



INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD

**HER MAJESTY'S PRISON & YOUNG OFFENDER INSTITUTION
HOLME HOUSE**

STOCKTON-ON-TEES

ANNUAL REPORT

2015

(1 January to 31 December 2015)

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Section 1

Statutory Role of the Independent Monitoring Board

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

1.2. The Board is specifically charged to:

a. 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.

b. Inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom he has delegated authority as it judges appropriate, any concern it has.

c. **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 the Board to carry out these duties effectively its members have right of access to every prisoner and every part of the Prison and also to the Prison's records.

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Section 3

Description of the Prison

1. Holme House is a purpose built Category B local prison holding both adult male prisoners (21 and over) who are either remanded in custody or convicted and a small number of unsentenced young offenders (18 – 21). It was opened in 1992 and has been expanded over the years, the last major expansion being in 2010 with the opening of HB7 with an additional 235 places. It was designated as a resettlement prison under NOMS' Transforming Rehabilitation agenda.
2. Despite being designated a Category B local prison, the highest percentage of prisoners are Category C plus a very small number of Category D prisoners.
3. Certified Normal Accommodation (CNA) is 1036. The operational capacity (OP CAP) has mainly stayed at 1230 in 2015. The population has fluctuated over the course of the year from a low of 1136 in January 2015 to a high of 1223 in November 2015 and an actual roll figure of 1189 on 8th December 2015 with average rolls under 1200 for 11 of the 12 months. The prison has had to lock out on one occasion in 2015. The prison population has been consistently lower than in 2014.
4. The population comprises mostly prisoners remanded or sentenced by courts in the North East region including those serving life sentences and longer Indeterminate Public Protection (IPP) sentences with most of its allocation coming from courts in the area, specifically Teesside Crown Court. However, the Prison has still been receiving prisoners direct from courts in Yorkshire and the North West due to a lack of prison places in those areas.
5. At 8th December 2015, of a prison population of 1189, 957 (80%) of prisoners were sentenced with the remainder either convicted but unsentenced or on remand, awaiting trial.
6. The population breakdown at the end of 2015 showed 92% of the prisoners were White British, 3 % of Black, Asian or mixed ethnicity with the remaining 5% spread across a wide number of nationalities. Of the 80% sentenced prisoners the highest % was in the 4-10 years range (23%), 33% were in prison for drug offences, followed by 25% for crimes of violence. The highest % of prisoners is in the age range 30–39 (34%) with 9% of prisoners (101) over the age of 50, including 14 prisoners over the age of 70. All of these figures are broadly similar to those quoted in the last Annual Report.
7. Holme House is a modern, generally well-maintained, prison, although 23 years down the road since the Prison opened, there is now an increasing need for some updating and refurbishment of some facilities such as the First Night cells and showers on some house blocks and Reception is still awaiting some long standing alterations and improvements. Prisoners are housed in one of seven house blocks according to their designation and status. There is a separate house block (HB3) for Vulnerable Prisoners (VPs) and HB7, the newest house block, has cells especially equipped for wheelchairs. The Prison has excellent facilities for work and education together with a well-stocked library. There is a well-equipped gym which would benefit from some expansion if budgets ever permitted as there was no additional space created when the new house block came on stream.
8. Services within the Prison are provided by the following organisations:

Education, Learning and Skills: *Novus* [originally The Manchester College]

Healthcare: G4S covering nursing and support admin services, Spectrum covering GP and Pharmacy, Burgess and Hyder covering dentistry, Tees, Esk and Wear Valley [TEVW] and RETHINK covering Mental Health and Lifeline covering non clinical substance misuse.

DTVCRC [Durham Tees Valley Community Rehabilitation Company] providing Through the Gate Service [TTG] covering Housing and Debt Management, Finance and Benefit.

Visitors Centre and Family Support: North East Prisons After Care Service (NEPACS)

SAMARITANS: Training of Listeners

Additionally, the Prison works with a wide range of voluntary and community organisations for the benefit of the prisoners in an effort to assist resettlement and reduce reoffending.

Section 4

Executive Summary

4.1. Overall Summary

- a. 2015 has been a much more settled year with a substantial reduction in nationally imposed changes and new initiatives. This, coupled with the bedding in of benchmarking introduced into Holme House in 2013, has led to greater stability and operational resilience than in the two previous years.
- b. The Board note and welcome the continuing reduction in staff sickness over the course of the year. However, in the opinion of the Board, there is still insufficient time and resources available within the prison to enable sufficient, positive engagement with prisoners which would help to mitigate and redress some of the volatile and disruptive behaviour from prisoners which has been more evident this year. It is the view of the Board that current resources are not commensurate with the published aims of resettlement and rehabilitation. The Board has seen many examples when staffing levels have fallen and the prison quickly experiences a tipping point where measures have to be taken at short notice to redeploy staff from their normal duties and /or reduce the regime for prisoners. Various examples of this are outlined in sections **5.3**, **5.5**, **5.6**, **5.7**, **5.8** and **6.1**.
- c. Holme House has embraced the concept more fully this year of prisoners filling mentoring and advisory roles to assist fellow prisoners reflecting the more stringent criteria for enhanced status within the Incentives and Earned Privileges Scheme (IEPS). The Board particularly commend the introduction of Prison Information Workers (PIWs) within nearly all of the house blocks and the part they have played in the reduction in applications and complaints both within the internal prison complaints system and to the IMB.
- d. The prison has continued to operate with a high prison population well above its certified normal occupancy (CNA) of 1036 and this has clearly had a negative impact on the quality of prison life in a number of ways not least in terms of prisoner decency. The Board has continued to raise concerns about a number of aspects of daily living including cell furniture and fittings, personal hygiene and clothing which are outlined in more detail under **5.8**. The issue of Clothing and Laundry was one of the main concerns raised by prisoners in the MQPL [Measuring the Quality of Prison Life] carried out in October 2015.
- e. As with many establishments Holme House has seen a worrying increase in the use of new psychoactive substances (NPS) such as SPICE which does not show up in the internal drug screening tests. Ingestion of these substances has led to some particularly violent incidents putting at risk the safety of staff and other prisoners. Hearsay evidence suggests some prisoners are being forced to take these substances as a form of bullying. Needless to say the consequences of ingesting NPS have taken a terrible toll on some individuals with effects from which they will never recover. The Board would commend those prison officers and healthcare staff who have been put at risk in trying to manage these incidents. In the MQPL report prisoners also commented on the negative impact of drugs causing problems between prisoners and the high level of drug use.
- f. These incidents have also added in part to the greatly increased need this year for escorts, bed watches and constant watches which has further strained already tight resources leading on occasions to a reduced regime particularly at weekends. For more information please refer to section **5.6** and **5.3**.

- g. Healthcare has struggled this year to fill nursing vacancies and has had to backfill with bank and agency staff which is far from ideal in terms of continuity and patient care. For more information please refer to section 5.3. The MQPL report also contained complaints about the delays in seeing a doctor or a dentist.
- h. This year has seen a further erosion of the Governor's autonomy with yet more outsourcing of services through the privatisation of Facilities Management which has produced an unwelcome extra layer of bureaucracy leading to delays in repair work and projects being undertaken in a timely manner. For more information please refer to sections 5.8 and 5.4..
- i. The Governor is now compelled to interact with 26 separate organisations in the delivery of services to prisoners within Holme House through formal contractual arrangements adding substantially to a busy agenda, creating extra lines of communication and the loss of direct control of some services for which the prison will no doubt be held to account. For more information please refer to sections 5.8 and 5.4. Despite this, the Board is impressed with the multi-partnership arrangements which are in place within the prison and which have been secured through the hard work and commitment of both sides.
- j. The booking visits system has been problematic this year, not only due to the fact that it is a dual system [email and phone] but also because the benchmark for the system did not take into account the fact that if there is any kind of shortfall because of staff sickness or annual leave this immediately leads to backlogs. This has been compounded by technical faults in the system resulting in frustrating and stressful delays in getting through to the operators. For more information please refer to section 6.
- k. The Board welcomes the recent improvement in the return of prisoners to their local prisons within the last 12 weeks of release. However, despite the best efforts of staff in OMU [Offender Management Unit] the CPA [Contract Package Areas] arrangements for out of area prisoners is not fully embedded within the prison estate. This is caused partly by a national high prisoner population but it does cause frustration and some distress to prisoners who feel abandoned by the system.
- l. Given all of these challenges the Governor, the management team , staff and partner organisations have all pulled together to minimise the effects on prisoners and prison life and to maintain a safe, secure and stable environment reflected in some positives highlighted below :
- The introduction of Prisoner Information Workers on most of the houseblocks.
 - The successful embedding of the Through The Gate Service.
 - The successful outcome of the contract with AEB and the award of a further contract.
 - The Amber / Green rating for the Safer Custody Audit.
 - The Green rating for the IOCCO audit.
 - The Amber / Green rating for the Security Audit.
 - An award to the Foreign National Coordinator for Holme House at the North East Prison Officer of the Year Event.
 - The presentation of long service awards to a number of officers.

Particular Issues Requiring a Response

4.2 From the Minister/NOMS

- a. This is the third year that the Board has raised concerns about staffing levels with particular concerns this year about the staffing of the prison at night and the need to staff bed watches and constant watches. This has directly impacted on the ability of the prison to meet the needs of the prisoners and as this report shows, staffing levels have had a detrimental effect in many areas of the prison. **Is the Minister able to provide any indication that the governors will have more autonomy in the way they run their own establishments and that they will have more control over staffing numbers and staff allocation?**
- b. 2015 has seen more core functions and services being contracted out eg new providers in Healthcare, Resettlement and Facilities Management. The need to discuss and understand the terms of the contracts has been time consuming and disruptive. The handover has not always been smooth and trouble free and has led to delays in the delivery of services. **Is the Minister able to say whether there is any imminent intent to offer up any further services for delivery by external providers given the Board's perception of the difficulties this can cause?**
- c. **Given the number of service delivery contracts that now exist within establishments who has responsibility for the management and compliance monitoring of these contracts?**
- d. There are major problems with the booking of visits. **Can the system be upgraded to incorporate a queuing message so that callers can decide at busy times whether to hold or ring back?**
- e. The Board is particularly concerned about the increasing use of NPS by prisoners and the unpredictable and often violent effects on prisoners' behaviour. We welcome the new Psychoactive Substances Act which will come into force on the 6th April 2016 and the action already taken by the prison to change the IEP policy to zero tolerance for those prisoners appearing to be under the influence of drink and / or drugs. **When will guidance be issued on how to treat staff and prisoners suffering from the secondary effects of these substances particularly in the case of the latter if employed in a workshop environment?**
- f. **In relation to recent announcements about greater autonomy for governors in the running of their establishments, can the Minister give us an indication of what this might mean?**
- g. Towards the end of 2015 the inpatient ward had a number of prisoners with severe mental health issues, most of whom had been assessed and were waiting for a bed in a secure mental health unit. At one point in December 50% of the beds available were filled by prisoners with mental health issues. This has been an ongoing problem and it is compounded by staffing issues and the lack of medical staff with mental health training. **Taking into account the growing numbers of prisoners with mental health issues, what future plans does the Minister have to deal with this problem?**

4.3 From the Governor

Issues identified by the Board in the course of monitoring visits are raised in writing in a monthly report to the Governor who provides a written response, setting out actions for change or improvement as appropriate, for discussion at the monthly board meeting. This approach means that there are few issues in this report which require a response from the Governor. The Board greatly appreciates these responses.

The main issues outstanding where action is currently in hand are:

- a] To continue to implement the Decency Charter – with specific reference to the section “Living Conditions” which covers the following:

Cell furnishings including provision of privacy curtains or suitable alternatives

Provision of sufficient clothing, towels and bedding of a good quality to prisoners.

- b]. Improvements to the environment in Reception

c]. To continue to develop the role of Prison Information Workers [PIWs] including support to facilitate the prompt return of prisoner applications.

d]. To ensure that PCC meetings [Prisoner Consultation Committees] are held regularly and that there is a consistent approach across all houseblocks.

Also, the Board was advised by the Minister last year that there would be a local review of the arrangements for booking visits which did not appear to happen. This remains an area of concern and the Board feels that improvements are needed.

4.4 Previous Year's Concerns.

- a. Staffing levels were a cause of great concern in 2014. This continues to be the case and it is clear that an unexpected incident eg the need for a constant watch or unexpected staff absence can easily tip the balance and lead to reductions in the regime and staff feeling under severe pressure. Although there have been no further cuts in staff numbers in 2015, other pressures easily impact on the current staffing levels. This leads to frustration on behalf of prisoners and staff who feel that they cannot do their job properly and meet the needs of prisoners. The Board continue to remain concerned about staffing levels and how that impacts on all aspects of prison life and regimes as highlighted in the overall summary and at many points in this report. The Board notes the Minister's response but does not feel that the prison has experienced “the full benefits of benchmarking”. As the Minister indicated in his response detached duty has continued in 2105 but the numbers of officers involved has been fewer. The Board welcomes this.
- b. The outsourcing of more core functions has continued in 2015. This lack of autonomy was and still is a major cause of concern.
- c. The Board was concerned about the number of service delivery contracts that existed at Holme House and asked who has responsibility for the management and compliance of these contracts. In the absence of a clear response this question is restated this year.

- d. Concern was expressed that PMU should give greater consideration in future to categories of prisoners allocated to Holme House to ensure that they match available spaces and / or the prison's resettlement designation. In his response the Minister said that "Action will be taken to make sure that offenders are transferred to a prison within their Contract Package Area for rehabilitation services so that they can receive continuity of service from the same providers as they move from custody into the community." There has been an improvement in 2105 but some prisoners are not returned in the time frame. The system has not been fully embedded.
- e. The Board asked if there could be a local number to book visits and if the system could be upgraded to make it more user friendly. This is an ongoing problem in 2015. The Minister mentioned a local review to establish the most cost effective and efficient way of delivering this service. This has not taken place to date and has been raised as an issue with the Governor.
- f. In October 2014 42% of all prisoners in the North East prison estate who were in receipt of methadone prescribing were located in Holme House due in part to caps imposed by other prisons on the numbers of prisoners they will take in this category. The Board asked that consideration be given to the lifting of arbitrary caps across the prison estate to create a level playing field and to equalise the burden borne by Holme House. In his response the Minister indicated that restructuring at HMP Northumberland will "help reduce the number of prisoners being received at Holme House who require support through the provision of methadone". There have been considerable changes throughout all prisons within the North East with providers working under the same contract for "health and justice care for prisoners". The Board welcomes the changes in HMP Northumberland and the reduction in the number of prisoners in Holme House who are prescribed methadone and we also welcome the increase in the number of prisoners reducing and completing a methadone reduction plan.

4.5 Overall Judgement.

In summary, the Board feels that Holme House is a well run establishment which has the safety, security and well being of the prisoners at heart, although it has fallen short on some aspects of the latter this year. The Governor is aware of these issues but has not always been successful in bringing about the changes that are needed. There are some mitigating circumstances eg financial restraints, staffing restraints and in the second half of 2015 temporary changes in the responsibilities of the SMT [Senior Management Team].

The Board does appreciate the efforts made by staff and partners to work together and do their very best for the prisoners. The Board also acknowledges that the SMT has a clear set of Development Objectives agreed with NOMS Commissioners which also incorporate a number of the Board's concerns. Actions are in hand and we will continue to monitor the success of their implementation.

The Board is grateful to the Governor, her Senior Management team and all the staff and partner organisations for their openness, accessibility and support during the reporting year and would wish to commend everybody for all they have achieved in yet another challenging year.

Section 5

5.1 Equality and Inclusion

a. Holme House takes issues relating to equality and diversity very seriously. The Single Equality and Diversity Action team (SEDAT) meet every two months (the meeting is part of the Safer Prison meeting which includes input from safer custody).

b. Every wing in the prison aims to have a prisoner who operates as an Equality Champion (in December 2015 there were 15 Equality Champions with HB5 waiting for a replacement Champion following release of the previous Champion). Although this is an unpaid role, prisoners receive recognition in the rates of pay they receive for their other work through the prison IEPS [Incentives and Earned Privileges] system. The Equality Champions meet every 4 weeks to discuss issues and two of them attend the Safer Prison main meeting to raise any issues there. As part of their role, the Equality Champions often assist the disabled/older prisoners with personal care in line with PSI 15/2015 Adult social care.

c. A Safety and Equality Action Plan is in place and is reviewed quarterly.

d. Data is lifted directly from C-Nomis. An equality data set is released every month. The Diversity Incident Report Form (DIRF) system shows the prison has received 27 DIRF's this year compared to 30 in 2014, and 40 in 2013. 22 DIRFs in 2015 were related to race, an increase of 5 from 2014; 2 in relation to sexual orientation (1 in 2014); 2 in relation to religion or belief (1 in 2014) and 1 in relation to Disability (0 in 2014).

e. The major challenges facing the SEDAT team are in the areas of disabled and older prisoners (there is a large overlap between these two groups). Of the 218 prisoners reporting a disability, 196 do not require assistance. 20 prisoners have Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs), and 7 have reasonable adjustments. There are currently 68 prisoners over 55 years of age a significant increase from the 37 in 2014; the majority, 22 were 60>69, with 2 over 80 years. At the time of the Report there were 4 on HB1, 43 on HB3, 2 on HB4, 3 on HB5, 3 on HB6, 8 on HB7 and 4 in Healthcare and 1 in SEG. The accommodation of prisoners who need assistance is not always suitable. House Block 7, the newest House block, has two adapted cells with en-suite accessible showers. There is a lift and the servery is on the same level as the lower wing. The area for association is well fitted out with seating. However, the majority of older and disabled prisoners are VPs and continue to be housed on an older house block (HB3), with no lift, no ramp or stair lift to allow easy access to the servery and education and no adapted showers. The 2 association areas for older prisoners on HB3 have both been fitted with high back chairs. Some improvements have been made to individual cells- such as fitting of grab rails and special beds. Older prisoners are now unlocked during the day but the lack of meaningful activity has been raised as an issue by the equality reps. The education on offer, leading as it does to qualifications, is not always appropriate.

f. During the year meetings have been held with outside agencies to look into the provision of social care for some of the older prisoners by these agencies, such as occupational therapy. Assessments by the Local Authority staff are in line with those in the Community. Currently, 2 prisoners have been identified as in need of social care and are in Healthcare. 5 prisoners have been issued equipment on HB3.

g. There are 49 Foreign Nationals currently held at Holme House, an increase of 10 from 2014. 30 remain unsentenced, 14 are sentenced and 5 are over sentence, held on IS.91. Yet again, this remains a major concern of the Board. Whilst appreciating the difficulties facing (UK Border Agency (UKBA) in either finding places at Detention Centres

or dealing with the paperwork required by embassies to facilitate repatriation, there is no doubt that the situation is undesirable. Prisoners over tariff often become very distressed, placing demands on the staff and the prison support systems. The Board again commends the work done by the Foreign National Clerk with these prisoners in keeping them fully informed and in trying to move things on as quickly as possible.

h. The 20 Ex-Services veterans currently at Holme House are generally well supported, with the Royal British Legion being involved in this support.

i. Focus groups of prisoners with specific concerns meet regularly, often with specialist external agencies

- Disability with Disability North
- LGBT with Hart Gables
- Older people (OPAL) with Age UK
- Veterans in Custody with ACTES

However there is presently no focus group for Young Offenders.

Nor has the focus group for Travellers got off the ground as no prisoners from this community have been prepared to attend the group to meet and discuss issues. However there is ongoing work with SPARC (Traveller's Charity)

j. The Chaplaincy Team continue to provide an invaluable service to prisoners and are always visible and accessible within the prison. Chaplains are available for most religions and in addition to providing religious services within the chapel they also run and facilitate chaplaincy groups which are well attended. The Christmas carol services are particularly enjoyable and IMB members are invited to attend these and other religious celebrations. There is now an embryonic Prison Visitors scheme in place which the Board hopes can be developed in the coming year.

k. Overall, the prison works hard to address issues relating to equality and diversity, but as with other functions activity is determined by the limited resources available.

5.2 Education, Learning and Skills

a. The provision at Holme House is delivered by NOVUS (which is the offender learning arm of The Manchester College, TMC) under the fifth year of the Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) 4 contract. The mission for NOVUS is to improve lives and economic success through learning and skills.

b. When prisoners first arrive at Holme House their English and maths skills are assessed by NOVUS staff, unless they have a previous score less than six months old. They are given attainment scores using the nationally recognised parameters. These scores are used by the Career Service (operated by the *National Careers Service*) when giving advice and guidance to prisoners as to their future work and training options.

c. A comprehensive Learning, Skills and Employment prospectus is given to all prisoners on induction listing all the options for work and education available at HMP & YOI Holme House. There are eighteen education and training courses, leading to NVQ level 2 or other nationally recognised qualifications provided. The scope of the courses and work based training on offer in the Prison is chosen using the latest local labour market information gathered from a wide range of

partner organisations. The virtual campus computer system runs “live” job searches and has employability information for end of sentence prisoners.

d. There were 6887 educational modules started during the 2014-2015 academic year with an 92% success rate (6% increase on 2013-14). The content of each module is designed to be transferable so the training can continue at another prison or at local community colleges on release. There are 119 full-time education places and over 70 part-time places in mornings and over 50 part-time places in afternoons in the Education department plus in-work training at the relevant workshops. The effort to ensure functional skills are embedded in the workshops has continued. Embedded delivery of Functional Skills English and maths is provided in the prison Kitchen and Industries as well as Novus Bistro and Bistro Kitchen, Construction programmes (Bricklaying, Fitted Interiors, Renewable Energy and Painting & Decorating. There are still plans to develop The Business Centre to offer practical work experience in a range of business administration, enterprise, customer service and IT tasks for internal customers.

e. NOVUS completed a detailed Self Assessment Review of the 2014 -2015 academic year. It awarded a one for the Quality of Learning and Skills [including the quality of teaching, behaviour and assessment], Personal Development and Behaviours and Effectiveness of Leadership and Management of Learning and Skills. Overall Effectiveness of the provision was given a two. The IMB is pleased to see that NOVUS achieved a 92% success rate against possible achievers less early leavers due to prison requirements. This represents a 6% increase on 2013 – 2014.

f. The Library

a. Stockton on Tees Borough Council provides the library provision at HMP Holme House funded by NOMS. The library is warm and welcoming with a large range of books and knowledgeable staff. The changes made to the opening hours last year remain in place. There is no provision on Saturdays but the library stays open late on Mondays and Wednesdays for full time working prisoners.

b. Unfortunately the fall in numbers seen in 2012-13 after staffing changes has still not yet been fully reversed even though the library is open on the two evenings mentioned above.

c. There remain a number of reasons for this that includes:

For two years there has been no provision within staffing levels for dedicated movement officer. All attendance at the library relies on house block officers unlocking prisoners who are received on free-flow by the Engagement Centre patrol officers.

d. Prisoners are introduced to the library’s services during their prison induction however this is now held in the prison gym and not in the library, so books cannot be suggested or taken out on a trial basis.

e. On a more positive note, later opening times for full time working prisoners are proving successful especially when clashes with gym sessions are avoided. As long as the time is not ‘squeezed’ by roll call and late tea.

f. The introduction of Prison Information Workers and other changes in library procedure has led to a halving of the numbers of books lost.

g. There is provision in the new work profiles as from Feb 2016 for the reintroduction of a dedicated officer in the evenings and also an increase in officers in the house blocks. Hopefully these changes will boost numbers

5.3 Healthcare and Mental Health

New contracts for Healthcare Services were awarded in April 2015.

The new providers are:-

Primary Healthcare	G4S
Doctors and Pharmacy	Spectrum
Dentist	Burgess and Hyder
Mental Health	TEVW and Rethink
Non clinical DART	Lifeline

Within HMP Holme House, providers are overseen by two forums which meet monthly. The Local Delivery Board, chaired by the Number 1 Governor looks at the delivery of services and the Recovery Orientated Treatment System, known as ROTS.

G4S

1 Early in 2015, the Healthcare team, under the leadership of the Head of Healthcare, devised a comprehensive exit plan to enable the smooth transition of healthcare services from Care UK to G4S. Healthcare Services strive to deliver a high standard of care and enable services to compare favourably with those in the community. The service focus on the prisoner at all times, with increasingly more complex and challenging issues. Credit must go to all healthcare staff for continuing to successfully deliver services with competency and good humour.

2 Following unsuccessful attempts to install a telephone line to enable prisoners to make their own healthcare appointments, it is now likely that will be installed in 2016.

3 Prison officers, acting as outside escorts to hospitals, has proved extremely problematic in 2015. This was largely due to the new Profiling arrangements within Holme House.

4 The number of prisoners who do not attend booked appointments {DNAs} was very worrying throughout most of the year, ranging from 24.9% - 17.8%. Healthcare staff made great efforts to scrutinise the reasoning behind this and discovered that a large number of prisoners chose to visit the Gym/ work or other activities at this time. New and improved processes have been introduced, and , with the appointment of a team support worker, this has significantly reduced the DNAs in the latter part of the year .Unfortunately, there is still a high number of patient cancellations.

5 In Patients provides a 24 hour nursing facility. There are 16 beds in the department for prisoners with significant clinical difficulties. At the end of 2015, 2 of these beds were occupied by 'social care' prisoners and 6 by patients awaiting secure mental health beds. Please see more evidence of this in the Mental Health Report. Clearly, this compromises prisoners with physical health complaints.

6.E- prescribing came live within the department in the middle of December 2015. Initially, the new system created huge problems but has now started to 'bed in' and staff are now optimistic about its future.

7. Staffing has been problematic throughout 2015 due to significant vacancies within the service. This has necessitated the hiring of bank and agency staff. However, performance has not suffered and patient safety has not been an issue. Credit for this must go to all staff whose hard work has surmounted any difficulties.

8 Applications to the IMB from prisoners, in relation to Healthcare complaints, amounted to 114 out of a total of 685 [16.6%].

Spectrum and Pharmacy

GP sessions, Optician Services and Telemeds have continued to work well over the year.

Dental Services

Initially, Dental Services caused concern, with prisoners having to wait an unreasonable time for appointments. The service provider Burgess and Hyder, introduced a Dental Therapist, in addition to the dentist, who is able to undertake many routine procedures. For twelve weeks, an additional dentist was provided in order to successfully bring the waiting list down.

Smoke free prisons

Planning is underway for the arrival of smoke free prisons and a committee of staff of all grades have created a focus group to put strategies in place for this. The Pharmacy staff facilitate smoking cessation clinics which are very popular with prisoners.

Mental Health

1. Tees, Esk and Wear Valley's (TEWV) contract for Mental Health, was renewed under the new arrangements implemented in April 2015. This is delivered with assistance from staff from the charities RETHINK and MIND.
2. Consultant Psychiatrists provide three sessions per week, following the regional model and the team consists of eleven staff, plus two admin. staff.
3. Placements are provided for students at Teesside University and also via the Royal College of Psychiatry where students attend for approximately six months.
4. Anyone within the prison can make a referral to the Mental Health Team (MHT) and self referrals are accepted. All referrals are triaged within 24 hours, often faster than within the outside community. The Rapid Process Improvement Workshop, helps to streamline and improve efficiency and more timely access to services. Qualified Practitioner caseloads average about twenty to thirty annually, which is a reduction on 2014, and is an indicator of greater efficiency. At present, there are no outstanding referrals, but there remains an increase in the complexity of cases, resulting in more constant watches and self harm issues.
5. Weekend cover is supplemented by the Mental Health Team Manager and 'on call' Psychiatrists.
6. The MIND contract operates where there is an identified need. This usually amounts to 3 sessions a week. The charity RETHINK, has been a valuable addition to the MHT and provides primary care and have started delivering evidence based groups focusing on anxiety and depression. Since the introduction of New Ways of Working, the MHT, together with RETHINK and MIND, has significantly improved the service to prisoners.
7. A new Learning Disability nurse works with the team and provides a shared resource with Deerbolt Young Offenders Institution.
8. AT THE END OF 2015, THERE WERE 5 HOSPITAL REFERRALS AND 1 PENDING ADMISSION, 2 OF WHICH ARE OUT OF AREA [LIVERPOOL AND BLACKBURN], THE REMAINING 4 ARE FOR ADMISSION TO LOCAL HOSPITALS. THERE ARE LIMITED EXTERNAL SECURE HOSPITAL BEDS, THEREFORE A NUMBER OF THESE PATIENTS,[5] ARE CURRENTLY BEING CARED FOR IN 'IN PATIENTS', WHICH CREATES A HUGE CHALLENGE, IN RELATION TO BED MANAGEMENT.
9. New Psychoactive Substances [NPS] eg Legal Highs, such as Spice create huge challenges for Mental Health Services, and of course, for the prison as a whole.

10. IT systems have improved. There is now access to two HMP computers, five System1 computers and one Trust computer. The IT Paris Mental Health System allows 'read only' access to patients' clinical records in the Trust area.

The Board support the provision of more IT to the MHT, to further promote efficiency within the service.

11. The Mental Health Team Manager and his staff are to be commended for the improvement in service and efficiency throughout 2015. They display a positive attitude and enthusiasm for their work.

DART and Drug Strategy.

1 2015 has seen a continued review of all regimes in Home House that affect illegal drug taking. Failed Mandatory Drug Test paperwork is treated robustly and consistently and this has led to fewer delays in the Adjudication process. In 2015 there were 708 MDTs, of which 80 were positive (11.3%)

2. The first line option for opiate addiction, within the prison is methadone, and this report will allude to programmes devised to reduce or eradicate methadone within the prison population.

3. The Non-Clinical DART team working within the prison is commissioned by LIFELINE. A new Non Clinical DART Regional Development Manager enables all prison treatment systems to be audited and so alleviate blockages in the system.

4 DART assesses prisoners on arrival at Holme House within 24 hours, usually within Reception or Houseblock 4. Every prisoner receives a one to one harm reduction programme , which includes advice on the dangers of NPS which has been previously referred to and causes increasing challenges to both prisoners and prison officers.

5 The number of prisoners engaged in treatment with DART services in 2015 was 598, of whom, 288 were in clinical treatment, with a suspended caseload of 206. All cases are reviewed jointly with clinical and non-clinical DART

6 In 2015, Holme House planned a Recovery Orientated Treatment System to support the new prison drug treatment culture. This involves the prison working more closely with prisoners to offer a wide range of treatment options which support them through their recovery by reducing reoffending, creating the potential to be better off financially, strengthen family relationships and have a healthier quality of life. It will be implemented from February 2106.

7 A DART peer mentor programme is now established with peer monitors being appointed throughout the prison. Plans are in place to revise the designation of Houseblocks to assist with the reduction of methadone prescribing. It is pleasing to note that in 2015 there was a 1% reduction in the methadone taking prison population.

8 The Non Clinical DART team run alcohol treatment programmes which continue to work well.

9 Houseblock 6 consists of the Therapeutic Community which is for prisoners who are methadone free and this is supported by Lifeline. In 2015 there were 44 graduates of this programme.

10 There is also a Drug Recovery Wing on Houseblock 6 where a robust methadone reduction programme operates. This is a twelve week programme, and to be accepted, prisoners must have fourteen weeks left to serve and be prescribed 40 mls or less of methadone. The first two cohorts on this programme have graduated, and a further two cohorts of prisoners are part way through their programme. This will continue throughout 2016.

5.4 **Purposeful Activity**

This part of the report deals with the following work centres:-

1. Kitchens
2. The Bistro
3. Woodwork and Soft Furnishing Workshops
4. Laundry
5. Canteen workshop
6. Clothing workshop
7. Gardens.

General comments

1. The Board continues to follow the progress of various aspects of the drive to increase the range and value of work related time for prisoners whilst in prison. As stated in previous reports, the Board fully supports the endeavours of the Minister and the Prison Service in enlarging the opportunities for full time work particularly where such opportunity relates to work which results in an end product which goes to an outside customer. In the view of the Board, this assists:-
 - a). in promoting the acquisition of new skills and pride in the exercise of those skills
 - b). in enabling prisoners to work overtime and earn extra moneys and experience
 - c). (most importantly) in ensuring that the prisoner can appreciate the importance of delivery to the customer at the right time and to the correct quality thus linking "prison work" with the standards required on release.
2. Overall, 2015 has been a good year for purposeful activity. Both instructors and prisoners have met the challenges of the work required of them during the course of the year with great skill. The Board would like to compliment all those involved. During the year 430 prisoners have been placed in employment and 153 have enrolled on vocational qualifications linked to their area of work.

Fortunately the problem highlighted in the report for the year 2014 concerning wage differentials appears to have been resolved.

3. Kitchens
 - a. The kitchens have continued to work effectively providing two main meals a day often to over 1200 prisoners which offer a hot option at each meal. There is a varied menu and the needs of minorities, including vegetarians and prisoners on special diets, are properly addressed. The kitchens have also provided quality food for special occasions such as Christmas Day and Ramadan. On one occasion, the kitchens were able to supply, at the expense of the prisoner, a wedding cake for a prisoner getting married in the Prison.
 - b. The Board is particularly pleased to note that the Food Forum meetings have been much more productive. Meetings are usually chaired by a governor and the contributions of the prisoners have been, in the main, positive and helpful. The kitchens have appreciated this input and have done what it could to meet the suggestions. A member of the IMB always attends these meetings.

- c. There remain areas of concern which added to the pressures on the kitchens to meet expectations. The principal ones are:-
 - i. Equipment breaking down and remaining out of action for lengthy periods of time.
 - ii. Prisoners allocated for daily duty in the kitchens are nominated by AMU. That department will rarely know if the prisoner allocated is unavailable for some perfectly good reason. The consequence is that the kitchen staff really only know how many prisoners are available to work in the kitchens when the shift actually starts. There may be no answer to this conundrum but the Board does think that further consideration should be given to see if some solution could be found.
 - d. During the year under review the duties of the Works Department were transferred to Amey.
4. The Bistro.
- a. This remains a valuable facility and training tool. Those involved with The Bistro are to be congratulated on the quality of service offered.
5. Woodwork and Soft Furnishing workshops.
- a. During the year under review, the workshops have worked on contracts for customers both within and outside the Prison Estate. One large contract for AEB was challenging but very successful and has led to a second contract.
 - b. Towards the end of the year the workshops started a sizeable repeat contract for another outside customer. This is a reflection of what a group of prisoners can do when presented with a suitable challenge. The Board would like to congratulate both trainers and prisoners (not forgetting Prison Industries who negotiated the contract) on a very good year.
 - c. Unfortunately, it has still been impossible to institute a training course in computer design technology.
6. Laundry
- a. The laundry continues to work well although problems of ensuring that adequate supplies of clean kit is available at the right time and place within the Prison have been endemic throughout the year. The Prison has worked hard to try and resolve this but not always with great effect.
 - b. At the end of the year under review, the laundry was only working on one small contract for an outside customer. The main external customer was able to take his work in house again following completion of repairs to the customer's own laundry. Working to the exacting standards required by external clients is valuable.
 - c. The Prison is looking to extend the practice of enabling prisoners wearing their own clothes whilst in prison. This will present the laundry with problems with ensuring an effective system of marking laundry.

7. Canteen workshop.
 - a. This workshop continues to operate under the aegis of DHL and currently puts up the canteen for seven establishments.

 - b. The prisoners working in the workshop and the staff who manage are to be congratulated on the high quality of the work that they do which is exacting requiring a high degree of concentration. This is reflected in the relatively small number of applications received by the Board on the subject.

8. Clothing workshop.
 - a. Because of its relatively isolated location within the Prison, this workshop is not visited as often as it deserves to be.
 - b. The workshop continues to supply the Prison with small items of clothing and towels. The work is done well and efficiently.

9. Gardens.
 - a. This aspect of purposeful activity is sometimes overlooked. However, the high standard of grounds within the Prison is testament to the dedication of instructor and prisoner alike.
 - b. Visiting the poly-tunnels is a rewarding experience. The prisoners speak of the plants they cultivate with genuine enthusiasm.

The IMB commends the Workshop Manager and his team, who, together with prisoners, have achieved some excellent results this year.

5.5 **Resettlement**

1. The resettlement agenda is primarily the responsibility of two governors: Head of Reoffending and Head of Offender Management. Since September the latter has had two Governors in post temporarily.

2. Since June the Reducing Reoffending Strategy Group and the Quality Improvement Group have combined and a Reducing Reoffending Improvement Group [RIGG] now meets bi-monthly. This meeting is attended by key people who cover accommodation, education, training and employment, mental and physical health, finance, benefit and debt, drugs and alcohol, children and families and attitudes, thinking and behaviour. Each pathway has a designated lead person. IMB attend as observers. Each meeting focuses on the Action Plan which is RAG rated and is updated by each Pathway Lead. It is a very useful forum where key people share information and developments and are able to get an overview and on occasion offer help and support from their own particular area. There are also bi-monthly Informal Partnership Meetings which discuss general operation issues and involves the same membership as the RIGG meetings but also involves any outside agencies who are working within the prison eg the DWP[Department for Work and

Pensions] and local charities. These two meetings create the forum for a more proactive and prisoner focused approach and is welcomed by the IMB.

3. There is a Reducing Reoffending Policy which has an Action Plan which is closely aligned to the RIGG Action Plan. There is also a Pre –Release Strategy which was adopted in November in 2015 and the Employability Strategy was reviewed in December 2015 and will be signed off by SMT [Senior Management Team] in January 2016. The Head of Reoffending is keen to continue the focus on the Informed Prisoner which underpins the prison's role as a resettlement prison. He has therefore included a three year development plan starting in 2016 in the Reducing Reoffending Strategy.
4. The Head of Reoffending welcomed the arrival of the CRC [Community Rehabilitation Company] in 2015 and values their good working relationship and the support they provide for prisoners. There have also been notable successes in the workshops eg a major commercial contract with AEB to provide furniture for 160 student bedrooms, The tight deadlines and high expectations of the quality of work meant that this was a useful and realistic learning experience for both prisoners and staff. The success of this contract has lead to another important contract being awarded to Holme House. The prison has also developed good relations with local public sector industries and this will hopefully lead to employment opportunities for prisoners on release, in line with the Regional Business Strategy.
5. The biggest challenges in 2015 have been the benchmark for Programmes and the problem of staffing and running the programmes. It has also been difficult to link OMU [Offender Management Unit] into the Resettlement process but some progress has been made eg programmes staff have provided some training for Offender Supervisors and probation staff working in PPU [Public Protection Unit] about the programmes on offer. The planning of the arrival of the CRC and their role in the resettlement process was demanding but the CRC is becoming embedded in the process.

Engagement Centre

1. First night assessments of new prisoners take place in Reception and the relevant information eg about risk assessments of self harm and cell sharing is passed to HB4 [First Night Centre – C Wing]. A first night officer is detailed to be on C Wing in the mornings and accompanies prisoners from Reception to HB4 in the afternoons. Initial induction takes place in the Engagement Centre on Tuesdays to Thursdays and on HB4 on Fridays to Sundays. The latter are presented by an Induction Champion, a prisoner who has undertaken training for the role. Prisoners then move as quickly as possible to HB1 When the prison population is high this has often delayed movement of prisoners.
2. Prisoners attend the Engagement Centre on a maximum of three mornings during their first two weeks at Holme House. The resettlement needs of prisoners are identified during these visits. Four trained peer mentors carry out a detailed needs assessment which identifies a wide range of areas needing support. They also work to raise awareness of important prison policies and procedures i.e IEP and the importance of attending learning , skills and employment [LSE] activity, They are fully aware of their duty of care, the need to keep information secure and the need to share information with other agencies within the prison. The mentors are required to complete the NCFE level two

qualification in Mentoring delivered by NOVUS. [NOVUS are a branch of the Learning, Training and Employment Enterprise, alongside the Manchester College]. Each prisoner is given an induction pack which includes an Information Booklet. This is currently being updated.

3. Prisoners are told about LSE opportunities. Their English and Maths levels are assessed by Novus and they are seen by a National Careers Service [NCS] Advisor. They also have a gym and library induction. Information about prisoners is shared with NOVUS, DART, NEPACS, and the NCS. During the induction process prisoners are asked if they have a current bank account. If they don't, their name is passed onto the Activity Management Unit [AMU] where they are added to a database and at the relevant time invited to a bank account opening session, Supported by peer mentors they complete the application process.
4. The prison does recognise that short term prisoners are sometimes released before support can be given. It is hoped that closer working practices and the wider use of the Engagement Centre by CRC staff and OMU staff will address this problem in 2016. The continued development of the Engagement Centre in 2015, building on the good work done in 2104, has been affected considerably by the involvement of the CRC since May 2015 and by the Transforming Rehabilitation agenda but the IMB recognises the that the ongoing development of the Centre is a priority in 2016.

Durham Tees Valley Community Rehabilitation Company [DTVCRC]

1. DTVCRC started the delivery of the TTG Services at Home House on the 1st May 2015 but staff vetting problems meant that the full team was not in place until September. The team did face initial teething problems but an imaginative use of rotas and the expertise of the staff, who all have a Probation Service background, helped to alleviate the situation. The team has made efforts to advertise their role to the staff, including a presentation at a full staff meeting, and the TTG Manager attends the bi-monthly RRIG and Partnership meetings, NEPACS meetings within the prison and the Local Offender Partnership in the community. Good communication has been developed with OMU and Offender Supervisors eg concerning HDC [Home Detention Curfew] releases.
2. All prisoners are seen on arrival, except transferred prisoners, and also in the last 12 weeks of their sentence. 95% of prisoners have to be seen within 5 days of the initial screening and the Basic Custody Screening Tool Part 2 has to be completed. The team has regularly exceeded these targets. TTG officers create a Resettlement Plan for each prisoner which feeds into the Initial Sentence Plan following release. Although the CRC is not contracted to see prisoners during their sentence, if they are contacted and have the capacity they do intervene and see them, often signposting prisoners to support within the prison.
3. The CRC shares information about prisoners using CNOMIS and collates information for prisoners on their release eg giving each prisoner a list of meetings, contacts etc. Support staff work closely with the TTG officers to meet the needs which have been identified and they provide interventions linked to the mandatory contracted areas to assist resettlement. Feedback has been very positive, for example "when in prison I expected to get out and go

to housing myself but the TTG support worker got me a place straight away and took me to a food bank. I got more help than I expected.”

4. Prisoners are seen on the day of release in the NEPACS Visitors Centre for their first appointment and the support staff are present to deal with any changes in circumstances or transport prisoners to their accommodation.
5. The TTG Manager is constantly looking to improve the quality of the services they provide and has a clear vision of improvements she would like to see in 2016 including a more rigorous use of the Engagement Centre and introducing a resettlement module for some prisoners.

Offender Management Unit [OMU]

1. Again, it has been a particularly challenging year for OMU. and continues to be one of the functions within Holme House for which the Board has received a disproportionately high no of applications from prisoners experiencing problems and delays (101 of 685 = 14.7%). The work load of the OMU has continued to increase this year. For example, the PPU has had to monitor an increase in harassment and child safeguarding incidents and there was a significant increase between May to June. In December they had 333 prisoners who were assessed as being high risk of harm, compared to 299 in May.
2. The Band 4 Offender Supervisors [OS] within OMU continue to have a primary or secondary role and this has allowed primary officers to have a larger share of the prisoner workload. This has been an improvement on the situation in 2014 where the operating model was hard to manage. It enables officers to focus more on this role and provides more consistency. However It has not always been possible at times to allocate prisoners to the same named OS nor for prisoners to have ready access to their OS. There have been many occasions this year when it has been difficult for IMB members to find anybody to deal with an application.
3. Throughout the year there have been staffing problems due to operational cross deployment to other roles and high levels of sickness. In the second half of 2015 sickness levels have declined but OMU has suffered badly from redeployment of staff, sometimes at very short notice. This leads to frustration on the part of the officers and of prisoners.

Offender Assessment System [OASys]

1. There has been a backlog of OASys assessments throughout 2015 attributable to staff shortages or staff redeployment. Payment Plus [eight volunteers] has been used to reduce the backlog in OASys but in December 2015 there was a backlog of 77 OASys assessments. There has been some Payment Plus in the period to assist in reducing the backlog but this has now been withdrawn, so the Head of OMU does not expect the figure to fall until the new financial year in 2016. The IMB does welcome the downward trend and notes the efforts of Offender Supervisors to deal with the numbers. The IMB will continue to monitor the situation in 2016.

Observation, Classification and Allocations [OCA]

1. This function has continued to sustain a high workload. 2015 has not seen as much pressure from the allocation of overcrowding drafts which were a feature of 2014 but other factors eg closure or refurbishment of other prisons and the much reduced OPPCAP of a Yorkshire prison has created similar pressures. Holme House relies very much on the goodwill of local North East prisons to relocate prisoners to a prison nearer to their home and the OCA values their good working relationship. It is regrettable that the policies of other prisons do not always facilitate such prisoner transfers. The OCA has noticed a decrease in out of area transfer requests in 2015. There is currently no backlog in categorisation requests.
2. Staffing has been problematic as the OCA officer is often redeployed – sometimes at very short notice – to other areas of the prison. This has an obvious impact on his work. The Head of OMU is training another non –operational member of staff within the OCA role to ensure that there is a sustainable member of staff available Monday to Friday.

Home Detention Curfew [HDC]

1. There was a concern raised in the 2014 report about the prisoner experience of HDC applications. In 2015 there has been a slight reduction in the numbers of HDC applications, Some delays have been caused by information not being passed on the Holme House when prisoners are transferred and it has proved quicker to start the process again from scratch. Clear reminders are sent to prisoners explaining the process, timescale and the information needed. The IMB now has regular monthly updates in the NAP on the number of applications received, approved and released on time plus reasons given why the prisoners' release is delayed.

Offender Behaviour Programmes

1. The Programmes Team has had staffing issues in 2015 and has lost one Thinking Skills Programme [TSP] Manager, two facilitators, and a part time admin assistant. In addition, two members of staff have left for promotion elsewhere. However there will be an additional Band 4 Profiles Officer appointed early in 2016. Consequently one member of staff has taken over a dual management role for TSP and Resolve. There has also been a reduction in the number of facilitators from 6 facilitators delivering two programmes to just three facilitators and one Treatment Manager.
2. In 2015 OBP delivered five TSP programmes and have had a 100% success rate over the last three years with 150 successful completions. They have delivered two Healthy Relationship Programmes [HRP] and one ongoing Self Change programme [SCP]. In addition there have been two new programmes – two completed Resolve programmes and the Healthy Sex Programme [HSP]. The IMB recognises the hard work which has gone into the preparation and delivery of these new courses
3. All of the programmes are made available to prisoners from other prisons and prisoners transferred to Holme House make up approximately 50% of the numbers

enrolled. This has wider implications for the management of the prison eg housing prisoners during the length of the programme and then transferring them back to their original prison. But the main problem has been a small but significant number of prisoners who have been recommended by other prisons but were judged to be not suitable for the programme on arrival.

4. Members of the team do try to visit and assess prisoners before they are transferred but this is not always possible. However in late 2015 Holme House joined a Multi Disciplinary Review Team which covers local prisons and will meet to discuss the suitability of prisoners for the programmes. Staff from OCA and Security are also represented at these meetings.
5. In 2015 a self audit was carried out by the Programmes Manager and treatment managers and was sent to OSIG audit department. The Programmes Manager expects no problems when he receives the feedback .He feels that the team is ready and prepared for the Benchmarking which comes into effect in April 2106.They feel confident that they can ensure that all programmes are delivered as they reached the BM staffing level in December 2015.
6. The backlog in OAYSys assessments has impacted on the work of programmes , particularly as prisoners are not being referred onto a programme as part of their sentence planning. The Programmes Manager acknowledges that this is due to pressure of work within OMU but at times his staff have had to go through the OAYSys documents and identify prisoners for the TSP programme. More training is needed to enable Offender Supervisors to make informed referrals to SCP, HRP and Resolve programmes.
7. Home House has joined a newly formed OBP Alliance Group at the regional level to share good practice and possibly staff with Low Newton and Deerbolt.
8. The IMB does recognise and appreciate the huge efforts made to ensure that prisoners do not reoffend when they are released. We also are very aware that the many staff who are involved in reducing reoffending are constantly striving to improve the services for prisoners. The range and complexity of the Reducing Reoffending Action Plan shows the commitment of various groups within the prison and the progress made. For example in November 2015 a Motivational Programme called Homeward Bound was developed and piloted. Physical Education instructors delivered this programme which was introduced to encourage prisoners to have a positive outlook to their future, looking specifically at their resettlement needs. The programme gained positive feedback and offered those prisoners who attended the opportunity to link with internal and external agencies through attendance at a community marketplace session. It is now delivered three days per week within the gym to those within the last 12 weeks of their sentence. Prisoners who are likely to be granted HDC, parole or have sentences less than 3 months are included in this allocation. This is a good example of staff from OMU, OBP and DTVCRC working together for the benefit of the prisoners.

5.6 Safer Custody

1. A Safety and Equality meeting is held bi-monthly, chaired by the Deputy Governor, with representatives from all relevant functions including Listeners. IMB attend as observers.
2. This year has seen a significant and productive addition to the raft of reports produced for this meeting, namely the Violence Diagnostic Tool which has been particularly helpful in the development of violence reduction strategies to accommodate the findings of local data and intelligence.
3. The tool has already been the driver for a number of actions to date including:
 - *The identification of violent hotspots
 - *Display of HOT SPOT posters in those areas identified as hot spot
 - *Extra body worn cameras allocated to staff working in hot spot areas (Holme House is part of the body worn cameras project introduced into the prison in June this year)
 - *The award of more severe punishments where appropriate to prisoners who commit acts of violence in hot spot areas
 - *A bid for CCTV on all exercise yards.
4. This approach is very much driven by the increase in incidents of violence this year. The stability level for the prison was increased from low to medium mid- year to reflect this and other indicators. The tables below indicate comparative figures for 2014 and 2015:

Violence Related Incidents:

Incident Totals 2014	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Monthly Incidents	7	14	16	14	8	15	22	11	15	12	4	5
Violence in Red	11	11	11	15	16	10	12	9	12	17	11	24
Total for year	18	43	70	99	123	148	182	202	229	248	263	292
Average population	1184	1205	1201	1189	1167	1203	1204	1198	1203	1209	1183	1207
% of population	1.52%	2.07%	2.08%	2.43%	2.05%	1.99%	1.99%	1.66%	2.24%	2.39%	1.26%	2.04%

Incident Totals 2015	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total during month at H/House Violence in Red	14 11	7 19	13 15	13 15	13 22	21 25	19 39	19 43	19 24	13 37	13 16	14 30
Running total for year	25	51	79	107	138	184	242	304	347	397	426	470
Average population	1151	1136	1161	1163	1170	1184	1167	1146	1150	1198	1123	1189
% of population	2.17%	2.28%	2.41%	2.41%	2.99%	3.88%	4.97%	5.41%	3.74%	4.17%	1.69%	3.70%

- As the tables indicate there has been a very significant increase in violent -related incidents with 470 in 2015 against 292 in 2014, a 60% increase. Although this is due in part to better reporting it is also more reflective of a more violent and disruptive element within the prison population.

Prisoner on prisoner assaults have risen exponentially borne out of debt, bullying and gang /drug issues . NPS (Spice) is a real concern in Holme House, as in many other establishments, causing some particularly violent incidents and putting at risk the safety of officers and nursing staff, as prisoners under the influence of this legal high are particularly dangerous and refractory.

- There have been 20 staff assaults. The prison has a national MOU with the police and CPS and is working with the police locally to ensure any assault on staff leads to a criminal charge should the individual officer so wish.
- Additionally, the prison has adopted a zero tolerance policy towards violence reflected in a number of ways including the use of the IEPS where a single incident of violence will almost always trigger downgrading to basic. Use of this measure has increased incrementally and is monitored monthly by Residence Heads to ensure a consistent approach. In the 12 months ending December 15th. 264 prisoners had been placed on basic of which 175 were for incidents relating to violence.
- A Governor has been tasked with introducing Perpetrator Intervention Plans and Victim Support Plans with the objective of better managing the consequences of violent incidents whilst offering greater support to victims. **The Board will monitor this development with interest.**
- The Safer Custody Team is staffed with two Band 3 officers and administrative support reporting directly to the Head of Safer Custody. As with most functions this year these officers have frequently been cross deployed on other duties as tight staff resources across the prison have been exacerbated by the very high volume of escorts , bed watches and constant watches stemming from a constantly high prison population and some very difficult and disturbed prisoners. Because of this there has tended to be a more reactive approach to prisoner welfare with less involvement from the Safer Custody officers in all

ACCT cases for example and a dilution in their knowledge of individual prisoners. Despite this they have continued to offer support to the most vulnerable. **The Board would hope that under the new profiles “normal service “ can be resumed and that once again the officers can give their undivided attention to those prisoners in greatest need.**

10. With regard to ACCTs the tables below provides comparative information on the no. of ACCTs opened in 2014 and 2015

ACCT Totals 2014	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total opened during month at H/House	48	33	28	44	44	45	57	42	55	47	52	40
Running total for year	48	82	110	154	198	243	300	342	397	444	496	536
Average population	1184	1205	1201	1189	1167	1203	1204	1198	1203	1209	1183	1207
% of population on an ACCT	4.1%	2.8%	2.3%	3.7%	3.8%	3.7%	4.9%	3.5%	4.6%	3.8%	4.4%	3.3%

ACCT Totals 2015	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total opened during month at H/House	37	44	50	55	55	60	59	71	50	52	65	45
Running total for year	37	81	131	186	241	301	360	431	481	533	598	643
Average population	1151	1136	1165	1163	1170	1184	1167	1146	1150	1198	1223	1189
% of population on an ACCT	3.2%	3.9%	4.29%	4.72%	4.70%	5.07%	5.05%	6.19%	4.34%	4.84%	5.31%	3.78%

11. The no. of ACCTs opened has increased significantly this year with 643 opened against 536 in 2014 an increase of 20%. This has added greatly to the pressure on already tight staffing resources both in terms of reviews and the additional observations. There have also been some really difficult and challenging prisoners on ACCTs for whom prison is not the most appropriate place. Staff do their very best to look after and care for them so it was gratifying to hear that a prisoner who had seriously self- harmed on numerous

occasions whilst in Holme House had written to the Governor at release to thank staff for saving his life.

12. The audit did recognise some training needs in ACCT Awareness and documentation which are/have been addressed. However, there is still an ongoing issue about attendees at ACCT reviews and the need for a multi -disciplinary approach. The sheer volume of ACCTs opened this year and the ad hoc timing of reviews make it almost impossible for all relevant parties to attend. The Head of Safer Custody is currently exploring ways to combat this.
13. There have been 40 constant watches this year which have also greatly added to staffing pressures . Again nursing, discipline staff and governors have had to deal with some very troubled prisoners and the Board would commend the care and compassion that is shown them in very difficult and trying circumstances.
14. On a positive note Reception staff have now been issued with a checklist of risk factors to aid early and immediate identification of vulnerable prisoners following a concern raised in a PPO Report.
15. The Board would commend the work that is done in Holme House by the Samaritans, supported by Safer Custody, in the identification and training of listeners and their ongoing support via their regular meetings. There are currently 21 trained listeners with more in the pipeline providing an invaluable service to their fellow prisoners.
16. There have been 4 deaths in custody during 2015 of which 3 appear to be attributable to natural causes(although inquests are outstanding for 2 of them .) Final or interim PPO reports have been received and any recommendations are incorporated into a PPO Action Plan. Given previous PPO criticism about inappropriate use of restraints when taking ill prisoners to outside hospital it was particularly pleasing to note that in one of these three cases the PPO applauded a governor's decision not to restrain a very ill prisoner.
17. A Safer Custody Audit took place in 2015 and it is very much to the credit of the prison and all those involved in ensuring the safety and well- being of prisoners and staff that a rating of Amber Green was achieved.

5.7 Segregation, Care and Separation, Close Supervision

- a. The Segregation Unit (SEG) continues to play a vital role within Holme House in the care of prisoners who are facing difficult situations or who have transgressed the establishment rules and regulations .IMB members visit SEG at least weekly and over the course of the week see and speak to all prisoners located there. The Board is notified promptly when prisoners are moved to SEG either in person or via voicemail in the IMB Office.
- b. There have been consistently high numbers of prisoners detained in SEG this year placing a very heavy burden on already overstretched staff. The unit has capacity to hold 26 prisoners and there have been times when it was full with some cells out of use having been smashed up by very disruptive prisoners.
- c. SEG. has housed some extremely difficult and non -compliant prisoners this year leading to a serious incident of concerted indiscipline in September which was very well-managed by governors and staff with prisoners located in special

accommodation and/or immediately transferred out to other prisons. IMB was involved throughout. An investigation followed to determine the reasons behind this incident and what if any lessons might be learned for the future.

- d. Yet again the Board must commend those officers who are deployed in SEG. for the way they engage with and treat those difficult prisoners in their care. Officers working in SEG. are specially selected on the basis of confidence, competence and knowledge with the emphasis very much on personal attributes and the ability to employ firmness, patience and empathy. Prisoners located in SEG are invariably treated with courtesy, good humour and compassion. Officers will always go that extra mile to help prisoners with genuine needs who are prepared to accept and comply with the regime.
- e. The Board has had occasion at points during the year to express concern about the lack of resource deployed to SEG, particularly the absence of any regular and consistent oversight from some Supervising Officers. There have been times when it has not been possible for members to do their round of prisoners located there as there were not two officers available to unlock .This is another consequence of benchmarking which hopefully will be mitigated by the introduction of the new profiles in 2016.**The Board will wish to monitor this carefully.**
- f. SEG. has again suffered disproportionately with shortages of kit and bedding and the Board is very disappointed that for the second year running this issue has not been satisfactorily resolved despite raising it regularly over the course of the year. There has however been a positive development in that a washing machine and dryer have been provided for SEG and are currently awaiting installation. **The Board very much hope that this will go a long way to improving matters and will be monitoring the situation closely in the coming months.**
- g. There was a cell fire in September this year where equipment was found to be unfit for purpose. An internal investigation followed which made various recommendations for improvement. Again, the Board would commend the response from all those involved making the safety of the prisoner paramount.
- h. Special Accommodation has been used on 17 occasions this year compared with 8 in 2014 with 6 dirty protests. The Board is always informed when a prisoner is placed in special accommodation and informed when they are removed.
- i. Adjudications are conducted on a daily basis by the Duty Governor and the Independent Adjudicator attends monthly. IMB members monitor this process through regular attendance to check that proper procedures have been followed and that a fair and consistent approach is adopted. This year has seen a substantial increase in the number of adjudications rising from an average of 109 per month in 2014 to an average of 163 per month in 2015 for the period January to November. This reflects a more disruptive and non-compliant population this year resulting in more awards of cellular confinement (253) The Adjudications Room would benefit from some decoration and refurbishment, budget permitting, as no improvements have been carried out for a very long time, some of the furniture being unsafe and therefore presenting as an unbusiness-like environment. **The Board would welcome such changes.**
- j. IMB members attend virtually all 14 day GOOD Reviews which are conducted each Monday afternoon but only attend 72 hour reviews on an ad hoc basis if a member is on duty. This year saw a change to the process and procedure for the retention of

prisoners in SEG beyond 72 hours, with the requirement to prove good and valid reasons for further confinement supported by relevant paperwork. The Board has monitored these changes closely. All GOOD decisions have been supported by the Board this year. There have been a couple of cases where the DDC has been involved in the GOOD Review where the prisoner has been kept on GOOD in SEG for more than 42 days. Again, proper process has been followed.

- k. Once again the Board commend the officers who work in SEG for their professionalism and care in their dealings with some very difficult and damaged prisoners but especially for their unfailing helpfulness, support and good humour when attending to the demands of members.

5.8 Residential Services

a. Kitchens and Catering

i There have been few complaints about food this year. Any complaints tend to relate to quantity (many prisoners feel they do not get enough food and that the portions are inadequate). However, the meals meet national guidelines in terms of calorific and nutritional content. Many prisoners complain that they have to spend their own money to buy food on their weekly canteen but this is obviously a matter of personal choice. Board members visit Serveries on each house block on a regular basis to observe and taste the food and are generally satisfied with the meals. There is, however, a need to visit more often later in the day to sample the evening meal.

ii .The restoration of a monthly Food Forum, attended by servery workers from each house block, has gone some way to dealing with and countering any issues relating to food, with the Deputy Kitchen Manager and Team Leader listening to and responding to questions and complaints and taking on board suggestions about menu changes where possible.

iii. Falling out of the Food Forum Servery workers visited the kitchens to gain an insight and understanding into how the kitchen operates and how central purchasing and budgets hamper giving prisoners all they would like.

iv. During the course of the year the Board has raised concerns about Servery workers not wearing "whites" in accordance with health and safety and hygiene requirements. This is due in part to a shortage of kit as itemised below but also a lack of consistent vigilance by officers.

v. There have been frequent and sometimes major breakdowns of key pieces of equipment with inordinately long waiting periods for repair. This has seriously hampered the smooth and speedy preparation of meals. The problem has only been compounded by the new contracting arrangements which lack the more immediate response provided by in house works staff. It is to the credit of the Kitchen Manager and her team that they always manage to work round any breakdowns and provide meals to 1200 prisoners.

vi. Theft of food from the kitchens has been of great concern and despite the implementation of various security measures it has not been possible to totally eliminate this.

vii. There were some 40 Muslim prisoners observing Ramadan and, as ever, the kitchens were praised for the preparation of meals to strict guidelines and timings, assisted by a Muslim prisoner, culminating in a buffet to celebrate the festival of Eid.

viii. The Board would wish to thank the Kitchen Manager and her team for the open and transparent manner in which they respond to criticism or complaints and their willingness to strive for improvements.

b. Accommodation:

- I. Holme House comprises 7 house blocks each with their own identity:
 1. HB1: Cat B /C Engagement Centre
 2. HB2: Full time workers
 3. HB3: CAT B/C VPs
 4. HB4: Cat B/C: First Night, DART, Remands
 5. HB5: Cat B/C: Full time workers
 6. HB6: Cat B/C: Therapeutic Community (TC), Drug Recovery Wing (DRW]
 7. HB7: Cat B/C: Part time Education. Non- smoking wing.

- II. The Residential Services Specification requires that prisoners' domestic needs are catered for in respect of daily living including living accommodation, cell furniture, fittings and bedding, personal hygiene and clothing. This is where the Board feel that the prison has fallen short again this year.

- III. Many cells are poorly furnished and lack tables, chairs or lockable cabinets with some prisoners doubling up in cells intended for single usage and therefore having to share facilities. There has been a reduction in cell inventories and fabric checks as they are now carried out on a risk assessment basis. Prisoners eat their meals in their cells due to the lack of communal dining facilities. Of greatest concern, therefore is the lack of privacy curtains or screens around the toilet area in the majority of shared cells which cannot be deemed decent or hygienic. Some prisoners resort to using sheets as privacy curtains which only compounds any shortages of bedding.

- IV. Some replacement furniture has been installed in two house blocks this year. However, the plan to install whitewood beds in all double cells has stalled under the new contracting arrangements with Amey. There are beds on site but they cannot be installed because of a lack of handyman hours. Nor can prisoners be used to build these beds as Amey would still be required to supervise, quality assure and fix these beds to the wall so a stalemate situation prevails to which there seems no answer at present.

- V. The situation is further compounded by a lack of replacement metal beds in the prison to replace those broken beyond repair and a failure to secure and fit privacy curtains although the latter would still need to be fixed by Amey.

- VI. **The Board is concerned that this situation is neither decent nor private and hope that an early resolution can be found to the problems.**

c. Kit

- i. The Board is disappointed to have to report problems with kit for the third year running. Whilst a great deal of effort has been expended in trying to ensure that all prisoners have sufficient kit of a decent fit and quality regrettably this is still not the case and is attributable to a number of reasons including insufficient kit in the system , a lack of vigilance at kit exchange times (prisoners holding on to kit) and problems with laundering and return of kit to the house blocks.This has been further compounded since the introduction of the Amey contract into Stores adding another tier of difficulty to the processes.

- ii. Any progress that has been made during the year seems to have been short lived and the Board regularly receive complaints not only about kit but also about towels and sheets (stained/torn and not fit for purpose).

- iii.The intention was for all prisoners to wear their own kit but this has stalled yet again due to outstanding work to move the Chemicals Store from the Laundry and to secure supplies of

chemicals. However, given the current problems with existing laundering arrangements this is probably for the best.

iv. Yet again the Segregation Unit has been worst affected as regards kit and bedding due in part to the continual churn and high occupancy this year. The Board has had to raise concerns on a number of occasions this year with previous requests to install a dedicated washing machine and dryer rejected. However, these appliances have recently been authorised and purchased and are on site but cannot be installed pending a change request as some fairly major work is required. **The Board welcome this development.**

v. The Board does acknowledge the effort that has gone into trying to manage and resolve the issues outlined (one off whole prison kit checks, manufacture and dyeing of towels, plans to repair damaged kit) but would urge rigorous and continuous oversight of these problems to the point that every prisoner does have decent and appropriate clothing and bedding. Hopefully, the impending appointment of Domestic Officers on each house block will help with this. . If this cannot be achieved it has the potential to discredit the recently published Decency Charter, which is not yet embedded, as simply words.

d. Prisoner Consultation and Prison Information Workers (PIWs)

i. PIWs are now in place on all house blocks having been introduced incrementally over the course of the year and have proved a welcome asset to both staff and fellow prisoners. They are also a useful sounding board for board members as they have a good awareness of prisoners' issues and concerns. The Board hope that work will continue to develop their role and to make them a focal point for fellow prisoners thereby deflecting some of the more mundane questions from officers .Also, that the PIWs collectively can form a prison wide Prisoner Consultative Committee (PCC) for the exchange of ideas and information.

i.

ii. There has been some progress this year with PCCs but this is still inconsistent across the house blocks. There is now a standard agenda and each house block has a scheduled meeting time. However, meetings are still sporadic. Board members now have responsibility for monitoring individual house blocks and will try to attend meetings where possible but have requested notes of meetings as a minimum. **The Board will wish to monitor these arrangements in the coming year.**

e. Catalogue orders

i. Ordering and receipt of goods from catalogues has been a major cause of complaint to the Board this year and as with most problems there are a number of strands to this. Firstly, the move to on line catalogues has made life difficult for all sides as has the reduction in available suppliers .Secondly, items are frequently out of stock with no indication of when goods may be back in stock.

ii. Internally, there have been long delays between ordering and receipt of goods triggering multiple applications and complaints from prisoners querying what is happening, especially as money has been taken from their account.

iii. Delays were attributed to staffing problems and a lack of storage space in Reception so that at receipt goods were held in the Business Hub for long periods depriving prisoners of the opportunity to retrieve them on a weekend.

iv. This was further compounded by a failure to send prisoners down to Reception at weekends to pick up their orders once they were there.

v. The Board is pleased to report that this issue is gradually improving due to some excellent work by the Acting Custodial Manager in Reception and a more cooperative approach from the house

blocks. There is, however, no immediate resolution to the problems of storage space in Reception and online/ limited supplier choice.

f. Core day

The regime has generally run in accordance with the Regime Management Plan although it has been sorely tested at times this year given the extraordinary pull on resources from escorts, bedwatches and constant watches. Even then full association has been maintained whenever possible. It has however , not been possible to restore a full regime at weekends. Unlike other establishments who report that prisoners are spending more time behind their doors because of a shortage of resources this is not the case at Holme House (although Category C prisoners who remain on the house blocks are now locked behind their doors at lunchtimes).Library attendance has been disappointing this year from some house blocks but hopefully this should improve when the new profiles are introduced.

g. Applications and complaints

i. This year has seen a substantial reduction in the number of complaints both to the prison and IMB due to factors such as the introduction of PIWs and the scanning ,distribution and response to complaints electronically.

ii.Applications continue to present problems in that although PIWs log them in at receipt very often there is no response and PIWs have no authority to progress chase them . Hopefully, now that PIWs are in place across the prison this issue can be discussed and resolved.

iii.The Board has frequently raised the absence of complaint forms on some house blocks , particularly confidential complaint forms, with prisoners having to request forms from the Centre Office which totally undermines the purpose of such confidentiality.

iv.The Board now has access electronically to copies of complaint forms and responses and would commend their timely completion and the generally comprehensive replies.

Section 6

6.1 Booking of Visits

1. There have been considerable problems particularly in the second half of 2015. Visitors are encouraged to use the website and it's email system to book visits up to four weeks in advance – the latter is a change which was introduced in 2015. Some visitors however still prefer to use the phone lines either because they do not feel comfortable with IT or they find the three alternative dates they have to give for each visit somewhat confusing. Many visitors prefer to speak to someone on the phone. The whole booking system is staffed by the equivalent of three full time booking clerks.
2. Booking staff feel that the system has the potential to work well but the main problem is the volume of requests for visits. Every effort is made to respond to emails but too often extra staff are needed to deal with a backlog. The IMB does appreciate that the governors have at times allowed officers on Back to Work plans to spend some of their time helping the booking staff and this has worked well. The ability to make multiple bookings for visits is popular with visitors but it does add to the workload of the booking staff. For example the need to amend the names of the visitors or the changes needed when a prisoner status changes and consequently their entitlement to a set number of visit per month.
3. There have been a growing number of technical problems with the phone line. At times the high number of people waiting to be connected has resulted in a breakdown in the connection and the inability of booking staff to hear people on the line. This adds to the frustration of the visitors who, having waited a long time, cannot speak to staff. The problem has been exacerbated by the telephone lines not being operational on a Monday and a reduced service on Fridays. The NEPAC Visitor Satisfaction Survey Results [March 2015] mentions these concerns but the situation has deteriorated since then. Visitors arrive for a booked visit but do not appear on the system as the email system does not automatically populate NOMIS. There are also delays in getting visitors added to the contact lists. Visitors have no confidence in the email and phone booking system.
4. The IMB does appreciate the great efforts made by the booking staff to respond as quickly as possible to email requests and we can understand their frustration when the phone system lets them down. We understand the pressures they are working under and commend their dedication. We are pleased to hear of the inclusion of a member of the booking staff in the NEPACS / HMP Holme House Liaison Meetings from January 2016.

6.2 Visitor Centre/Visits

1. The Visitor Centre, which is under the jurisdiction of the North Eastern Prisons' Aftercare Service (NEPACS) is the first point of contact for visitors to the prison and is run by a Centre Manager. She efficiently co-ordinates a team of paid workers and volunteers who create a warm and welcoming ambience in the centre. This is due, in part, to the Manager's dedication and inspiration which is quite infectious. There is also a NEPACS Family Support Worker based in the prison who is independently funded. She is well liked and respected by the prisoners as she takes time to build links and maintain contact between them and their families. The staff continue to build good links with local organisations and refer visitors to them if needed. The feedback from visitors is extremely

positive as regards the help, support, time and welcome they receive.

2. The Visitors' Centre is open seven days a week; weekdays it is open from 12.30 until 4.30 and at weekends, 8.00 until 4.00.
3. The Visitors' Centre Manager is responsible for the Centre, the Tea Bar in the prison and the play area and youth zone in the prison. Seven family days have been organised by the NEPACS Family Support Worker supported by The Visitors' Centre staff for fathers and children to enable them to interact and enjoy activities together.
4. The Visitors' Centre hosts bi-monthly meetings where representatives from local child welfare organisations and officials from other concerned bodies can liaise and share information. There are also opportunities at regular meetings for users of The Visitors' Centre to voice any issues they feel important.
5. The number of visitors in 2015 has increased. Each month they have an average of 3,600 visitors. In the last 3 months of 2015 an average of 759 monthly visitors were children.
6. Visitors also frequently complain about the difficulties they encounter when trying to bring in property for prisoners. Systems are in place for prisoners to request receipt of property from visitors. However, often late on the morning of the visit Reception has to cancel the handover due to staffing shortages. Prisoners then have to restart the process by submitting another application. This adds to the frustration of prisoners and visitors.
7. The IMB appreciates the efforts made by staff to cope with the increase in visitor numbers and their efforts to take phone calls on a daily basis to deal with problems booking visits and bringing in property.

6.3 Reception

1. Not surprisingly, Reception staff have been at the forefront of various pressures this year including dealing with prisoners who arrive clearly under the influence of drugs and alcohol or who have serious mental health issues.
2. Despite the findings from the 2013 HMCIP Inspection and the findings of the 2014 IMB Annual Report there has been no improvement made in the fabric and facilities available to prisoners at their arrival. Whilst the reception area is generally clean there is still a lack of privacy with interviews carried out at an open counter.
3. The 9 holding rooms are bleak and sparsely furnished. Televisions have not yet been restored as recommended and there is still very little reading material available. However, this is due in part to prisoners' propensity to smash up and destroy such amenities. Since September, however, these rooms have been painted as well as the corridors. This situation is very frustrating for the staff who are working in an environment which has changed little since the prison was opened in 1992 when prisoner numbers were considerably lower than today.

4. However, since October there has been an ongoing assessment of the Reception area by the Custodial Manager [CM] and governors and an action plan has been written. There are plans in place to improve the quality of the seating in the holding rooms, to put TVs in two of the holding rooms and to provide up to date displays of posters and prisoner information in these rooms and in the corridors. The IMB welcomes the proposed plans and recognises the enthusiasm of the CM to try to improve the environment. However, these plans will be affected by the need to make savings early in 2016 and the IMB will continue to monitor the situation.
5. We are also concerned about the facilities in Reception – for example there is only one shower working and one bath available for prisoners.
6. Management and storage of property continue to present problems as the Property Store is simply not fit for purpose. It has never been enlarged as the prison roll has increased. Solutions to the problem are currently under consideration but there is no immediate answer and any resolution will come at considerable cost. Attempts have been made to alleviate the situation by using storage areas in other locations and imaginative use of the space available in Reception but this is not a long term solution.
7. The storage problem has been made worse by the increase in the facilities list which has led to an increase in the volume of prisoner property, by the inability of Branston to store property and by the rule that prisoners' property has to be stored for 12 months after their release. The refusal of GeoAmey to take prisoners' property when they are being transferred also compounds the problems for Reception staff.
8. Given the limitations property is handled efficiently by staff and great efforts have been made in the last 3 months to get prisoners to Reception to collect their property. However, there were 55 applications about property within Holme House and 53 applications about property sent on from other prisons in 2015. The latter is a major concern but the IMB hopes to see an improvement within Holme House in 2016.

In conclusion, the IMB knows that there are systems in place in the Visitors Centre, the Business Hub and Reception but feel that closer collaboration and a clearer understanding of the pressures encountered by visitors and by prisoners would help to make progress in two crucial areas – the visit booking systems and the handover of property. The IMB understands the restrictions of staff availability but we also recognise the importance of maintaining family links and its effect on reducing reoffending. An improvement in the booking system and a investigation into the flaws in the current system are needed.

a. Security

- a. A Security Committee meeting is held monthly and chaired by the Deputy Governor. IMB attend as observers.
- b. Intelligence Reports are processed and categorised by regional security analysts and intelligence information is quickly disseminated to relevant areas within the prison to

enable prompt action and intervention as appropriate.

c. Despite a reduction in random searches due to reduced resources priority is given to intelligence led information.

d. Mobile phones continue to present problems especially with advances in technology which make them smaller and more readily disguisable. Smart watches are also beginning to present and are not readily identifiable.

e. During the course of the year the following items were found :

- * A total of 52 mobile phones
- * 27 chargers
- * 25 SIM Cards were found
- * 115 prisoners were placed on closed visits
- * 82 visitors were banned
- * 19 visitors were arrested on domestic visits on suspicion of bringing in drugs
- * 52 IRS reported actual drug finds and 18 IR regarding drug finds

Section 7

The Work of the Independent Monitoring Board

Applications to the Board

Code	Subject	Year 2012	Year 2013	Year 2014	Year 2015
A	Accommodation	11	23	51	21
B	Adjudications	3	4	16	7
C	Equality & Diversity (inc religion)	8	5	7	4
D	Education/employment/training inc IEP	34	91	103	41
E 1	Family/visits inc mail & phone	69	119	116	76
E 2	Finance/pay	10	76	70	39
F	Food/kitchen related	9	72	41	22
G	Health related	78	111	139	114
H 1	Property (within current establishment)	55	78	107	55
H 2	Property (during transfer/in another establishment)	13	68	77	53
H 3	Canteen, facilities, Catalogue shopping, Argos	4	22	20	35
I	Sentence related (inc. HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-cat etc.)	74	123	170	101
J	Staff/prisoner/detainee concerns inc bullying	35	44	66	42
K	Transfers	74	91	120	43
L	Miscellaneous	112	44	62	32
	Total number of IMB applications	589	971	1165	685

Notes: The Board received 480 fewer applications in 2015 than it received in 2014. Proportionately, of the overall total, the highest categories were Category G Health Related (16.6%), Category I Sentence related (14.7%), Category E1 Family /visits (11%). These are the main categories of applications accounting for 291 or 42.4% of 2015 applications.

The large reduction in the total number of applications is much welcomed by the IMB and is linked to the introduction of Prisoner Information Workers during 2015 on 6 of the 7 house blocks.

- Health related applications tend to be about clinical or prescribing decisions which are outside the remit of IMB. Some of these applications however are linked to procedures within Health Care eg the waiting times for appointments and the lack of response to health care applications.
- Sentence related applications are attributable to issues raised within Section 5.5 Resettlement and also prisoners who ignore the set time scales and want early contact with OMU staff.

Prison Service complaints:

		2014	2015
	Stage 1	3444	2037
	Stage 2	399	108
	Others (DDC/Adj Appeals)	43	28
	Confidential Access	269	183

The IMB welcomes the marked reduction in the total number of prison service complaints.

Board Statistics

BOARD STATISTICS	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	18
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	11
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	12
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	3
Number of members leaving within reporting period	2
Total number of Board meetings during reporting period	12
Total number of visits to the Establishment	336
Total number of segregation reviews held	Not recorded
Total number of segregation reviews attended	Not recorded
Date of Annual Team Performance Review	5th Jan 2016

Board Matters

7.1 The Board had eleven members at the start of the year and 12 by the end of the year. On the 31st December two board members left one due to tenure and one resigning. We recruited three new members but one of these will shortly be leaving the board. This means that with a membership of 9 board members in January 2106 we will be recruiting for new members.

7.2 The Board operates a weekly rota with 9 members attending on a specific day each week. The remaining members cover one week per month. All statutory areas are visited at least weekly. Applications are logged as received and dealt with normally within the week by one of the rota members.

7.3 14 day GOOD Reviews are now held every Monday afternoon, conducted by a Residential Governor, with an IMB member in attendance. 72 hr reviews are attended on an ad hoc basis subject to availability of member but, failing that, all those in the SEG. are seen at least weekly.

7.4 Adjudications are regularly observed, including those conducted by the Independent Adjudicator.

7.5 A Daily Rota Report is completed which is then used as the basis for a written report from the Board Chair to the Governor, together with an analysis of applications received in month, with a written response from the Governor tabled for discussion at the subsequent Board Meeting.

7.6 There has been a significant improvement this year in the notification of incidents to the Board with the updating of the list of relevant incidents where the Board must be contacted. There have been 6 deaths in custody when the Board have been informed and responded as per the Death in Custody protocol.

7.7 There have been 3 inquests this year. IMB no longer attend those where the prisoner has died from natural causes.

7.8 Additionally, each member is allocated a special area(s) of responsibility at the start of the reporting year which they are expected to monitor, reporting back to the Board to an agreed timetable and providing a contribution to the Annual Report.

7.9 Board members attend meetings specific to their area of responsibility as observers, prepare written reports for all members and give updates if appropriate at each Board Meeting.

7.10 There have been 12 Board Meetings this year. The Governing Governor or her deputy attends for part of the meeting with the main meeting preceded by a guest speaker talking about a specific function or a national or local development initiative. These attendances are greatly appreciated by the Board.

7.11 Board members have attended both national training and training delivered within the Prison where appropriate and, again, this opportunity is welcomed by members.

7.12 Two members attended the 2015 National Conference.

7.13 There were 336 visits made to the Prison in the reporting year including rota visits, Board Meetings and training sessions.

7.14 As Chair of the Board for the last four years I would like to thank all members for their hard work and contribution to the work of the Board. I would also like to thank the Clerk to the Board for his excellent support.

Linda Broadhead OBE

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