



# **HMP Buckley Hall Rochdale**

## **Annual Report to the Secretary of State for Justice**

Year Ending: 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015

# 1. STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB

- 1.1.1 The prisons Act 1952 and the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 require every prison to be monitored by an independent Board appointed by the Secretary of State for Justice and from members of the community in which the prison is situated.
- 1.1.2 The Board is specifically charged to:
- 1.1.3 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.
- 1.1.4 inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom he has delegated authority as it judges appropriate, any concern it has.
- 1.1.5 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.
- 1.1.6 To enable the Board to carry out these duties effectively its members have right of access to every prisoner, every part of the prison and also to the prison's records.

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## 2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

- 2.1 The prison is a Category C training prison for men, mainly from the North-West. It is built on a steep site on the edge of the Pennines, near Rochdale. Buckley Hall has been designated a non-resettlement prison, housing men with sentences of four years or more. The prison is in transition to meeting the new agenda and role set.
- 2.2 The prison opened in 1994 as one of four contracted prisons and was managed by Group 4 for a period of five years. In 2000, a 10 year contract was put out for tender and won by the Prison Service. During this contract, the prison held category C men, then Women, and finally Category C men again. In 2011, the Prison Service was successful in its bid for the latest contract which will run, initially, for five years.
- 2.3 HMP Buckley Hall continues to operate overall as a Level 3 prison. On the Decency dimension, the prison has maintained its level of performance from last year on all relevant criteria. On both Reducing Reoffending and Public Protection, the prison's performance is broadly commensurate with last year, although there has been a slight slippage on some of the criteria. The Hours worked in Industry dimension remains at Level 1 and continues to have a negative impact on the prison's overall PRS score.
- 2.4 Seven services are sub-contracted:
- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Education               | Manchester College                           |
| Catering                | ESS Criminal Justice Division                |
| Healthcare              | Manchester Mental Health & Social Care Trust |
| Visitors' Reception     | Partners of Prisoners & Families             |
| Library Service         | Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council        |
| Drug & Alcohol Recovery | Lifeline                                     |
| Facilities              | Amey   |
- 2.5 There are four residential blocks and 89% of prisoners are housed in single cells. In terms of its capacity, the prison was instructed last Year to increase this from 445 to 455. As a result, some double cells, previously in single occupancy, now house two men. The most recently built wing has a capacity of 60 single cells, each with its own shower and toilet. One of the general residential units is now a dedicated Drug Recovery Wing and the Induction of new prisoners takes place in C Wing.

### 3 Executive Summary

- 3.1 Whilst not as significant as the previous year, the prison continued to experience significant organisational change. The Facilities Department has been transferred to the private sector and the Healthcare Service contract is now with the Manchester Mental Health & Social Care Trust. In the case of the former, it is too soon to reach a judgement on the consequences of the change-over while for the latter, it appears, so far, to be 'business as usual'. Compared to previous years, the Senior Management Team has remained relatively stable, which has been beneficial. The prison management is forward looking and, in the next reporting year, will be grasping the 'Benchmarking' nettle and, in addition, have put the prison forward for a number of new projects being established by the Prison Service. Such changes may be seen by some, as disruptive and unwelcome but should help to strengthen the long-term prospects for the prison.
- 3.2 The Board remains concerned about current staffing levels, particularly amongst uniformed staff. Ongoing and regular features of this year have been Wing lockdowns, Officers' working hours being extended and the Gym being closed in order to manage staff shortages. It is fortunate for the Prison Service that the vast majority of the uniformed staff is professional, cooperative and responsive when such difficulties arise. The Board is aware this problem exists across the prison estate but remains concerned that Officers' goodwill and cooperation cannot be relied upon indefinitely.
- 3.3 The fact that the perimeter of the prison is surrounded by a public footpath is put forward as a significant explanation for the supply of drugs and mobile phones in the prison. Whilst the Officers and OSG's are diligent and have made significant finds, policing the external perimeter is outside their purview. It is debateable how effectively occasional patrols of the perimeter by Police Community Support Officers can be in tackling the problem and yet, it has to be accepted, Greater Manchester Police face their own difficult operational decisions and resource limitations. It is clear to the Board that in the absence of a coordinated commitment to the problem of drugs and mobile phones in prison, it will remain a time-consuming, frustrating and potentially disheartening issue for prison staff to contend with.
- 3.4 Taking the 'Four Tests of a Healthy Prison'
- 3.4.1 "All Prisoners feel safe"
- In the judgement of the Board, the majority of prisoners feel safe within the prison. This is not to suggest there are no vulnerable prisoners nor those who are in debt to others and fearful but, rather that these men are managed effectively and sensitively. There are good external links with partner agencies and a multidisciplinary, proactive approach is adopted within the prison. In the opinion of the Board, two strengths of Buckley Hall are its effectiveness at managing

vulnerable prisoners and a Safer Custody team who are proactive and committed to their work.

3.4.2 "Prisoners are treated with respect as individuals"

A further strength of Buckley Hall is the relationship the staff have with prisoners. The majority of Prisoners are positive about how they are treated by staff of all levels. In the experience of the Board, staff interact with prisoners respectfully and fairly and this year is, typical in the low number of IMB Applications received from prisoners complaining about the ill-treatment they claimed to have received from staff.

3.4.3 "Prisoners are fully and purposefully occupied and expected to improve themselves"

Hours attended at Work remains lower than might be expected in a 'Working Prison'. Many of the Workshops provide prisoners with a positive and worthwhile experience and this is particularly important given the changed prisoner profile at Buckley Hall. For prisoners attending Education classes, the overall quality, appropriateness and completion rates of the Courses on offer are judged as sound.

3.4.4 "Prisoners can strengthen links with their families and prepare themselves for release"

The Board's judgment is that families and friends enjoy a friendly and positive experience when they visit the prison. The Family Days are popular, successful and could be developed further. As a non-resettlement prison, Buckley Hall has now to reconsider its precise role and place in the preparation of prisoners for release. The prison is at a very early stage in this process.

3.5 In the judgment of the Board, the prison performs satisfactorily on each of these four criteria and, in doing so, provides the taxpayer with good value for money.

3.6 The Board wishes to place on record its appreciation for the patience, courtesy and cooperation shown to its members by all grades of staff. The Board is particularly grateful that the members of its extremely busy Senior Management are approachable, open and engage positively with the Board. This year, the Board has started sending to the Governor and his Deputy, a weekly summary of its issues and concerns. The Board appreciates the speedy response they receive to the matters raised and view it as evidence of the open and responsive attitude of Senior Management.

4. **Matters for the consideration of the Secretary of State**

4.1 The introduction of a national scheme which mirrors ACCT procedures and processes and is similar to the Tackling Anti-Social Attitudes scheme at Buckley Hall would highlight your commitment to confronting the pernicious influence of bullying in prisons.

- 4.2 As the criteria to achieve Enhanced IEP status becomes more exacting, the benefits it confers on those who achieve it should be more attractive to prisoners, than is currently the case.
- 4.3 The problem of illegal drugs and mobile phones requires a response and resources from Greater Manchester Police Force rather than the local Police Division. A joint task force which draws together Greater Manchester Police and representatives from the prisons in its area should be established.
- 5. **Matters for the consideration of the Chief Executive of the National Offender Management Service.**
  - 5.1 The non-OLASS prison workshops should provide inmates with the opportunity to gain qualifications.
  - 5.2 The Bowel Cancer Screening Programme should be extended to include all prisoners in England.
  - 5.3 The performance of the firm charged with the maintenance of the kitchen equipment is unsatisfactory and should be reviewed.

## **6. Reports**

### **6.1 Equality and Inclusion**

- 6.1.1 Harmonious relations between the different ethnic groups continue to predominate in the prison. Only 2% of IMB Applications during the year related to issues of equality. However, it has not been possible to establish the number of complaints about Discrimination issues received by the prison because of changes in how these complaints are submitted. Part way through the reporting year it was announced that Discrimination Information Reporting Forms (DIRF) were being withdrawn and replaced by the generic complaints system. However, this decision has recently been rescinded and DIRF forms are to be reintroduced; suggesting a possible degree of uncertainty over how best to report these complaints.
- 6.1.2 In the previous reporting year it was stated that the prisoner forums were to be reinstated. The Board welcomed this and felt they provided a useful focus on a range of diversity issues related to equality and inclusion. However, staffing issues has meant that the progress in restarting them has been slow, which is a matter of regret to the Board.
- 6.1.3 Parking for disabled staff and visitors remains an issue; there are only four dedicated car parking spaces adjacent to the prison entrance. As stated in the previous reporting year, the distance and steep hill between the car park and the Gatehouse remains a matter of concern to the Board for visitors who are elderly, have young babies or restricted ambulatory powers. These concerns are particularly acute during the winter months.
- 6.1.4 The new Managing Chaplain came to Buckley Hall already well experienced in serving the needs of prisoners. He is now firmly established here and under his efficient and active leadership, the team are continuing to introduce new initiatives such as the Sycamore Tree course on victim awareness. In the judgment of the Board, the needs of the different religious groups within the prison continue to be well met.
- 6.1.5 As usual, the Catering manager and his staff responded admirably to the needs of prisoners during the period of Ramadan, and Eid al-Fitr. In addition, the kitchen staff and officers are commended for their efforts in relation to the food provided at Christmas and Easter.
- 6.1.6 There are a small number of Foreign National Prisoners in Buckley Hall. During the year, they were interviewed by Board Members and reported no significant issues of concern. The Prison Service has retained the option of placing some of these men here, if space elsewhere is limited. Typically, these men have received lengthy sentences and the intention is that Buckley Hall will move them to an appropriate

prison once they are within their two year 'window' of release. However, before this date, these prisoners may still need access to specialist support and advice and it remains the case that no member of staff is given profiled time to manage their needs.

## **6.2 Education, Learning & Skills**

- 6.2.1 Education provision within the prison is provided by Manchester College and, in the opinion of the Board, is sound in terms of its relevance and quality. Learning and Skills plays a major role within the prison - in May 2015, 49% of the prisoners were enrolled on either full or part-time courses and others who were involved in the outreach education programme. The latest figures show that the Department has a 96% retention rate, which compares favourably with the 95% in our last year's Annual Report.
- 6.2.2 Overall, the Department fills 90% of its available places, although some courses have difficulty in reaching this figure. The Curriculum Review initiated by the new Education Manager should, hopefully, offer guidance and direction in adapting the present offer over the coming years. The overall success rate of the Department is 77%; an improvement on the 63% noted in last year's Annual Report. Attendance at class is reasonable at 72% and, although not ideal, is better than the figure of 50% we reported last year.
- 6.2.3 In the last Annual Report it was noted the Department was giving greater emphasis to ensuring all prisoners achieve Functional Skills qualifications and this remains its priority. Until recently, the Functional Skills classes have included students at different levels, which is not ideal for either prisoners or staff. The Board welcomes the Education Manager's decision to reorganise the classes so that students in the same class are now preparing for a common examination. As to when the men should acquire these skills in prison, in the opinion of the Board, they are a priority and should not be postponed to near the end of [an often lengthy] sentence. The acquisition of basic skills in Literary and Numeracy will not only improve a prisoner's prospects on release, they are also crucial tools in helping him negotiate his time in prison successfully.
- 6.2.4 The current provision of courses in digital media, catering and construction reflects the trends in the North West labour market and should assist the employment prospects of those completing them. The new Plastering Workshop and qualification is proving popular with those enrolled while the Carpentry and Fitted Interiors Workshops continue to deliver a sound level of learning. However, whether some of these courses should continue to offer specialist vocational qualifications or, instead, contribute towards a more generic award, is under debate. The inability to gain vocational qualifications in the non-OLASS classes is disappointing and has still to be addressed.

- 6.2.5 Board Members have been impressed with the new Personal & Social Development group, aimed at those prisoners who find classes in main-stream education too demanding or threatening. The intention is to provide these men with a positive experience which will give them the confidence to move eventually into general provision. Prisoners enjoy the class and the Board has seen clear signs of progress being made by some of the men on the programme.
- 6.2.6 When prisoners arrive at Buckley Hall, they receive an Education induction and an initial assessment which contributes to the decisions made about the programme organised for each man. The Education Department and Prison Industries staff work closely together and in the weekly Sequencing Board, agree what employment or education each prisoner should be offered. The intention of the Sequencing Board to determine an appropriate individual pathway for every prisoner is laudable, as is the move away from it being primarily a mechanism for filling vacancies in Education and the Workshops. In this respect, we believe the Sequencing Board should always contain a representative or input from OMU, to advise on the relevance of its decision, in relation to a prisoner's Sentence Plan. The Board support the aim of the prison that the men under discussion should attend the Sequencing Board. Ensuring their presence will require some considerable organisation by the prison, but should prove to be a worthwhile allocation of staff time.
- 6.2.7 The new Education Manager is aware that, currently, no forum exists for the students' views to be expressed and represented to management and plans to remedy this situation.
- 6.2.8 There are good links between the Education Department and the OLASS Workshops. Outreach provision is proving popular and there is a growing number of prisoners wishing to gain Functional Skills qualifications while working. However, taking education out to the prisoners in this manner, while commendable is also labour-intensive. Responding to this by bringing groups of outreach students together for lessons in the Education building is sensible but a little counter-intuitive and does increase the demand on classrooms in the building.
- 6.2.9 The Education Management enjoys a constructive and positive relationship with Prison Management and the formal communication channels between the two are now firmly re-established. In such a symbiotic relationship, it is important each side acknowledges and appreciates that the other operates under its own priorities and constraints. The Education Department's Horticulture group and the non-OLASS Gardens group each make a valuable contribution to the Prison but, on occasion during the year have not always butted up against each other comfortably.
- 6.2.10 The problem, mentioned in the last two Annual Reports, that not all education staff are trained to make P-Nomis entries, remains. As we have reported, the obvious consequence is that this may result in the under-recording of incidents – both negative and positive - involving prisoners. The Board supports the intention of the Education Manager to hold a P-Nomis training day for staff. Requiring all staff to

make regular contributions to prisoners' P-Nomis files will improve their familiarity and confidence with the software.

- 6.2.11 There are some external links between the Education Department and the wider community but, ideally, these could be developed further. Although contact with potential employers is less relevant in a non-resettlement prison, outside guests can add variety and richness to the Department's delivery of the curriculum.
- 6.2.12 The Prison Library is run by Rochdale Council. Prisoners currently enjoy good access to the Library and on an average week, in the present year, it was visited by 203 prisoners and issued 181 books. Recently, limitations have been imposed on prisoners' evening access to the Library on security grounds and the Board would be concerned if this were to reduce prisoners' ability to take advantage of this valuable resource.
- 6.2.13 The new Education Manager takes over a Department which is already performing satisfactorily. The Department achieved a Grade 2 on a recent internal review and with its continuing focus on quality improvement and determination to evaluate its work is expected by the Board to continue meeting the needs of prisoners well.

### **6.3 Healthcare and Mental Health**

- 6.3.1 In the judgment of the Board, the standard of healthcare provision within the prison remains sound, despite an increase in the numbers of Comp1s relating to Healthcare. Between May 2013 and April 2014 there were 48 such complaints, a figure which rose to 64 for May 2014 to April 2015 and, as a % of the total Complaints this represented an increase from 3.76% to 7.45%. However, this period, saw some significant changes made to prescribed medications and to what prisoners are allowed in-possession, both of which were unpopular with many prisoners. The Board consider that, overall, Healthcare staff and management are conscientious, competent and caring although it is aware of one instance when following the correct administrative procedures appeared to take precedence over the immediate medical needs of a prisoner.
- 6.3.2 During the year, a new provider has been appointed for the prison's healthcare and Manchester Mental Health and Social Care Trust, who provide the service at HMP Manchester has also been awarded a five year contract at HMP Buckley Hall. There were a few initial problems during the changeover – primarily in terms of the IT facilities – but, as far as the prisoners were concerned, it was 'business as usual'. Credit for this smooth transition must be given to healthcare staff and management. The fact that the new Trust will be providing health services at two local prisons offers opportunities to improve the existing provision and may result in some changes and rationalisation in the longer term. It is to be hoped that the vacancies in the department will be filled quickly now the new provider is in place.

- 6.3.3 In the opinion of Healthcare staff, the fact that Buckley Hall is now a non-resettlement prison, taking men serving sentences of four years or more, does not appear to have had any significant effect on the medical services required by prisoners. It may, therefore, be just coincidental that the period of April 2014 – March 2015 saw a 9% increase in outside hospital appointments compared to the previous year.
- 6.3.4 Despite the Board's overall satisfaction, there are a number of issues facing the Healthcare Department; for example, the considerable delay in appointments to see the Physiotherapist remain. Moreover, the complaints prisoners have made to the Board about delays in obtaining routine dental treatment are not without substance. On average, prisoners had to wait 101 days for treatment between April 2014 – March 2015. During the year, the Board also received a number of complaints about the time it took to see a G.P. which, at one stage, averaged, 20 days. However, the Department has worked hard to address this issue and should be congratulated for reducing the waiting time to its current level of 5 days. The 'Did Not Attend' rate for the GP remains stubbornly high - 14.8% for April 2014 – March 2015. The consequences for Healthcare when the prison does not reconcile the prison roll are much reduced this year but do still occur and, result in appointments being missed, prisoners being left frustrated, NHS resources being wasted, and waiting lists growing. The Smoking Cessation classes were an unfortunate victim of the change to a new healthcare provider and a long list of prisoners wanting to enrol has built up.
- 6.3.5 Given that Buckley Hall is a 'working prison' the determination of Prison Management to improve the attendance rates in Education and the Workplace has the full support of the Board. As a result of the policy and in the opinion of the Board, Healthcare staff, has felt under some pressure to reduce the number of appointments being made for prisoners although the Board is satisfied that there is no question their clinical judgment has been questioned by prison management. Healthcare staff contend that it is not the number of medical appointments which affects attendance at Work but rather the difficulty of getting prisoners to their workplace after Healthcare appointments. The Prison Management would prefer more appointments and clinics to be provided at weekends or in the evening. However, while this may be possible with nurse-led clinics, the prison will need to accept this is more difficult for appointments involving external healthcare professionals. In the opinion of the Board, Prison and Healthcare Managers are trying to reconcile this particular issue in a manner which is mutually acceptable.
- 6.3.6 The tight staffing levels under which Buckley Hall operates, had some negative impact on prisoner access to outside hospital appointments during the year. Between April 2014 and March 2015, the number of hospital appointments cancelled by the prison rose from 27 in the previous year to 31. This is disappointing for prisoners and can lead to delays in their treatment. Cancellations usually arise because of a lack of available escort staff or because escort staff have been redeployed due to staff shortages within the prison. Staff are not profiled for escorts to an outside medical appointment on a Friday afternoon and the Board is

concerned that any prisoners requiring medical procedures only provided at this time should not be denied access to the treatment.

- 6.3.7 The Board is satisfied that prisoners have good access to Healthcare Management. Prison and Healthcare Managers attend the regular Patient Experience Group, chaired by prisoners and at which the men are given full opportunity to contribute. In the opinion of the Board, it is regrettable that the prison's GP did not attend any of the meetings during the year and believe their presence would better inform both doctor and prisoners. PALS continues to be available for prisoners wishing to pursue a complaint against the Department. The Department takes an active approach to health education and publishes a Newsletter, Posters and has healthcare material available in the Library.
- 6.3.8 Between April 2014 and March 2015, there was a 9% increase in the number of prisoners taken to A&E and a rise of 144% over the same period in the number of emergency call-outs. In part, these changes are attributed to the greater use of NPS and an increase in incidents of violence between prisoners. In addition, the emergency doctor service, BARDOC [Bury & Rochdale Doctors on Call], was called out 48 times during the period – an increase of 55% on the previous year. In respect to BARDOC, the Board wish to register their concern that on at least two occasions, it would not attend the prison, despite the specific intervention and request of the Duty Governor to do so.
- 6.3.9 As part of the new contract the drug and alcohol awareness service now come under the umbrella of the new Trust which, in the opinion of the Board, is a positive step and offers the potential for a more integrated service to the prisoners concerned. Bringing together the work of the substance misuse team with that of other healthcare staff and offering dual diagnosis is to be encouraged. In the opinion of the Board, offering treatment 'under one roof' is preferable to the present situation of the prisoners being treated separately by both Healthcare and Lifeline medical staff.
- 6.3.10 As regards substance misuse, the prison relaunched its Recovery Wing in June. It is to be hoped this opportunity is used to clarify and establish clear aims and goals for the Wing and the criteria on which its performance can be judged. This year, the Substance Misuse team began a structured programme of courses and the Board has been most impressed by the commitment and enthusiasm of those delivering it. Providing these block courses, has meant that their delivery can be better integrated into the daily life of the prison. However, prison managers may have to accept that not all such interventions can be provided on this block basis.
- 6.3.11 During the year, the Board have received a number of complaints from prisoners about the long queues in Healthcare for medication. However, improvements have been made and since December, medicines arrive in the prison, bagged for each prisoner. The Governor is very much of the opinion that wing-based dispensaries would be of considerable benefit both to the operation of the prison and delivery of

healthcare services. Consequently, a capital bid was submitted with this in mind; however, this was not approved.

- 6.3.12 Despite a member of the Mental Health team not having been replaced, its staff continue to provide a good level of service to prisoners and are well regarded throughout the establishment. Partly due to these staffing constraints but also because of a change in emphasis, members of the team are spending rather less time with individuals and are more involved in the prison's overall management and care of vulnerable prisoners. At the same time, both they and Safer Custody staff are dealing with a growing number of prisoners with complex needs. Given the current demands on the Mental Health team, the prison is encouraged to consider how best it could support the staff and the additional calls on their time.
- 6.3.13 The Board has been told by prisoners that Anxiety Management courses should be provided in the prison and that there is also a place for addressing the needs of those affected by Historic Sex Abuse. Some English prisons are able to offer prisoners over the age of 60 access to the Bowel Cancer Screening Programme and it is regrettable that, in this respect, prisoners here do not have the same level of service as those in the community.
- 6.3.14 The Board would like to thank Healthcare staff and management for their openness, approachability and the positive attitude they have shown towards Board Members. A member of the Board attends the regular Partnership Operational Management group. In the opinion of the Board, the Healthcare Management are forward thinking, professional, responsive and keen to maintain the good delivery standards currently achieved.

#### **6.4 Purposeful Activity**

- 6.4.1 The prison provides a range of purposeful activity and it has a crucial role to play in the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders. It is also important in giving the population of long-term prisoners a sense of purpose and fulfilment. Some of the work provided is highly regarded and develops good employment skills among the prisoners. However, some of the smaller contracts have provided relatively menial and monotonous work. It has been reported elsewhere in the Report that the Board regret the continued absence of qualifications in these non-OLASS workshops.
- 6.4.2 The Industries Manager is commended by the Board for her whole-hearted efforts to seek out and provide prisoners with meaningful employment and she has achieved a good measure of success in her endeavours to attract business ventures into the prison. However, long-term relationships between the prison and profit-seeking private enterprise seem difficult to sustain. This year there have been disappointing examples of commercial enterprises attracted by the low labour costs on offer but who seem not to factor in and accommodate the other costs and issues associated with sourcing work from a prison. When such a firm has withdrawn from the

contract – often at short notice -prisoners lose their work and pay and the prison performance figures take an inevitable and significant hit. In response to the problems which can occur with commercial organisations, the suggestion has been made to the Board that the prison would be better served seeking out employment opportunities with the Charitable and Public Sectors. Another suggestion is that education and skill training should be increased to replace low level and unpredictable contract work.

- 6.4.3 The 'Hours Worked in Industry' on the NOMS Performance Hub reveals a relatively disappointing situation. Between April 2014 and March 2015, on average only 52% of the scheduled hours were worked, which was the lowest figure among both North West prisons and Buckley Hall's comparator group. As mentioned earlier, this was due in part to the unexpected withdrawal of business partners from their contract with the prison. However, the Performance Hub also shows that, overall, Buckley Hall has a relatively high ratio of 'Unacceptable Absences' to 'Attended Hours' compared to other prisons. Similarly, the prison has a high ratio of 'Not Required' to 'Attended Hours' and it has been the case that the tight staffing levels mean that when Instructors are ill or on leave, their workshops have often been temporarily closed and prisoners stay locked in their cells .
- 6.4.4 Prison Management to place a high priority on ensuring prisoners are gainfully employed during the day. Wing Staff and Instructional Officers now appear to be much better at working together to challenge poor attendance and unacceptable behaviour in the workplace. However, when appropriate, greater use of negative comments on P-Nomis by Instructional Officers should occur. Some IOs have given the impression to Board Members that they deal with unacceptable absence from work by stopping the prisoner's pay, rather than making a comment on his P-Nomis file too.
- 6.4.5 Prison staff try hard to fill any vacancies in the Workshops. On a spot-check by the Board on one day in June, of the 919 vacancies 825 had been allocated – in other words there were 96 vacancies on the day, around 10% of the total.
- 6.4.6 In the last Annual Report, it was stated that the Outdoor Furniture Workshop was providing worthwhile opportunities for the prisoners. It was recommended that a retail outlet would be of considerable help in furthering its ambitions and it is disappointing this has still to be provided. In the opinion of the Board, this Workshop and others would benefit from the availability of a van to move stock around the establishment.
- 6.4.7 The Board has been impressed by the new Cycle Repair Workshop, run in conjunction with the Margaret Carey Foundation. Prisoners in this workshop are not only learning valuable skills they are also contributing usefully to society. The recent prolonged absence of its Instructional Officer is, therefore, particularly regrettable. The new Workshop making pallets is well-organised and engages those prisoners employed in it. The Board have been impressed by the work ethic of those in it and hope this particular commercial partnership will stand the test of time. The Waste

Management workers lost some of their focus on recycling during the year because of a lack of direction but seem now to be back on track and far more committed to the ethos of recycling and of better organising the waste they collect.

- 6.4.8 A new contract has been won which involves repackaging window blinds and curtains. The Instructional Officer is working hard to ensure this venture will be a success and it is to be hoped that the business partner is satisfied with the quality of the prisoners' output. A call centre is also in the pipeline but appears to be delayed by issues of responsibility for the capital set-up costs. The Board would like to think that this matter can be satisfactorily resolved by the parties involved.
- 6.4.9 During the year, a new Pay Policy was introduced. At the time, this gave rise to some complaints to the Board but now appears to be broadly accepted by the prisoners. A move to the payment of performance bonuses or a wage system not based solely on attendance would, in the opinion of the Board, improve the motivation of prisoners and reduce the numbers seen sitting around at times.
- 6.4.10 Security in the prison is not just the responsibility of uniformed staff and those who work in the Workshops have an important role to play in the control and management of the prisoners in the prison. Their vigilance can contribute valuably to the prison's efforts to limit the availability of drugs and mobile phones within the establishment.

## **6.5 Offender Management**

- 6.5.1 The Offender Management Unit (OMU) Buckley Hall is yet to be bench marked following the restructuring of the Probation Service and so, in consequence, the potential impact on it of the reorganisation remains unclear. At the beginning of this reporting year and in preparation for any change, additional Band 4 Supervising Officers were drafted into the unit as Offender Supervisors. Throughout the reporting year, they received the necessary training, were given case-loads, and assigned mentors. However, this staffing decision was not without its problems. Of necessity, operational duties continued for these Officers and not all those assigned were comfortable in their new role or the competing demands it imposed on their time. As a result, the initial decision was reviewed and a number of the officers are assigned back to operational-only duties and, effectively, restoring the previous status quo. The current staff balance is not optimal for managing the differing tier levels resident at Buckley Hall but, nevertheless, is managed effectively.
- 6.5.2 Offenders are seen by their assigned supervising officer within the first ten days of arrival at Buckley Hall. It has been noted by the Board that in some cases, only the basic screening has been completed by the previous establishment, and, in others the OASYS reports are not up to date. At Buckley Hall the Board is satisfied that OASYS reports are reviewed in accordance with NOMS guidance and that Parole hearings are not delayed for want of updates.

- 6.5.3 There has been a significant reduction in the number of OMU related applications to the IMB. The Board is aware that requests from offenders to meet their supervising officers are monitored by the Department Head for timely compliance and delays are minimal. The majority of related IMB applications concern dissatisfaction with the outcome of Cat D reviews or Parole Hearings- neither of which OMU has direct control over.
- 6.5.4 The IMB enjoys an open and positive relationship with the OMU management and staff alike and is grateful for their cooperation particularly during this unsettled period. It is to the credit of all concerned that despite the continuing uncertain future for individuals, and the negative impact on morale, changes have been accepted stoically, and without detriment to the offenders in their charge.

## **6.6 Safer Custody**

- 6.6.1 Safer Custody staff continue to provide an excellent service; working with vulnerable prisoners and defusing potentially difficult situations. The majority of prison staff value and appreciate the work of the department. Board Members have been impressed by the weekly multidisciplinary Safer Regimes meeting, which the Department organises and, at which, individual prisoners giving concern are discussed and an appropriate plan of action for each man is determined.
- 6.6.2 As stated in the previous reporting year, the procedures in place for prisoners on an ACCT document are thorough and the staff responsible for managing vulnerable prisoners provide a high quality and sensitive service. The Board can confirm the Prisoners are fully involved in the review process and that each quarter the Department undertakes a thorough analysis of the ACCT data. However, the Board recommends, that, ideally, the timing of the ACCT reviews should be rather more structured and predictable than is currently the case. At present, the times and locations are arranged in an ad hoc manner, which does not always make it easy for staff who wish to attend a prisoner's case review.
- 6.6.3 In the previous reporting year the Board referred to the fact that 'sometimes the Officers completing the actual document are a little too perfunctory in their written comments and their contributions insufficiently related to the individual's Caremap'. It appears this continues to be the case because the opinion of a recent external inspection was that the written comments were not always sufficient and consequently it awarded a Green/Amber status. The Governor and Custodial Manager responsible for Safer Custody are developing strategies to rectify this situation. In the opinion of the Board, 'Safer Custody' is the responsibility of all prison staff and cannot be left just to those in the Department.
- 6.6.4 In the previous reporting year it was stated that the Governor's wish was to have a Safer Cell on each Wing. However, this has not been achieved and, in the opinion of the Board, financial and accommodation constraints will not make it any easier to achieve in the future. At present, there is only one gated cell in the prison and it is

regrettable that circumstances have required that it is not always used exclusively for prisoners in temporary crisis, as intended.

- 6.6.5 Throughout the current year a new scheme, Tackling Anti-Social Attitudes (TASA), has been developed, as part of the prison's violence reduction strategy. Safer Custody staff have familiarised officers and prisoners with the process which involves monitoring prisoners who have been identified as being bullied or accused of bullying. Under the scheme, potential bullies are informed of the accusation and warned that their behaviour will be monitored and recorded for a period of time. It has been suggested to the Board this encourages such men just to suspend their behaviour and that a more active intervention is also required, if their behaviour is to be permanently modified. Wing staff need to be convinced as to the value of the scheme if they are to put a prisoner on it, monitor his behaviour and complete the documentation. However, despite these caveats, the scheme is commended by the Board for making explicit and formalising the prison's response to instances where it is thought prisoners are bullying or being bullied.
- 6.6.6 The Board has been informed that Management Plans are put in place for prisoners who, for a variety of reasons, refuse to leave their cells on the Wing. However, it would seem that these 'Plans' are unwritten, relatively informal and, thus, not easy to monitor. Prisoners subject to such plans can find that the prison has difficulty implementing them at weekends, so that they have access to showers, telephone calls, exercise, etc.
- 6.6.7 During the current reporting year there have been 23 instances of self-harm; some of which were serious. Fortunately, there have been no fatalities and Members of the Board commend the staff involved for being alert, responsive, and in some instances, undoubtedly saving the life of the prisoner concerned. Data on these instances of Self-harm and Threats to Self-harm is collected and thoroughly analysed by the Departmental staff.

## **6.7 Care and Separation Unit**

- 6.7.1 The Board considers that the Care and Separation Unit at HMP Buckley Hall is well - managed. The unit offers segregated prisoners as tolerant, supportive and caring environment as is possible in a secure segregation area. The senior manager with overall responsibility for the unit provides CSU officers with a high standard of leadership - both supportive and clear. The emphasis on teamwork and proactivity leads to a confidence particularly evident when handling the needs of challenging prisoners. Issues are not shirked and solutions are sought. The unit's performance is closely monitored by the quarterly SMARG meeting. A member of the Board attends these meetings.
- 6.7.2 There are 12 cells in the unit but some of the accommodation lacks flexibility. Staff do not have access to camera or gated cell in the unit. This limits the options for providing an individual approach to a segregated prisoner's needs and imposes

extra demands on unit staff. The outside area available to prisoners has seen significant improvement during the reporting period. A seat is now available to prisoners in the exercise area, and the surrounding gardens have been planted out to create a more pleasant and more civilised environment. Segregated prisoners have responded well to these improvements. The toilet facilities for staff have also been improved. These changes demonstrate management's acknowledgement of the unit's worth.

- 6.7.3 The Board is satisfied that prisoners at HMP. Buckley Hall are segregated appropriately and that correct procedures are in place to ensure that a prisoner is suitable for segregation. The April 2015 audit score of 85% identified the improvements needed in the recording of some of the activities which operate in the unit in accordance with PSO 1700. A swift response by management to the stated outcomes led to a comprehensive action plan, which has already been completed. Consequently, the re-audit which took place in July, awarded a creditable 100%.
- 6.7.4 The prison's Mental Health Team plays a significant role in the unit and offers a laudable service to both prisoners and to staff. Their work with challenging prisoners is particularly praiseworthy and engenders confidence in CSU staff. Prisoners in the unit are seen on a daily basis by the Duty Governor, a member of the Chaplaincy Team and Healthcare staff. The doctor visits twice a week. Prisoners in the unit are offered daily showers, exercise, access to a telephone, a radio and library books. All prisoners in the unit are assigned a personal officer. Rule 45 prisoners in the CSU have an individual care plan. This plan is reviewed at the same time as the GOAD review. GOAD reviews are normally completed every seven days rather than the requirement of fourteen days. All CSU prisoners subject to ACCT have enhanced case reviews completed within the required timescale. Relations between CSU staff and prisoners are good. Where possible experienced CSU staff are based in the unit. Staff are in the process of being given mental health training and the majority have been given Equality training.
- 6.7.5 The Custodial Manager of the unit is a capable and experienced manager. She is respected by her staff. Her role as CM for CSU and for Safer Custody is a demanding one and the lack of office accommodation for this role is not satisfactory.
- 6.7.6 During the reporting period the prison's management have responded to the national increase in the number of Own Interest [OI] prisoners in CSUs by establishing a CSU workshop specifically for OI prisoners. This allows these men time out of their cell and an opportunity to earn money. In addition, OI prisoners are offered, where appropriate, exercise association with one other prisoner, thus encouraging socialisation. Of particular note is the development of a 28 day Re - Integration programme established on C wing. Any suitable segregated prisoner can now be offered an opportunity to go back onto normal location in a secure and supported environment. The Board considers that these developments are praiseworthy.
- 6.7.7 Prisoner reviews are taken in the unit by senior managers. The Board monitors

these activities and is satisfied they are well-run and fair. A member of the prison's mental health team attends all reviews.

## **6.8 Residential Services**

- 6.8.1 The Residential Governors appointed during the previous reporting year are now well established and in the judgment of the Board their presence has enhanced the governance of residential services. Prisoners continue to refer to the responsiveness and sense of fairness of the new Governors.
- 6.8.2 Whilst it was indicated in the previous reporting year that equipment such as washing machines and dryers were being replaced, it has been evident during the first half of this year that faulty equipment continues to be an ongoing problem. At times there appears to be a significant gap between prisoners reporting faults and officers informing the works department of the issue.
- 6.8.3 There continue to be instances when Staff experience difficulty in undertaking the roll-call accurately and, on occasion, it has taken more than two hours to achieve a correct count. Responsibility for this lies with all prison staff – Wing Staff, Workplace Instructors, Education Staff, Healthcare, etc. Management have made strenuous efforts to rectify the situation and the Board has been an improvement. Nevertheless, it remains the case that some staff still react to the message “the roll is correct” with a hint of surprise and degree of relief.
- 6.8.4 Inaccuracies in the roll are a disruptive influence on the prison's daily regime. In relation to this, there have been a number of occasions when wing orderlies have been locked up during roll call and unable to go about their work, even though residential governors have said that this should not happen.
- 6.8.5 During the year, the Board conducted a Report into the Incentive & Earned Privileges [IEP] scheme within the Prison. The prisoners' attitude towards the IEP scheme is, at best, neutral and it tends to receive very few compliments. During the year, a number of Prisoners complained to the Board they were only informed about their negative write-ups on P-Nomis after they had triggered an IEP downgrade. Prisoners have said they received no notification that an officer has reported their negative behaviour.
- 6.8.6 Prisoners continue to complain that when they are accused of being in possession of a mobile phone or drugs they are reduced automatically to a Basic IEP regime before any findings of guilt at adjudication. In the opinion of the Board, given the scale of the problem of drugs and mobile phones, such a robust and unswerving response is perhaps understandable. Prisoners are advised that when their IEP status is downgraded in these situations that there is a right of appeal but in the experience of the Board, such appeals are not always dealt with as speedily as might be hoped.
- 6.8.7 A number of prisoners have complained to the Board that there is insufficient differentiation between Standard and Enhanced IEP, to provide sufficient incentive.

At the start of the reporting year, the percentage of Enhanced IEP prisoners at Buckley Hall was significantly more than for its comparator group of prisons. This figure is now declining and in July 2015, it stood at 54% but which is still higher than the figure of 45% for the comparator group. The Board supports the idea that greater consideration should be given to downgrading a prisoner's IEP status rather than placing him on an Adjudication charge.

- 6.8.8 The Board considers that the IEP scheme is effective in highlighting to prisoners the direct consequences of poor behaviour. Moreover, its impact on negative behaviours is more immediate than receiving added days from the Independent Adjudicator. However, in the opinion of the Board it remains a fairly blunt weapon to alter a prisoner's behaviour when it is used in isolation and if it does not allow Custodial Managers any flexibility. The other area of some concern for the Board is that the burden of proof when downgrading a prisoner's IEP status is much less than when facing an Adjudication charge.
- 6.8.9 Whilst it does appear that Wing Officers are spending more time being visible on the Wings than has previously been the case, a small number of prisoners continue to state that they do not feel safe on the Wings and would like to see a greater presence of officers.
- 6.8.10 The gym and its facilities continue to play an important part in the life of the prison and remains extremely popular among many prisoners. In addition to the normal classes and sessions, the staff and prisoners are to be congratulated for the large amounts of money they have raised for charity during the year by their fund-raising activities. In the reporting year, outdoor exercise equipment has been installed for each Wing and is available when prisoners are on outside association.
- 6.8.11 The Board regret the quite regular need to suspend prisoner access to the gym facilities in order to redeploy the staff elsewhere, because of Officer shortages. Prisoners have accepted this situation without too much fuss, largely because Prison Management try to rotate the closures equitably and also, whenever possible, communicate the decision to prisoners in advance.
- 6.8.12 The prisoners chosen to be 'Community Advisers' performs useful function within the prison, providing fellow inmates with practical information and advice on a wide range of matters. However, the role has perhaps not developed as much as some of them had hoped.
- 6.8.13 The Wings generally look clean and tidy. Visitors and Member of other Boards who have visited during the year, have commented very favourably on the cleanliness, absence of litter and the generally well-maintained grounds compared to many other prisons. For this, considerable credit must be given to the Gardens and Horticulture Work Teams.
- 6.8.14 The Board continue to have concerns about the often large quantity of prisoners'

property involved when prisoners are moved in/out of this prison. The longer term prisoners who now make up Buckley Hall's population have often accumulated a sizeable amount of property by the time they arrive here. The extent of the problem can then become compounded when GeoAmey is not prepared to transport all of it with them. Buckley Hall lacks the storage facilities needed to implement volumetric control and, equally, the central facilities at Branston face their own pressures. However, given the range and complexity of issues that prison management have to contend with it may be expedient not to 'Awaken the Kraken' that is volumetric control.

## **6.9 Other Issues**

### **Catering and Kitchens**

- 6.9.1 The Catering Manager and Staff continue to do an excellent job; providing a healthy and varied diet within tight budgetary constraints. In particular, Members of the Board have received many positive comments in relation to the provision made during religious festivals such as Christmas, Easter and Eid.
- 6.9.2 In the previous reporting period the Board received a significant number of complaints about the introduction of cold lunches. However, it appears that prisoners have come to accept this situation and few complaints have been received during the current year.
- 6.9.3 Members of the Board continue to be concerned about the inadequate procedures of the maintenance contractor when there has been a breakdown of kitchen machinery and equipment. The present contract appears slow to remedy problems and is proving administratively time consuming for catering staff.

### **Prisoners' Reception, First Night & Induction**

- 6.9.4 Board Members have observed the procedures in Reception when new prisoners arrive and report that the men are treated with courtesy and respect by the Reception Officers. However, new prisoners are not offered a hot drink on arrival and the facilities for them in the Waiting Room can best be described as 'spartan'. The space available for searching a prisoner's property is confined and there is little privacy for the men to make their free phone call on arrival to family/friends.
- 6.9.5 Induction prisoners are housed on C Wing, where most of the induction programme is delivered. The induction programme would be improved if it included a tour of the establishment for new inmates. Elements of the programme are delivered by Prison Orderlies and they provide a realistic view of what to expect. An Information Sheet containing basic details about the prison is available for new prisoners to post out to their family. The Prisoner Handbook is informative and thorough although visually rather dull. At the end of the reporting year, a new building has been made available where most of the work induction programme will be delivered.
- 6.9.6 C Wing is not reserved exclusively for Induction prisoners and it has been suggested to the Board, that during the prolonged absence through illness of its Custodial

Manager the Wing has been used to relocate prisoners from other Wings who may not be ideal role models for those new to Buckley Hall.

### **Prisoner Complaints**

6.9.7 Prisoner complaints continue to be monitored effectively and generally, most are responded to within the deadline. While The Board is aware of one instance when a Comp1A application was responded to by the same member of staff who dealt with the Comp 1 application it is satisfied with the way in which this situation was resolved. In the year to June 2015, the NOMS Performance Hub indicates that prisoners made 200 Complaints. This compares favourably with the median figure of 380 Complaints made for each prison in its comparator group. The Board find that Prisoner Complaints which originate at previous establishments can take up a large amount of our Members' time and often prove difficult to resolve satisfactorily

### **Adjudications**

6.9.8 Board Members have observed a number of Adjudications and can report that they are conducted fairly, impartially and with due regard to procedure. This year, the Number 1 Governor and Deputy have joined the rota of Adjudicating Governors and the Board sees this as a positive step, offering them a practical and direct insight into some of the issues facing their staff on a daily basis.

### **Drugs & Mobile Phones**

6.9.9 Illegal drug use continues to be a significant issue and many Prisoners tell the Board that drugs remain readily available in Buckley Hall. Because much of this is related to the use of NPS, the results from the MDT scheme significantly under-record the problem, as it does not detect a prisoner's use of NPS.

6.9.10 In part, the prison's problem arises because the entire perimeter is surrounded by a public footpath and although plans have been approved to improve CCTV coverage of external areas, the prison faces an ongoing struggle to control the problem. During the year, the Board can confirm that Prison Management have improved the analysis of intelligence on drugs, been robust in their response to prisoners found in possession, made changes to the control of prisoner movement around the prison and run a number of campaigns warning of the dangers. Recently, the prison has begun videoing prisoners suspected of being under the influence of NPS, in order to show them its dangerous effects, when they recover.

6.9.11 It is clear to the Board that Prison Management, alone, cannot solve the problem and only a coordinated, proactive response involving external agencies has any prospect of success. The financial gains from illegal drugs in prison are considerable and have attracted the attention of organised criminals. The trade is no longer controlled and run by a few local individuals and any effective response must reflect this change.

6.9.12 The dangers of taking New Psychoactive Substances ('Spice') has been witnessed by a number of prisoners and only very recently does this appear to be having any

significant impact on reducing its use. Some prisoners have witnessed near death situations amongst their fellow inmates and yet have told Board Members this would not deter them. During just two months of this reporting period, 8 out of 15 'blue light' ambulances from the prison to hospital were because of suspected use of NPS. The Healthcare Department confirm that this figure of approximately 50% is representative of all emergency ambulance call-outs throughout the reporting year.

6.9.13 The availability of drugs and mobile phones continues to be a significant problem in Buckley Hall; as is the case across the entire prison estate. Officers and OSGs are commended for their diligence and have made significant finds of both throughout the year. Between January and July 2015, the staff made 140 finds of mobile phones. The use of mobile phone blockers has been in place during the current reporting year; however, this technology can only be used in one wing at a time.

### **Offender Behaviour Programmes**

6.9.14 The Programmes Department runs Resolve and TSP alternately back to back and is on track to achieve its target of completions for the year. However, the Board note the waiting lists which exist for both and in particular, Resolve. Given that prisoners have often been transferred to Buckley Hall specifically to complete these courses as part of their Sentence Plan, long delays in starting the courses are far from ideal.

6.9.15 The OMU and Programmes unit liaise to deliver timely progression of sentencing plans. Forward planning ensures that the priority given to those nearing a Parole Hearing does not impact on the sentence plan of other offenders although it may affect those nearing a Cat D review.

6.9.16 Attendance and involvement in Programmes form an important part of many prisoners' Sentence Planning and it remains a matter of some frustration to the Board that Members feel unable to monitor this area effectively; principally because issues of prisoner confidentiality restrict Board Members' access to its activities.

### **Resettlement**

6.9.17 Although Buckley Hall is a non-resettlement prison, a small number of prisoners are still released from here. Most of these releases have been directed by the prisoner's Parole Board. In such cases, the Board is satisfied that the Parole Board has required an appropriate resettlement plan for the prisoner. Alternatively, the Board has been assured the prison will have informed the CRC of a prisoner's imminent release. The Board is, therefore, content that the full range of resettlement services related to benefits, employment and accommodation will be made available to these men.

### **Visits**

6.9.18 For security reasons, a more rigorous visits policy has been introduced but appears to have had no significant impact on the positive experience of the prisoners and their visitors. The Board has informed Prison Management that the Privacy Curtain,

in the area off the Visits Hall where full body searches are conducted when prisoners exit, has still not yet been replaced.

- 6.9.19 Prisoners have suggested to the Board that window blinds or obscured glass should be installed in the Visits Hall so that visitors – particularly young children – are unable to see prisoners being taken on and off prison vans or going in handcuffs to outside appointments from Reception. This seems an eminently sensible idea.
- 6.9.20 Board Members have observed the Family Days which have been arranged and commend highly their value and the hard work of those involved in organising them. Attendance at the Family Days is dependent on the positive behaviour of a prisoner and the Board hope that the needs of more challenging and troubled families will also be tackled by the prison.

## 7 The work of the board

### Membership

7.1 The Board has an allocation of 14 members. Officially it has a complement of 10 Board Members but, effectively, has been operating with 8 members – 2 of these are dual-boarding and to whom we are extremely grateful plus 2 probationary members. Given the limited numbers on the Board, the active Members must be commended for giving a considerable amount of additional time and commitment to ensure that the Board fulfils its role at Buckley Hall.

### Organisation of the Board

7.2 Each week two members are on Rota Duty, two monitor Reviews & Adjudications and one is responsible for prisoner IMB Applications. The result is that, five members are scheduled to visit the prison at least once a week.

	Aug13 – July14	Aug14 – July15
Recommended Complement	14	14
Members at start of period	10	10
Members at end	10	12
New Members	2	2
Board Meetings	12	12
Average Attendance	7	6
Rota Visits	102	111
Training of Probationary Members	90	26
Prisoner Applications Visits	100	78
Prisoner Inductions	10	3
Care & Separation Reviews + Adjudications	110	124
Serious Incident	2	7
Chair and Vice Chair Duties	20	42
Board Meetings	90	72
Miscellaneous	37	34
<b>TOTAL VISITS</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>494</b>

## APPENDIX

### 8. Applications to the Board August 2014 – July 2015 [and compared to previous Reporting Year]

Subject	Total Aug13 – July14	% of Total Aug13 – July14	Total Aug14 – July15	% of Total Aug14 – July15
Accommodation	9	3.0	6	2.2
Adjudications	10	3.3	12	4.5
Diversity related	5	1.7	1	0.4
Education / Employment/ Training	25	8.3	17	6.3
Family / Visits	13	4.4	9	3.4
Food / Kitchens	1	0.3	7	2.6
Health	31	10.4	22	8.2
Property in Buckley Hall	30	10.1	47	17.5
Property transferred to Buckley Hall	33	11.1	27	10.1
Sentence Related	94	31.6	72	26.9
Staff / Prisoner	4	1.3	17	6.3
Transfers	12	4.0	6	2.2
Miscellaneous	31	10.4	25	9.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>100%</b>