



**HMP/YOI BRONZEFIELD**

**INDEPENDENT MONITORING  
BOARD**

**ANNUAL REPORT  
2014/2015**

*Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody*



## **Section 1**

### **THE 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 Justice 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 Minister for Justice, 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 all parts of the prison and also to the establishment's records.

### **Equality Statement**

HMP/YOI Bronzefield Independent Monitoring Board is committed to an inclusive approach to equality and will not discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital and civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race including colour, nationality, ethnic or regional origins, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, in recruitment, in the treatment of members and in the way that they monitor the treatment of those in custody. The IMB recognizes that a fully inclusive approach to equality must respect differences that cut across social and cultural categories such as mental health and literacy.

The Board values this approach to equality within its recruitment and board development practices to increase its repertoire of skills and to promote awareness amongst its members of the diverse needs and perspectives of the population within HMP/YOI Bronzefield.

All members of HMP/YOI Bronzefield IMB will undertake their duties in a manner that is accessible to everyone within the establishment regardless of their background or social situation. The Board will monitor to establish that the experiences and interaction between staff, prisoners, detainees and visitors is fair and without prejudice. Where this is not the case, the Board will alert appropriate authorities and individuals including the Director General, Deputy Director for Contracted Prisons, Minister for Prisons and Sodexo Justice Services.

### **REPORTING PERIOD**

1<sup>st</sup> August 2014 – 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015

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### **Section 3**

### **DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON**

HMP/YOI Bronzefield opened in June 2004. It is a privately run local prison, managed by Sodexo Justice Services Ltd which holds both remand and sentenced female prisoners. It is located in Ashford, Middlesex, close to Heathrow Airport.

The prison has a Certified Normal Accommodation (CNA) of 527 and holds approximately 50 Young Offenders aged between 18 and 21 who are accommodated in the same houseblocks as the adult women and also accommodates a 12-bed Mother and Baby Unit with room for 13 babies. HMP/YOI Bronzefield serves approximately 80 courts.

Primary GP services are provided by a private sector agency - Cimarron UK. Nursing staff are employed directly by Bronzefield and shortfalls filled by agency nurses. Secondary mental health care is provided through a contract with Central North West London NHS Foundation Trust. The prison has a 24-hour in-patient healthcare unit, but no dedicated mental health unit.

Education services are provided by Sodexo Justice Services. NOCN qualifications are awarded internally under the name of Woodthorpe College.

There are various outside organisations supporting family and community ties and linking to services that can help with resettlement after release. Among them are:

- WISH (support for prisoners with mental health issues)
- Samaritans (support for Listeners)
- Alcoholics Anonymous
- WI (The Women's Institute)
- Shannon Trust Reading Plan
- Job Centre Plus
- Blue Sky (employment of ex-offenders)
- Friends of Bronzefield
- Aurora Project (sexual abuse and sex workers)
- Chance to Change (mentoring)
- Changing Tunes (music therapy)
- Nordoff Robbins (music therapy)
- Spurgeons Sisters Project (mentoring)
- Within My Reach (relationships)
- Spark Inside (mentoring for young offenders)
- SARC and RASASC (rape and sexual abuse)
- Re-unite (mothers and children)
- Nia (support for young offenders)
- AGE UK
- Royal Parks Harness the Horses
- Womens Centre
- Spelthorne Borough Council & Network Rail
- Beyond Youth

## **Section 4**

### **4.1**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**This report covers the twelve months between 1<sup>st</sup> August 2014 and 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015.**

**We are asked to report on eight main areas of the prison (*Section 5*) and to comment on any other areas where we have concerns or where we wish to cite examples of excellence.**

**HMP/YOI Bronzefield is a bright, modern establishment, now in its 11<sup>th</sup> year of operation, it is near capacity but not overcrowded. The Senior Management Team promotes an ethos of respect and decency for the individual. We thank them for their approachability and acknowledgement of our reports to them.**

**During the reporting year we have witnessed examples of care being given above and beyond that which would be expected. Generally the staff have been very responsive to resolving problems. We have also observed, on occasion, a reluctance of some to take ownership and responsibility of an issue which has impacted on individual prisoner care. (*Section 6 Work of the Independent Monitoring Board*)**

**There have been significant improvements in the level of healthcare provision which has been the subject of concern in the Board's previous reports. A few concerns still remain. (*Section 5.3 Outpatients, Medication*)**

### **4.2 Questions to the Minister**

- The Board is concerned about the number of prisoners with serious mental health problems. What provisions are planned to address the increasing number of women prisoners who have mental health problems and to provide appropriate secure hospital places? (*5.3 Healthcare Inpatients*)
- The Board is concerned about the number of prisoners, some with personality disorders and/or learning disabilities, who cannot cope with life outside prison, many of whom are repeat offenders. What provision is planned for these prisoners for whom prison is both inappropriate and expensive?

### **4.3 Questions to Sodexo**

- While retired prisoners may now do voluntary work, will Sodexo consider part-time work for these prisoners if they wish to take up this option, without losing their benefits?

## **Section 5**

### **5.1 EQUALITY and INCLUSION**

HMP/YOI Bronzefield has a positive and proactive approach towards equality matters. The Diversity Team holds a monthly meeting, chaired by the Director, with Senior Managers and prisoner representatives who participate fully in all discussions. Focus groups for specific areas have been well received and have contributed to the reduction in complaints to the Board.

#### **Foreign Nationals**

- Foreign National (FN) prisoners report that they feel well supported by the proactive Diversity Team who demonstrate empathy and provide positive assistance. The dedicated FN staff member left towards the end of the reporting period and a replacement is being sought.
- Some FN prisoners say that they feel excluded from some areas. Meetings with FN prisoners, with translators available, have been held and were well attended.
- The FN population has fluctuated between 25 - 30%. There is a close and effective working relationship between prison staff and staff from the UK Border Agency who visit twice a week. The Local Immigration Team also visits to assist with care and advice for the FN prisoners. The new 'Rough Guide', given to prisoners on entry, will be translated into 6 languages. It has been unavailable for the majority of the year. The Houseblock 'pods' provide interactive information in English only.
- The 'pods' have been upgraded with an enhanced number of pictures to assist FN prisoners.
- There is a good range of books in other languages in the Library.
- Written information on notice boards is generally in English and is frequently out-of-date.
- The canteen supplies have been updated to cater for a more diverse population.

#### **Discrimination**

- There is a dedicated complaint system for prisoners who wish to report allegations of discrimination.
- The number of IMB applications relating to discrimination has reduced over the year.
- The Board has regularly reviewed the discrimination incident report forms (DIRFs).
- The DIRFs are independently scrutinised by a representative from the local Spelthorne council.

#### **Disability**

- There has been an increase in the number of prisoners with self-reported physical disabilities. These prisoners can have a named fellow prisoner as a disability assistant. These assistants have a clear role description and are paid for their work.

- Some women have had to wait a long time to be provided with the appropriate aids or modifications needed. The recent appointment of a part-time Social Worker by the Local Authority, in response to the Care Act, has led to enhanced professional assessments, the impact of which is yet to be seen.
- Disabled prisoners have equal access to all areas of the prison including the gym.
- The Board has observed an increased number of prisoners with learning disabilities, some of whom are apparently reluctant to self-declare.

### Older Prisoners

- The number of older prisoners has risen and there has been an inconsistency in providing the entitlements for which these prisoners are eligible.
- Retirement is optional when State Retirement Age is reached and retired prisoners are paid above the Prisoners Pay P80 recommended pension. There remains no provision though for part-time work although retired prisoners may now do voluntary work.

### Young Offenders

- A total of 4 Young Offenders (YOs) were awarded their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze award, and there are 7 more working towards this goal under the care of dedicated gym staff.
- The staff run a focus group for YOs.

### Board

- The Board has actively sought to increase its diversity but remains without visible ethnic diversity.

## **5.2 EDUCATION LEARNING AND SKILLS**

- The Education Department has been fully staffed during the year and is making efforts to equip prisoners with skills and qualifications that will be of use to them when they are released.
- A Hair and Beauty salon offers a full range of treatments and is staffed by one beauty therapist, two hairdressers and 11 newly qualified prisoners who have gained certificates in Hair and Beauty. The feedback from prisoners to the Board is very positive.
- The planned Virtual Campus is not yet operational.
- The planned Catering and Hospitality Venture is still under construction.
- Two prisoner classroom assistants are working with Special Educational Needs (SEN) which has been running since April for prisoners who find it difficult to work in a normal classroom situation. There is now a dedicated classroom.

- The Blue Sky 'Stitch in Time' initiative has continued with the core work of bag making. The department now includes an alteration and clothes making service. The prisoners are able to work towards a City and Guilds level 1 in Fashion. During the year the prisoners contributed to a fashion show.

### **5.3 HEALTHCARE AND MENTAL HEALTH**

#### Inpatients

- The majority of the patients in this 16 bedded inpatient unit have complex mental health issues and are waiting for transfer to secure accommodation. The Mental Health Team have been very active in pursuing these transfers. The Board is concerned that there remain lengthy delays in securing these places due to external factors.
- Staff demonstrate a very good understanding and knowledge of the women in their care and deal with them with compassion and sensitivity.

#### Outpatients

- There has been a reduction in applications to the Board relating to this area.
- The Board has received a number of IMB applications complaining about the GPs.
- In addition to the male GPs, Cimarron provides two female GPs.
- The Board has been told that around 10-15% of appointments are missed each month.
- Well Being Representatives (previously known as Patient Advisory Liaison Service (PALS) representatives), who are prisoners, provide an additional avenue for prisoners complaints and queries.
- There has been no chiropody service since January and a replacement has not yet been sourced. The GPs have had to refer to the local hospital but no appointments have been forthcoming. The Board considers this as unacceptable.

#### Medication

- Complaints from prisoners to the Board regarding delays in issuing repeat prescriptions have reduced.
- Medicine charts are not always in the dispensary and prisoners complain that they therefore are not issued with their medication as prescribed.
- Some prisoners have complained to the Board that their GP consent form, signed on arrival in the prison, giving permission for their local GP to be contacted by Healthcare staff, is often not responded to by GPs for a considerable time. This means that prisoners wait a long time for confirmation of their externally prescribed medication which can have a negative impact on their behaviour.

#### Mental health

- The provision of Secondary Mental Health services is contracted to Central North West London NHS Foundation Trust. This comprises a multidisciplinary professional team - the Mental Health Inreach Team (MHIT).
- The MHIT has introduced individual and group therapies e.g. 'Looking after yourself'- a group concentrating on coping strategies and 'Managing emotions'- a group for women with personality disorders.
- Prisoners can self-refer to the Primary Mental Health Team by making an application through the 'pods'. This service is provided by Sodexo.

#### **5.4 PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY INCLUDING WORK**

- Prisoners are usually allocated work within two weeks of entering the prison.
- Prisoners work as Peer Support Workers in all areas of the prison including the chapel, diversity, education, employment, reception and induction.
- The introduction of offices on each Houseblock spur has increased the amount of engagement between prisoners and officers.
- A number of prisoner representative and focus groups have been created which the Board understands have been helpful in resolving issues at an early stage. The Board has observed that the number of applications to the IMB has declined as many issues are now resolved locally.

#### **5.5 RESETTLEMENT**

- In February 2015 the Offender Rehabilitation Act 2014 (ORA) was introduced.
- The Resettlement Team have worked very hard implementing the increased demands generated by the ORA.
- Since the ORA was introduced the Board has been told that Bronzefield has experienced a significant increase in the number of Licence Recalls. This has risen from 15 pre-ORA in January 2015 to 54 in May 2015.
- Local Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) became responsible, in April, for providing Through the Gate resettlement services.
- The Board observed continuing efforts to provide opportunities for Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL).
- The Resettlement Team has worked hard to form links with the community to help prisoners gain employment on release. The Board has been told that 2 prisoners have been assisted into employment in the reporting year.

#### **5.6 SAFER CUSTODY**

- The Board has observed that staffing in the Safer Custody Department has been below the optimum number for the majority of the year.

- The quality of entries on Assessment Care in Custody (ACCT) documents has been inconsistent and the Safer Custody staff have been working with the nurses and case workers to improve the quality of these entries.
- 'Support Towards Encouraging Positive Solutions' (STEPS), has introduced a new approach to reducing antisocial behaviour through a focus on support rather than punishment. It aims to support both perpetrator and victim.
- Self-harming incidents rose during the year.
- During most of the year there have been 12 Listeners who are supported by the Samaritans.
- When Listeners are not available the prisoners can use the Samaritans phone line which can now be accessed using their in-cell telephone.

## **5.7 SEPARATION and CARE**

- The Separation and Care (S&C) unit cares for some prisoners with complex needs who can be very difficult to manage, disruptive and violent.
- Two of the prisoners in S&C have lived there for two years. The officers have shown great understanding and patience in their care of these prisoners. The encouragement they have given these prisoners has enabled them to engage and improve their quality of life.
- In the absence of specialist Closed Supervision Centres, or similarly resourced facilities in the female estate, the Board understands that additional funding has been provided for enhanced counselling and therapy for some of the prisoners who have highly complex needs. The Board welcomes this initiative.
- The Board has observed an increase in the number of prisoners held in this unit who are on ACCT documents. Every prisoner in Separation and Care has a safety algorithm screening carried out on admission to the unit.
- The improved record keeping on the unit has been maintained.
- The Board is always notified when prisoners are moved to the unit on 'Good Order or Discipline' (GOOD). The Board attends the majority of the GOOD reviews.
- The Board has monitored random adjudications throughout the year and has not noted any irregularities. A designated manager now carries out as many as possible of the adjudications which has ensured a more consistent process. Adjudications are reviewed by the Management and any trend noted.

## **5.8 RESIDENTIAL SERVICES**

### Reception

- On occasion prisoners have waited a long time in Reception, but, in general, the waiting times have improved. The main cause of delay is the wait for the doctor to see the prisoner before transfer to the Houseblocks.
- A 'pod' has been installed in Reception to give women greater flexibility in managing their applications and canteen purchases.

- Connection workers, who are prisoners working in Reception, provide valuable support for prisoners, in particular those for whom this is the first time in prison.
- Some prisoners with poor understanding of English were not always identified immediately as needing a translator for the Induction programme. A process has now been put in place to correct this.

### Early days in Custody (EDIC)

- EDIC has been under review for much of the reporting period. This is still work in progress.
- The Rough Guide to Bronzefield has been under edit for the reporting year. It is to be translated into 6 languages. The Guide has not been available for the majority of the year.

### Residential Units

- The residential Houseblocks have been reorganised with the introduction of one solely for prisoners who have drug and/or alcohol addiction issues.
- Written information on notice boards is predominantly in English and frequently out of date.
- In-cell telephones have been installed in all Houseblocks and MBU.
- Small offices have been created in each spur of three of the Houseblocks where the spur officer can talk to prisoners with a degree of privacy. This appears to be popular with the prisoners and has reduced the clustering of officers in the central hub.
- The 'Your Voice' prisoners' forum was reinstated and is generally well attended, allowing full discussion of prisoners' concerns with a range of senior staff.
- The 'pod' system gives prisoners easy access to finances, canteen orders, menu choices, visits and applications. At the end of the reporting period new 'pods' were being installed with a touch keyboard so prisoners are able to leave a message.
- More pictures have been added for those who have difficulty with the written word or with their understanding of English.

### Kitchen/Food/Serveries

- The kitchen provided special menus supporting international, festive and religious days which are popular and appreciated by the prisoners.
- Serveries are not always supervised by officers and some prisoners have complained about bullying from fellow prisoners.
- The serveries are now locked during service to prevent entry by unauthorised prisoners. The spur officer should always be in attendance but the Board has noted that this does not always happen and has expressed concern about prisoners locked in an area such as this with no quick means of entry or exit.
- New food comment sheets have been introduced with a locked box to put them in. This closed system means that the comments are seen only by kitchen managers.

- The Board received many complaints from prisoners that their daily milk ration had been reduced to 250ml per day in response to the PSI. This is consistent with other prisons and has apparently reduced wastage. The prisoners can purchase extra milk supplies through the canteen.

#### Mother and Baby unit (MBU)

- This continues to be an excellent facility catering for up to twelve mothers and thirteen babies.
- Staff have been trying to encourage prisoners to prepare fresh food for their babies. Food storage regulation issues have impacted this effort. Staff are working to overcome this.
- The unit became non-smoking at the latter end of the year with very little complaint from the prisoners.

#### The Gym

- This well-used and popular facility continues to be well run.

#### The Chaplaincy

- The prison has an active chaplaincy team representing 10 faiths. The team provides support for prisoners who are experiencing personal and family crises and in the resettlement process. Prisoners have told the Board that they value this support.

### **Section 6**

#### **THE WORK OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD**

Each week Board members attend the prison to conduct rota visits. We also respond to the IMB applications, monitor meetings and prisoner forums. We attend Separation and Care reviews and randomly monitor adjudications.

Overall, the applications to the Board have reduced considerably. On occasion reluctance by some staff to take ownership and responsibility has meant that resolving some of these applications has been lengthy. This has impacted on prisoner care and well-being.

The Board holds a monthly meeting which the Director or her Deputy attends in order to brief the Board on prison matters and to discuss issues from rota reports.

Board members give a talk about the IMB to new staff during their initial training.

Two Board members attended the IMB Annual Conference in 2015. Members have attended national training courses and hosted visits from IMBs from other prisons and have in turn visited other establishments (HMP Send and HMP Holloway).

<b>BOARD STATISTICS</b>	
<b>Recommended Complement of Board Members</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Number of new members joining within the reporting period</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Number of members leaving within the reporting period</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Total number of visits to the prison (including all meetings)</b>	<b>564</b>
<b>Total number of applications received</b>	<b>507</b>
<b>Total number of segregation reviews attended</b>	<b>174</b>
<b>Total number of Board meetings</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Date of Annual Team Performance Review</b>	<b>14 Oct 2014</b>

## APPLICATIONS

Code	Subject	2012/13	2013/14	2014/2015
A	Accommodation	27	35	27
B	Adjudications	3	1	6
C	Equality & Diversity (inc religion)	24	19	21
D	Education/employment/ training inc IEP	47	38	19
E1	Family/visits inc mail & phone	65	83	52
E2	Finance/pay	33	45	19
F	Food/kitchen related	9	20	10
G	Health related	207	167	136
H1	Property (within current establishment)	74	45	28
H2	Property (during transfer/in another establishment)	18	16	21
H3	Canteen, facilities, Catalogue shopping, Argos	15	19	8
I	Sentence related (inc HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-cat etc)	68	37	27
J	Staff/prisoner/detainee concerns inc bullying	73	110	87
K	Transfers	14	14	11
L	Miscellaneous Did not want to pursue	40	39 14	24 7
M	Confidential Access	6	27	4
	<b>Total number of applications</b>	<b>723</b>	<b>729</b>	<b>507</b>