



HMP Wakefield

Annual Report

by

**Independent Monitoring Board
Wakefield**

01 May 2014 – 30 April 2015

**Monitoring Fairness and Respect
for People in Custody**

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1. STATUTORY ROLE of the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB)

- 1.1 The Prisons Act 1952 and the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 required 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.
- 1.2 The Board is specifically charged to:
 - i. 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;
 - ii. inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom he has delegated authority as it judges appropriate, any concern it has;
 - iii. 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.
- 1.3 To enable a 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.

2. HMP WAKEFIELD – DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 HMP Wakefield is one of only eight High Security Prisons in the country. It is located between the city centre and a residential district, with a Certified Normal Accommodation of 750 prisoners of Category A, B, and High Security Remand. There are four residential wings: A, B, C, and D. Remand prisoners are also housed in B wing, in a separate unit. All cells are of single occupancy. Prisoners are also held in the Health Care (HCC), the Segregation Unit and the Exceptional Risk Unit (Closed Supervision Centre - CSC), both located in F Wing.
- 2.2 The CSC operates under a national co-ordinated management strategy to provide secure isolated location for those prisoners who are assessed as consistently and violently disruptive.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 3.1 This report covers the period 1st May 2014 to 30 April 2015. It is presented in the standardised national format.
- 3.2 In the last Annual Report, comment was made about the difficulty of recruiting new members to the Board, and delays in the process. These delays continued throughout the year subject of this report, to the extent that during the period covered by this report, only five experienced active members remained out of a full establishment of 20. This has had clear consequences for the nature and content of this report, which is inevitably reduced in detail. The Board has of necessity had to focus on achieving its basic tasks. Nonetheless, as in previous years, we again acknowledge the continuing good work and the improvements achieved in many areas of the prison while identifying and highlighting any areas of concerns.

- 3.3 Although not within this reporting year, it is relevant to note that four new members have taken up positions during 2015, and are undertaking the processes of induction and training. Further interviews are scheduled. The prospects for returning to a much better resourced Board are thus good, and the next Report will hopefully be more detailed.

Issues requiring the attention of the Director

- 3.4 It is very pleasing to be able to recognise a number of distinct achievements and improvements in this report. For several years, the Board had been concerned about the continuing problems with the aging fabric of the Segregation Unit. The necessary work was undertaken during the current reporting year, and signed off immediately afterwards. Imaginative solutions were put in place to allow the repairs and renovation to be carried out whilst achieving an ongoing commitment to public protection.
- 3.5 Similarly, the Board had expressed its concerns over some considerable period of time about the continuing restrictions on the use of the workshops caused by dilapidation of the fabric of the buildings. Work during the year on these issues achieved the necessary repairs and renovation. By the end of the reporting year most workshops were back up and running fully. The next reporting year should show a much more stable and very positive position. During the whole period the staff have clearly worked extremely hard to maintain operations.
- 3.6 Last year, the Board commented on the potential service delivery implications of the introduction of the Fair and Sustainable initiative, as well as the personal challenges it has posed for individual members of staff. As stated in our last report, the Board continues to monitor and discuss with management standards of service, training and skills and staff morale. As a general conclusion, the Board considers that the revisions of service have been undertaken very successfully, a tribute to the commitment of the staff and prison management – but also a reflection of the very evident development of a more cohesive and settled community within the prison population.
- 3.7 A full inspection was undertaken by HMCIP during the year (July 2014). As in previous reports, this shows significant improvements in the overall running of the prison. The IMB would wish to associate itself with the assessments of change made by the Inspectorate and recognise that this has been the result of significant and sustained efforts by management and the hard work and commitment of staff to improving conditions for prisoners. One particular area which needs mention, and continued support, concerns the pioneering work being undertaken on resettlement, elaborated under each of the pathways designed to achieve a rehabilitative community. Especially important in this respect are the initiatives being developed by the Assessment and Intervention Centre, such as the developing “Wayfinder” scheme. The Board will continue to monitor and support these initiatives where appropriate, and given their evident success and impact, urges that resources continue to be directed to sustain and further elaborate them, even in these times of generally reducing resource availability.

4. Reports

4.1 Equality and Inclusion

- 4.1.1 This is an important area of Prison life, and is managed thoroughly and successfully by the Prison staff. The IMB actively monitors the operation of prison procedures.
- 4.1.2 Most of the formal work dealing with and evaluating equality, inclusion and diversity issues is done by the monthly Prisoner Equality Action Group (PEAG), usually chaired by the Deputy Governor. The PEAG is well attended by prison equality representatives: 3 or so for each Wing. Prison staff, including several Governor grade staff, are usually present. It maintains a running agenda of live issues, focused on issues concerned with the “protected characteristics” (age, disability, gender, religion or belief, marriage, race, sexual orientation etc.). The scale of those with protected characteristics is high in Wakefield, given the nature of the population (over 30% being registered disabled, and over 20% aged over 60). Practical actions flow from decisions of PEAG –ranging from very detailed day to day concerns, through to more strategic considerations such as matters derived from Inspection reports.
- 4.1.3 Monitoring of figures is undertaken on quarterly basis to see exceptions from the expected level of performance about ethnic minority complaints, and explanations sought. No significant issues are usually evident – and most variations are explained by a very few regularly complaining prisoners rather than substantive concerns.
- 4.1.4 The Prison’s formal Equality Action Plan (EAP) derives at least in part from PEAG.
- 4.1.5 The formal complaints system (reported to PEAG, and feeding into EAP if necessary) is based on consideration of DIRF (Diversity Incident Reporting Forms) investigations. For the reporting year, 92 DIRF’s were submitted, of which 61 were not substantiated, 27 were substantiated (and action taken), and 4 were withdrawn by the prisoner. This is similar in numbers to those reported in our last Report, and give us no cause for concern. There are also monthly Equality Reps meetings, at which the Reps scrutinize around 10% of the DIRFs, and recommendations from investigations are added to the Equality Action Plan. In addition there are External Scrutiny Panels held on a quarterly basis. DIRFs are also quality checked by the DDC on his visits to the Prison.
- 4.1.6 The level of constructive joint working between officers and prisoners has continued to be impressive.

4.2 Education, Learning and Skills

- 4.2.1 Education Learning and Skills programmes are offered to a significant proportion of prisoners. Although some issues were expressed in the HMCIP Inspection Report of July 2004 about the levels of provision against demand, and the range of courses offered, these are not in the Board’s opinion matters of significant concern at Wakefield. Concerns raised in the Inspection Report do appear to have been addressed, or are being tackled positively. Provision of courses meeting the needs of the particular nature of the population of the Prison, and within the inevitable resource constraints, will always be challenging, and there are no issues which the Board would wish to identify.

- 4.2.2 Few applications from prisoners about the availability of courses have been raised with the Board which have been found to suggest substantive concerns or shortfalls in practice.
- 4.2.3 Inevitable limitations exist in the provision of a full range of “soft”, non skills based courses. However, whilst further provision for activities and courses relating to music or writing would be desirable, the Prison makes the most of limited resources (eg. the writer in residence), and support continues for visual art work.
- 4.2.4 Education and skills training should relate to the particular characteristics of each Prison’s population. As Wakefield Prison recognises, a very significant proportion (perhaps a third) of prisoners in Wakefield have disabilities in terms of educational ability. This reduces their capability to take educational and skills courses, but perhaps more importantly also hinders the ability to undertake some treatment courses addressing particular offending behaviour, which require basic educational skills. Resource constraints hinder progress in implementing the ideas and initiatives of Prison staff in this area, but the Board will continue to monitor and support their development.
- 4.2.5 Education and skills training is undertaken throughout the Prison, within workshops as well as educational classrooms, and includes courses run in the gym both for physical education skills and for addressing health issues.

4.3 Healthcare and Mental Health

- 4.3.1 Owing to the current very reduced numbers of IMB Board members this area cannot be reported on fully this year. Nonetheless, the Healthcare Unit has been visited weekly as part of the normal IMB rota visits, and all in-patients seen at that time. Very few applications are received which relate to the standard of medical care, indeed the numbers and proportion have almost halved compared with the previous reporting year.
- 4.3.2 The quality of care appears to remain high. Absence of significant Ombudsman criticisms relating to Deaths in Custody would support this conclusion. Given the significant elderly (and increasingly aging) population of the Prison, healthcare in all its forms is very important in Wakefield, and appears to be managed well. Nonetheless, improvements to this area (as part of the general approach to social care) are underway, and will be commented upon in the next reporting year.

4.4 Purposeful Activity (including work)

- 4.4.1 During the reporting year the Workshops have been in a state of considerable flux, and large changes have taken place. Almost all workshops have been rescheduled or relocated, and in some instances more than once. This has been for several reasons, which have included changes in staffing levels and refurbishments. In this situation it is not appropriate to give an individual breakdown of use of each workshop for this reporting year.
- 4.4.2 By the end of the reporting year most workshops were back up and running fully. The next reporting year should show a much more stable and very positive position. During the whole period the staff have clearly worked extremely hard to maintain operations.

4.5 Resettlement

- 4.5.1 HMP Wakefield has developed a clear interpretation of resettlement, in the context of its specific population. It means achieving the settlement of prisoners into the Wakefield custodial and rehabilitative community, to commit to their long or very long offender journey, engaging with the regime and committing to their sentence planning and addressing their offender behaviour. This was recognised in the HMCIP Inspection Report of July 2004, and it is evident that major work has continued to develop these concepts since that inspection. Wakefield continues to use the pathways of offending model to guide resettlement and reducing re-offending work, but has extended and elaborated this approach to suit the needs of the local population. The Board is impressed with the initiatives being undertaken, particular the proliferation and diversification of prisoner roles – such as the “Enablers”, designed to support the enabling and community cohesive culture being developed in the Prison; and the “Wayfinders” (see below).
- 4.5.2 The work of the Assessment & Interventions Centre (AIC) in Wakefield Prison is critically important, given the nature of the population. Many prisoners have severe psychological issues accompanying their very serious offences, and many are in denial. One dimension of the pioneering work of the AIC which is particularly to be welcomed is the identification of the prisoner “Wayfinder” role, designed to help rehabilitation through peer support. Some 20 or so prisoners are currently undertaking this role. Developing this role, the AIC has utilized the Wayfinders to initiate a succession of conferences (attended by upwards of 60 prisoners each time), which are continuing beyond the current reporting year. These conferences have addressed a range of topics which collectively help to demystify psychological issues and programmes, and thus help overcome barriers to take up of courses. These and a variety of other initiatives and programmes (both standard accredited and those locally developed) are attempting to address the major issue of denial of offences.
- 4.5.3 The Board will continue to monitor and support these initiatives where appropriate, and given their evident success and impact, urges that resources continue to be directed to sustain and further elaborate them, even in these times of generally reducing resource availability.
- 4.5.4 A major change in approach to offender management has been initiated in the Prison. The first year of a three year programme has involved the combination of Offender Manager and Supervising Officer functions as dual role officers. The individual caseload of at least 90 prisoners per Offender Manager has been reduced to around 35 cases per officer – with the same officers operating in a Supervising Officer role on the specific residential wing where their cases reside. This has the major benefit that officers see their prisoner caseload much more frequently, and enables a more accurate view to be taken of individuals in “real life” rather than interview situations. Formal meetings between officer and offender take place at least 4 times a year (in addition to sentence planning reviews). This initiative responds directly to the HMCIP Inspection Report of July 2004 concern about the observed lack of certainty of prisoners seeing their Offender Manager. In due course this initiative will involve the skilling up of officers to cover other aspects of offender manager roles (for example potentially work related to the probation function).
- 4.5.5 This initiative has no doubt been challenging for the officers, and has taken many “outside their comfort zone”. But from the observation of the Board most appear to be responding well, and finding this work productive and rewarding. The Board will continue to monitor the effectiveness of this promising initiative.

4.6 Safer Custody

- 4.6.1 The Prison's approach to Safer Custody is driven by co-ordinating meetings held each month. These are in two parts, with prisoner representatives from each wing attending the first part. The Board supports this representation as positive feedback can be obtained and any developing problems can be addressed. The diversity of people at these meetings is noted and we recognise the importance of inter-departmental co-operation in achieving a safer environment. All persons present are given the opportunity to raise any matters of concern.
- 4.6.2 Assessment Care in Custody Treatment (ACCT's) documents are sampled at every meeting and these are usually found to be completed to a good standard. It is proposed to increase the ACCT training for staff members.
- 4.6.3 Self Harming and attempted suicide is closely monitored and statistics are produced to determine any trends. Many factors are included to identify vulnerable persons. This will be monitored closely by the Board.
- 4.6.4 There were several Deaths in Custody during this reporting period with the Board being notified of the involvement of the Ombudsman. There remains concern at the level of restraint used for end of life persons and the impact on their families. This is not monitored by the IMB, but has been reported by the Ombudsman.
- 4.6.5 Bullying is an issued raised by the Listeners and this continues to be monitored by the Board.

4.7 Segregation, Care & Supervision, Close Supervision

- 4.7.1 The Segregation Unit and the Close Supervision Centre are both housed on the same wing, in an older part of the prison, where the concerns of the IMB and other inspection bodies about the fabric and the state of repair of the building and the overall environment, have been of considerable concern over a number of years. The Board is now pleased to record that the necessary work to make significant improvements, including a replacement roof, has now been completed (the work was actually signed off as complete just after the conclusion of the reporting year). Maintenance of care and supervision of the prisoners, and public protection, within the Unit and Centre was well achieved through the efforts of prison staff during the repair period, with Segregation Unit prisoners temporarily relocated onto one of the residential wings. The CSC remained in situ, but the work did not impact on the prisoners, and concerns about noise were very limited.
- 4.7.2 As a part of the prison which is visited very regularly by the IMB, the Board is well aware of the considerable efforts of managers and staff to provide at least a satisfactory regime for prisoners in close supervision. Living conditions for those few, and very high risk, prisoners held in the CSC are of particular concern. In order to ensure effective monitoring of this unit the Board has given a couple of members particular responsibility for the oversight of the CSC, with regular contact with management and staff, and attendance at review meetings for prisoners. There are approximately 8 or 9 Exceptional Risk prisoners held in the CSC Unit plus two prisoners who are being assessed for CSC status. Those on assessment are housed in the Segregation Unit adjacent to the CSC unit.
- 4.7.3 Wakefield CSC unit is well run, with a very dedicated staff. The staff, whilst under pressure, work in a positive caring manner bearing in mind the security and nature of the inmates. Most but not all require SO and 6 officers unlock. There are three rooms

dedicated to fitness regimes including a gym, and whilst the prisoners share these facilities they have no direct contact with each other. Food is served individually from a servery. Whilst collecting their food there is a selection of videos which can be borrowed to watch in their cells. The Board witnesses and checks the food being served and the CSC prisoners are given chance to speak and have discussions with the IMB. The IMB also attend the monthly and quarterly reviews.

4.7.4 The Chair of the Board also regularly attends the national CSC and Category A management meetings on behalf of the group of high security prison IMBs.

4.8 Residential Services (including accommodation, food, catering and kitchen)

4.8.1 There are four main wings and one wing for Segregation and CSC. As commented above under “resettlement”, within the reporting period “Wayfinders” and “Enablers” have been introduced on the main wings. Each wing has about eight representatives and these are intended to assist prisoners with managing programmes and sentence progression (Wayfinders), and prison routine and developing relationships and wellbeing (Enablers). Prisoners have welcomed this and several have commented that the wings are acting more as a community. The Board will continue to monitor and support this initiative.

4.8.2 Prisoners are able to choose to eat their meals at tables provided on the landings, although most still eat in their cells (despite the toilet in near proximity).

4.8.3 Games tables provided on the main wings are sadly in need of repair. Delays in repairs have apparently been caused by the need for clearance before repairers can enter.

4.8.4 The kitchen (new in 2013) is working well after initial problems with non functioning of equipment. Efforts are made to reduce wastage by altering the menu and requesting comments from prisoners, and undertaking their own baking (which as resulted in major cost savings accompanied by significant quality improvements). During Benchmarking the original kitchen staff (Prison and Civilian) complement was reduced by 3, but the functioning of the kitchen has not been diminished, and now appears to be very well managed indeed.

4.8.5 Visits take place on Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday. Coffee mornings for visitors are well attended and include Staff members, who explain prison systems and life to visitors. Family days are held each year. Family days for Lifers are rare but the Board is hoping these will be more frequent. Sandwiches and hot pies are served in the visits room and are appreciated by both visitors and prisoners.

5. BOARD STATISTICS

Recommended complement of Board members	20
Number of Board members at start of the reporting period	11
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	8
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	0
Number of members leaving within the reporting period	3
Total number of Board meetings during reporting period	12
Average number of attendance at Board meetings during period	6.1
Number of attendances at meetings other than Board meetings	236
Total number of visits to the prison (including all meetings)	309
Total number of applications received	220
Total number of segregation reviews held	29
Total number of segregation reviews attended	29

APPLICATIONS TO THE BOARD BY NUMBER & SUBJECT

CODE	SUBJECT	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015
A	Accommodation	4	21	11	15
B	Adjudications	3	5	1	12
C	Diversity related	5	7	12	7
D	Education/employment/training	32	29	15	17
E	Family/visits	12	7	8	12
F	Food/kitchen related	5	1	5	3
G	Health related	14	15	37	20
H	Property	33	17	25	38
I	Sentence related	13	7	12	7
J	Staff/prisoner/related	37	21	5	14
K	Transfers	2	11	6	6
L	Miscellaneous	55	30	59	69
Total number of applications		215	171	196	220

APPLICATIONS TO THE BOARD BY % SUBJECT

CODE	SUBJECT	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015
A	Accommodation	1.86	12.28	5.61	6.82
B	Adjudications	1.39	2.92	0.51	5.45
C	Diversity related	2.33	4.09	6.12	3.18
D	Education/employment/training	14.88	16.96	7.65	7.73
E	Family/visits	5.58	4.09	4.08	5.45
F	Food/kitchen related	2.33	0.58	2.55	1.36
G	Health related	6.51	8.77	18.88	9.09
H	Property	15.35	9.94	12.76	17.27
I	Sentence related	6.05	4.09	6.12	3.18
J	Staff/prisoner/related	17.21	12.28	2.55	6.36
K	Transfers	0.93	6.43	3.06	2.73
L	Miscellaneous	25.58	17.54	30.10	31.36
Total number of applications		215	171	196	220

END OF REPORT