



Independent Monitoring Board

HMP Onley

Annual Report

March 2014 – February 2015

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

The Board is specifically charged to:

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

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

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Section 3: Description of the Prison

- 3.1 HMP Onley is situated between Rugby and Daventry. The prison is a male adult Category C London Resettlement establishment. The population is split 90/10% between prisoners from North London and the Midland Area.
- 3.2 In March 2014 the Certified Normal Accommodation (CNA) was 742 with prisoners housed in 12 wings. This balances with the Operational Capacity (Op Cap) of 742. The CNA had been reduced to 682 since before March 2013 to accommodate essential maintenance. This was completed in December 2014 when the CNA reverted to 742.
- 3.3 Wings A,B,C,D,E,G,H each hold 60 prisoners in single cells with in-cell sanitation. Showers are located separately on each wing.
F Wing is the Care and Support Unit (CSU) with capacity to hold 15 prisoners.
H Wing since the completed refurbishment is the Induction wing.
I Wing is the Resettlement Wing with 100 prisoners in 50 double cells.
J and K Wings have 45 single and 15 double cells and are located in a separate block.
L Wing, also in a separate building, holds 72 enhanced prisoners with full en-suite conditions in 56 single and 8 double cells.
Included in these figures are 2 safer cells on G wing and 1 constant watch cell on K wing.
- 3.4 Recreational outlets include a gym, sports hall, all weather football pitch, pool tables, dart boards and exercise stands in the exercise yards. Telephones are located in the wing corridors.
- 3.5 Agencies delivering education are Lincoln College, Milton Keynes College and North Warwickshire and Hinckley College. Milton Keynes College was replaced as the education provider by Manchester College in October 2014.
- 3.6 Healthcare, Mental Health Care and Dentistry are provided by Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. The Coventry Samaritans, who also train the Listeners and Peer Support; the Family Advice and Support Team (FAST), provided by Warwickshire Social Services, and National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO) also attend the prison. Since November 2014 User Voice is also represented in the prison.

Section 4: Executive Summary

- 4.1. The Board feels there is a genuine culture of decency and prisoners are treated with respect. Particular mention should be made of staff in the CSU who have consistently shown extra care and support to very demanding prisoners. Paragraphs 5.7.1 and 5.7.6 refer.
- 4.2 Although acknowledging that the prison is operating in a safe manner under the new Fair & Sustainable (F&S) manning levels, The Board is concerned at the level of pressure all staff are working under which it feels is unsustainable with the resul-

tant effect on prisoners. The recruitment of more officers should relieve this situation. Paragraphs 5.2.4, 5.7.1, 5.8.2 and 5.8.5 refer.

- 4.3 The Board is particularly concerned over the reduced staffing levels. It acknowledges that the establishment is actively recruiting and is operating at a safe level but is concerned over the effect such pressure has on the staff's wellbeing and again with a knock on effect to prisoners . As in 4.2 above, paragraphs 5.7.1, 5.8.2 and 5.8.5 refer.
- 4.4 Throughout the reporting period good practice in workshops, Education and Mental Health Team has been observed and commented upon by The Board.

4.2 Particular Issues Requiring A Response

- 4.2.1 Over the year the prison has operated on a much reduced manning complement and has never attained the recommended figure of 102 officers. The shortfall has been filled by Detached Duties and reliance on Payment Plus. The Board believes this situation is unsustainable over the longer term and leaves the safe running of the prison exposed. The Board is aware that this is a national issue and would ask The Minister what further proposals are planned as the recruitment campaigns to date have not supplied the 1500 officers required?
- 4.2.2 The Board also has concerns regarding the outstanding number of uncompleted Offender Assessment System (OASys) reports and how these are to be managed. Prisoners looking to manage their return to society are being disadvantaged as a result of not being able to complete their sentence plans. This situation is directly linked to the question in 4.2.1 but again The Board would ask The Minister what proposals are suggested to manage this situation? The Board also queries whether the OASys is fit for purpose?

4.3 Previous Year's Concerns

- 4.3.1 The Board still has concerns over visiting difficulties for families. Visiting problems are frequently cited as reasons for transfer requests to more southerly establishments.
- 4.3.2 The concern over Category D places has resurfaced with the ongoing OASys problems and The Board cannot report that this is resolved; it is once again an outstanding issue.
- 4.3.3 Property remains another ongoing problem as can be seen in the application figures in paragraph 6.6. It had been hoped that instructions by the operator GEO Amey on the acceptable volume of property to be transported would address this issue but this has not proved to be the case.

Section 5: Key Areas

5.1 Equality & Inclusion

- 5.1.1 Since March 2014 Onley has operated a whole prison approach to reducing reoffending where it is recognised that Every Contact Matters built on a framework of hope and trust. Every Contact Matters actively supports prisoners to engage in the regime, encouraging them to volunteer, offer peer support or undertake charity work. All lifestyle choices aimed at improving self confidence, independence and to desist from reoffending.
- 5.1.2 The Shannon Trust was effective once more from March 2014. Using the Toe by Toe method of one prisoner teaching another prisoner to read benefits both parties. The learner, who may be intimidated by a formal learning setting, gains knowledge, a skill and self confidence and the mentor gains increased self esteem and confidence. For the prison it is a win win situation at little cost.
- 5.1.3 The Anne Frank Prison Project visited the prison in May 2014 and was well attended by staff, their families and prisoners. IMB attended and were very impressed with the level of involvement shown by the prisoners. They spoke movingly and knowledgeably about the topic; showing a high degree of empathy.
- 5.1.4 Also running are Inside Out, in conjunction with Families First, which offers support directly to families- essential for prisoners on release, and Storybook Dads which enables prisoners to create a CD reading a story for their children. All vital tools to maintain family links.
- 5.1.5 On monitoring Reception one member was impressed by the sensitive way new arrivals were managed. A concern about the dense language used in leaflet handouts was expressed by The Board and has since been acted upon.
- 5.1.6 The Board has not carried out any specific monitoring to establish if the recommendations of the last HMCIP report are being met, but is of the opinion that standards are better across the prison. The statistics produced for the monthly Board Meetings show an improving and positive picture.

5.2 Education Learning and Skills

- 5.2.1 The Manchester College (TMC) assumed responsibility as the education provider from Milton Keynes College (MKC) in October 2014. The Board were concerned as it was aware of difficulties when they were the provider at Onley previously. It was also a concern for the teaching staff as they did not know if MC would acquire their contracts. However, staff were able to transfer to TMC so there was no interruption in the teaching and the high standard offered by MKC still exists albeit under the TMC name.
- 5.2.2 During the reporting period 97% of students started learning new skills and 96% were aware of what was needed to improve in a graded observation carried out in July 2014. The Board feel this to be a positive aspect for a future Ofsted visit.

- 5.2.3 Prisoners are not transferred until identified training, vocational or educational qualifications have been completed unless the receiving establishment can offer the same course.
- 5.2.4 The Board has observed on a number of occasions that workshops are not full. In January 2015 a member visited Interventions, who deliver the Resolve and Thinking Skills programmes. They did not have a waiting list as Offender Management Unit (OMU) were unable to make referrals as prisoners did not have OASys scores. On raising this with The Governor at the February Board Meeting he confirmed the OASys situation was having a knock on effect to education in particular. The number without an OASys was 300. For a resettlement prison of 742 prisoners and a high emphasis on education and training this is a concern.
- 5.2.5 Courses offered at Onley include certificated ones such as City & Guilds in Bricklaying and Electrical Skills and NVQs in Catering and Waste Management. In addition there are non vocational ones such as the Textile workshop or Paints.
- 5.2.6 It has been recognised that conflicts arise between activities such as gym or health-care appointments when prisoners should be in education or work and this is being addressed by the establishment. This affects the education staff particularly as they are paid by results and having students leave classes to attend other activities impacts their productivity.

5.3 Healthcare and Mental Health

- 5.3.1 The tendering process for the renewal of the healthcare contract again consumed a considerable part of the manager's time.
- 5.3.2 The Mental Health Team (MHT) work closely with other prisons, particularly the co-located prison which has proved to be beneficial.
- 5.3.3 The MHT had the benefit of two newly qualified psychologists for three months which improved team knowledge and provided useful experience for the psychologists. It is hoped to repeat this in the future.
- 5.3.4 Onley runs a number of therapeutic groups such as: ADHD group, over 55s group, quiet group, Narcotics Anonymous, general support group and the alcohol related violence programme. This has produced particularly good results.
- 5.3.5 The dental waiting list which had reduced has now returned to 4 weeks. The dentist has left and a locum is acting; not an ideal situation.
- 5.3.6 The Board understands that cannabis is on the increase as prisoners are concerned about the effects of New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) (Spice), however, there are still significant concerns about the amount of NPS (Spice) detected in the prison.

5.4 Purposeful Activity

- 5.4.1 Hours of purposeful activity is at present 28.5 due to lunchtime and evening lockup. This should improve towards the end of April 2015 with the increase in officers after the recruitment campaign.

- 5.4.2 Workshops are well attended and the number of places varies between 5 and 36. There is still concern about the level of productive activity taking place in some workshops.
- 5.4.3 Generally there are sufficient work places for all requiring work, prisoners are allocated work on the basis of their choice. However it may not be their first choice due to availability of space and their second or third choice may be allocated.
- 5.4.4 Some of the areas are making products to be used in the Prison Estates or sold on the open market; for instance concrete garden products.
- 5.4.5 Rugby District Council, Rugby Food Bank, DHL, Hope for Church Charity, Halfords and the Woodland Trust all provide options for ROTL and The Board commends the hard work involved in securing these places. Four prisoners working in the Halfords Academy have been assured jobs when they leave prison; an excellent result.
- 5.4.6 Generally the workshops are working well and training is offered enabling the prisoners to work towards a qualification in the appropriate skill to the level of either NVQ, City and Guilds or a qualification in Warehousing. These are all transferable skills on release into the community.
- 5.4.7 There was criticism of the assembly workshop that the prisoners were sitting around without work. It was explained that the work planned did not materialise due to a cancelled contract. To overcome the problem other work was being sourced in the short term through to the securing of another contract.
- 5.4.8 Employment and learning skills equates to 70.6% for accredited skills for life, i.e. Maths, English and IT. 29.4% consists of programmes for personal and social development, i.e. Painting and Decorating, Textiles, Waste Management, Health and Safety etc.
- 5.4.9 There is a democratically elected Prisoners Council associated with the charity 'User Voice' that meets with the Governor on a regular basis to discuss two issues. This has been welcomed by prisoners generally.

5.5 Resettlement

- 5.5.1 Onley approaches the task of reducing re-offending by setting up links with outside agencies to try to ensure that there is employment for the prisoners when they leave prison. This is difficult as prisoners are still arriving without an OASys report. At present the level of prisoners without a report is very high at 45%. This represents a huge workload for the OMU staff. It is hoped that this situation will be addressed by an increase of officers towards the end of April 2015.
- 5.5.2 A counselling service, called 'Safeline', for prisoners who have suffered child abuse, is based at Warwick and is working in partnership with the prison. Prisoners self refer with a confidential application form obtained from Wing staff, Chaplaincy or Mental Health Department. They are assessed to ensure they meet the criteria. Arrangements have been made for one-to-one sessions lasting an hour over eight

sessions, which can be extended if the counsellor considers it necessary. The Board commend this as an excellent initiative.

- 5.5.3 The prisoners can liaise with the Intervention Team to discuss their addiction problems and follow a plan which involves assessment and three phases of intervention. The prisoners are then supported through the entire process. On release the prisoner is supported by the link with external services and the current results are showing as very positive.
- 5.5.4 A zero tolerance policy towards violence and anti social behaviour is in operation. The prison is committed to treating people with respect to encourage prisoners to take control of their lives when they leave the prison environment. This helps reduce re-offending and the links formed between outside employers and the prisoners can also assist in this way.
- 5.5.5 Onley is actively working with outside employers to obtain contracts that will provide work and the profit generated can be used in the Victim Awareness Scheme. Again The Board support this initiative.

5.6 Safer Custody

- 5.6.1 A new initiative launched in April 2014 changed the focus of the Safer Prisons monthly meetings with external as well as internal providers to introduce a more seamless approach. This should provide a good grounding for the proposed Through The Gate services from April 2015. A Complex Needs and Stability meeting is held weekly to review the most demanding cases.
- 5.6.2 Onley being the only London Resettlement Prison in the region brings added pressure. The ratio of London to local prisoners has increased consistently throughout year to a level of 76/24% at the year end. The gang and drug cultures particularly the "Black on Black" gangs have been imported presenting location difficulties within the prison and led to more tension and an increase in the level of incidents, albeit most at a low level.
- 5.6.3 The daily briefing for all functional heads and Senior Management Team (SMT) ensures everyone is aware of the state of the prison and is a useful communication tool for prison wide issues. The Board attend these regularly and find them very informative.
- 5.6.4 Approximately 1-5 ACCTs are opened daily. The Board regularly sits in on ACCT Reviews and reports all procedures are followed. ACCT records, care plans and all paperwork is reviewed and discussed at the Safer Prisons meetings to identify effective follow up and learning points. Following an incident where a prisoner on an ACCT misused medication in possession the procedure was changed to prevent this happening again.
- 5.6.5 Body Cams are now available for use in Serious Incidents and have proved effective. The Board consider they are an extra tool for the safety of the officers.
- 5.6.6 Drones dropping packages of mobile phones or drugs are becoming more of a problem although visits and throw overs remain the main supply routes.

5.6.7 There were six Serious Incidents over the reporting period. The Board was unable to attend three of these due to communication issues which have now been addressed. The incidents The Board did attend were all handled professionally and with safe outcomes.

5.7 Segregation/ Care & Separation/ Close Supervision

- 5.7.1 The Care & Support Unit (CSU) has been at maximum or near maximum capacity for most of the reporting period. For example the average weekly occupancy for the months June to September 2014 was June 12.43, July 13.86, August 14.38 and September 12.10: there are 15 cells in CSU. This leaves no manoeuvring room should an immediate location to CSU be required. Once again The Board commend the staff in the unit for their care and dedication with reduced numbers and some very demanding prisoners. In January and February 2015 there have been three prisoners on ACCTs, and at least one on a three man unlock concurrently. The Board feel the pressure on the staff is unsustainable at the present level and hope that with more recruitment the CSU staffing level will return to its previous level.
- 5.7.2 Prisoners on initial relocation to the CSU are no longer fully searched but risk assessed as on normal location. This does not appear to have caused any issues but assisted the officers in making the best use of their limited time.
- 5.7.3 The Board attend reviews on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and these are well run; having the same Governor conduct them ensures continuity and consistency. Sometimes these are delayed, usually for operational reasons, which The Board always note on the paperwork and always ask for the reason behind the delay.
- 5.7.4 Two prisoners have been located in CSU for over three months; one for over six months. The establishment felt it would be detrimental to the prisoners to transfer them. The Board concurs with this and monitors the situation with The Governor.
- 5.7.5 There have been regular instances of cells being damaged, sometimes quite badly, which has necessitated frequent maintenance visits with the accompanying noise and disruption but the staff have handled this well. A rearrangement of the accommodation has released a quiet room for them to use for which The Board commends the prison.
- 5.7.6 The Board is always notified of moves to CSU and usually speak to all residents on a weekly basis. Sometimes this is not possible due to low staffing levels and the need for a three man unlock.
- 5.7.7 Healthcare, usually a member of the MHT, always attend the reviews and it is welcomed by prisoners and the reviewing Governor alike as a current assessment is always available.
- 5.7.8 The ending of in cell education The Board feel is a retrograde step and hope it can be reintroduced. It enables those in segregation to continue engaging with the regime.

5.8 Residential Services

- 5.8.1 A new Incentives and Earned Privileges (IEP) system was installed in June 2014 which is better understood. With 70% on enhanced status this was felt to be too high and it is now more challenging to attain and retain the grade. This is understood by prisoners with IMB receiving only 22 applications on the subject over the reporting period.
- 5.8.2 From June 2014 a restricted regime has operated to manage staff shortages. Wings are in patrol state at lunchtime and at weekends on a rotating basis. Weekend closures mean half of the wings are in patrol state at any one time. Cross deployment of staff has meant that work on OASys, Cat D Reviews, HDC and Parole applications is further restricted to cover shortages at officer level. The reductions in staff have not improved over the year despite recruitment campaigns. The establishment was short of 16 Officer grades and 45 staff overall in July 2014, 14 officers, 42 staff overall in September 2014 and although The Governor is working towards full staffing levels by April 2015 it is difficult to see this being achieved. The Board recognises the situation is being micro managed and commend the prison on some innovative workarounds but acknowledge the level of Payment Plus and Detached Duty being used is unsustainable.
- 5.8.3 A new kitchen manager was appointed in September 2014 and she has brought a fresh energy to the area. A system for distribution and collection of menu lists has resulted in fewer complaints over catering, together with an improvement in meal planning and expenditure. The menus at Christmas and Eidd were well received.
- 5.8.4 J and K wings were affected by heating problems which The Board raised with The Governor. We were advised this was a legacy issue and would be looked at by maintenance with blankets being issued as a temporary measure. 10 applications regarding accommodation were received most of which related to this issue.
- 5.8.5 As well as a shortage in officer and administrative grades there has been a shortage at management level. The Governor assured us at the January Board Meeting that there would be a full management team in post by March 2015, an expectation not achieved. The Board is aware that senior management have worked in excess of what is expected to maintain a safe and decent establishment.
- 5.8.6 Litter is an ongoing problem despite daily litter picks. At the September Board Meeting The Governor confirmed there had been a large infestation of rats and their pest control contractor had been called in. The prison is attempting to educate prisoners not to throw food out of their cell windows but it is not having a great deal of success. Litter was mentioned at several Board Meetings and on a number of rota reports. A Cleaner Wing competition has been established to improve the situation.

Section 6: Work of the Independent Monitoring Board

Board Statistics	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	19
Number of Board Members at the start of the reporting period	13
Number of Board Members at the end of the reporting period	13
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	4
Number of members leaving within the reporting period	4
Total number of Board meetings during the reporting period	12
Total number of visits to the Establishment	591
Total number of segregation reviews held	250
Total number of segregation reviews attended	241
Date of Annual Team Performance Review	13/11/2014

- 6.1 Four experienced members resigned during the year and The Board is running a recruitment campaign with another likely in the summer of 2015.

- 6.2 The Board held monthly meetings and a Team Performance Review offsite in November 2014.

- 6.3 A new Governor was appointed in April 2014 and although he was unable to attend a Board Meeting until July 2014, due to operational reasons, a good working relationship has been established. The Deputy Governor attended in The Governor's absence. Both The Governor and Deputy Governor keep The Board informed of all aspects of the operation of the prison which is appreciated.

- 6.4 The Board visited HMP High Point on 8th October.

- 6.5 Each week a team deals with applications, reviews on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and monitoring of four areas: Healthcare or kitchen/ servery on alternate weeks, one wing, an educational or workplace area and another area. CSU prisoners are spoken to weekly.

Code	Subject	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
A	Accommodation	15	18	13	10
B	Adjudications	22	15	8	6
C	Equality & Diversity (inc Religion)	4	4	2	3
D	Education/ employment/ training inc IEP	14	42	44	22
E1	Family/ visits inc mail & phone	18	34	26	6
E2	Finance/ pay		1	8	4
F	Food/ kitchen related	22	12	7	7
G	Health related	27	36	36	25
H1	Property within current establishment		18	19	57
H2	Property during transfer/ in another establishment	74	60	66	52
H3	Canteen/ facilities/ Catalogue shopping/ Argos			6	9
I	Sentence related (inc HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-cat etc)	81	88	64	54
J	Staff/ prisoner/ detainee concerns inc bullying	35	37	23	16
K	Transfers	68	109	30	28
L	Miscellaneous	60	51	53	36
	Total Number of IMB Applications	440	525	405	332
	Confidential Access not included above			11	3

6.6 Breakdown of Applications received:

WING	2013/14	2014/15
A	44	21
B	34	16
C	30	18
D	10	19
E	22	25
F/CSU	26	26
G	20	51
H	31	29
I	51	45
J	37	18
K	72	40
L	28	24
Total	405	332 plus 3 Conf Acc =335

- NOTES: 1. The number of applications has fallen from 2013/2014 although there is no apparent reason for this.
2. Property is once again the highest number of complaints, closely followed by sentence related issues as evidenced earlier in the report.
3. Code J: Staff/prisoner concerns has reduced which implies that although staff numbers are reduced the zero tolerance to violence and bullying is effective.