspection of all wings by the Board during March 2011 showed that Racist Incident Reporting Forms (RIRFs) and envelopes appeared not to be readily

available on some of the wings and have to be requested from staff. However some of the prisoner representatives hold stocks of these forms. Forms are available in 24 languages other than English but have to be requested from staff since they are held on the IT system. The practicality of this is appreciated but the Board is concerned that the lack of readily available forms may be a barrier to some non-English speakers.

3.2.7 The Board inspection also revealed that for the majority of wings Diversity notice boards were neglected. Notices were very out of date with one of the boards showing SMART data and REAT minutes for 2008. All photographs of Diversity staff were out of date by at least 2 years. The Board is concerned that this presents the wrong image of the importance of diversity to both prisoners and staff.

3.2.8 In March 2011 the Board audited a sample of RIRFs submitted since June 2010. The evaluation reviewed the procedures followed and the quality of responses. The Board found that the RIRF process is working satisfactorily. Feedback of findings was comprehensive and timely. In cases where misunderstandings occurred or verbal 'slips' were made, action and feedback was sensitive and constructive.

3.2.9 Prisoner diversity representatives have reported that some officers appear to be unaware of, or unsympathetic to, diversity issues. However the Board is pleased that the Prison's *Establishment Priorities for 2011-12* shows the intention to train Diversity Liaison representatives in all functional areas. Early in the reporting year prisoner representatives reported that prisoners did not have confidence that all submitted RIRFs were reaching the Diversity Manager. However a system whereby diversity representatives keep a log of submitted RIRFs was put in place and appears to have improved confidence.

3.2.10 At the time of writing (and as mentioned in the 2009-10 report) there is no external body involved in independent quality checks of RIRFs. There is a Community Engagement Strategy document but there are currently no external bodies involved in Impact Assessments for Diversity and Equality and as a result the assessments lack independent scrutiny. The Board urges the Prison to seek external involvement in RIRF audits and impact assessments as a matter of urgency. Currently an outside organization sporadically attends REAT meetings.

3.2.11 Impact assessments for Diversity and Equality have been completed within the reporting year and identified several issues for concern including a lack of prisoner confidence in the RIRF system, the lack of a full-time REO, the lack of preparation to cope with trans-sexual prisoners and specific support for bi-sexual and Gay prisoners

3.2.12 The Kitchen continues to be proactive in providing for the diverse cultural and religious needs of ethnic minority prisoners. The Prison has held a number of

events to celebrate diversity including a Travellers day, Black History celebrations, Ramadan and the Feast of Eid. Toward the end of the reporting period a Muslim Prisoner Focus Group had been formed. Muslim prisoners are encouraged to worship together irrespective of conviction, with category C and vulnerable prisoners praying together at Friday prayers.

3.2.13 Staff undergo race equality/diversity training at induction. However the Board is of the impression that some staff lack an awareness of ethnic customs and religious restrictions. This may lead to unnecessary friction due to misunderstandings and the Board urges this issue to be addressed

(ii) Elderly and Disabled Prisoners

3.2.14 Within the reporting year a new disability policy has been produced which fully complies with the 2010 Disability Act. The Board is pleased that the Prison plans to improve the routine reception screening of prisoners for learning disabilities.

3.2.15 The Board considers that the DLO has insufficient time allocated to fully carry out the role because he works for a limited number of part-time hours per week and often covers for absences during this time. Nevertheless the Board considers that the DLO is making the most effective use of the time available and is committed, innovative and productive. The DLO appears to be well-supported by the Governor.

3.2.16 Staff have not received any formal training in disability awareness over the reporting year with the exception of blindness awareness training by the *Galloways* organisation. However the Board has observed that staff provide a caring and safe environment. The Board understands that the Prison is planning to provide learning disability staff training by March 2012.

3.2.17 The Board considers I Wing accommodation to be generally unsuitable for elderly and some disabled prisoners, particularly for the many who spend a considerable amount of each day within its cramped confines. However the opening of the daycare centre during the previous reporting year provides an excellent area for out-of-cell recreation and relaxation. Wing staff also try to ensure that prisoners have access to the exercise yard throughout the day and not simply during the prison's defined association hours. Wheelchair prisoners cannot be accommodated easily in the main body of I Wing because the design of the building makes free movement very difficult and the width of cell doors makes access impossible. The Unit has an annexe that is suitable for wheelchair accommodation but because the Prison is forced to make spending cuts it has chosen to close this facility. The Board is however pleased that the *Establishment Priorities for 2011-12* states the intent to review the operation of I Wing day-care centre to provide 'a community-equivalent service as possible'.

3.2.18 The Board is dismayed that the care and welfare of elderly and disabled prisoners is not yet of concern to Adult Social Services. The Prison therefore has

had to assume this role together with its other financial demands. The Salvation Army provides some social activities and advice on 3 days each week and prisoners value these activities. The NHS funds healthcare services for prisoners but the important, much-needed, additional daily and social care that elderly and disabled prisoners require is not provided by Adult Social Services. In order to provide a reasonable standard of care the Prison, at its own expense, provides a day-care centre and the employment of two care-workers. The Board urges the Justice Secretary to recognise this issue, and consider the Social Service provision to cater for the needs of elderly and disabled prisoners present within a custodial care setting.

(iii) Foreign Nationals

3.2.19 At the end of the reporting year there were 48 foreign national (FN) prisoners held at Wymott. Of these, one was a lifer and seven were on indeterminate sentences. Three were being held beyond their deportation date.

3.2.20 The Foreign Nationals Clerk does not have direct contact with prisoners and provides administration only, including the administration of meetings between FN prisoners and the Immigration Department. These immigration surgeries are held once per month with the purpose of answering prisoners' questions and resolving immigration issues. Forms are available to request attendance at these surgeries but they are only available in English. The Board understands that translation facilities are not made available at these meetings.

3.2.21 The Board regrets that there is not a designated Foreign Nationals Officer who can act as a focus for the unique concerns and issues that can arise. These prisoners are often not able to speak or read English and therefore may find difficulty in accessing the usual formal and informal channels through which other prisoners resolve issues. Additionally there is no forum through which they can meet and share prison-based issues, personal issues and problems (other than immigration issues) with a designated officer.

3.2.22 There is no policy to accommodate FNs having the same language on the same wing but the Diversity Manager encourages this whenever practically possible.

3.2.23 There are difficulties in facilitating telephone contact with FNs who have family in time zones that are very different from the UK since prisoner telephone contact access is at set times in the day.

3.2.24 The Board has noted that around the Prison almost all notices and rules for prisoners are in English only (an exception is CARATs team information and the Foreign National Handbook where literature is available in most of the commonly needed languages). Lack of more easily understandable information will present these prisoners with additional stress and may lead to unintentional breaches of prison rules. The Board urges the Prison to give this issue its attention. More worryingly, some of the few notices that do have foreign language versions are so

badly translated as to be rendered almost meaningless. These appear to be official notices supplied by NOMS rather than local translations. The Board is able to comment with authority on the Spanish and French translations and must assume that the same concerns will apply to other language versions.

c. Care and Separation Unit (Segregation)

3.3.1 The Care and Separation Unit (Segregation) comprise 22 cells, 2 of which have camera cover, and 2 unfurnished cells also with camera cover. The Unit is bright and generally has a good ambience. Four officers are always on duty in mornings and 3 in the afternoons. A Governor visits the Unit daily and a GP visits 3 times a week. Healthcare nurses and the chaplaincy also visit daily. External adjudications are carried out monthly.

3.3.2 Wherever possible the Board attends Rule 45 reviews which are generally conducted appropriately. Healthcare staff attend and are briefed on the particular circumstances of the individual prisoners under review. The Board is concerned that it is not always notified within the required time limit when prisoners are placed on Rule 45 segregation.

3.3.3 In-cell occupation is provided by the library who change the selection weekly and some activity is also provided by Education. Shower facilities and external exercise are provided daily as prisoners request. Telephone calls availability is for one hour each day. Inevitably, however, the regime is somewhat sterile when compared with the normal wing regime. This raises particular concerns when prisoners are held for extended periods of time as can be the case when they are awaiting transfer to another prison and either have refused or are unable to return to normal location. During the course of the year a number of prisoners were held in CSU for what the Board considered to be excessive periods in spite of the best efforts of prison staff to ensure their transfer or re-location.

3.3.4 The Board considers that the CSU is well run and that officers are helpful and caring toward the prisoners.

d. Learning and Skills

3.4.1 The Board considers that the Prison is providing purposeful practical training in well-appointed workshops making a valuable contribution towards prisoner resettlement. There have been various changes throughout the reporting period, with a significant upgrade planned for the Laundry facility to allow an increase in prisoner places and a planned expansion of the printing workshop.

3.4.2 Prison management has continued to attach a high priority to providing and developing learning and skills opportunities and the Board welcomes this. Over the reporting period the attendance rate in Education was nearly 90%, comparing very favourably with the national average of 80%.

3.4.3 Tutors regularly work one-to-one with offenders in the workshops and the wings, setting goals and homework designed to address specific targets. Specialist tutors work in the Light Engineering workshop and in the Kitchens to provide support for Prison staff

ensuring that the skills prisoners are required to learn and master are accredited through national qualifications.

3.4.4 A Resettlement and Interventions Board assesses the educational and vocational training needs for each prisoner during induction. Towards the end of the reporting period the Healthcare Manager and Education Advisor devised a process through which offenders with learning disabilities will have their educational and training needs more accurately targeted. The Board applauds this initiative.

3.4.5 The Board is concerned about the impact of the commercialisation of educational provision that demands a measurement of success based on academic achievement but ignores the vital interpersonal and life skills that may be gained. These skills are considered by tutors to be of importance and can be a critical aid to learning the core skills. This focus on academic results has increased the pressure on tutors to meet targets, paying less attention to the possible wider and more useful outcomes of learning such as interpersonal and negotiation skills. The Board is concerned regarding the changes in teaching contracts and pay that have resulted in some staff becoming demoralised.

3.4.6 The Board notes that movement to labour on some wings is sometimes delayed such that available training time is adversely affected. Additionally the Board notes with concern that cost constraints imposed by the education provider has a negative impact on the amount of teaching time available and on delivery.

3.4.7 The Board notes the achievement of Prison management in maintaining a good training prison despite funding cuts. However the Board is very concerned that demand for further cuts and a further change in the Core Day may seriously impede the future effectiveness of the Prison to act as a credible training prison and urges the Secretary of state to consider the impact that reduced education and training will have on rehabilitation and re-offending rates.

e. Safer Custody

3.5.1 The Board considers that during the reporting period 2010 - 2011 HMP Wymott continued to approach the issue of Safer Custody with seriousness and determination to improve. The issue is viewed by senior management as a high priority for prisoners and staff alike. In the Establishment Priorities for 2010 - 2011 Safety was upgraded to a priority along with Decency and an important link was made between the two. It is pleasing to note that Decency and Safety has again been given a high priority in the Establishment's Priorities for 2011 - 2012.

3.5.2 Key performance and local targets have been identified, as have standards. These give a clear and informed steer for staff. By the end of October 2011 it is planned to carry out a survey measuring the quality of prison life, safety and decency, resulting in an action plan to be implemented from January 2012. The Board will monitor this aim.

3.5.3 The Prison achieved all but one of the key performance targets identified for safer custody over 2010 - 2011. The serious assault rate target over the year of no more than

0.5% of the average prison population (or 6 incidents of serious assault against prisoners or any other person) was narrowly missed. There were 7 incidents of serious assault.

3.5.4 During the reporting period a Violence Reduction Improvement Plan was written with the intention of improving the safety of prisoners and staff. This plan was partly in response to the HMCIP report of October 2008 and its recommendations. The plan identified several important areas for improved monitoring. These included the operation of the CSRA system, the location of Score 3 prisoners, the number and location of assaults, fights and incidents of bullying. This plan has now been successfully implemented and is a regular agenda item on the monthly joint Violence Reduction, Suicide and Self-Harm meeting where its operation is monitored.

3.5.5 The whole strategy of safer custody at HMP Wymott is monitored by the joint Violence Reduction, Suicide and Self-Harm meeting (The Safer Custody Meeting). This is held every month and is chaired by a senior governor, ensuring a management - led focus on safer custody issues and a high profile for this area. There is an improved consistency of this meeting; the same governor, a set date, time and place, and an established procedure. This has encouraged and enabled attendance. The attendance at the meeting over the reporting year has been more representative of the prison as a whole and includes prisoners, wing staff and senior officers. Security, Psychology, Workshops, CARATS and Healthcare are represented as well as outside agencies such as the Samaritans. The prisoners who contribute to the meeting continue to be treated with decency and respect, and their concerns and ideas are given validity. This wider attendance has led to a cross-fertilisation of ideas and information allowing a striving for continuous improvement. For example the Security department has developed a cross-prison mapping of bullying incidents based on SIR information. The Security Department has also made itself available to other prison departments or areas for advice and guidance. There has been an increasing tendency on the part of meeting participants to positively challenge statistics and procedures and importantly this is encouraged and supported by the senior governor who chairs the meeting. Information, statistics and other data presented at the meeting is much more detailed and focussed than previously. Comparisons of data by wing/workshop/day/time have been introduced. Discussion centering on the information is encouraged.

3.5.6 Minutes of the Safer Custody meeting have been improved in accuracy and content. They are circulated across the Prison and action points are identified and reported back on at the following meeting. Feedback to wings however, is still not as effective as it needs to be, but efforts are being made to address this issue, including the publication of a new monthly Safer Custody Report, which has a wide circulation across the Prison

3.5.7 The Prison has responded positively to the concerns and issues identified in its Annual Report 2009 - 2010.

3.5.8 The Board considers that positive attempts have been made to address the weaknesses identified by the IMB in operating the prison's TAB policy. TAB documents are being completed more thoroughly by wing and workshop staff, although greater consistency is still needed. Safer custody staff, duty governors and wing managers are now

charged with making regular checks on the accuracy and completion of these documents. However the Board considers that this is not always the case. The need for more staff training and re-training has been acknowledged and is now ongoing. The number of prisoners on TAB monitoring is collected at the safer custody meeting and wing representatives provide information about the prisoners involved. Cross-Prison departments, for example Education and Library, are now made aware of this information and, in turn, are able to contribute further information where appropriate. The Prison has set a key performance and local target in the Establishment Priorities 2011 - 2012 to achieve 90% quality ratings for both TAB and ACCT documentation completion.

3.5.9 The administration of the ACCT system has developed further during the reporting year. Live ACCTS are carefully reviewed at the Safer Custody meeting. The information discussed there is more detailed and individual; for example the name and location of the individual, whether self-harm is involved and the trigger generating the ACCT. The number of ACCTs opened is compared between wings and previous months. Two important refinements have resulted from this monitoring. One is the identification of the need to monitor ACCTs by ethnicity and secondly, that the initial assessor, even if from a cross-prison area, should be present at the First Case Review. The improvements in the management of this area was confirmed and recognised by the highest available audit rating being received for this area of work in the second half of the reporting year.

3.5.10 The work of the Prison's Family Liaison Officers has developed further this year to the advantage of prisoners. When a prisoner is diagnosed with a terminal illness extra support is given to both the prisoner and his family. The prison has developed a system of pre-death counselling which includes a multi-disciplinary meeting with the prisoner and his family to discuss how the prisoner can be supported. This development has been recognised as an example of good practice by the National Safer Custody Group.

3.5.11 The Board is disappointed that the weaknesses identified in the annual report 2009 - 2010 in the application of the Incentives and Earned Privileges policy have not been fully addressed. There have been delays of up to three months in the implementation of an IEP. Similarly, a co-ordinated approach towards the IEP and TAB systems has not yet been adopted, with some prisoners being on a perpetrators TAB and yet remaining on an Enhanced IEP status. This affects the effectiveness of this system and its contribution to a safer environment for prisoners. Prisoners have also complained about a lack of consistency in the application of the system. More staff training is needed, particularly for staff in cross-prison departments some of whom are unsure about the application of the system. At the *Managers Operational Priorities 2011 - 2012* briefing day held in April 2011 the intention to issue a pocket-sized summary of the IEP system to all staff was agreed and the need to improve the consistency and the application of the system was acknowledged. The Board will monitor the future developments in this area.

3.5.12 Management has continued to support the Prison's Listener Service. Two listeners are always present at the beginning of each Safer Custody meeting and encouraged to contribute. Prisoner contact with listeners is carefully monitored both by the Samaritans and at the Safer Custody meeting. Accommodation for listeners to ensure privacy and confidentiality is protected by senior management in spite of this period of economic

stringencies. This has not always been possible however, for example on F wing the care suite has at times been used to accommodate pre-release prisoners. The Listener Service continues to offer a good resource to prisoners at Wymott. There are now 46 trained listeners and all wings in the Prison have access to a listener. 70% of the contacts are from the VP side of the prison. During the reporting year over 1700 contacts have been made between prisoners and listeners. Reasons for contact are carefully monitored and provide useful information. Family debt, access to required courses, personal debt and inconsistencies in the application of prison administration have been identified as the main reasons. The support of the Samaritans for this service is laudable.

3.5.13 In conclusion the Board considers that noticeable improvements have been made in the Safer Custody area of the Prison's work. Violence Reduction was audited in September 2010. The 79% score obtained was an improvement on previous scores (2009: 72% and 2008: 71%). The Board considers that there is every reason to expect that the audit due in September 2011 will show a similarly improved score. The Safer Custody Audit in October 2010 resulted in a green rating - the highest score.

Section 4 Reports on Other Areas of the Prison

a. Catering

4.1.1 The Board considers that the Kitchen continues to provide a well-balanced and varied menu catering for dietary, ethnic and religious needs. This menu has been maintained despite the national average of £2.50 per day per prisoner and the substantial increase in the cost of food ingredients. Some cultural and religious diets require additional purchases above that daily allocation which adds to the stress on the allocated budget.

4.1.2 During the reporting year kitchen staff were reduced following changes in the National Catering Specification, which demanded a reduction in staffing at Wymott. The resulting reduction of 3½ staff has placed additional pressure on the Kitchen whilst still trying to help prisoners to achieve qualifications and also to meet varied dietary needs. The outcome was that the Kitchen no longer offers the British Institute of Cleaning Sciences Certificate. However an NVQ in catering is now offered by Education through a part-time tutor. The Kitchen continues to offer the Food Hygiene Certificate, the minimum qualification for any prisoner working in the food industry. Diversity is taken seriously and prisoners are also educated in all aspects of food preparation and handling to meet cultural and religious requirements.

4.1.3 The Board, as part of its weekly rota, regularly inspects the Kitchen and from time to time, the serveries located on the wings and it also samples the food, usually at the point of service. Board reports are always positive concerning the quality of the food and the attention given to cultural, religious and ethnic requirements. During the reporting year the Board received only 2 Applications concerning food issues.

4.1.4 The menu is rotated on a five-week basis to ensure a varied diet but within that is flexible enough to cater for religious events and holidays. A well-designed menu sheet is provided to prisoners allowing them to select from across a wide menu catering for a range of tastes and cultures. Additionally, for prisoners who have difficulty reading or for whom English is not their first language, an innovative pictorial presentation is used on the menu sheet and the Board applauds this innovation. In addition a themed menu meets diversity requirements including various fasting days. The Cultural and Religious Practices and Guidelines Policy continue to ensure an appropriate diet together with the active co-operation of the chapel and the various religious leaders who regularly visit the Prison.

4.1.5 Prisoner input to the Kitchen is provided through the Prisoner Food Focus Group set up early in the reporting year and through the comments made in each of the Wing Comments Book available in each servery. As well as providing useful feedback, the Food Focus Group also ensures that the Kitchen meets diversity demands.

b. Resettlement

4.2.1 Despite financial stringencies which generate increasing pressure on accommodation and staffing, the Board considers that Reception continues to provide a good service for prisoners. Officers demonstrate a culture within which offenders are processed with decency and respect and the Board has observed that effort is made to ensure that prisoners are not detained in transport vans for longer than is necessary. The Board has noticed that effective working relationships have been established with the external bodies responsible for transport and this has helped to speed up the transfer process to prisoners benefit. Senior officers in Reception encourage staff to provide a non-threatening and humorous approach. Prisoners on ACCT documents are clearly identified at Reception and extra support is provided to those identified to ensure their process of transfer is less stressful. The chaplaincy gives good support in this area of activity. Feedback to the Board from prisoners regarding the Reception process has been positive; some examples being "very good", "much better than at [other prison]", "the best I have been through".

4.2.2 Reception may process up to 30 or more prisoners per day and the varying workload this presents is a challenge that is met by staff. However some of the problems identified in the IMB Annual Report 2009-10 still remain, including delays in property dispersal. This issue is often not Wymott's fault but that of the sending institution. In the current reporting period the Board has noted, with some concern, an increase in accommodation pressures leading to some prisoners being interviewed in corridors rather than designated rooms. This has led to a resulting loss of privacy and possibly a consequential reluctance by prisoners to self-disclose important information; for example issues which may affect cell-sharing or health records or learning disabilities. It also places staff under increased stress with some expressing that they "cannot do a proper job". Additionally, staff continue to be moved from Reception to other areas of the Prison to meet demand elsewhere, thereby adding to their stress. On occasions the Board has noted that a senior officer has not been present in Reception during processing.

4.2.3 The introduction of new CSRA (Cell-sharing risk assessment system) requirements in April 2011 appears to have increased workload, though this may be until the system is embedded and training completed. Under the new system the sending institution is now responsible for completing the relevant documentation surrounding the suitability for cell sharing. However the Board has observed that this does not always happen. For example, on one IMB monitoring visit, 7 prisoners arrived from another prison without completed forms. The Board notes that the Prison intends to include a 'Safer Custody Procedures Review' during the Autumn of this year. Two innovations - the screening of prisoners for learning disability needs and the identification of individual needs in the wider prison population are to be welcomed.

4.2.4 The First Night Centre on F wing, opened in September 2009, operates to the benefit of prisoners. Offenders in the Centre, interviewed by the Board, appeared relaxed and considered they had good access to information. Property delays appeared to cause them most concern. The Induction wing as a whole has felt the effects of increasing accommodation demands. On occasions when the induction wing is full, newly-arrived prisoners have to be held on other wings thus losing out on the benefits of the induction wing. Some inductees have had to be moved after 2 or 3 nights because of new prisoners arriving or because some prisoners are permanently occupying cells. The result of this is that some new arrivals do not have a full induction. On many occasions the care suite on F wing has been occupied when urgently required forcing Listeners to use unsuitable accommodation.

4.2.5 Prisoners continue to arrive at Wymott and find themselves unable to progress their sentence plan when a required course is not offered at the Prison. Apart from the stress and frustration this causes prisoners it is a waste of valuable resources. The Board urges Population Management to address this issue.

4.2.6 The Board considers that the induction process is of a high standard. Every prisoner is interviewed and individual needs are addressed. For example during the reporting year there has been a real effort to identify prisoners who are ex-servicemen so that information can be given to those individuals on available military mental health support programmes. At induction all prisoners meet an OMU officer and are informed who their Personal Officer and Offender Supervisor is and their respective roles. Prisoners are provided with a copy of their sentence plan and its targets. The induction programme is well-regarded by prisoners and feedback from them to the Board is very positive. The Board considers that staff engaged in induction deserve to have their supportive and professional work recognised and acknowledged.

4.2.7 The IMB's Annual Report 2009-10 identified the need to improve the operation of the Personal Officer scheme at wing level. During the current reporting period some progress has been made in this area. The important operational link between the Offender Supervisor and the prisoner's Personal Officer has been reviewed and strengthened and the important triangle of prisoner, Personal Officer and Offender Supervisor is now clearly identified. The three month post-induction offender management and public protection assessment interview involving the prisoner, his Personal Officer and Offender Supervisor

scheduled to be introduced by the end of 2010 was in fact operational three months ahead of schedule. This interview enables the prisoner to discuss progress, identify any problems with courses and targets and for the sentence plan to be reviewed. Vitality, it improves communication and focusses the prisoner on addressing his offending behaviour. However there have been some initial problems. For example at the 3 month interview other officers have deputised for Personal Officers because of absences and work schedules. Prisoners continue to complain to the Board that they do not know who their Personal Officer is, that they never see him or her, that the service they receive from him or her is slow and worse, this service is frequently regarded by them as unsatisfactory and being reluctantly carried out. Similar comments have also been made by prisoners regarding their Offender Supervisors. Although the Personal Officer/Offender Supervisor system still has some problems it is an improving service. The Board urges that the improvements made this year will continue.

4.2.8 The operation of the Offender Management Unit (OMU) has been reviewed by senior management during this reporting year. Some re-organisation has taken place which the Board considers will be of benefit to prisoners. The Board is pleased to note that the changes have been prisoner-centred and driven by the need to address specific offending behaviour patterns. The OMU consists of 'Pods' each containing specific categories of offenders based on type of sentence and type of risk. It was anticipated that there would be an average of 98 prisoners per Offender Supervisor. However, financial stringencies have meant that that figure has already risen to 104 offenders. This figure will increase further as 2 members of OMU staff have recently been removed in response to the need for financial cuts. The Board will monitor the effects of these cuts on this important area of operation because of its central contribution to the reduction of reoffending.

4.2.9 The OMU continues to face other new challenges. Increasingly, prisoners are arriving at Wymott without an initial assessment. As officers at Wymott have not been trained to carry out initial interviews, both prisoners and staff must wait for assessment to be done by outside probation. Similarly, there are problems when prisoners are transferred from other prisons without the relevant documentation. In spite of these challenges, there have been positive developments in the Unit since its formation in the Board's reporting period 2009 - 2010. The need for awareness raising on the wings and in workshops as identified in that report is now a key priority. Positive attempts are being made to improve communications with prisoners regarding matters such as parole hearings, recategorization and early release. The Board is optimistic in expecting that, during its next reporting period, further progress will be made in this important area.

4.2.10 The pre-release service provided for prisoners has been identified as an area that needed further development in the establishment's operational priorities for 2011 - 2012. The Board considers that improvements have been made during this reporting period but also notes that pre-release issues are still high on the list of prisoners' worries and undertands that these issues are regularly discussed by prisoners with Listeners. These issues centre specifically on healthcare provision and accommodation after release. In order to address this concern the 2011-2012 operational priorities document has set a local target of 95% of prisoners to have settled accommodation upon release. The Board

will monitor progress against that target. The establishment of a Systematic Discharge Planning meeting (identified in last year's operational priorities) is now functional. Two weeks before release prisoners have access to a pre-release Multi-Agency Discharge Board. A random survey of prisoners revealed satisfactory feedback on these developments but suggests that further developments in these areas is needed. For example, OMU reviews are being carried out very close to anticipated release dates causing anxiety for prisoners with pre-release issues not being resolved.

4.2.11 The Board notes that in its priorities document for 2011-12 the Prison's target for prisoners entering training or education upon release has been downgraded from 17% to 15%. However the Board understands that the Prison has been forced into this target by the current economic situation.

4.2.12 The good level of care offered to pre-release prisoners who have been on an ACCT earlier in their sentence is an example of the good practice extant in this area. The Board views this area of prison work as an improving one

c. Decency

4.3.1 The Prison continues to give priority to achieving appropriate standards of decency in its treatment of prisoners. The Board has again observed extensive good practice in relationships between staff and prisoners although current pressures on staffing levels erode the opportunities for individual conversations and interactions through which decency of treatment is achieved.

4.3.2 The Board continues to be concerned at the institutional barrier to decency as evidenced by the inappropriate designation of single cells for double occupancy. The Board has read previous responses to its concerns in this area but remains of the view that the normal cells at HMP Wymott do not meet recognised standards of decency when occupied by two prisoners. At the end of the reporting year the number of such cells designated for double occupancy was increased as a result of having to take other cells out of commission.

4.3.3 Ill-fitting and damaged windows in both A and B Houses cause temperatures within cells to be extremely cold and uncomfortable, particularly during winter months. In the Minister's response to the Board's 2010 Annual Report it was stated that, in light of the financial constraints, the construction programme planned for Wymott had been shelved for the foreseeable future, and thus the essential repairs required of A and B Houses would be significantly delayed. The Board urges that this matter and also the state of the showers in these Houses be reviewed again.

d. Drugs Strategy

4.4.1 Three major strands comprise drug strategies at Wymott; the Therapeutic Community (TC), the Integrated Drug Treatment Service (IDTS) and the Counselling, Assessment, Advice and Through-care programme (CARAT). Over the reporting year there has been considerable development within these strategies including the growth of the drug free wing, the introduction of the Prisons Addressing Substance Related Offending

(PASRO) programme and an increase in the number of prisoners on the IDTS programme. Future developments will include the introduction of the Smart Recovery and Narcotics Anonymous programme which is intended to assist in the support of prisoners wishing to remain drug free whilst in prison and on release.

4.4.2 During the reporting year there have been occasions when there were insufficient numbers of prisoners wanting to engaging in the TC programme. On these occasions the spare cells in the Unit (K wing) were occupied with either prisoners who are still in their induction stage or those who have only a few weeks of their sentence left to serve. The Board considered that this was unsettling to those on the TC programme and, for new prisoners, their location on TC was not an ideal induction experience. However great effort has been made to promote the Unit by the wing governor and Phoenix Futures (the organisation delivering the TC programme). There is currently a waiting list of around 40 prisoners who wish to access the programme. During the reporting year the Board has been informed by several prisoners on K wing that there were some prisoners bringing drugs on to the wing, thereby undermining the programme. With the improved drive to populate the wing with prisoners who have a sincere wish to undergo the TC programme, the number of those on the wing and not committed to the programme will reduce to zero.

4.4.3 In addition to the promotion of the TC to those with substance misuse problems within the Prison and the continuous encouragement of prisoners on the IDTS methadone programme to reduce dependency, staff from Wymott have visited 19 prisons in the East Midlands who do not have a TC programme to encourage prisoners to transfer to Wymott in order to engage in the programme. The Board considers that there has been improved promotion of the TC programme and that prisoners are well supported.

4.4.4 Prisoners completing the programme are offered return to the establishment from which they came or a place on the Drugs Free wing. This wing aims to provide further support to maintain a drug free future both inside the Prison and after release. Drop in centres have been set up on both wings and the IDTS wings where there is an emphasis on peer support and mentoring. CARATs have provided support to those prisoners who, in turn, support their peers in remaining drug-free. It is planned that in the near future 'Smart Recovery' and 'Narcotics Anonymous' workers will be present on C and D wings during evening association to run further supportive courses.

4.4.5 The TC team are attempting to enhance the community spirit on the drugs-free wing and in order to do so has engaged with the Community of Communities (promoted by the Royal College of Psychiatrists). Their first report on this wing was very positive and targets have been set for further improvement. One initiative proposed is for the facility to dine together as a community at least once a day. The practicalities for this are currently under investigation.

4.4.6 The Board understands that there is insufficient organised activity on the TC wing during the day. To help overcome this, the Prison has purchased games. Staff often join prisoners during Friday afternoon association in the playing of these. Art and Craft materials have also been purchased and short courses such as The Healthy Living

Programme have been introduced but the Board considers that there is still insufficient productive activity on the wing.

4.4.7 Other forms of activity for these prisoners are also considered by the Board to be insufficient. During the reporting year the Board expressed concern that the sports pitch had been unavailable for a considerable period because the PE Department had declared its surface to be unsafe. This was rectified and three of the wing staff were trained as sports and games tutors but further concerns were again raised by the PE Department who have stopped the playing of ball games due to Health and Safety issues. There is a small gym on the wing and prisoners appreciate its use. PE staff should supervise this gym but the Board has noted on many occasions that prisoners are using this gym without any supervisory presence.

4.4.8 Throughout their stay in Wymott all prisoners with substance misuse issues are supported and monitored by the CARATs team. Unfortunately the number of staff in this team has been reduced and the team are now having difficulties in providing the level of support they consider to be necessary. As a consequence, team members are voluntarily arriving before their allotted shift start time in order to maintain a good quality of service. The CARATs team have always aimed to interview all clients at least every 6 weeks. The usual time per interview is between 2 and 3 hours. With a case-load each of 65 prisoners team members are finding difficulty in meeting this target forcing them to prioritise their time so that at least they provide initial and leaving interviews. The Board is concerned that the effectiveness of this team may be impaired. However on a recent audit this team scored 88% ranking, making it joint top in the UK.

4.4.9 The introduction of PASRO, whilst welcomed has added to the pressures felt by staff as there has been the loss of an administrative officer and all administrative time has now to be shared between both PASRO and CARATs staff. The Board is concerned about this and would urge area office to address the administrative staffing of CARATs. Last year the CARATs team lost an alcohol worker resulting in an important gap in their programmes.

4.4.10 The IDTS programme has recently lost its own house manager. A manager is now shared with HMP Garth and staff report this as being very successful. The number of prisoners on the programme in Wymott is usually around 100 with 50% to 60% detoxing. A service user group is held every 2 months on the Drug Free and IDTS wings in the drop in centres on C and D wing. Prisoners serving sufficient time for them to be considered for the TC are specifically encouraged to reduce their Methadone intake in order that they may benefit from this programme before leaving the establishment.

4.4.11 There has been a reduction in the number of mandatory drug tests in line with national requirements. Voluntary testing continues to take place as does Compact-Based testing and the results are well within required performance targets.

4.4.12 The Board considers that the drug strategy at Wymott is undergoing a process of continuous improvement by its dedicated staff

e. Family Links

4.5.1 HMP Wymott has excellent facilities for visitors. A recently purpose-built external Visitors Centre provides a good and welcoming atmosphere for both adults and children. Facilities include a café area for snacks and hot and cold drinks and a play area for children, supervised by qualified staff. POPS (partners of prisoners) are trying to obtain funding for a children's play area adjacent to the Centre.

4.5.2 Over the reporting year the Board had not received any Applications of complaint regarding visit facilities. However the Board has learned that some families have complained about the late issue of Privilege Visiting Orders (PVO). These have to be earned by prisoners and are issued at the start of a month and to be used within that month. It appears there can be delays in issuing these orders caused by the computing system or when start of the month falls within a weekend. Some significant time may pass before the family receive it and this can often make the planning of a journey difficult.

4.5.2 POPS manage and operate the Centre including the booking-in procedure and process visitors' paperwork in accordance with arrival times. Visitors with disabilities are given priority. Visitors are escorted to the visits search area within the Prison also in accordance with arrival times.

4.5.3 A family forum is held every six weeks. Each forum deals with issues that are important to relatives, such as probation services, loan sharks and debts. A range of speakers, including Trading Standards, provides these forums. There are hopeful plans to include a short tour of prison.

4.5.4 Lifer days are held twice a year. Family visit days are held monthly at which prisoners are allowed to sit with up to 15 visitors and children. Listeners have their own family day once per year. The Therapeutic Community (TC) have their own family day. The Board has observed an excellent level of commitment by a wide range of staff to these family visits. A parenting course is held 5 times a year.

4.5.5 The Board has observed that the searching of visitors by Prison staff is carried out with utmost respect.

4.5.6 There is an excellent shop within the visits area where visitors can obtain hot or cold food and drinks for themselves and prisoners they are visiting. However the ensuing clutter on tables can cause observation issues for Security.

4.5.7 The Board considers that the prisoners' holding areas in visits are in a poor state of decoration and that adjacent toilets need painting. The holding areas can accommodate up to 36 prisoners with seating for only 12 to 16 prisoners. Lack of seating and poor decoration can detract from the visits experience for prisoners since some holding times can be significant.

4.5.7 New seating tables obtained from HMP Lancaster have been installed in the visits area but prisoners consider that the original three separate chairs and one prisoner chair

was more family friendly. The Board understands that visitors have compared this new seating arrangement to a post office counter.

4.5.8 The main visiting hall has very poor ventilation since there is no air-conditioning and it appears that windows cannot be opened due to paint residue. In hot or humid weather this may detract from the visits experience. Only 4 cubicles are provided for closed visits and these are housed on the VP side. The Board considers this number of cubicles to be insufficient for a Prison with a population the size of Wymott. It also results in 'mainstream' prisoners having to cross to the VP area for their visit.

4.5.9 The Board understands that visitors complain about difficulties in arranging visits due to usually only a single operator dealing with both incoming calls and email bookings.

4.5.10 The Board considers that Wymott is a good and caring prison for families but some of the facilities need upgrading

f. Lifers and IPP prisoners

4.6.1 At the time of writing, Wymott held 73 life-sentenced prisoners and 112 prisoners serving indeterminate sentences for public protection (IPP). The number of IPP and Life-Sentenced prisoners has increased since the previous Board report.

4.6.2 Prisoners on IPP and life sentences are managed in the Offender Management Unit (OMU). Each Offender Supervisor has a caseload of around 70 prisoners and given the volume of work that each of these prisoners will generate, the Board considers that this individual work load may affect the production of timely sentence progression and review reports.

4.6.3 The Board continues to have concerns regarding the sentence progression of some IPP prisoners. The Board has observed, and OMU has commented, that in a number of cases IPP prisoners allocated to Wymott continue to arrive with specific sentence plan targets that include offending behaviour programmes not offered at Wymott. This is a particular problem for prisoners requiring CALM and extended SOTP courses. Subsequent transfers to more appropriate prisons can take 3 months or more. The Board understands, but has not been able to verify, that staff in OMU feel that they have been advised by Population Management not to identify specific programmes in a sentence plan with a view to allowing greater flexibility on transfer. If true, this may give Population Management greater flexibility in transferring prisoners but will inevitably add to delays in completion of sentence plan targets once it becomes clear that the required programmes are not available. Additionally the Board understands that prisons now prefer to receive prisoners who have a 'local' postcode. Because of these problems IPP prisoners find it difficult to progress through the programmes identified in their sentence plan with the result that many are less likely to complete identified work before tariff expiry. At the time of writing 66 of the 112 IPP prisoners are held beyond their tariff. The Board is concerned that emotional distress, lack of hope, deterioration in family links and relationships may be caused because of an indeterminate release date. This is exacerbated by uncertainty over the availability of the programmes required to address risk in individual cases. This is

a national problem and the Board urges the Justice Secretary to urgently review the continuing injustice of the IPP sentence.

4.6.4 Towards the end of the reporting year the Board became aware of delays in the transfer of indeterminate sentenced prisoners for whom progression to open conditions has been granted by the Secretary of State. Again this appears to be a national problem caused by the large numbers of prisoners now eligible for open conditions and the limited number of places available.

4.6.4 The prison continues to support the maintenance of *family links for life* and provides two family day events per year. These are well received by prisoners and their families. The Board has noted the time and energy given by a wide range of staff to ensuring that these events are relaxed and effective.

Section 5

THE WORK OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD

5.1 During the reporting period, due to the closure of HMP Lancaster, a member of its Board transferred to Wymott. Additionally the Board has interviewed two prospective members and one is currently waiting confirmation of approval from the Minister. It is anticipated that this member will take up her duties shortly. This will raise the number of Board members to 11.

5.2 The principal method used by the Board to meet its primary function of monitoring fairness and respect for those in custody is the weekly rota visit. The Board has been able to meet its commitment to weekly monitoring visits and, through the use of effective documentation, has been able to efficiently report on issues of concern and good practice identified at each of those visits. Prior to each Board meeting the Chair presents these issues to the Governor. The Governor has been active in promptly addressing the issues raised and reporting back to the Board. The Board is appreciative of this and the information provided by the Governor at each meeting. Important issues raised during the Board meeting are noted and followed up by members during their rota visits. The Board has also developed mechanisms for recording formally any issues of concern that may arise from members' frequent informal visits to the prison. The Board recognises the need to ensure that issues are not simply logged and forgotten and over the reporting year the worth of its 'Key issues log' in pursuing important issues has been proven.

5.3 During the reporting period the Board, led by the Board Development Officer, carried out a Team Performance Review followed by a series of meetings to discuss its outcomes. As a result of those meetings the Board formulated an action plan intended to improve its efficiency and effectiveness in monitoring the Prison. This has culminated in new written procedures.

5.4 Board meetings are generally well attended, reflecting the level of commitment of current members. The Governor always attends the meetings to update members on current issues and developments and provides feedback on issues raised by the Board as a result of carrying out Rota visits.

5.5 Each member of the Board is allocated to at least one specialist monitoring area thus improving the Board's overall knowledge and depth of monitoring. This Board development is supported by regular pre-Board meetings at which talks are provided by members of Prison staff on key aspects of the Prison and its operation. These meetings are also used to discuss other Board issues of concern. Several members of the Board attended the launch of the *Prison's Establishment Service Level Agreement for 2011-12*, copies of which were provided to all members. During the reporting year two members of the Board attended courses for newly elected chairs and vice-chairs.

5.6 During the reporting year the Board updated its Constitution and its serious incident policy and procedures as well as some reporting documents

5.7 The Board makes every effort to attend all Rule 45 reviews and is kept well informed by CSU staff when these are to occur. The Board maintains its own record of individual reviews and is thus able to maintain an overview of each prisoner held under Rule 45. The Board also attends a sample of internal and independent adjudications.

5.8 Board members regularly attend the induction programme for new prisoners and also the induction of new staff in order to explain the work of the Board and how prisoners may make Applications. That work is undertaken through a rota of four members. During the year the Board has also attended, as observers, a range of Prison meetings in order to extend its depth of monitoring.

5.9 Table 1 below gives a detailed analysis of the work of the Board during the reporting year:

Table 1: The work of the Board over the reporting year

BOARD STATISTICS	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	16
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	9
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	10
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	1
Number of members leaving within reporting period	0
Total number of Board meetings during reporting period	12
Average number of attendances at Board meetings during the reporting period	8
Number of attendances at meetings other than Board meetings	52
Total number of visits to the prison (including all meetings)	508
Total number of applications received	274
Total number of segregation review sessions held (Rule 45)	93
Total number of segregation review sessions attended (Rule 45)	93

Section 6

Applications to the Board

6.1 The number of applications the Board received from prisoners during the reporting period is nearly 12% fewer than those received during 2009/10. The following, table 2, shows an analysis of the issues raised by prisoners in their applications to the Board by nationally-required categories.

Table 2: Analysis of applications under national key headings

Subject	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11
Accommodation	5	1	4
Adjudications	1	6	5
Correspondence	16	11	7
Diversity related	0	2	0
Education/employment/training	22	21	22
Family/visits	7	18	21
Food/kitchen related	2	5	2
Health related	40	30	24
Property	37	62	27
Release/resettlement	24	21	13
Request/complaint procedure	4	2	7
Sentence related	33	23	25
Staff/prisoner/detainee related	6	7	10
Transfers	27	44	32
Miscellaneous*	70	58	75
Total number of applications	294	311	274

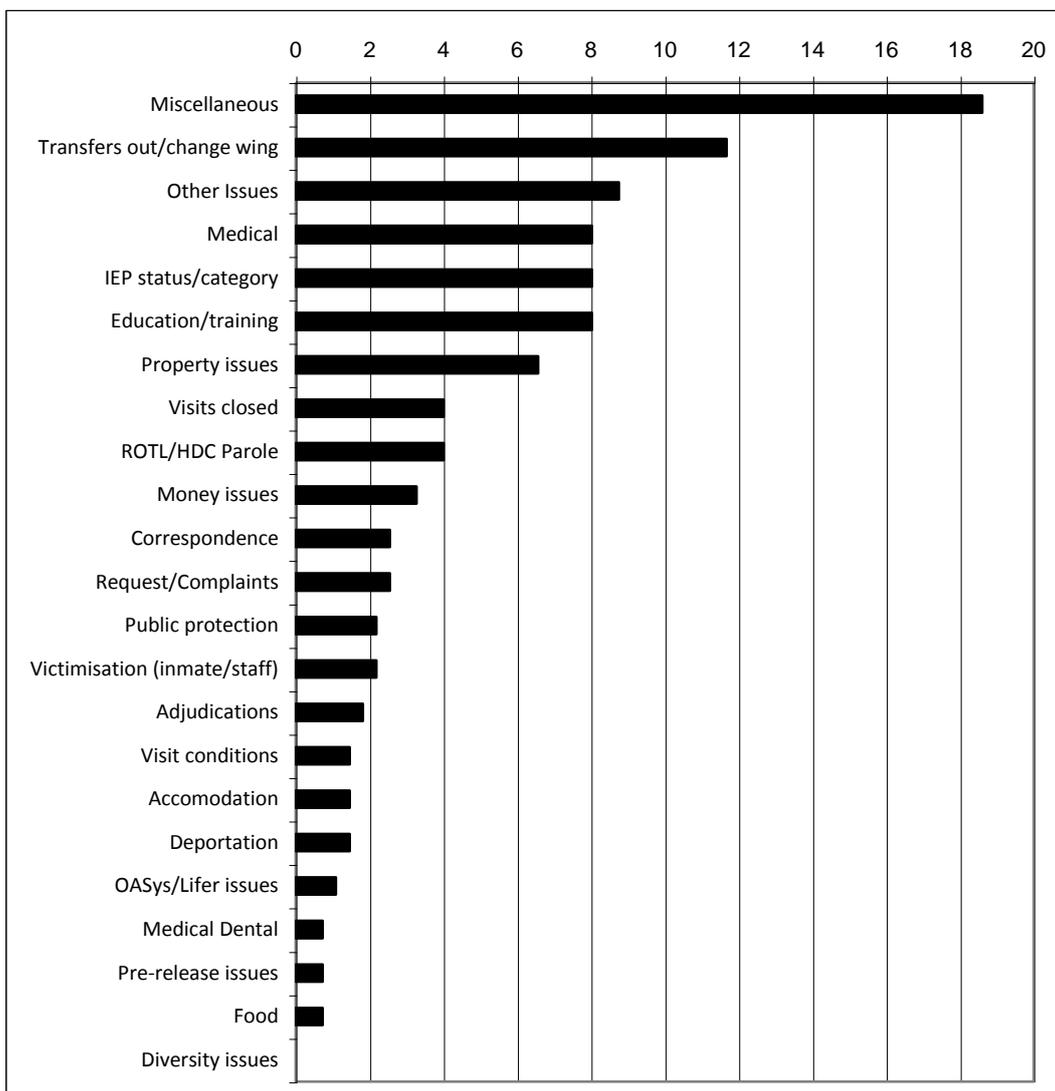
**The miscellaneous category includes applications that do not fit into national key headings including applications regarding issues that had already been resolved, duplicated, withdrawn, prisoner did not wish to continue with application, duplicated applications or where a prisoner had not appropriately used the formal Request and Complaints procedure.*

6.2 There has been a gradual reduction in the number of Health related applications to the Board since 2008/9. This may be due to the fact that more prisoners are now aware of, and are using, Healthcare's own complaints system, although as figure 1 below shows applications concerning healthcare issues are still significant. Over the reporting year the Board has also experienced a gradual reduction in complaints concerning correspondence but an increase in those relating to family/visits.

6.3 Unusually there has been a fall in the number of applications regarding property lost or delayed. In the 2008/09 reporting year, property accounted for second highest number of applications and the highest number in 2009/10. Applications concerning transfers out of Wymott are a significant issue for prisoners and may reflect the problems of gaining access to courses that satisfy sentence plans.

6.4 The Board at Wymott records applications using a wider, but similar set of categories to the national key ones. Figure 1, below shows applications for the reporting year by percentage.

Figure 1: Application categories by percentage of total



N.B. 'Miscellaneous' includes Applications regarding issues that had already been resolved, duplicated, withdrawn, prisoner did not wish to continue with application, duplicated applications or where a prisoner had not appropriately used the formal Request and Complaints procedure.

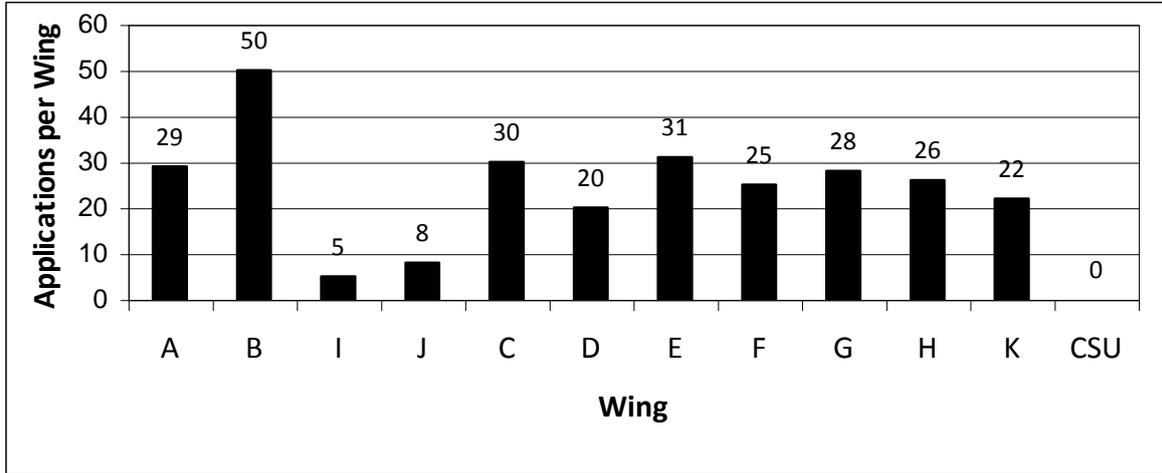
6.5 'Other issues' shown in figure 1 include those applications that do not fall into any of the categories of table 2 but nevertheless are important to prisoners. Some of these are listed below in table 3 to illustrate their diversity:

Table 3: 'Other' Issues

Town visit	Book order issue
Footwear issue	TC regime issue (2)
Request for phone trace	Argos order
Request for photographs	In-cell religious artefacts
Sentence plan issue	Early release scheme
Allergy to prison bedding	Request to sleep on cell floor

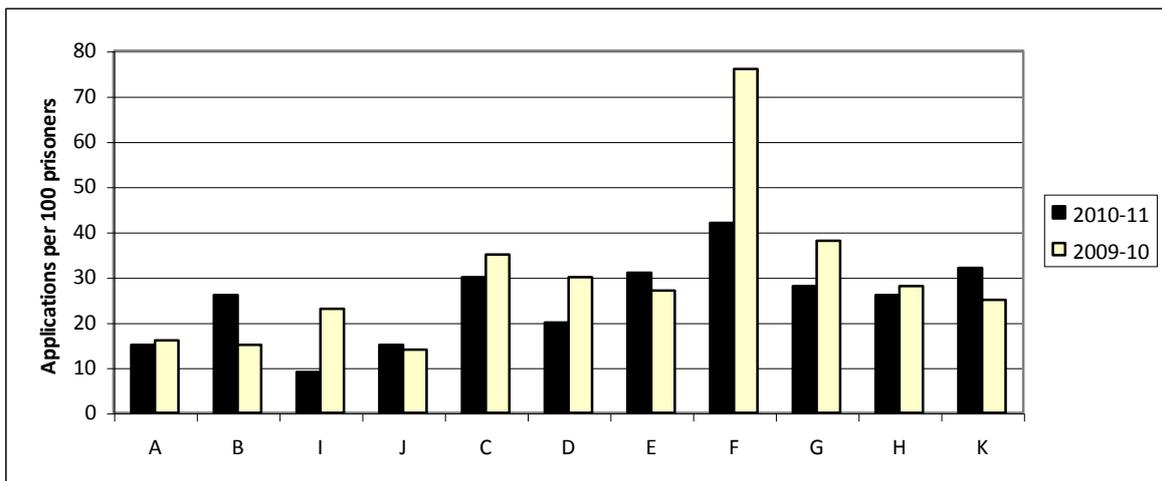
6.7 The Board collects applications data by wing as well as category in order to observe any trends. There were a total of 274 applications made to the Board during this reporting period compared with 311 over the 2009/10 period. Figure 2 shows the applications from each wing over the current reporting period.

Figure 2: Number of Applications per Wing



6.8 In order for comparisons to be made, the data above has been modified to show in figure 3 the number of applications per wing per 100 prisoners (CSU excluded) and between the reporting years 2009-10 and 2010-11).

Figure 3: Number of Applications Per 100 Prisoners



The high number of applications from F wing in 2009-10 was probably due to the change in function of that wing as it converted to an induction wing to hold both VP and Cat C prisoners. More applications from new prisoners can be expected than from those who had been at the Prison for some time. The reduced number of applications during 2010-11 may have been due to the wing and its officers settling down to their new roles.

Section 7

Abbreviations Used in the Report

ACCT	Assessment Care in Custody Teamwork
CARATS	Counselling, assessment, referral, Advice and Throughcare (related to drugs)
CAT C	Security categorisation of prisoners (Cat A highest, Cat D lowest)
CALM	Crisis, aggression, limitation and management
CNA	Certified Normal Accommodation (number of prisoners who can be accommodated without overcrowding)
CSRA	Cell Sharing Risk Assessment
CSU	Care and Separation Unit (usually known as Segregation)
DEAT	Disability Equality Action Team
DLO	Disability Liaison Officer
HMCIP	Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons
IDTS	Integrated Drug Treatment Service (Methadone maintenance)
IEP	Incentives and Earned Privileges
IMB	Independent Monitoring Board
IPP	Imprisonment for Public Protection (indeterminate sentence)
MDT	Mandatory Drug Tests
NACRO	National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders
NOMS	National Offender Management Service
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
OAsys	Offender Assessment System
OLASS	Offender Learning and Skills Service
OMU	Offender Management Unit
PCT	Primary Care Trust (Central Lancashire)
PEEPS	Prisoner Emergency Evacuation Procedures
PVO	Prison visiting order
REAT	Race Equality Action Team
REO	Race Equality Officer
Rule 45	Removal from association either for own interest/own protection or in interests of good order or discipline
RIRF	Racist Incident Reporting Forms
Score 3's	Score 3 is a Prison Service mechanism for identifying prisoners who may be more likely to commit disciplinary offences or become involved in disturbances. It uses 3 criteria - age of the offender, length of sentence and type of offence - and is defined in Prison Service Order PSO 1810
SIR	Security Information Report
SMART	Systematic Monitoring and Analysing of Race Equality Template
SMARG	CSU (Segregation) Monitoring and Review Group
SOTP	Sex offenders' treatment programme
TAB	'Tackling Anti-Bullying' (Prison name given to anti-bullying policy and its documentation)
TC	Therapeutic Community (drug rehabilitation)
VP	Vulnerable prisoners