



**HMP GARTH  
IMB  
ANNUAL REPORT**

**REPORTING PERIOD**

**1<sup>st</sup> December 2014 - 30<sup>th</sup> November 2015**

## **SECTION 1**

### **Statutory Role of the IMB**

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 Home Secretary from members of the community in which the prison or centre is situated.

The Board is specifically charged to;

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

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

## **SECTION 2**

### **Contents**

<b>Page 2</b>	<b>Section 1 – Statutory role of the IMB</b>
<b>Page 2</b>	<b>Section 2 - Contents</b>
<b>Page 3</b>	<b>Section 3 - Description of the Prison</b>
<b>Page 4</b>	<b>Section 4 - Executive Summary</b>
<b>Pages 6</b>	<b>Section 5 - Statutory Reporting Areas</b>
	<b>(1) Equality and Inclusion</b>
	<b>(2) Education, Learning &amp; Skills</b>
	<b>(3) Healthcare &amp; Mental Health</b>
	<b>(4) Purposeful Activity</b>
	<b>(5) Resettlement</b>
	<b>(6) Safer Custody</b>
	<b>(7) Segregation</b>
	<b>(8) Residential Services (includes accommodation, food, catering and Kitchens)</b>
<b>Page 16</b>	<b>Section 6 - Other areas of the Prison Regime</b>
<b>Page 18</b>	<b>Section 7 – The work of the Independent Monitoring Board</b>

## **SECTION 3**

### **Description of the Prison**

- 3.1 HMP Garth is a Category B Training Prison. It opened in 1988 and holds long-term and life sentenced prisoners, together with IPP prisoners. E Wing, opened in 1997, houses a therapeutic community run in conjunction with The drug service at Garth is delivered by Discover Drug & Alcohol Service. They are a partnership between several agencies, primarily Greater Manchester West NHS, Mental Health Foundation Trust and Phoenix Futures.
- 3.2 The Beacon Unit, providing treatment for prisoners with profound personality disorders, became operational in March 2014. The Unit is jointly operated with the Mersey Care NHS trust.
- 3.3 In April 2014, F and G wings were re-roled to accommodate some 200 category B sex offenders.
- 3.4 Health care continues to be delivered by the Lancashire Care NHS Trust on the basis of an annual service level agreement
- 3.5 Education and Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) are provided by Manchester College.
- 3.6 The Operational Capacity is 845. The Certified Normal Accommodation (C.N.A.) is 810. The number held at the time of the report was 765. Of these, 36.4% are serving a life sentence and a further 25.2 % are serving an ISPP.

## **SECTION 4**

### **Executive Summary**

- 4.1** In August a new Governing Governor was appointed & immediately made an extremely positive impact on the establishment. She quickly established an excellent working relationship with the Deputy Governor, SMT & all staff in general – including the Board! She has already introduced a number of initiatives with the aim of improving both staff & prisoner morale, which had really reached a low point (5.1.2; 5.7.5; 5.7.6; 5.7.11; 5.8.10; 6.1.3 & 6.1.5:). Her approach has been welcomed by the staff & they are proactively involved in ensuring her initiatives take root; the aims being to create an establishment valued by both prisoners & staff alike.
- 4.2** In the Executive Summary of last year's report the Board highlighted developing concerns regarding:- (a) Staff shortages impacting on the quality & effectiveness of the regime as a result of 'Benchmarking'; (b) Confirmation that plans are in place to ensure staff are fully trained in prison management and to introduce staff motivational techniques; & (c) Confirmation that a comprehensive review of the impact of 'Benchmarking' would be undertaken: The Board is pleased to be able to report that In September, the new Governor assisted by the Deputy Governor put a business case to the DDC for 'Benchmarking' to be revisited. The 'BDG' spent a number of days here & the outcome was positive. The Board will report on this next year, as any changes will not be able to be implemented until the end of the year.
- 4.3** The Board is concerned that the excellent work undertaken by the Security Dept. is being undermined by the fact that essential equipment in the form of mobile phone blockers are no longer fit for purpose because they cannot block 4G phones. There is no budget to purchase equipment to block these phones and, whilst the prison is proactive in trying to find solutions (for example by developing links with equipment providers), it is clear that the ongoing good security of the prison is compromised. Mobile phones continue to be an issue at HMP Garth (6.1.9)
- 4.4** We have been informed by the Governor that there is to be an establishment review of non-smoking areas. This would appear to be getting the establishment ready for the time in the not too distant future when the whole estate becomes non-smoking. The Board considers that it is both inappropriate & illogical to make decisions on the implementation of this by quoting the results of trials in chosen sections of the estate. Comparisons must be made on a like-to like basis – the effects on prisoners in an establishment like Garth serving long sentences cannot be compared with prisoners in a less secure part of the estate. We agree that smoking is detrimental to health & also that it is reasonable to identify specific non-smoking areas however we would like you to seriously consider the following thoughts :-
- (i) By stopping prisoners from smoking in their cells you are increasing the punishment handed down by the Court as they have already been given a long custodial sentence;
- (ii) There are more and more restrictions placed upon where it is permissible to smoke throughout society but an outright prohibition of smoking has not been imposed. When most of the prisoners who smoke were sentenced it was a legal activity and imposing a ban upon these prisoners will inevitably cause both physical and emotional problems which will not be easily resolved.

(iii) Tobacco will be yet another substance which can be used to do deals with, as was historically the case before the drug problem became as great as it is. A black market in the supply of tobacco can be expected to reappear with all of its attendant disciplinary problems.

(iv) The ability to smoke relieves tensions in prisoners who have many years left to serve. Does it not follow that violence will increase throughout the estate. Why worsen the fragile state which currently exists in establishments? (6.1.7)

- 4.5** HMP Garth has recently been able to take advantage of using patrol dogs when either forcibly removing a recalcitrant prisoner or during workshop searches. Members of the Board have attended a number of these occasions & can vouch for the effectiveness of using them. They must be cheaper to use than deploying additional staff to control a dangerous situation, which in turn enables the establishment to refrain from sending for the 'Nationals'. Can you please give due consideration to extending this usage and, if possible, make the patrol dogs a permanent feature. They are a superb 'tool' & if used correctly restore order quickly & stop prisoners from getting themselves into further trouble. (6.1.5)
- 4.6** It is felt that there is a real need for improved funding for meaningful education and improved workshop training in this prison. There is a massive problem relating to basic literacy and numeracy. The library has identified this problem and is attempting to do what it can to resolve it. However when three classrooms in the education department are currently closed it seems clear that a major opportunity is being lost. Prisoners cannot be expected to take full advantage of the offending behaviour courses they are required to undertake if they are not adequately literate and numerate.
- 4.7** During the last year or so an improvement in the performance of Healthcare has been noted. However there continue to be frequent complaints about the length of time it takes to get an appointment to see the doctor. There are also concerns about the pressures the Mental Health Team have been under. We are now informed that they are up to strength numerically but not all of their members are full experienced. It is often argued that prisons are "the new mental hospitals". There may be many reasons for this but the simple fact is that increasing numbers of prisoners display signs of mental illness or personality disorder and it is of the greatest importance that adequate resources are put in place to both identify and address these problems. It should be noted that the Board recognises and applauds the value of the work carried out by the Mental Health Team.
- 4.8** Following the implementation of the benchmarking requirements HMP Garth went through a period of instability caused by reduced staffing levels, inappropriate deployment of staff (most significantly the use of SOs) and issues related to the immediate management of the prison. Since the arrival of the new governing governor in September 2015, determined efforts have been made to rectify these problems and clear and significant progress is being made. There is no doubt that most staff of all grades and disciplines have, or are beginning to, sign up to the new regime and a much more positive atmosphere now pervades the establishment. Much work still needs to be done but the Board is confident that continued progress can be expected and we move into our next reporting year with a renewed spirit of optimism.

## **SECTION 5**

### **Statutory Reporting Areas**

#### **5.1 – Equality and Inclusion**

- 5.1.1 The Equality and Inclusion Committee, known as the Equality Action Team (EAT), meets quarterly and comprises members of the SMT, one of whom has responsibility for this area, a Chaplaincy representative, prisoner Wing representatives and representatives from the clerical and professional staff.
- 5.1.2 Staffing issues with regard to changes in regime since Benchmarking have meant that the role of the designated Officer in Charge of the EAT Committees and Sub Committees has changed several times. This has now been addressed & meetings are once again being organised on a regular basis. Hopefully meetings will not have to be cancelled due to shift changes.
- 5.1.3 In light of the above dislocation it is difficult for the Board to be assured that the Diversity and Equality Strategy has been effectively monitored and taken forward.

#### **5.2 – Education, Learning and Skills**

- 5.2.1 The austerity climate has had a serious effect across all of the public services and within HMP Garth it is fair to say that funding cuts have significantly impacted upon the Education Department.
- 5.2.2 At the present time three classrooms are not in use because of these cuts. When this is considered in conjunction with the effective reduction in the use of vocational workshops, it will be understood that the education and training services offered to prisoners are presently seriously reduced.
- 5.2.3 The education department seeks to find suitable funding for relevant courses for prisoners, for example through Student Financing England.
- 5.2.4 Not all relevant courses can be accessed, especially those requiring IT access. There is a facility for prisoners to self-finance some courses.
- 5.2.5 At the present time funding is provided through “Novas”, the justice arm of Manchester College. This funding is divided between ‘Cat B’ and ‘Cat C’ prisons and the former can be disadvantaged as ‘CAT B’ sentences are by their nature much longer, meaning the available funds are insufficient

#### **SECTION 5.3- Health Care and Mental Health Care**

- 5.3.1 Without giving fine detail for security reasons, Healthcare has a daily SLA for the provision of hospital escorts. When the establishment (for pressing security/staffing reasons), or when a prisoner becomes acutely unwell and requires emergency hospital treatment, is unable to honour that agreement, a system of triaging is in place for the more routine hospital visits. However, when that system has been used say 3 or 4 times for a particular prisoner further appointments are delayed. This can have potentially serious consequences and as these situations are not ‘occasional’ and undermine the ability of Healthcare to provide a safe and efficient service.

- 5.3.2** In the recent past, when the establishment was operating with unacceptably high numbers of segregated prisoners, both in the Segregation Unit and on an overspill basis on a designated wing, the necessary daily visit/medication input undertaken by Healthcare became time consuming and onerous. This had a direct effect on the ability of the unit to make improvements in waiting times for the other services it provides. It is good to note that Segregation is now operating from the Segregation Unit alone, with a separate RSU (Residential Support Unit) in operation, for those prisoners requiring additional support.
- 5.3.3** The Board has concerns that waiting times have not noticeably improved, in for example non-urgent G.P. appointments, which have increased from 3 weeks to between 4&5 weeks.
- 5.3.4** This is due in part to the cancellation of G.P. sessions, relating to the instability of the establishment. It is pleasing to note that extra sessions have now been agreed with the two agency doctors to redress the situation.
- 5.3.5** The Mental Health team is now up to strength in numbers, however a number of new appointments are still gaining experience in this, one of the most difficult areas of the establishment. This means that the improvement in waiting times is yet to be seen, as new staff gain in experience.
- 5.3.6** Routine mental health appointments are now 12 weeks compared to 10 weeks in our last report are cause for concern and the Board expect to see good steady improvement in this area.

#### **Examples of excellence and good practice**

- The Board acknowledges the positive impact the Healthcare manager is having on the unit in restoring confidence & motivation in the staff.
- The Board acknowledges the ever increasing workload being managed by the mental health team & the thoroughly professional manner in which they carry out their duties.
- The Board also acknowledges the efforts made by the clinical staff & the manner in which they deal with a difficult clientele.
- Healthcare screening has been streamlined and within 72 hours of arrival a prisoner will experience - Meet and Greet/Reception leaflet/Full Health check.
- The Board acknowledges the ever increasing workload being managed by the mental health team & the thoroughly professional manner in which they carry out their duties.
- The ongoing concern expressed by the Board in previous reports regarding the healthcare complaints system being unnecessarily cumbersome has been addressed. It has now been simplified and one simple form is used to highlight either a concern or complaint
- The number of applications to the Board relating to health care issues has reduced by 48.48% (from 66 as at 30 November 2014 to 32 as at 30 November 2015).
- The Board was pleased to have the benefit of a presentation on the implications of Social Care & Support via The Care Act 2014 at its October 2015 Board Meeting

## **SECTION 5.4 – Purposeful Activity**

**5.4.1** The role of the prison presently averages around 830 of which in the region of 600 are regularly engaged in purposeful activity. There are 12 workshops many of which are under used because of a shortage of contracts. Amongst the more effective ones are :-

- Speedy which employs 36 and repairs electrical equipment for the Speedy Tool Hire Co.
- Textiles which employs 54 engaged in making items of prison clothing
- Contract services which employs 54 vulnerable prisoners assembling key rings and other low grade items.
- Braille which employs only 12 prisoners but produces high grade translations of a range of books into braille script. As well as Britain, these books are sent to various parts of the world.
- Community Workshop which employs 13 renovating wheelchairs and bicycles.
- Gardens Department employs 16 prisoners who maintain the grounds, grow ornamental and food plants and operate two food digesters which convert waste food into fertiliser
- Construction. This engages 12 largely in woodworking projects and has produced much high quality work although more recently its output has reduced.

**5.4.2** Other prisoners are employed in various capacities around the prison, for example:-

- Education has a capacity for around 127 prisoners but currently has three closed classrooms
- Kitchen employs around 40 prisoners some of whom are able to undertake NVQ level courses.

**5.4.3** Summary – A large proportion of the work done by prisoners is of a menial nature requiring little or no training. It does keep the prisoners active but offers little in the way of skill enhancement. Work carried out in workshops such as Construction, Textiles, Braille and Community has a rewarding end product, which is a motivating incentive for the prisoners involved in these areas. Management has recognised the need to seek contracts to provide more, meaningful work and contracts are being sought. The Board will continue to keep focused upon the need for more purposeful activity within the prison.

## **SECTION 5.5 – Resettlement**

- 5.5.1** Whilst it is accepted and agreed that all staff should engage positively and constructively with prisoners at all opportunities it is clear that the Offender Management Unit plays a major role in terms of liaison with the Probation Service, Sentence Planning and offering advice and support to prisoners. The department can only work effectively if its role is recognised and if its staff are allowed time and space to perform their duties as they should. Since the introduction of the Benchmarking arrangements, this has **NOT** been the case because whilst the number of offender supervisors (Band 4 prison officers) has been increased they have all too frequently been redeployed to other duties and, therefore, the effectiveness of the department has been reduced despite the best efforts of its management and staff.
- 5.5.2** Until recently the department should have had 18 Band 4's but three were 'acting up' to custodial manager (CM) with others performing senior officer (SO) duties around the prison. When the Business Management Group visited the prison recently to address benchmarking related issues these staffing problems were brought to their attention by 'Senior Management Team' and in a letter sent by this Board to the Secretary of 'State For Justice'. One of the outcomes was that it was agreed that permanent SO's should be redeployed to residential units and it is gratifying to note that that change has now been made. This should mean that fewer offender supervisors should now be called upon to fill other duties. However it is going to take time for all of the residual problems to be ironed out. When these problems are resolved it is envisaged that the department will be staffed by 10 permanent Band 4's, possibly with support from others, and the department will then have a manageable workload which should mean a better service can be offered. While the department has been experiencing difficulties in recent times it is felt that a good and determined spirit has prevailed and this bodes well for the future.
- 5.5.3** The department has three full time and two half time seconded probation officers whose contributions are valued and who work largely with high risk offenders.
- 5.5.4** It should not be thought that the Board believes that all of the problems recognised are consequences of staffing problems alone. We recognise, and management agree, that many aspects of offender management need to be addressed but this has been difficult because of the problems related above. Throughout the prison staff morale has been low because of the cut backs and the related disciplinary problems displayed by increasing numbers of prisoners during the last two years or so. However since the arrival of the new governor in September 2015 there has been a significant improvement towards a more positive approach and this is observable throughout the prison, including the Offender Management Unit.
- 5.5.5** The whole prison service has faced endless change over approximately the last 30 years. Much of it has been beneficial but just as much as not. However a result has been that staff do not feel valued and therefore are less willing to make the efforts required to meet targets and demands. The service needs a period of stability over at least a five year period during which it can assimilate the changes that have been introduced without the threat of further disruption. Only when this is allowed will staff begin to fully engage.

- 5.5.6** The Board has previously commented on the relatively high numbers of Cat C and even 'Cat D' prisoners being held in HMP Garth. This has largely been resolved. However there are currently around 110 re-categorisations outstanding because of the above mentioned staffing problems.
- 5.5.7** There are also large numbers of outstanding OASys reviews. This is mainly because these assessments are not being carried out efficiently by local prisons and the probation service (NPS), who are responsible for prisoners deemed to be high risk. Inevitably this large number of outstanding reviews imposes an extra burden upon staff of the OMU who are required to make good the deficit. No doubt local prisons and the NPS would say that they would complete the assessments if they had the staff and resources to do so, but that does not help Garth's situation.
- 5.5.8** HMP Garth continues to experience problems with the large number of prisoners who are a long distance from their home areas and who apply for transfers. It is understood that an additional 'Cat B' training prison is to be established but it is not known when, or where, it will be. In the meantime this issue places additional strain upon the resources of the OMU as well as other departments in the prison.

### **SECTION 5.6 – Safer Custody**

- 5.6.1** The 'Safer Custody' manager & lead Governor have established a positive working Governor have heightened the profile of this important area of increasing the safety of the prisoners.
- 5.6.2** A 'Violence Reduction' database was created on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015. This database monitors any violent incidents.
- 5.6.3** All adjudications are followed up to make sure that appropriate action has been taken.
- 5.6.4** The IEP levels and CSRA are regularly checked to see if they needed reviewing.
- 5.6.5** All serious assaults and fights are monitored to ensure those deemed serious enough are referred to the police.
- 5.6.6** Relevant checks were made on all incidents to determine whether any of the following documents needed to be opened:- ACCT; CAB1; CAB Support; CAB Monitoring; IEP Review; CSRA; Police referral, wing log book entry, Cnomis case Notes; or any other relevant actions.

### **5.6.7 SAFER CUSTODY STATISTICS**

	1st Dec 13 - 31st Nov 14	1st Dec 14 - 31st Nov 15	<b>COMPARISONS</b>
<b>ACCT</b>	227	292	28.0%
<b>CAB 1 WARNING</b>	319	406	28.6%
<b>CAB SUPPORT</b>	42	100	138.0%
<b>CAB MONITORING</b>	19	44	131.6%
<b>SELF HARM</b>	277	231	<b>-16.6%</b>

- 5.6.8** USE OF FORCE - There has undoubtedly been an increase in violent behaviour in the prison in recent times. This may be attributed to numerous factors such as regime changes and staff reductions caused by Benchmarking, by the increased usage of NPS and its side effects such as bullying, and by the perception of weakness in the regime by many prisoners.  
During the last four calendar years recorded usages of force have increased as follows:- 2012 – 54; 2013 – 56; 2014 – 104; 2015 – 194:

## **SECTION 5.7 – Segregation**

- 5.7.1** A year of dramatic change & disruption not helped by the staffing implications of 'Benchmarking' as described in last year's report.
- 5.7.2** The Segregation Unit (SEG) is on two levels, each with 14 cells. There are two 'special cells' on each landing.
- 5.7.3** The Governor had a bid to upgrade the fabric approved & work commenced in the spring. At the same time, work commenced throughout the establishment on renewing the fire alarm. These two contracts created difficulties in ensuring each of the two landings could be vacated to facilitate this.
- 5.7.4** By its very nature, the Unit is full of extremely dangerous and volatile prisoners with complex needs, which adds to the stress staff are operating under.
- 5.7.5** A new Governing Governor was appointed in August & immediately drew up an action plan to alleviate the situation in the establishment as a whole & the Segregation Unit in particular. She invited the 'Benchmarking Team' back to review the decisions they had made regarding staffing as both she & her SMT had reached the conclusion that it was really not workable as it was. The results of this exercise will not be known until the reporting period has ended, therefore this will form part of our report next year.
- 5.7.6** The occupancy of the unit is normally 100%. During the period of this report, there were 56 prisoners being held under 'Rules 45A & 45B'. This necessitated in the Governor identifying a wing which would be a non offence related vulnerable prisoners' wing. The prisoners on here would previously have been held under 'Rule 45A' as they were either in debt or felt under threat.
- 5.7.7** A large number of prisoners held in the Segregation Unit are held under 'Rule 45B'. Those held on 'Rule 45A' are given the opportunity to have a TV – see 5.7.10
- 5.7.8** Segregation reviews are held each weekday morning & the Board has attended every review throughout the year - this was 958 in total!
- 5.7.9** The Custodial Manager had been successful in obtaining promotion to Governor grade & was redeployed to HMP Buckley Hall in the summer & her replacement took up post in September. The handover proved quite seamless!

- 5.7.10** The recommendations of the 'Chief Inspector of Prisons' as reported in our 2013-2014 report are being addressed in a positive manner:- (a) All cells now have an electric point meaning prisoners are able to have a mains radio; (b) Prisoners who comply positively with the regime are given the opportunity to reside on the 2's & those who are actively addressing their offending behaviour are given the opportunity to have a TV; & (c) An extensive range of gym equipment has been provided to enable prisoners to choose either exercise or an equivalent session using the equipment. Unfortunately, one refractory prisoner damaged this equipment to the extent that until it is either replaced or repaired it is no longer able to be used!
- 5.7.11** At least one member of the Board attends the quarterly 'SMARG' meeting. The progress of each of the long-term occupants are discussed together with strategies for persuading them to return to normal location. The Governor's policy is that prisoners cannot circumvent the system for transfer by using the unit as a 'departure lounge' – in fact, any prisoner transferred out will only be transferred to the High Security estate.
- 5.7.12** The Board is always notified of every prisoner who is moved to the unit.
- 5.7.13** In our last report we mentioned that there was only one toilet/washing facility for both male & female staff. This is still the case & still a cause for concern!

## **SECTION 5.8- Residential Services (includes Accommodation, Catering, Kitchen and Chaplaincy)**

### **KITCHENS & FOOD**

- 5.8.1** Kitchens and Food have been subject to a full monitoring report and the IMB monitor responsible for that report was most impressed with the operation of this potentially emotive area of prison life. Examples of excellence and good practice are itemised below:
- 5.8.2** 897,000 meals were prepared during the last 12 months with few complaints (including Christmas Dinner and Eid).
- 5.8.3** Rules of the kitchen were clear and fully enforced - for example, if a prisoner was found guilty of stealing even a small amount of food, they were sacked and **never** re-employed in the kitchen. For example, in the case of say - a Fish Pie prepared from scratch – all ingredients (including seasoning) were laid down and the item prepared **exactly** to the recipe.
- 5.8.4** Control of costs is supported by an extremely effective 'Laser Read' computer system, which ensures that no additional meals are provided to cover prisoner movements. The system is aware of the location of prisoners at all times - 'the food follows the prisoner!'
- 5.8.5** The cleanliness of the kitchen can only be described as outstanding and was a further evidence of attention to detail/rules carefully made and enforced. The results were there for all to see.

#### **5.8.6 Awards gained during this reporting year:-**

- Level 5 Environmental Health Food and Premises Award
- Gold Award from Chorley Council (selection of food and clarity of description and display)
- Area Catering Manager 11 Section Audit (Overall Compliance)  
10 x Green 1x Amber (amber related to wing serveries) which will be the subject of increased monitoring by the Board.

### **CHAPLAINCY**

**5.8.7** The Chaplaincy team is now up to strength in terms of full time chaplaincy staff. However, providing separate worship and study for the two sex offender wings does significantly increase the work load.

**5.8.9** In the Chaplaincy and Compliance Audit (October 2015) a figure of 95% was achieved. The Board acknowledges this high achievement and commends the Chaplaincy for its work within the establishment.

### **ACCOMMODATION**

**5.8.10** During the course of 2015 the number of segregated prisoners increased alarmingly. The causes of this appear largely to be reduced staffing levels and poorer leadership resulting from Benchmarking , the increased usage by prisoners of NPS (New Psychoactive substances), the increased desires of prisoners to be transferred away from HMP Garth either because of problems encountered in the prison or because they wished to be located nearer to their home areas ( it will be understood that there is a serious shortage of Cat B training prisons). Equally it may be argued that many prisoners had recognised the problems being encountered within the regime and went out of their way to cause disruption. The Segregation Unit is set up to accommodate 28 prisoners but the total grew to around 56 with about half being segregated for their own protection. This latter group were located in an 'overspill' unit in a spur of D Wing. The situation was not satisfactory and the new governor quickly addressed the problem by transferring these prisoners to a new vulnerable prisoner unit of 'B Wing' which, it was made known, was not for sex offenders. To date this unit has run with quiet efficiency and has halved the number of segregated prisoners.

**5.8.11** The Board has been informed by the Governor that there is to be an establishment policy of the introduction of voluntary non-smoking areas. This would appear to be getting the establishment ready for the time in the not too distant future when the whole estate becomes non-smoking.

## **SECTION 6 - Other Areas of the Prison Regime**

### **6.1 - Security**

**6.1.1** The recent appointment of a new Security Governor at Garth has led to an improved security strategy with consequent analysis of and improvements in all systems and processes. This has included a more strategic approach to the collection and analysis of intelligence which in turn has led to more effective searching and thus improved levels of security.

- 6.1.2 The use of a licensed dog to detect alcohol, hooch and cannabis has been very successful with significant finds of all the aforementioned. It is therefore disappointing that this resource is being recalled to the regional dogs' team from the beginning of next March.
- 6.1.3 There are also plans to improve the physical security of the extensive exterior grounds by planting shrubs to deter the throwing of drugs and mobile phones over the wall.
- 6.1.4 The area dog team have a dog which is able to 'sniff out' SIM cards which, together with excellent use of intelligence and tactical searching, has been effective in reducing the numbers of phones in circulation.
- 6.1.5 The establishment has recently been able to avail itself of the area patrol dogs team. These have proved to be invaluable in de-escalating a number of serious incidents reducing the possibilities of both operational staff & prisoners being injured. The new Governor has made representations to the DDC for this trial to be evidence that this dog team should be retained by the establishment.
- 6.1.6 The security department has recently taken delivery of a "cell-sense" pole on a semi-permanent loan basis from the regional dogs' team. This is a very sensitive and mobile metal detector. The department will be using intelligence available in relation to weapon possession and manufacture to conduct some targeted searches using the device.
- 6.1.7 A main concern of the Board, the prison management and indeed most other prisons, is the increase in the use of illicit NPS amongst prisoners. These drugs, when taken, are taken in addition to prescribed medication, and the consequences are potentially fatal. The contents are variable, unlicensed and often adulterated. Security Department is active in keeping the ingress of these drugs to a minimum and Discover have recently developed a pathway for addressing NPS use.
- 6.1.8 This is a concern to the Board and the prison, especially as the 'recipe' is composed of readily available and permissible food items. The answer seems to be the control of potential receptacles for the 'brew' and in this the establishment have enjoyed recent success.
- 6.1.9 As illegal mobile phones are quite prolific in HMP Garth prisoners are able to conduct 'business' with their associates outside, thus increasing such things as the amount of drug trafficking, money laundering & settling scores with violence. Surely in the 21<sup>st</sup> century there must be an answer to this?

## **6.2 – Sex Offenders Wings**

- 6.2.1 It was recorded in the last report that F and G wings have been re-designated as Sex Offender Wings. This has resulted in a significant change to the prison regime and one that needed to be carefully planned in terms of staffing, prisoner movements, prisoner employment and education. It is now true to say that these changes have been accomplished successfully and that few significant problems have been encountered.

- 6.2.2** In the early stages, the questions of staff management and leadership were addressed. Under Benchmarking permanent SOs were replaced by “floating” ones, which was totally unsuitable for a wing with so many complex and manipulative prisoners. However, it is pleasing to note that the reintroduction of permanent SO’s has restored more effective leadership.
- 6.2.3** Whilst there is a shortage of worthwhile employment in many of the prison’s workshops, the Governor & SMT have ensured that the prisoners on F and G Wings have meaningful & productive employment. The areas identified for employment are:- (a) The ‘Braille Unit’ which could rightly be described as one of the ‘beacons’ in the establishment. The men employed here transcribe a wide variety books for the blind. This gives them great satisfaction & a feeling of worth; (b) Needletrades – This workshop manufactures clothing for the prison estate & enables the men to acquire a variety of skills; & (c) Gardens – Again, an area in which the men learn to develop their horticultural skills & knowledge. All of these employment opportunities also help the men to develop their interpersonal skills as well.
- 6.2.4** This is an area of the prison which needs ongoing monitoring and it will be further addressed in subsequent reports.

### **SECTION 6.3 – Personality Disorders (Beacon) Unit**

- 6.3.1** The Beacon Unit was established a little over two years ago as a regional resource for the management and treatment of prisoners with severe personality disorders. It is located on the lowest level of B Wing and accommodates a maximum of 48 prisoners.
- 6.3.2** Time has been allowed for the unit to develop at a controlled rate towards full occupancy and this has resulted in fewer than expected problems during the development phase. There are currently 36 men located in the unit.
- 6.3.3** The unit forms a key component of the Personality Disorder Pathway Strategy in the North of England and it is delivered by a collaborative partnership between Mersey Care and NOMS. with, of course, existing staff of the prison who expressed a desire & demonstrated the ability to work proactively with prisoners with a diagnosed personality disorder.
- 6.3.4** The Beacon Unit is staffed by a multi-agency team comprising a range of disciplines each of which brings a range of specific expertise to the unit. These practitioners together with existing staff of the prison who expressed a desire & demonstrated the ability to work proactively with prisoners with a diagnosed personality disorder, have built an excellent team. It is evident that a good spirit of co-operation exists between them
- 6.3.5** Staff and practitioners working with personality disordered offenders face substantial challenges in their day to day work, given that personality disorder is characterised by an ingrained pattern of maladaptive behaviours that are damaging to the individual and others around them.
- 6.3.6** Working with this client group can raise very strong opinions and high emotions in individual practitioners and staff teams. One might envisage the possibility of staff burn-out but the Beacon Unit at HMP Garth impresses as being a

very professional unit and consideration of staff needs appears to be at the forefront of best practice and staff management.

- 6.3.6** The location of the Beacon Unit on B1 is good in the sense that it is self-contained and isolated from the rest of the prison. However it is dull and relatively airless and it is suggested that its work might be enhanced if it could be relocated to a brighter and more welcoming location. Overall, however, the beacon Unit is assessed as being a very professional and innovative unit.

#### **SECTION 6.4 – THERAPEUTIC COMMUNITY**

- 6.4.1** This is a 40 bedded unit delivering an intense treatment programme to prisoners wanting to make significant lifestyle changes. It performs well against targets, but care needs to be taken to ensure that only the most appropriate prisoners are located on the unit.
- 6.4.2** The drug service at Garth is delivered by Discover Drug & Alcohol Service. They are a partnership between several agencies, primarily Greater Manchester West NHS, Mental Health Foundation Trust and Phoenix Futures.
- 6.4.3** At Garth 'Discover' deliver an end to end service for substance misuse, made up of the clinical treatment service, the psychosocial interventions team and the therapeutic community.
- 6.4.4** Across the three areas Discover engage with more than 200 members of the prison population.
- 6.4.5** Currently 24 individual prisoners are in receipt of opiate substitution therapy (methadone).

## **SECTION 7 THE WORK OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD**

### **SECTION 7.1**

**7.1.1** The mandatory reporting areas have been monitored on a weekly basis as part of the Board's rota protocol. The protocol also ensures that all other areas of the prison are monitored with sufficient frequency to enable accurate reporting.

**7.1.2** All members of the Board completed the ATPR questionnaire. The results were reviewed by the Board at its November meeting. On the basis of the review findings a detailed action plan was agreed to develop best practice in areas requiring development. The outcomes will be implemented during 2016.

**7.1.3** The total number of applications received within the reporting year was 501 compared with 505 in the previous year. As reported last year, many of these applications have involved far more complex issues than previously and have consequently been more time consuming.

### **SECTION 7.2**

**7.2.1** Two Members of the Board attended the Annual Conference.

### **SECTION 7.3**

**7.3.1.** It is pleasing to report that the Board now has a permanent clerk.

## **SECTION 7.4**

### **7.4.1**

<b>BOARD STATISTICS</b>	
Recommended complement of members	20
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	10
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	9
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	2
Number of members leaving within the reporting period	3
Total number of meetings within the reporting period	12
Total number of visits to the Establishment	786
Total number of segregation reviews held	958
Total number of segregation reviews attended	958
Date of Annual Team Performance Review	November 2015

**SECTION 7.5 – APPLICATIONS DEALT WITH**

Code	Subject	YEAR 2013 / 2014	%	Code	Subject <i>N. Changed categories for 2014</i>	YEAR 2014 / 2015	%
A	Accommodation	24	4,75	A	Accommodation	11	2,95
B	Adjudications	5	1.00	B	Adjudications	3	0.80
C	Diversity related	10	2,00	C	Equality & Diversity	3	0.80
D	Education/ employment /training	17	3.36	D	Education/ employment /training	14	3.76
E1	Family/visits	54	10.69	E1	Family/visits Incl mail and phone	29	7.79
E2	Finance/Pay	19	3.76	E2	Finance/Pay	6	1.61
F	Food/kitchen related	8	1.58	F	Food/kitchen related	10	2.68
G	Health related	66	13.07	G	Health related	32	8.60
H 1	Property (within establishment)	32	6.34	H 1	Property (within establishment)	50	13.44
H2	Property (other establishments)	51	10.10	H2	Property (other establishments)	40	10.75
H3	Canteen/facilities	19	3.76	H3	Canteen/facilities	11	2.95
I	Sentence related	50	9.90	I	Sentence related	35	9.40
J	Staff/prisoner	78	15.44	J	Staff/prisoner	54	14.51

K	Transfers	46	9.10	K	Transfers	22	5.91
L	Miscellaneous	16	3.17	L	Miscellaneous	50	13.44
M	Staff	10	1.98	M	Staff	2	0.53
	<b>Total number of applications</b>	505			<b>Total number of applications</b>	372	
	<b>Of Total: number of Confidential access</b>	14			<b>Of Total: number of Confidential access</b>	8	

**SIGNED**     *PETER GUY* (CHAIR)

## **GLOSSARY**

ACCT	Assessment care in custody teamwork
BICS	British Institute of Cleaning Science
BME	Black, minority ethnic
CAB	Challenging anti-social behaviour
CAN	Certified normal accommodation
CJSM	Criminal justice secure mail
CSU	Care and Segregation Unit
DEAT	Diversity equality action team
DIRF	Diversity Incident reporting form
DNA	Did not attend
HMCIP	Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons
IEP	Incentives and earned privileges
IMB	Independent Monitoring Board
IRC	Immigration removal centre
IPP	Integrated planning process
LGBT	Lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgender
OASys	Offender assessment system
OCA	Observation, classification and allocation
OLASS	Offender learning and skills service
OGRS	Offender group reconviction scale
OMU	Offender Management Unit
PSI	Prison service instruction
PSO	Prison service order
SMARG	Segregation, Monitoring and Review Group
SMART	Systematic Monitoring and Analysing of Race Equality Treatment
SMS	Substance Misuse Service
SMT	Senior management team
SPO	Senior Probation Officer
TC	Therapeutic Community
VDT	Voluntary drugs test