



**ANNUAL REPORT OF
THE IMB AT HMP NORWICH**

1ST MARCH 2014

TO

28TH FEBRUARY 2015

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 Secretary of State for Justice from members of the community in which the prison or centre is situated.

The Board is specifically charged to:

- (1) Satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody within its prison and the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release.
- (2) Inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom he has delegated authority as it judges appropriate, any concern it has.
- (3) Report annually to the Secretary of State on how well the prison has met the standards and requirements placed on it and what impact these have on those in its custody.

To enable the Board to carry out these duties effectively its members have right of access to every prisoner and every part of the prison and also to the prison's records except for the medical records.

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DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON DURING THE PERIOD OF THE REPORT

HMP Norwich is a multi-functional Adult and Young Offender Category B,C and D Local Prison predominantly serving the courts of Norfolk and Suffolk, housing convicted and remand prisoners. Accommodation is in a mixture of Victorian, 20th and 21st century buildings, spread over 3 separate sites. The Main site houses Category B and C prisoners. A Local Discharge Unit (LDU) is on one site; this houses low risk Category C prisoners. A separate Category D Open Prison, Britannia House, is sited in part of the old Victorian barracks of the Royal Norfolk Regiment.

The **main reception site** has 5 main wings plus the Care and Separation Unit (Ketts Unit) with the capacity to hold approximately 510 prisoners.

A wing is multi-functional wing; it holds 210 prisoners in 180 cells. It accommodates the First Night/Induction landings, prisoners who are waiting to go to other wings and the Integrated Drug Treatment System (IDTS) stabilisation and maintenance landings.

B and C wings serve the local courts and house both Category B and C prisoners (remand, convicted and prisoners sentenced to an indeterminate sentence – life or imprisonment for public protection (IPP). B and C wings have the capacity to hold 230 prisoners.

C2 and C3 landings accommodate up to 70 sex offenders in single and double cells.

E wing – the only Victorian residential wing still in use accommodates up to 26 more-settled prisoners in double or triple cells.

M wing houses 40 selected low risk prisoners in portakabin-style accommodation.

The Care and Separation Unit (known as Ketts Unit) has 10 cells and 2 Special Accommodation cells, 1 of which has been furnished to provide a room for education.

The **second site** contains:

The **Local Discharge Unit (LDU)** in **F and G wings**, which houses prisoners with normally less than 12 months to serve and who will be released into the local community. It has the capacity to hold 180 prisoners.

L wing houses up to 15 elderly prisoners needing specialised nursing care and is overseen by Healthcare.

The Healthcare Centre (HCC) provides Type 3 healthcare for 23 prisoners. The prison's healthcare contract is managed by Virgin Care (since April 1st 2014).

Britannia House is a separate Victorian building outside the prison walls, housing up to 42 Category D prisoners in open prison conditions. Many of these men have jobs in Norwich or are employed in the recently established Café Britannia on the ground floor of part of Britannia House.

Education is managed by A4E through the Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) regional contract with the Learning and Skills Council (LSC).

The Visitors' Centre is run by Ormiston Families.

HMP Norwich has a Certified Normal Accommodation (CNA) of 627 and an Operating Capacity (Op Cap) of 769, although for most of the reporting year an additional 14 spaces were added.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We are pleased to report that HMP Norwich continues to be an improving prison in spite of limitations in the quality of care engendered by benchmarking constraints together with a budget cut of 24% over the last 3 years.

We have grave concerns over the safety of both staff and prisoners due to unavoidable reductions in staffing levels on the wings. We are unhappy that the management had to impose a restricted regime last summer due to staffing levels and that this has remained in place throughout the reporting year. We note that there has been a considerable reduction in staff sickness levels after very robust management intervention.

We are concerned that there is more prisoner on prisoner violence, despite the introduction of CCTV on the landings, resulting in more unplanned interventions and more unaccountable injuries. Prisoners have commented that this is due to the lack of staff on the landings.

There has been a marked increase in both numbers and the recognition of prisoners with serious mental health illnesses who should not be in prison and we commend the mental health team for their vigorous, proactive approach to this problem. We deplore the inadequate provision of dentistry within HMP Norwich. We are concerned that there are too many agency staff in healthcare, although many of these staff have been working at HMP Norwich for some time. Of greater concern is the lack of permanent GP cover.

There remain some persistent weaknesses which we have highlighted in previous years:-

The delivery of inductions is progressing but needs further improvement.

ACCTs entries do not consistently give an authentic record of the nature of any meaningful interaction with the prisoner.

Information for foreign nationals re Home Office surgeries and immigration clinics are not adequately displayed on all wings.

Some of the complaints boxes are not secure.

Inaccurate roll calls continue, disrupting the regime.

Pin phones are not always activated swiftly and there are unnecessary delays which is of particular concern to new prisoners.

Cell clearances and property management can lack proficiency.

Staff shortages mean that Listeners cannot be assisted through gates to other wings, despite their 'passports'.

Wing applications lack an efficient monitoring system and prisoners complain that they are frequently ignored.

The personal officer scheme does not function.

Management of stores is poor and records are frequently unreliable.

The PE department still does not facilitate accredited qualifications (formerly praised by HMIP and the IMB).

However, we observe that the majority of people working in the prison are trying hard to do a good job and achieve the best for prisoners within the confines and restrictions of the system. It is regrettable that there is frustration over the lack of time to meaningfully engage with prisoners - not even time for the five minute intervention.

The stability of A wing shows a dramatic improvement after a reconfiguration of staffing levels and strong positive management.

A programme of re-painting and refurbishment has been initiated and parts of the prison are brighter and less austere.

There has been an increase in purposeful activity throughout the prison and prisoners are actively encouraged to participate.

We regret that several fundamental issues have not been addressed by Government.

- NOMS Business Plan 2013-14 stated that benchmarking levels were determined "to ensure that prisons are as safe as possible in relation to order and control, violence reduction, suicide prevention and drug strategy" and declared that "we will not compromise safety, security or decency". This has proven to be a fallacy as official figures show that prisons are unsafe and safety, security and decency have all been compromised (July 2014 official figures show:- serious assaults up 30%, 6% rise in suicides - the highest level since 2005, 15% rise in assaults on staff).
- There remain major difficulties and unnecessary delays in allocating prisoners with severe mental health illnesses to more suitable secure facilities; these seriously ill men should have been diverted prior to arrival in prison.
- The inadequate discharge grant remains unchanged; remand prisoners remain ineligible, regardless of how long they have been imprisoned.
- There are no short-term programmes for addressing offender behaviour and no Sex Offender Treatment Programmes (SOTPs) available at Norwich, which is now a local resettlement prison. The number of registered sex offenders in England and Wales has risen by more than a third in the past five years to over 40,000 yet the number of SOTPs delivered nationally in prisons has decreased year on year from 2010: 1,142 in 2010 to a target in 2013-14 of 886 (only 78% of the 2010 total).
- Doubling up of cells remains commonplace, eliminating any personal privacy for a prisoner using the lavatory within a very small space, right next to where the cell mate sleeps and eats.
- Property management lacks an efficient nationwide tracking system.

- There is no allowance for sick/holiday cover for instructing staff.

QUESTIONS FOR THE MINISTER

1. Can the Minister outline his plans for offender behaviour programmes following short sentences and short term recall on licence as there appears no provision for such programmes within local resettlement prisons?
2. In 2014, prisoners needing transfer to secure hospital facilities under the terms of the Mental Health Act served a total of 692 days in HMP Norwich beyond the agreed 14-day transfer target. What plans are there to improve the situation and what steps is the Minister taking to ensure that adequate secure facilities have been allocated in order to prevent severely mentally ill people arriving at prisons because 'there were no secure facilities available' and prison is therefore concluded to be 'the safest place'?
3. There has been a marked increase nationally in the use of force and subsequent injuries since benchmarking was introduced. Does the minister have any plans to rectify this situation and what steps are being taken to rationalize upwards benchmarking profiles to ensure safety for both staff and prisoners at all times?
4. How can the Minister justify only an 11p increase in the daily meal allowance when food prices have increased significantly over the last 3 years?
5. How does the Minister defend the fact that acute staff shortages necessitate regime restrictions on a regular basis?
6. How does the Minister plan to raise standards within Prisons whilst continuing swingeing budget cuts?

EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

Forms reporting incidents of discrimination are responded to promptly and sensitively; the Board monitors these and they are quality controlled at the EAT meetings. We have not observed any active or obvious discrimination but note that Use of Force (see page 12) has been found to be used disproportionately against minority prisoners and is being investigated.

Positive steps have been Equalities meetings, the prisoner performance recognition scheme, electronic training packages on learning difficulties, personality disorders and wheelchair use, the successful Equalities Fair and displays for Black History month and Disability History month. The excellent Ann Frank exhibition explored all aspects of discrimination, using selected prisoners effectively to enhance the delivery; prisoners reported it as a very positive learning experience.

There are now forum meetings allowing differing communities to have their say.

92.93% of men in HMP Norwich are registered as heterosexual with 0.3% registered as bisexual, 0.3% as homosexual and 6.47% not disclosed. The prison has established a sexual orientation group as they believe the figures could reflect under reporting.

Lack of education amongst the travelling community was identified as an issue in a focus group meeting. The Shannon Trust programme (formerly known as Toe by Toe) is due to be re-launched with the expectation that this community will engage with the programme if appropriate mentors can be trained.

There is an over 50s Club managed by Age UK, but there have been operational problems limiting its success. Forget-me-Nots, a group to encourage cognitive stimulation, takes place in L wing; we have observed that this has a positive effect on the elderly prisoners.

Disability care plans have taken time to be formulated and have floundered between the Disability Liaison Officer and Healthcare sign off. We will monitor the impact of the new Care Act within the prison in the approaching year.

Exchange of information with Children's Services regarding young care leavers is non-existent. There is little differentiation in the management of Young Offenders and Adults but they do not cell share; any errors have been swiftly rectified.

Several attempts at setting up a support group for Veterans in custody had all failed due to lack of time or commitment. However, a new forum with support from Regular Forces Employment Association, Veterans Norfolk and Royal British Legion has started well.

Vulnerable Prisoners (VPs) have reported that they were treated with dignity in Reception and the Board has monitored officers being professional, polite and respectful. The housing of Vulnerable Prisoners (VPs) in C2 and C3 works well, but VPs placed on C1 due to lack of space report not feeling safe. As VPs work in the Vocational Training Centre, an acceptable daily regime is offered in a safe environment. The food situation has improved although portion sizes remain a problem at times and VPs fear the risk of their food being tampered with.

EDUCATION, LEARNING AND SKILLS and PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY

Education, training and employment places have increased significantly. Courses are limited in scope and it is a serious deficiency that no offender behaviour programmes are offered other than the Living Safely week-long workshop run by RAPt.

Universal Assessment (UA) is now mandatory for prisoners and those who refuse to attend are dealt with under the IEP. UA sessions are supervised supportively. Enrolment on educational courses, initially poor, has risen but not enough.

Use of IEP and tightening of regime, has increased attendance and enrolment. Non-attendance can be caused by concurrent appointments (legal etc) for which there is no planning but non-attendance due to medication queues has been solved by an earlier start to daily dispensing. Some unlock problems remain and checking prisoners whereabouts on freeflow is not sufficiently diligent. The classroom ethos has improved with only scheduled toilet breaks permitted.

ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) courses are well provided. Prisoners held in Ketts Unit can be provided with education but we have seen little evidence that this takes

place. Help with Open University (OU) is now offered but there is limited access to computers for research etc. However, the few OU students are supported by A4E on an individual basis.

Data is collected and analysed on a regular basis and evaluated at the regular QUIG meetings. The prison complies with the core provision but Level 3 is only available for 18-23 year olds in limited areas.

OFSTED support is provided and has registered an improvement in the quality and management of educational/vocational provision.

At HMP Norwich, the purposeful activity is linked to the resettlement agenda in that the majority of the workshops are designed to lead to job opportunities. Student needs assessments are analysed each year, linked with local outside employment opportunities; this drives the education/training provided. However, again only low level qualifications are available.

Since the redundancy of a key trainer, there have been no qualifications for food safety or hygiene handling and we have received some applications complaining that there is a lack of hygiene apparent where the prisoners work in catering.

The Board commends the proactive role of the Library. Some hours within the library have been lost due to regime shutdown, prison staff training etc.

The gym continues to be popular and well run but Physical Education Instructors (PEIs) are too often detailed to other duties causing gym closures. Qualifications are no longer offered.

Prisoners' applications for work, based on satisfactory UA results, go before a weekly activities allocation board which assesses need and allocates accordingly. From the start of the BCST pilot, two activities allocations boards per week will be taking place and will help speed up the process; we are satisfied that this procedure is supervised closely by HMP Norwich.

Britannia Cafe is an on-site social enterprise, open to the public, with excellent on the job practical training for the hospitality industry. No formal qualifications as yet are available for the Cat D prisoners working there, which is disappointing, but these prisoners have stated that they feel the café offers a constructive opportunity for reintegration into society and the job culture.

The new Call Centres, now open on both sides of the prison, provide good training and job opportunities for released prisoners who have proved themselves competent in this field.

Painting and Decorating workshops are now found on both sides of the prison and some innovative work is being done.

HEALTHCARE

Healthcare provision has improved after an uncertain start to the new contract with Virgincare, although we regret the lack of permanent GP cover and there are too many agency staff generally.

Dental provision continues to be unacceptable, various initiatives failing to resolve the situation. We believe the subcontracted providers are breaching their contract; we note that Virgincare is pursuing this issue robustly.

The introduction of pain clinics coupled with robust prescription reviews of medication on arrival has caused some upset as has the move to liquids for some medications, reducing diversion. However we are satisfied that these changes may well improve the long term health of prisoners despite vocal opposition from some men.

IDTS provision in the LDU has been unacceptably delayed but we are happy to report that a room is at last being equipped and the slow introduction of a small number of IDTS prisoners is due to start at the end of March.

Some of the in-patient accommodation is bed-blocked by mental health patients, many of whom show disturbed behaviour, so bed availability for prisoners with physical illnesses may be delayed. The Health Care Centre (HCC) is out-dated and lacks the facilities of a good medical centre.

Specialist nursing care for up to 15 prisoners is provided on L Wing. During this reporting period, the wing has continued to improve. New nursing beds with alarm mats have been installed, which make it easier for staff to deal with the less mobile prisoner but alarm bells are often inaccessible. The "Forget-Me-Nots", a charitable organisation, still visit each Friday to stimulate and entertain the prisoners through exercise, singing and games. The group is a great success with the prisoners who look forward to its visit. The standard of cleaning in L wing is not always high but the orderly is assiduous in his care of the elderly. The level of care from the staff is commendable but continuity, beneficial for the elderly, is affected by the lack of regularly detailed prison staff.

MENTAL HEALTH

A continuing concern for the Board is those offenders whose mental health makes prison a wholly unsuitable place for them.

The Liaison and Diversion services provided by Criminal Justice Mental Health Teams are intended to ensure that such offenders never get as far as prison. We welcome the extra funding to expand the services of the team to conform to a new national operating framework but too many mentally ill men are falling through this safety net and continue to arrive at Norwich prison gates.

Offenders who enter prison with, or subsequently develop, severe mental health problems may need to be transferred quickly to secure mental health facilities. In the calendar year 2014 there were 29 transfers, compared to 11 in 2013. The average time for transfers during the reporting year was 38 days. Only 7 were within the 2009 Bradley Report recommended 14-day target; the shortest time to complete a transfer was 3 days, and the longest 140. The average interval between the gatekeeper's recommendation and completed transfer was 16 days (with a range from 4 to 55 days.)

Mental health provision, under the new contract covering both primary and secondary services, has improved dramatically with a staffing increase under dedicated and capable

leadership. More agency staff than is desirable are used to maintain safe levels of staffing. Unfortunately, 'Wellbeing' (part of the 'Increased Access to Psychological Therapies' initiative) is still managed separately, although liaison between the teams has improved.

With the increase of prisoners displaying acute symptoms of mental health illness, these committed staff are under relentless pressure.

RESETTLEMENT

We are disappointed that the Community Liaison Officer's role has been restricted as he is frequently detailed elsewhere due to staff shortages. The Community Liaison Officer had received national awards for his work and the resettlement agenda is diminished by this curtailment.

Positive links have been formed with the Police and Crimes Commissioner's Office with good rehabilitation implications and closer ties are proposed, which we welcome.

KPTs have all been consistently achieved. However we are aware that parts of the reported results are self reporting and therefore cannot be verified (e.g. jobs/housing on release). We have had fewer complaints this reporting year about prisoners being unsure about accommodation on release although NACRO continues to have had staffing problems during some parts of the year which has impacted upon delivery for prisoners.

The transition to Through the Gates (TTG) is taking place. Part 1 of Basic Custody Screening Tool (BCST) has been implemented smoothly by the prison but too many aspects of the Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRC) remain unknown, and NACRO staff have been uncertain whether they will transfer to the CRC. We are looking forward to monitoring the change that this new policy will make upon resettlement.

Officers and prisoners in Britannia House have raised concerns as they perceive that ROTL, under new directions, is less available, thus hindering the rehabilitation progression. We have noted that ROTL men in Britannia House can no longer join the community gym or go to the local library.

Department of Work & Pensions staff (DWP) have suffered with computer problems which has impacted upon their ability to provide a comprehensive service to the prisoners.

The provision of advice on debt, gambling and alcohol awareness has improved after lengthy delays in implementation of planned services, in some measure due to difficulties with security clearances.

SAFER CUSTODY

The Safer Custody team has become a more cohesive unit during this reporting year with a number of positive changes. The weekly Complex Needs meeting, now with better attendance, when not cancelled through the absences of the Lead Officers, successfully identifies, assesses and provides action plans for particularly vulnerable prisoners.

After the disintegration of the previous system, commented on last year, a new Personal Officer Scheme is finally to be introduced in March 2015: this will be closely monitored.

Personal Evacuation Plans are now in place on every wing.

The IEP system is being monitored more rigorously by the prison's Equalities Action Team and there has been a drop in the number of men remaining on Basic for an unreasonable length of time. IEP reviews remain a concern as the limited staffing often impacts on the ability for timely reviews to be held. IEP has increasingly been used in this reporting year to support Violence Reduction effectively.

CCTV cameras are now working and assisting with reporting and investigation of incidents. Although very useful, we have some concerns that some bullying may have moved in-cell, out of the range of the cameras.

ACCTs, now managed by permanent staff monitored by the Safer Custody team, have reduced in number, but too often reporting remains inadequate and an unacceptable number of healthcare staff remain untrained. In February 2015 there were 42 ACCTS effective, of which 37 were prisoners with mental health problems.

The important role of Listener/orderly in Reception continues effectively, helping to settle in new prisoners in particular. Throughout the reporting year there have again been concerns about a shortage of Listeners. Samaritans have been hampered by a lack of suitable applicants for training. The service is also affected by the scarcity of listeners on A wing, inability to confidentially brief other listeners when prisoners are transferred, loss or damage to Samaritans phones and lack of staff to help listeners move between wings.

Incidents of self-harm seem to have reduced; however, cutting is the most frequent issue and Friday seems to be the most likely day of the week for cutting to occur.

The number of Constant Watches (CW) has reduced but CW has had to be used too frequently for high risk prisoners with a serious mental illness. We commend the sensitive and individualised use of CW for three high risk prisoners at long term risk.

Cell bell response times have improved, particularly in A wing. Misuse of bells has been effectively and robustly tackled through IEP sanctions.

Violence reduction is taken seriously; the Deputy Governor has been appraising prisoners' views. Towards the end of our reporting year there was an increase in violence, both physical and psychological, this could reflect both this year's increase in more difficult prisoners and fewer staff on the wings.

There has been a significant improvement in the management of A wing, which mainly houses reception prisoners and those on IDTS. Historically this wing has been unsettled and sometimes vulnerable to serious incidents and other poor behaviour. To reflect the complexity of the roles undertaken, staffing on A wing has been increased, the wing is now more settled and relationships between prisoners and staff are more positive.

There were 4 prisoners who died in HMP Norwich this year. They were elderly men who died of natural causes. Delays in Inquest dates are decreasing but there is still one inquest outstanding for a prisoner who died in 2011.

USE OF FORCE

The monitoring of use of force, practice and training has improved over the last 12 months

Due to malfunctioning equipment, the recording of planned interventions has sometimes failed. New equipment should enable 100% of planned uses of force to be monitored. Existing videos have identified training needs on planning, de-escalation techniques and follow up report writing. Failure to complete Annex A reports may result in disciplinary procedures in the future.

Use of force averaged 24 – 26 incidents per month in 2014, with a spike in December. Minority ethnic groups, particularly Moslems, and young people, are over represented in these incidents, a worrying trend which is being evaluated. Post incident interviews and CCTV should help investigate incidents.

There has also been a worrying increase in injuries to staff during 2014, which may coincide with more unplanned interventions and fewer staff. There has been no notable corresponding increase in injuries to prisoners.

SEGREGATION (KETTS UNIT) and ADJUDICATIONS

The unit has been busy throughout the reporting year but does not appear to have been used arbitrarily. A number of prisoners have complained that they have been held for security reasons which they did not understand, although in each case the prisoner was spoken to by the Security Department. Special Accommodation has been rarely used and only for very brief periods, despite the unit having dealt with some very difficult prisoners. A number of prisoners have failed the algorithm, being so mentally unwell that they should not be in prison. The Activities room remains underused and education provision is extremely limited. Staff shortages impact on the Board being able to see prisoners face to face and our visits are frequently limited to speaking through the cell door as there are not enough officers to unlock at the time we visit. There have been a number of occasions where we suspected that some members of staff have made individual decisions about regime without reference to managers. We note with relief that this is being dealt with effectively and quickly. Most members of staff have displayed great tolerance and professionalism in the face of deliberately provocative behaviour. Board members attend reviews and adjudications and are satisfied that they are fair and well managed.

RESIDENTIAL SERVICES (ACCOMMODATION, FOOD, CATERING AND KITCHENS)

The accommodation at HMP Norwich is largely unchanged since our last report. Some minor improvements have been made, particularly in aiming to ensure that basic cell equipment is quickly replaced by purchasing essentials regularly. However, significant failures in stock control have impacted on this aim. We shall monitor closely the new contracted out service provided by Carillion from April 2015. There have been fewer applications complaining of poor laundry since washing machines and dryers have been installed in the main wings. A pressure washer has been purchased in A wing and refurbishment there has made a difference. There is a programme of repainting throughout the prison but some areas are difficult to enhance, particularly the LDU which was not well designed and is unattractive. Showers in B & C wings became unacceptable during the year with mould and flaking paintwork. L wing has new flooring in the recreational room but the dining area is still dull and institutional. The Board reported unacceptably dirty lavatories and this was rectified with a deep cleaning regime. General daily cleaning is not always regularly or efficiently done and the board has noticed dirty and dusty staircases and floors in some parts of the main prison.

Food for prisoners is barely adequate. During the reporting year the daily allowance was increased from £1.91 per prisoner per day to £2.02. This increase is still palpably inadequate and does not reflect the increase in food costs faced in the community at large. The small and unappetising breakfast pack is often eaten well before breakfast time. Lunch is a sandwich or soup and bread and the evening meal is the only full cooked meal given. After meetings with prisoners, the Catering Manager has specified amounts to be served to each prisoner when individual packed portions are not used, but this needs good supervision at the serveries. Staff shortages often impede this at this critical time, when favouritism and bullying can thrive. Improvements have been made to the LDU kitchen but there is no progress with the proposed market garden and proposed bakery, both of which could improve the nutritional quality of prisoners' food. We have reported before that the contract with 3663 is unsatisfactory. During the year we were shown a sample of wrapped bread which was beyond its 'sell by' date with obvious signs of mould but still delivered to the prison to be consumed by prisoners. This would not be allowed in the community and there is no excuse for this practice within the prison system.

RECEPTION AND INDUCTION

Reception at Norwich is a busy place with around 130 prisoners passing through each week. Prisoners with a disability are not always identified in Reception, unless it is obvious. This should be picked up by the first night screening with the nurse and a disability questionnaire should be completed by the first night officer. However, it is accepted that not all men with a disability will report it.

Officers in Reception still regularly work well past their hours due to late arrivals from court. Norwich does not lock out and will accept prisoners from late sitting courts and other establishments that have locked out. The Board applauds the Reception staff's continuing dedication to providing an unthreatening reception to HMP Norwich although we maintain that the physical appearance of the Victorian Reception area remains somewhat stark and inhospitable.

Pin phones are still a cause for concern, with backlogs of unprocessed numbers. This is unacceptable, particularly for Reception prisoners who are at recognised heightened risk of self harm. A solution is being sought by the manager and we will continue to monitor this closely.

At the start of the reporting year, the reliability of inductions on A wing seemed to be variable. More officers have been trained to carry out inductions they but are not always available. The Induction Rep on C wing has previously reported that they are not always informed when a new prisoner comes onto the wing.

Steps have been taken to improve 1st night experience and the 1st night booklet has been simplified. The first night officer from A wing should spend time in Reception going through the first night information there rather than on the wing but this does not always happen. The Reception Orderlies have provided an excellent service to new arrivals throughout the reporting year.

The former VDT room on A6 has been turned into an induction suite. This is used by the induction reps who go through basic non-personal information with new prisoners and this works well. At the end of the reporting year this room was being decorated by a prisoner, transforming a rather impersonal space.

BCST stage1 was piloted, is now fully implemented and is functioning well; the prison is reporting that 100% of new prisoners are being screened. Due to delays in clarifying the detail of the new CRCs role, BCST Stage 2 cannot be planned or trialled until the relationship between the prison and that new role is known and staff are in place. .

SECURITY

The Security department has managed to raise its profile and its work during this reporting year with some success. There has been an ongoing self-audit and random dynamic testing of both staff and visitors has increased. There was an unannounced Security Audit in November 2014 with an amber/green outcome. An Action Plan is in place and has been sent to the DDC. Contingency exercises are tested and modified appropriately. Monthly security objectives have been widely publicised. CCTV on the Reception site has been completed and has had a positive effect on investigating violence and bullying by providing reliable evidence; its success assisted in making a capital bid for CCTV to be installed in the LDU. Bids for additional fencing are ongoing.

Drug activity within the prison has escalated. NPS (legal highs) are increasingly used in the community and prisons. Initially some quite serious health consequences arose, particularly with younger prisoners, but this has lessened throughout the year. Virgincare has introduced new practices which are helping to reduce misuse of prescribed medication. Mandatory Drug Testing continues although the regularity has reduced owing to the staffing shortages. There has been a noticeable increase in good intelligence links with police outside the prison, resulting in some good strategies and finds. However throw overs are still frequently found and mobile phones and Class A drugs have been intercepted. A number of hooch finds have been made and it is disappointing to report that cell checks are not supporting the work of the

Security department when plastic bottles are repeatedly re-used illegally for brewing instead of being destroyed.

Covert testing continues and has exposed some vulnerability where routine procedures can result in behaviour which causes security breaches, usually resulting from reluctance to challenge what appears to be 'normal behaviour' around gates and keys.

Corruption prevention awareness has been heightened this year and a member of staff has been sentenced for illegal provision of drugs to prisoners for cash.

The department functions well and works hard to keep both prisoners and staff safe.

SERIOUS INCIDENTS

As we have reported in previous years there was inconsistent management of video observation. The cameras are not being maintained regularly and again have been found to have flat batteries when needed to be used in pre-planned incidents. We are pleased to report that ineffective and obsolete arm and leg protectors have been replaced, however, staff are concerned that the white overall boot covers are inadequate and tear easily either when being put over their boots or at times, when in use, which results in their personal boots becoming contaminated.

There have been a number of serious incidents within the reporting year which have been observed by the board. We are satisfied that they have been handled competently and resolved without any injuries. However considerable damage to prison fabric has occurred and prisoners have been fined under the IEP scheme.

PRISONERS' FORUM MEETINGS

Prisoners' representatives are self selecting and are then vetted for suitability by staff. It would be difficult to ensure equal representation for differing groups of prisoners and there is often an imbalance with some groups being over represented, particularly as the experienced reps progress through to lower security wings.

These meetings remain a positive means of obtaining prisoners' views; however, only 50% of planned meetings were held during the reporting year, due to staffing issues. The prison has worked hard this year to try to engage with most prisoner groups by inviting them to attend a forum and the Deputy Governor has been a strong lead in this venture. Matters arising are addressed by the prison where possible and a traffic lights system exists to highlight persistent issues.

There are some issues that are raised regularly. Prisoners report that DHL have improved the processes for canteen purchases with fewer incidents of missing items. Problems continue with catalogue purchasing. Printed catalogues are a thing of the past and few of them are available to the prisoners. When items are out of stock, which occurs frequently, refunds should take 7 days; on one occasion the prisoner did not receive the refund for 3 months.

In spite of several initiatives to improve the pin phone system prisoners continue to report many difficulties in being able to communicate promptly with either their family or their legal advisers. This is wholly unacceptable as it raises risks particularly with new receptions and prisoners with greater vulnerability.

Missing property also is raised as a regular issue and our applications have reflected that this is a perennial problem. Apart from prisoners stating they have had to wait for lengthy periods to receive their property, property missing from previous prisons and after cell clearances form the majority of these complaints. We have noted that different prisons appear to have differing policies on property and the liability of the prison for compensation and note that this appears to be anomalous. When HMP Norwich can detail the regular OSG to property, the system of storing the property works well; however, this is not always possible and then irregularities occur.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

We still have concerns that all accidents are not always reported promptly to the H & S department, photographs for evidence are not always taken, nor are the reports fully completed, and this can delay investigations and appropriate action being taken to prevent further accidents.

There have been a few occasions where staff have been reluctant to wear PPE where this has been issued in cell fires and it seems that the level of staff awareness of potential risks within the prison is not sufficient.

STAFFING, BENCHMARKING AND FINANCE

Throughout the reporting year we have been consistently concerned that the staffing levels are insufficient putting both staff and prisoners at unacceptable risk. Although on occasions HMP Norwich has reached 100%+ staffing as defined by benchmarking, detached duties ranging from 8 - 12 coupled with sometimes multiple hospital bed watches due to an aging/ill population and three long term constant watches have meant that actual staffing levels are well below the benchmarking guidelines. Consequently, a temporary restricted regime was implemented in the summer but has had to continue beyond the reporting year.

We contend that staffing levels defined by benchmarking are inadequate, making no allowance for contingencies. Daily, often skilful, juggling of the detail has been essential but has enabled the restricted regime to operate most of the time. The restricted regime is a direct result of staffing shortages but we cannot condone the principle and we have seen that prisoners are directly affected. The reduced staffing levels put both officers and prisoners in jeopardy where one officer working alone is responsible for many more prisoners than the recommended 30.

Our concern is that potentially problematic situations are only averted by the generally positive relationships between officers and prisoners. Prisoners comment on how they feel safer when

there are more staff on the wing and have expressed concern for staff having to operate on their own. Clearly this situation is dangerous for staff and prisoners alike. Officers and agency staff frequently inform us that they are finding it difficult to have meaningful interaction with prisoners as they just do not have the time, particularly on the larger wings. Some have said that they feel less able to help prisoners except at a very mundane level and that opportunities to assist rehabilitation have been lost. They state that the Five Minute Intervention is just not possible most of the time, as they do not have five minutes to give to an individual. Other staff have admitted that as they are moved around the wings, they do not always know the prisoners in their care.

The Board notes that certain proficiencies have been lost following Fair and Sustainable. There has been a marked deterioration in the quality of stock control in Stores due to non-specialist staff being detailed in this area. Likewise (see Prisoner Forums above), the management of property is compromised when the experienced OSG is detailed elsewhere.

We regret that finance is ring fenced to such an extent that the Governor has no leeway to innovate. We appreciate that government cuts have been necessary but we cannot accept that standards can be maintained with a 24% budget reduction in 3 years.

VISITS AND THE VISITORS' CENTRE

Ormiston Families continue to provide an excellent service albeit with some cuts on previous provision due to funding restrictions. The offender volunteer scheme, involving prisoners from Britannia House, continues to work well with the prisoners seeing the 'other side' of the impact of imprisonment on families. They help on the snack bar (including stock control, till, serving, observing and offering improvement suggestions) and are often invited to talk to visitors about the day to day regime inside the prison. They are inducted properly and receive a full written reference when they leave.

Parenting courses were curtailed but Ormiston Families has piloted at Norwich a new in-cell course that has proved popular with very positive feedback. It is unfortunate that the external funding for this has also run out and so there are no further courses planned.

The online visits booking process was not popular when it was introduced and has improved. The telephone booking is still more widely used and operates well when fully staffed.

During the reporting year the unpopular vending machines have been replaced by a small cafeteria where Cat D prisoners sell drinks and food prepared at Café Britannia – a great improvement illustrated by an absence of complaints

The satisfactory cleaning of the two children's visits rooms seems to be a problem without resolution. The main site's children's visits room used to be cleaned by the employed cleaners but now, as on the LDU, is cleaned by prisoner cleaners. This is unreliable and too frequently the rooms are not cleaned at all which is a health risk for the babies, young children and pregnant women who use this room. Efforts have been made to put regular cleaning in place, but this invariably breaks down.

WORK OF THE IMB

During the year our Board has lost a total of 2 members, 1 to tenure. A great deal of expertise has been lost and will be sorely missed. A successful recruitment campaign has taken place and we look forward to welcoming 4 new members to our Board in the new reporting year.

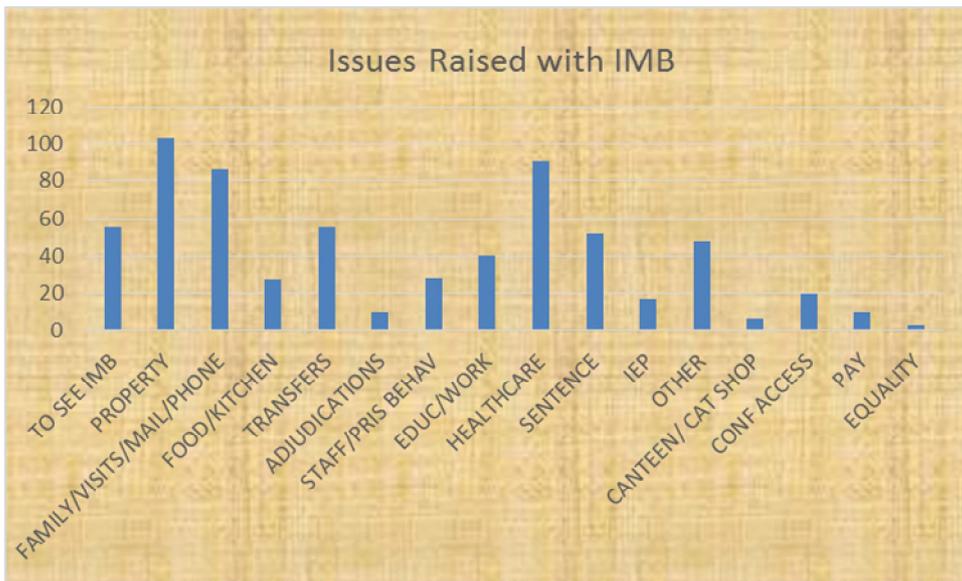
We have answered 577 paper applications, covering 16 issues (please see Annex A). We are endeavouring to raise our profile within the prison as we feel that there are some prisoners who do not appreciate the work of the IMB.

We have visited the prison over 800 times this year and have visited all areas of the prison, attending as many prisoner forums as possible and the Segregation Unit (Ketts) on a very regular basis.

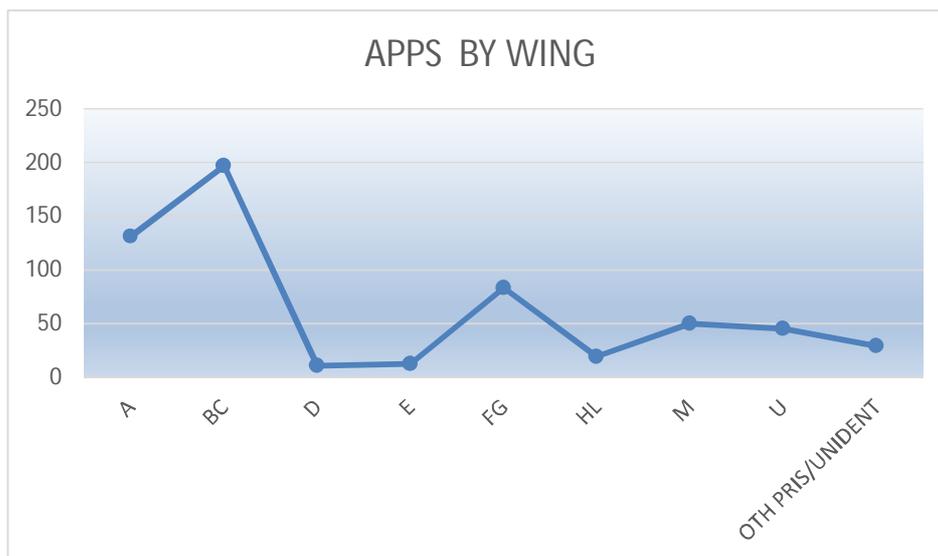
Annex A 2014-15 IMB STATISTICS FOR ANNUAL REPORT

577 Apps received - (783 IN 2013-14 and 552 in 2012-13).

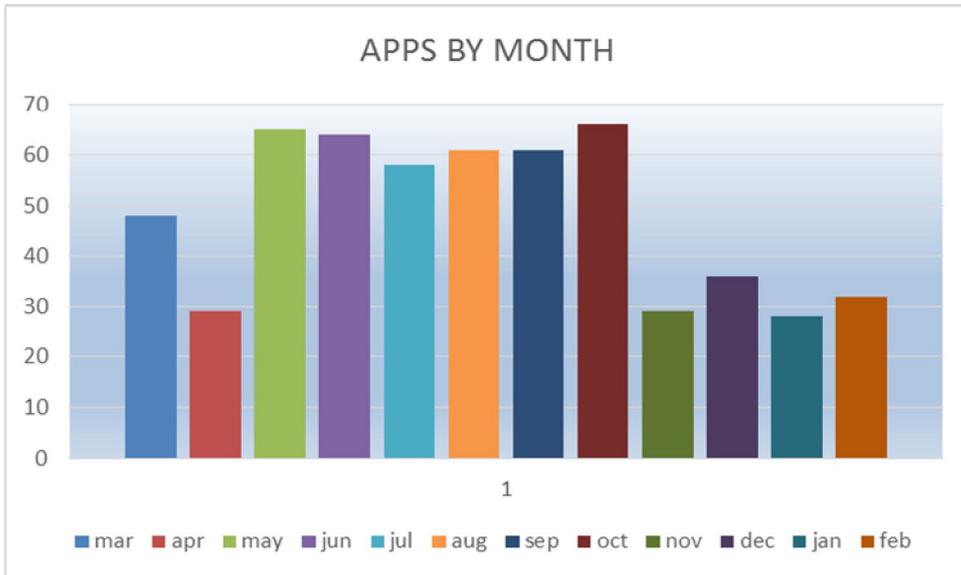
Issues raised (Bearing in mind more than one issue can be raised on an app):



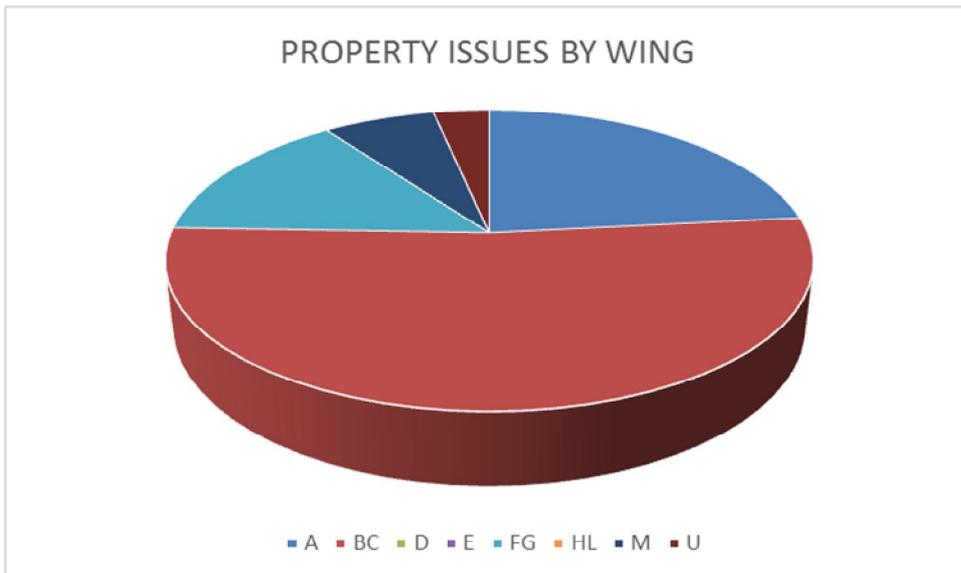
APPS BY WING



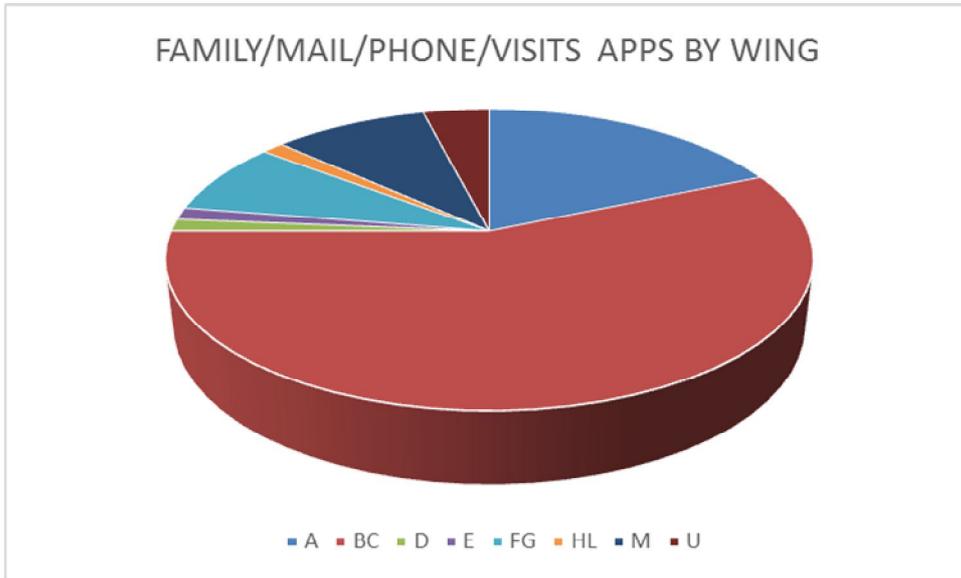
APPS BY MONTH



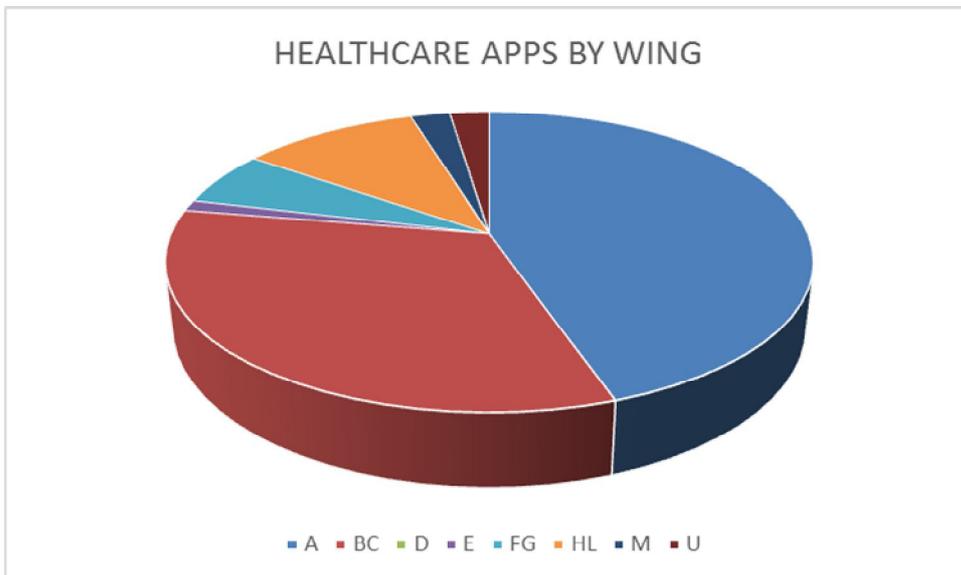
WING/ISSUE BREAKDOWN ON MAJOR ISSUES



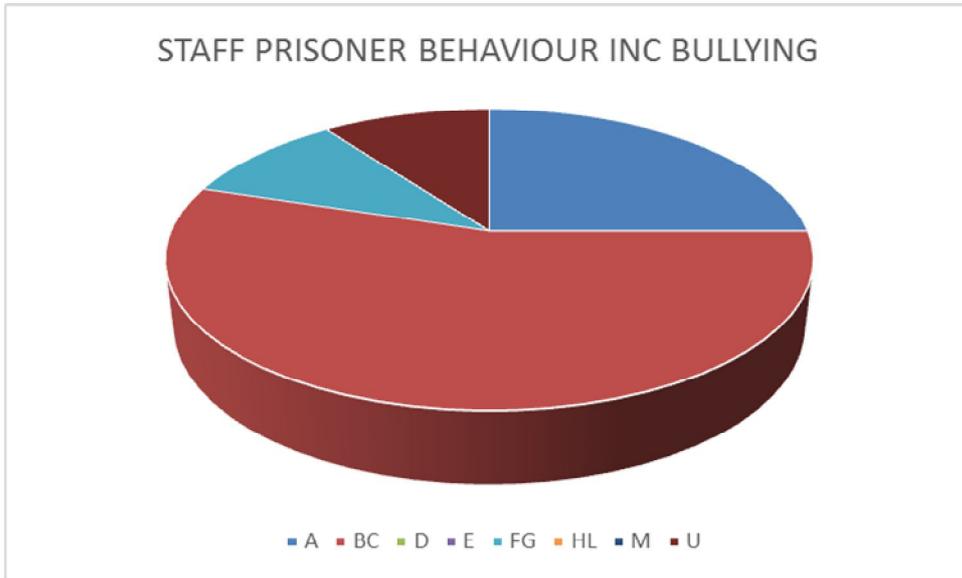
FAMILY/VISITS/MAIL/PHONE



HEALTHCARE



PRISONER/STAFF ISSUES INC BULLYING



Canteen complaints were from B/C (1) F/G (3) and M (3)