



## **HM Prison Leicester**

### **Independent Monitoring Board**

#### **Annual Report**

**1<sup>st</sup> February 2015 – 31<sup>st</sup> January 2016**

**Compiled and submitted by the full Board  
HMP Leicester, Welford Road, Leicester, LE2 7AJ  
IMB Chairman I M Peat**

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.

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 concern it has.
- (3) Report annually to the Secretary of State on how well the prison has met the standards and requirements placed on it and what impact these have on those in its custody.

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

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NB. The statistics in this report are based on locally collected data.

### 3. Description of HMP Leicester

Since 2014, HMP Leicester has been an adult male local prison with a resettlement function. It serves the magistrates and crown courts of Leicestershire, and caters for remand prisoners and those serving short sentences. Category C Leicestershire prisoners sentenced to over twelve months are transferred to HMP Ranby, and to over four years to HMP Stocken. Certified normal accommodation is 214, with current operational capacity of 411. The usual roll is in the range 320-340, mostly in shared accommodation but allowing for some single cell occupancy.

HMP Leicester is a Victorian prison, occupying a site of three acres close to Leicester City centre. The Gatehouse dates from 1825 and much of the building took place in 1874. In 1990 a new visits and administration block was built adjoining the main entrance. The main residential unit is a long rectangular cell block with four galleried landings, including full integral sanitation and in cell electricity. In the main block Level One houses the Segregation Unit (Seg) and the Vulnerable Prisoners Unit (VPU) and Level Two the First Night Centre (FNC). Mainstream prisoners occupy the remainder of the accommodation. The Substance Misuse Unit (SMU) and the Healthcare facility are housed in a separate building. Other buildings on site include those housing Reception, Learning and Skills, Gym, Kitchen, Chaplaincy and IMB Offices, and Legal Visits. There are outdoor exercise areas.

Service providers:

Health care: Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT), commissioned by NHS England (Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Area Team)

Dental care: Time for Teeth, commissioned by NHS England

Integrated Drug Treatment Services (IDTS): Inclusion Health

Education and Skills: Milton Keynes College (MKC)

Library services: Leicestershire County Council (LCC)

Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC): Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire and Rutland (DLNR) Community Rehabilitation Company

Escort contractor: GEOAmey

Catering supplies: BIDVEST/ 3663

Maintenance: Amey (from June 2015)

## 4. Executive Summary

2015 was an even more challenging year than 2014 for HMP Leicester.

During the whole period there were too few operational staff (6:1) to cover routine work and contingencies, although those present worked hard, and with professionalism and dedication to keep the service running.

HMP Leicester is a busy local jail with a high 'churn'. There are frequently up to 20 receptions and 20 discharges each weekday, and 60 prisoners released and 60 transferred each month.

In common with other prisons in the estate, the establishment experienced

- rising levels of violence and assault (5:6)
- gang and debt related bullying (5:6)
- an increase in the number of serious incidents and potential disorder (5:7)
- a significant level of New Psychoactive Substance (NPS) use (6:3)
- rising levels of self-harm (5:6)

Much of this behaviour related to a small number of individuals, some of whom were transferred from other prisons following bad behaviour, and who were now inappropriately housed in a local resettlement prison. There was regular vandalism and destruction of accommodation and facilities, including by fire-setting and flooding.

IMB regularly saw effective crisis management; volatile situations de-escalated; serious incidents managed without excess force or prisoner injury; the potentially life threatening use of NPS well handled; and serious self-harm averted. When disruption did occur, IMB saw every effort made to continue the regime for the well-behaved prisoner but inevitably on a number of occasions there were lock-ins and slippage of the core day. A restricted regime was not imposed. Mental health staffing was inadequate for the need (5:3), and redeployments of operational staff meant that some functions suffered, for example OMU (5:5) and allocation to and attendance at Education (5:2).

The built environment, already poor and demonstrably unfit for purpose, deteriorated further, despite the prompt efforts of maintenance staff. Meanwhile, there was no funding for planned refurbishments and renovations (5:8, 6:4).

The unannounced Inspection by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (HMIP) (28<sup>th</sup> September – 9<sup>th</sup> October) came at a time when the Governor and Senior Management Team (SMT) were only too aware of the problems the establishment faced, and they recognised that the experience for the well behaved prisoner had been poor. Remedial plans were already in place, but required full recruitment. This was achieved in November, by which time the confidence and experience of the Prison Officer Entry Level Trainees (POELTs) had increased. Since then, more Officers have been visible at times of prisoner movement, and individual officers are responsible for groups of prisoners, including their Incentive and Earned Privileges (IEP) reviews. There is a renewed focus on Education, and more time is available for functions such as OMU and Security and Visits surveillance. The Assessment Care in Custody Teamwork (ACCT) process is better focussed on those in crisis and Mental Health staffing has improved. The

unrelenting pressure of disruption has also reduced, following the transfer out of certain prisoners in November and December.

Throughout 2015, prisoners were appreciative (both in the HMIP survey and in conversations with the IMB) of those areas of the prison which continued to serve their needs well, including Catering, SMU and IDTS, Reception, the CRC, the Gym, and the Library. Alongside this IMB gives particular credit to the Segregation staff (5:7) who showed commendable resilience in a protracted sequence of the most trying of situations.

A continuing feature of HMP Leicester is the positive engagement between officers and prisoners, whether local or out of area. Prisoners have frequently paid tribute to staff who have helped them at times of crisis, or who have 'sorted things out' for them. 80% of those prisoners surveyed by HMIP stated that they were treated with respect by staff.

At the end of the reporting period IMB Leicester felt that basic functions were back on a firmer footing, thanks to the work of a committed body of staff and the hard work of the Governor and SMT, who have made Violence Reduction and increasing the efforts to disrupt the NPS supply an ongoing priority. For 2016, the IMB hopes to see an increased focus on providing a good experience for the well behaved prisoner, in terms of Health, Education and Skills, Equalities, and Peer support and Resettlement opportunities.

## Questions for the Minister

HMP Leicester has been expected to

- act as a local prison with a high 'churn';
- be a resettlement prison offering Education and Skills training and the strengthening of family ties;
- comply with the needs of the Prison Service by accommodating very disruptive and often mentally disturbed individuals.

The experience in this reporting year has demonstrated that even with a dedicated staff and good leadership it is impossible to provide all three functions efficiently in an environment that has long been acknowledged to be overcrowded and unfit for purpose, when there are too few experienced staff and there is limited purposeful activity available.

IMB Leicester would like to know

1 Is the prison marked for closure?  
If so, when?

2 If not, will the Minister make funds available to address the poor accommodation, the understaffing, the unsuitable prisoner case mix and the overcrowding, and increase the facilities for the Skills training and the Education required for successful Rehabilitation and local Resettlement?

We also repeat a concern raised in 2014 and still current:

The Board feels that it is inhumane for severely mentally disturbed prisoners to be kept in prison, sometimes of necessity in Segregation, rather than in a secure hospital. Weeks to months are spent waiting for 'assessment' and placement long after it is clear that there is no acute or temporary cause for their behaviour. Such individuals consume a disproportionate amount of time and money, and increase stress for staff and other prisoners.

3 Does the Minister acknowledge the pressure placed on the service by severely mentally disturbed prisoners?

If so, what are the plans to address this?

## Questions for the Prison Service

The IMB supports the aim of the Prison Service to reduce re-offending and encourage local resettlement and family ties.

However there is in practice a tension between the day to day needs of the Service and the needs of the prisoner at HMP Leicester in respect of the following:

- Prisoners who should be transferred on, to release spaces, may be refused because of exclusion criteria at receiving establishments.
- Leicester prisoners, including those on remand, may be required to transfer to other establishments on overcrowding draft, to the detriment of local and family ties and release arrangements.
- Prisoners may wait a long time for an appropriate purposeful activity, especially given the lack of Vocational training (VT) opportunities at Leicester.
- The 'whole sentence plan' of the individual is not the priority in determining his location.

1 What steps are being taken to ensure a more 'joined-up' approach to the delivery of resettlement opportunities?

The Board repeats a concern raised in 2014, which has not been addressed:

HMP Leicester has again been required by the needs of the Prison Service to house dangerous and disruptive individuals, often from out of area. Our current report illustrates the effect they have had on the whole establishment, to the detriment of the well behaved prisoner.

2 What steps are being taken to ensure the provision of secure accommodation for such individuals and their timely transfer to an appropriate environment?

## Section 5:1 Equality and Inclusion

The Equality Duty under the 2010 Equality Act requires the Board to have due regard to advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Protected characteristics are disability, race including ethnic or national origins, colour and nationality, sex and sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

**Disability:** About 35% of the Leicester prisoner population self-reports in reception as having a disability, usually relating to mental health or learning. The few with physical disabilities usually manage their chronic conditions themselves, with help from Healthcare and landing staff and other prisoners as appropriate. A cell and bathroom suitable for a wheelchair user is available in the SMU. There are about 30 prisoners over the age of 50, and these are offered a dedicated gym session.

**Religion/belief:** The multi-faith Chaplaincy team is well regarded in the establishment, and prisoners report positively about their help. There is a daily on call rota for visits to the Segregation and Healthcare Units, and a member of the team sees each new prisoner within 24 hours of reception. There is a large and well used multi-faith room. Religious festivals and excusals from work are well publicised. Some 15% of prisoners at any one time are Muslim, and their attendance at Friday prayers is a priority for the regime. Ramadan planning was exemplary. A 'Man-up' programme, helping prisoners to explore the pressures and expectations of society and how these affect behaviour, was due to start at the end of the reporting year, but had to be postponed because a facilitator dropped out.

**Foreign nationals:** The number of foreign national prisoners is usually between 30 and 40. The number of tariff expired overstayers rarely exceeds 3, and there were none at the end of the reporting year. Home Office Immigration Officers attend the Prison regularly, often weekly, and make themselves freely available to prisoners.

**Discrimination:** About one third of Leicester prisoners are from black or ethnic minority backgrounds. At the beginning of the reporting year, all staff were encouraged to avail themselves of the on-line Equalities training package. The Cell Sharing Risk Assessment in reception identifies those prisoners with discriminatory views or behaviour, and the Level 1 course 'Equality and Diversity' is promoted. The Discrimination Incident Report Form (DIRF) mechanism unfortunately fell out of use during the first 9 months of the year, although some incidents had been reported using the Prison Complaints procedure. This has been rectified, and an updated information leaflet for prisoners and staff 'Equalities at HMP Leicester 2016' was published in January.

In the HMIP survey, 80% of prisoners reported that staff treated them with respect, compared to 73% in comparable prisons.

**Equality:** Meetings of the Equality Action Team (EAT) are chaired by the Deputy Governor. Unfortunately there were a number of postponements because of lack of staff time, and only two meetings were held in 2015. The December meeting was well attended by staff groups. Prisoner representatives are being sought, and three officers have volunteered to take on Equality roles. A bimonthly timetabling is planned for 2016.

The Prisoners' Council was successfully re-introduced and met four times in 2015. An IMB member has attended this meeting and found that staff treated the prisoner representatives with respect and

listened to their often well founded concerns, and did their best to solve problems, or to refer them to the SMT.

**Concerns:**

The IMB would like to see a renewed focus on Equality issues. The appointment of Peer workers for the physically disabled and for older prisoners would be beneficial.

## **5:2 Education, Learning and Skills and 5:4 Purposeful activity (including work)**

The excellent working relationship continues between the prison, Milton Keynes College and the Cluster Lead Head of Learning Skills and Employment (HMP Leicester, Onley and Stocken). 18 staff deliver the service in 10 classrooms, and outreach learning support can be provided on the landings although this has been required less this year, because prisoners have been encouraged to attend class as part of their social skills development.

### **Education**

There are sufficient Education and Skills activity places (approximately 335), and prisoners are paid at the highest rate so that there is no disadvantage. The first educational assessment is made during Induction, and for the 50% of prisoners who fall below level 1 in Maths and English, Education is the mandatory activity. Each prisoner also sees a member of the National Careers Service (NCS), and a Skills Action Plan is produced. Basic Skills teaching includes Maths and English (Stepping Stones), and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and provision was increased in 2015 to match the needs of the population. Teaching to level 2 is offered in English, Maths, ESOL, IT and Art.

Most prisoners remain at HMP Leicester for between 6 weeks and 6 months, 40% for less than 3 months. Courses are delivered intermittently, but the College is flexible and provides agency staff if necessary so that prisoners do not wait too long to begin. All courses are accredited, and delivered in units, usually of 20 hours study over 4-6 weeks. The College collaborates well with other prisons and prisoners can take their credits with them on transfer, even for part of a unit.

Unfortunately during 2015 levels of educational activity fell. Those prisoners not mandated to Education could choose not to enrol if they preferred to wait for a work placement. Not all places were allocated, and lack of operational staff meant that punctuality and supervision of attendance was poor. Some sessions were lost during lockins and staff redeployment. There was also an unavoidable absence of senior Education staff over the summer. Activity levels were low at the time of the HMIP Inspection, and the Ofsted Inspection in October 2015 rated the prison at Grade 3.

Since then, the situation has recovered somewhat. A new Head of Education was appointed in October and has improved performance management and staff training. Three peer mentors promote Education as a worthwhile activity to new arrivals, help with attendance slips and see refusers. Remand prisoners can choose not to engage, but if they do sign up they must attend. Those above level 1 and waiting for work are encouraged to take courses such as those useful for future employability, Health and Safety, and Equality and Diversity, and each prisoner is directed to the courses that fulfil his assessed needs. Increased operational staffing and the new role briefs introduced in November mean that attendance is better supervised. Absenteeism is investigated immediately, and refusal leads to loss of pay and IEP

review. Educational activity is now reported at the weekly performance meeting, and is regarded as a 'whole prison' priority.

### **Library**

The Library is well used. Prison Service Instructions and legal texts are available on demand and prisoners can obtain photocopies at a reasonable cost. There is a good range of stock, available in 20 languages, and the Library Orderlies are helpful and welcoming to new arrivals. There are 4 VP sessions. Literacy is strongly promoted, and the programme includes a prisoner reading group, the 6 book challenge, and Turning pages (the Shannon Trust). Volunteers support 'Storybook Dads', and more than 20 prisoners made recordings for their children during the year.

**Concerns:** It remains regrettable that funding is not available for opening on Fridays or in the evenings. There is also a lack of funding for computer based resources and for resources to support Education and Training courses.

### **Writer in residence**

The Writer in residence, a published author sponsored at present by the Joyce Carr Doughty Trust, is energetic and well-liked by prisoners and makes himself available to individuals or groups for creative writing and reading projects. He works in close cooperation with the Library and the Education team. In 2015 he organised visits from a performance poet, a chess expert, and supervised a guitar workshop. He has made links in the community with the Curve Theatre, de Montfort University, the Bella Russia free theatre and the National Space Centre. In September 2015 he was awarded a Certificate of Excellence from the National Prison Radio Association for the 'Verbatim Pieces' project. In December, a bid to the Arts Council Libraries Fund was successful for a Shakespeare Festival Project to run from February to October which will offer Prisoner Workshops and will lead to three major broadcast and performance events – 'Richard 3 rebooted' for National Prison Radio, 'Imprisoning Shakespeare', a dramatic performance, and the Frantic Assembly Theatre Company's 'Othello', a physical theatrical performance. All these activities are a welcome addition to purposeful activity at the establishment, and increase prisoner confidence, literacy and well-being.

### **Purposeful activity**

Part time education is the main purposeful activity at HMP Leicester. A few prisoners on the landings work as Listeners, orderlies, mentors, barbers and painters, and in the Library and Gym. Employment is available to a small number of prisoners part-time in the laundry and cleaning services, and full time in the kitchens, and these link with a range of accredited courses, usually at level 1 or 2, including City and Guilds Cleaning, Hospitality and Catering, and Business and Employment Skills, the Royal Society of Public Health, Food Hygiene, Catering and Retail and the WAMITAB environmental waste recycling course. The Gym based training accredited by the ACTIVE IQ Company is particularly successful. A new course 'Kick-off in Business' is available, and it is possible for a prisoner to achieve the Beginner's qualification at Leicester and continue to the Higher in another prison; mentoring is then available for 12 months after release.

**Concerns:** There are too few Vocational Training (VT) opportunities at HMP Leicester and there are no workshops. The establishment has tried to be innovative. 28 prisoners work as kitchen orderlies, and some have been taught basic bread making skills. It was hoped that a formal qualification could be set up with MKC, needing short guided learning hours. The baking industry is a promising opportunity on release. However funding is not available.

## 5:3 Healthcare and Mental Health

**The Healthcare Unit** continues to provide 23 trained Clinical Nursing staff and Healthcare support workers supported by 2 administrators. General practice input has been strengthened, and 7 GPs now provide two clinics each weekday, and one each on Saturday and Sunday, and are on-call till 6.30pm with the Out of Hours Service then taking over. Urgent appointments are available daily. The nursing core day is 7.30am – 8.30pm, and one nurse stays overnight on site.

All prisoners entering HMP Leicester meet a member of the Healthcare team within 24 hours of arrival for a physical and mental health screening check and are referred on to specialist services if required, and all are given comprehensive written information about accessing the available services, and the arrangements for medication and IDTS dispensing. Prisoners are also reviewed on return from court.

### **Outpatient services**

The accommodation is spacious. In February 2015 the flooring was replaced, and there was better screening of clinic rooms to ensure privacy. A range of clinics is offered, including an optician, and visiting specialists and there is a nurse led diabetes clinic. The main concern throughout 2015 was lack of operational staffing for prisoner escorts, which led to a high rate of 'Did not attend' and increasing waiting lists. There were 9 allocated outside hospital slots each week, but sometimes these were lost for the same reason. VP access to services was however improved with the use of a room on the VPU, and the attendance there of the optician and of the GP weekly.

**Acute care** on the landings was very good. Nursing staff provided prompt and effective care for urgent situations such as self-harm, assault and the effects of illicit substances (6:3).

### **Mental Health**

HMP Leicester has a very needy population. In the HMIP survey 47% reported emotional or mental health problems, and the active case load at the time of the HMIP Inspection was 67 prisoners, and at the end of the reporting year 53. Mental health was understaffed during 2015, and there was unavoidable absence of senior managers during the summer, and a reliance on bank and agency staff. There were 5 different locum psychiatrists, whose opinions sometimes differed, and occasionally none was available. Crisis intervention was good, and Mental Health Nurses (MHNs) worked hard to cope with the rising number of ACCTs, but continuity of care suffered, and prisoners raised this with the IMB and at the Prisoners Council.

The situation improved after October, with the appointment of a new manager and additional staff. Three MHNs are now available each day, with defined roles and time for case work. A 'stepped model' like that in the community, has been introduced, so that those prisoners with low level needs receive support from the chaplaincy or wing staff, and so that specialist resources are allocated to those with clear psychiatric problems. There is stronger liaison with the Safer Custody team, with clear end-points for ACCT documents and ongoing Care Plans agreed with the prisoner. At the end of the reporting year, two appointed psychiatrists were each providing a weekly session.

### **Concerns**

In 2015, 8 prisoners were transferred under the Mental Health Act to a secure Mental Health facility, and at the end of the reporting year a further 6 were undergoing assessment. Again the Board has been concerned about the long time, usually a number of weeks, taken for the assessment and transfer of the

seriously mentally disturbed prisoner and the excessive time therefore spent in an unsuitable environment in prison.

There have been Healthcare developments during the year to the benefit of prisoners:

- Lockable boxes for in-possession medication have been installed in cell on all landings
- Group sessions addressing low level anxiety, including such themes as stress, anger management and sleep hygiene, led by the Cognitive Behaviour Therapist, to address low level anxiety
- Good liaison with the Resettlement services, and contacts made with Community Psychiatric Nurses and Social Services, aiding continuity of care on release, and with the Police regarding unwell individuals held in their Custody Suite
- Collaborative working has been introduced with HMPs Glen Parva and Gartree to share nurses with special skills and to develop nurse led clinics for chronic conditions and preventative work
- Increased liaison with the Gym to support health promotion and remedial PE
- Work has proceeded well for smoking cessation, with support for both staff and prisoners.

### **Dental**

Two dentist clinics are provided each week. A Dental triage nurse attends twice monthly and maintains the waiting list. Normally urgent cases are seen within days, and routine cases within 4 – 6 weeks. There is only one VPU session per month, but the waiting list is comparable. Adequate care was compromised for a number of weeks during the summer by the need to repair the dental chair and by servicing delays because of a complex private maintenance agreement outside the NHS contract. A number of prisoners complained both to the IMB and to their local MP about this service deficiency. However extra clinics were arranged to catch up and the Dental triage nurse saw all prisoners with dental problems. The situation now seems satisfactory.

## **5:5 Resettlement**

### **Offender management Unit (OMU)**

This continued under extreme pressure during 2015. Although a local prison, Leicester has been required by the Service to accept prisoners from elsewhere, sometimes those refused by other prisons, including some very disruptive individuals. Receiving prisons have not always accepted requests for transfer out, and have placed exclusion criteria. Overcrowding drafts to HMP Lincoln have also occurred, including the transfer of remand and local prisoners nearing the end of their sentence. This compromises the maintenance of local and family ties, and interferes with Resettlement plans.

During 2015 there was a shortage of Band 4 officers, and those in post were frequently called to other duties because of the general short staffing within the establishment. Offender Supervisor functions such as Offender Assessment Systems (OASys), recategorisation, and case management and sentence planning fell behind. Probation was also short staffed, although National Probation Service staff from elsewhere provided some assistance. Two of the three posts were vacant at the end of 2015. One Probation officer worked very hard to manage a large case load of indeterminate sentence and high risk prisoners. Parole report preparation was up to date at the HMIP Inspection, and prisoners expressed appreciation for this.

### **Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC)**

The CRC partners are St Giles Trust, the Crime Reduction Initiative and Igneus UK. The DLNR team in Leicester has a manager and up to 9 case workers, including staff with Citizens Advice Bureau, housing and welfare and probation experience. At any one time 4 are co-located with OMU staff.

Prisoner officers complete the Basic Custody Screening Tool (BCST) Part 1 within 72 hours of arrival, and within five days the CRC case worker meets the prisoner and forms an action plan, the BCST Part 2 or Resettlement plan. This identifies immediate priorities, such as contacting a landlord or utility provider, and addressing domestic problems relating to absence from home. 12 weeks before release there is another meeting to complete the Resettlement plan, by re-visiting housing, finance and employment. An offer is also made of a community mentor to meet the prisoner at the time of release, although uptake of this is low at present.

The CRC began work in May 2015, and quickly established working relationships with OMU and other prison departments. Members of the team have shown themselves to be energetic and proactive, and are always willing to visit prisoners on the wing and to offer them support, whatever their release address or sentence status. Prisoners have consistently praised their helpful attitude and practical results. Six St Giles Peer Advisers have been recruited and will be helped to progress to a Level 3 City and Guilds Qualification in Information, Advice and Guidance with 12 modules over three months.

**Finance:** The CRC has addressed debt in a Prisoners' Workshop, and has helped at least 16 prisoners with their debt problems, including contacting creditors. About 10 prisoners a month have been assisted in opening Bank Accounts before release. Job Centre Plus manages the closure and re-opening of benefit claims.

**Housing:** One in five prisoners has housing problems, and the CRC is active in contacting hostels, and private landlords. There are links with the Housing and Welfare Team at the Council, and a council worker may be assigned to meet the prisoner on release.

**Family liaison:** Some prisoners are now discharged through the Visits centre, and the CRC worker goes through the license conditions and other matters with the family. There are plans to work with the Troubled Families programme in the community.

**Concern:** Data collection is incomplete at present, relating to the numbers released to settled accommodation, to education or training, and to employment, but will be an important factor in demonstrating the outcomes of the CRC input.

## **5:6 Safer Custody**

### **Self-Harm**

340 Assessment Care in Custody Teamwork (ACCT) documents were opened in 2015 (287 in 2014 and 260 in 2013). There is a rota of 10 trained assessors, who see the prisoner promptly. The total number of self-harm incidents was 467, averaging 39 per month (range 35-55). The total number of prisoners involved was less, at 221 (average 18 per month, range 11-27), because some prisoners were repeated self-harmers. Life threatening self-harm was thwarted about twice a month, and 12 prisoners required hospital treatment after cutting or ligaturing. Each month, individuals were placed on constant supervision, for hours, or a few days or longer, sometimes repeatedly, and some prisoners later expressed their appreciation to staff for their care during these troubled episodes.

There was a significant proportion of manipulative self-harm. Although the ACCT process is intended for 'Crisis intervention', staff erred on the safe side, and the rising number of open documents became difficult to manage, with not enough time in the working day or at night to complete all the required observations and paperwork. This was highlighted in the HMIP report. Towards the end of 2015, when staffing numbers and experience allowed, and a closer cooperation became possible between the Safer Custody and the Mental Health teams, the number of open ACCTs gradually fell, with no prisoner detriment, and there was better focus on needy individuals, better continuity of case management, and proper closure of the ACCT process with an ongoing care plan agreed with the prisoner. Less staff time is therefore now taken up by routine observations, and there is more time for meaningful contact. The withdrawal of 'Emergency smoker's packs' in December led to a noticeable reduction in manipulative self-harm.

### **Listeners**

The number of Listeners (Samaritan trained Peer workers) has varied between 3 and 10 during 2015, with 6 in post at the end of the reporting year. The number is affected by the transfer or release of trained individuals and the fact that the Samaritans can provide just two blocks of training sessions per annum. Prisoner requests for a Listener are facilitated promptly both day and night, and the First Night Centre is particularly well supported. There are sufficient Samaritans phones and a Freephone number has recently become available. Representatives of the Samaritans and of the Listeners attend part of the monthly Safer Custody meeting, and their contribution is valued.

### **Violence**

There were high levels of violence throughout 2015, particularly over the summer months. A Zero Tolerance Policy was used. Incidents often related to gang culture, drugs and debt, including matters on the outside, and prisoners from outside Leicester were frequently involved. There were 95 assaults prisoner on prisoner, an average of 8 per month (range 2-15), and 50 fights, averaging 4 per month (range 1-10). There were 61 staff assaults, some very serious. HMIP reported that fights were twice, and assaults three times, their comparator level. This illustrates the challenging population that Leicester staff were expected to deal with.

Staff were very good at de-escalating violent incidents and controlling volatile situations and at least two potential mass disturbances were prevented. No prisoner was harmed during the control process, even though prisoners sometimes used improvised weapons. After a fight in November, 12 disruptive individuals were dispersed to other jails, with an immediate calming effect on the whole establishment.

Data collection was very good. A dedicated Safer Custody Officer investigated all serious incidents, spoke to prisoners and ensured that perpetrators and victims were on intervention plans. The weekly Order and Control meeting was particularly effective, with attendance from Security, Safer Custody, Healthcare and other departments, allowing full MDT discussion and information sharing, and outcomes were implemented immediately. An electronic Violence Diagnostic Tool was introduced in September, which allowed 'heat mapping' by highlighting the times of day and locations of violence, bullying, newly opened ACCTs, and R45 requests for own protection, and this data informed the meeting, and was also reviewed at the monthly Safer Custody meeting.

HMP Leicester has been chosen to take part in the NOMS Violence Reduction Project (Custodial Violence Management Model), and staff training began in January.

### **Vandalism and damage**

Some damage was caused by mentally disturbed individuals, but much was deliberate. The Fire Brigade attended 14 times during June, July and August. The number of fires fell after smoke detectors were installed outside all cells, and it became known that all arson, however minor, would be referred to the Police.

### **Death in custody**

The Board regrets having to report two deaths in custody in 2015, one from natural causes, and one self-inflicted. All proper procedures have been followed.

## **5:7 Segregation Unit**

### **Accommodation**

The already poor environment for prisoners in the seven celled Segregation Unit deteriorated steadily from January to September 2015, as a result of the actions of a small number of disruptive prisoners, with repeated, sometimes daily, vandalism of cell contents and fabric, fire setting, flooding and dirty protest. Cells were frequently unavailable for use despite the prompt action of maintenance staff, and at times up to 9 segregated prisoners were held in other cells on the landing. In October, HMIP found the cells unfit for habitation. In December, a concerted act of vandalism rendered the whole unit unusable. The Prison Service is funding refurbishment, rebuilding and strengthening work and by the end of the reporting year the conditions were much improved, although the cells were still cold. Work began in November on converting one cell into a Safe Cell, and this was available for use in December.

### **Staff**

IMB commended on many occasions the resilience of staff working daily with these disturbed and sometimes violent men. Prisoners were always treated humanely and with respect, no matter what their behaviour. Staff worked hard to engage each prisoner with the regime, and most were able to return to normal location. 8 officers, as before, are certified to work in the Segregation Unit, with 4 in reserve.

### **Admissions to the Unit**

160 prisoners were received into Segregation conditions in 2015 (264 in 2014, 300 in 2013), and the average stay was 13 days. Two prisoners were unavoidably held for over three months but none since October.

### **Procedures for involving IMB**

Members are usually advised within 24 hours of new admissions to Segregation, either in person or by e-mail or phone call, and make every effort to visit within 72 hours. Rota members visit the Unit at least twice weekly and are usually able to see and speak freely to each prisoner unlocked, unless staff advise that this is unsafe. The IMB box in the Segregation Unit has occasionally contained applications.

### **Review Boards**

IMB attended 28 Segregation Review Boards during 2015. These were all properly conducted, with essential personnel in attendance, and multidisciplinary discussion was encouraged. Some prisoners refused to attend, and were spoken to at the cell door. Those who did attend were given every opportunity to put their point of view, and were offered frank and helpful guidance as to how to improve their behaviour. The intention was always to engage the prisoner in the regime and to return to normal

location as soon as possible. It is more difficult for IMB to attend 'ad hoc' reviews, but arrangements are in place for paperwork to be inspected afterwards.

### **Force**

In 2015, force was used a total of 247 times. 177 episodes were unplanned. 70 were planned, including relocation within the prison of disruptive individuals, and the transfer out of those who were refusing to transfer voluntarily. Many volatile situations were de-escalated, and the use of force avoided, reflecting well on the behaviour and professionalism of prison staff. IMB witnessed the use of force, both planned and unplanned, on a number of occasions, and was satisfied that correct Control and Restraint techniques were used, with no excess force, and no prisoner suffered injury. Planned interventions are videoed, and CCTV coverage was available in 2015 for the Segregation Unit, VPU and SMU. The IMB monitored 13 serious incidents in 2015.

### **Adjudications**

The number of adjudications rose to 1914 in 2015, from 1273 in 2014 and 967 in 2013. Analysis of the data showed that charges laid ranged between 119 and 201 per month, while charges proven ranged between 49 and 86, so while it was clear that there were serious misdemeanors to be dealt with, some cases were being brought that would have been better dealt with under the IEP system. Recognising this, the Adjudication Liaison staff (Segregation Officers) worked hard to educate and advise new staff, and in January 2016 produced a comprehensive written guide. The electronic adjudication recording system is now well embedded. IMB monitored 34% of adjudications in 2015, and consistently found them to be well conducted and fair. The Independent Adjudicator has attended at monthly intervals, and IMB has been present on each occasion. Adjudication Standardisation meetings are timetabled quarterly, but low staffing meant that only two were held in 2015. These however were very effective with the intention always that prisoners should be fairly treated.

There has been strong Police Liaison this reporting year, and 119 serious acts of vandalism, fire setting and assaults have been reported to the Police, 25 of them from disturbances in August. A number of cases are proceeding to prosecution.

### **The Legal Visits Department**

9 sessions per week are available for prisoners to meet their legal advisers privately, and prisoners report that it is easier to attend than in other prisons. There was increased use of the video-link in 2015, with 980 court appearances and 254 conferences (in 2014, 798 and 243). There are plans to expand this work to include other outside agencies. Prisoners continue to appreciate this opportunity, and it saves time and public money. Some prisoners are sent to HMP Leicester because this facility is available. The accommodation is unfortunately in a poor state of repair, with a leaking roof, and has been of concern to the IMB throughout the year.

### **Concerns**

The Board continues to believe that it is inappropriate that a small busy local resettlement prison should be required to hold prisoners showing violent, dangerous and aggressive behaviour, and to commit disproportionately large amounts of time and resources to one or two individuals, who clearly need higher security accommodation. The Board deplores the delays involved in arranging such transfers.

The Board also remains concerned about the management of severely mentally disturbed individuals held in the Segregation. These prisoners cause stress for staff and other prisoners by their disruptive and unpredictable behaviour. The diagnosis and assessment period stretches over weeks to months, and

their mental health also tends to deteriorate in the meantime. It is inhumane to incarcerate these vulnerable individuals in the Segregation, rather than to manage them in secure hospital accommodation.

## **5:8 Residential services including accommodation, food, catering and kitchens**

### **Accommodation**

By its nature, the accommodation falls well below the standard expected in a modern prison. The poor and deteriorating physical environment has been pointed out in IMB reports over the past 10 years, and repeatedly by HMIP, and is well known to the Prison Service. There has been no significant investment in upgrading facilities. Toilets in the reception area and in many cells remain unscreened, as do showers in the gym. The outside PE area is no longer safe to use. In early 2015 the communal showers and toilets on one landing were refurbished, but the 'rolling programme' anticipated in our last report was not funded.

The wing accommodation deteriorated markedly in 2015 as a result of vandalism, flooding and fire-setting, despite the prompt and repeated repairs effected by the maintenance team. Although prisoners are held accountable at adjudication and charged for cell damage, in practice the system does not act as a deterrent and significant monies cannot be reclaimed. Staff and prisoners became used to 'making do' with poor conditions, and standards of cleanliness deteriorated at times of inadequate staffing. Waste management was also unsatisfactory, and there were frequent accumulations of bagged litter inside and out. As soon as new role briefs were introduced in November and a 'Cleaning officer' was in place, supervision of the cleaners and standards of cleanliness improved noticeably. The new Waste Contractor appointed in January effected an immediate improvement in litter management.

### **Laundry**

The Clothing Exchange System (CES) was reorganised during the reporting year, with a fairer rota, and exchange times well publicised. There were increased efforts to stop hoarding, and stock was replenished regularly. The main difficulty in 2015 was inadequate staffing, so that turn round of clean kit was too slow and some prisoners missed their turn, although expanded prisoner operated washing machines on the wings helped somewhat. The VPU is now self-sufficient, with dedicated washing machines in the unit. There are no laundry facilities for those entitled to wear their own clothes. The working of the CES had started to improve at the end of the reporting year as a result of better staffing and the new Operational Support Grade (OSG) working patterns.

### **Food**

Prisoners are provided with two cooked meals daily, from a preselect menu with a 6 option choice covering all dietary requirements and allowing for health, cultural and religious preferences. There is a rolling 4 week programme. A standard breakfast pack is supplied to eat in cell. Five fruit and vegetable choices are offered each day, and there is no added salt. A default choice is available for those who refuse to choose, or new arrivals. Kitchen staff visit prisoners with special requirements and give advice on choices. Special diets can be accommodated if necessary, for medical conditions such as gluten sensitive enteropathy, and for temporary conditions such as jaw fracture. Muslim prisoners were involved in planning the Ramadan menu and in surveying participants during the fasting period. The Black History month menu was very popular.

Consultation with prisoners is very good. There is a formal food survey every 6 months, a representative from the Catering service attends the Prisoners' Council, and there is a Comments book at the servery.

Suggestions are acted upon, and favourites remain on the menu. The IMB has consistently found the food appetising and of good quality, and prisoners frequently say that the food is better than they have experienced in other establishments and that to receive two cooked meals a day is exceptional. This is a notable achievement, when the budget per prisoner is £2.02 per day, and there is a monopoly supplier able to increase prices at short notice.

### **Kitchen**

The kitchen has continued to perform well in the 6 monthly regional catering audits, and was rated 3 at an unannounced EHO Inspection in November. In September the Servery was re-decorated, and new hotplate units were installed. The aging cooking equipment remains of concern to IMB.

## **6:1 Staffing**

Last year IMB commented on the improved staff engagement and communication fostered by the Governor and SMT. This strengthened through the year, with excellent team working especially at times of disruption. Although some operational staff became disillusioned by the relentless daily stress, morale on the whole remained surprisingly good.

There was significant understaffing throughout 2015. Benchmark levels were reached in March, but there were vacancies, and experienced staff continued to leave the service either through early retirement or for a change of career. Sickness levels were high, including long term sick, with the effects of stress and injury. Recruitment was excellent, and new POELTs joined throughout the year. They were enthusiastic and hardworking, but their inexperience led to increasing use of the adjudication and ACCT system which then consumed the time of the more experienced officers who were also responsible for mentoring the new recruits while trying to run the jail. New OSGs also joined, including 8 in June. By the time of the HMIP Inspection, of 90 Band 3 officers, 44 had less than 12 months service and 40 were probationers.

Because of vacancies, Band 4 officers were frequently re-deployed from OMU functions. There were too few OSGs for services such as the CES, PIN Phone monitoring, and waste management to run smoothly. Even the loss of 2 members of staff for escort duty or bedwatch had a serious impact on the ability to run a normal regime. During incidents, every effort was always made to run the routine day, but inevitably there were lockins and timetable slippage, and the well behaved prisoner suffered. The establishment did not however resort to a restricted regime.

Management were well aware of the difficulties highlighted by HMIP, and plans were ready, negotiated with the Prison Officers' Association, but dependent on full and more experienced staffing. At the end of November, new working patterns were introduced for wing staff, with new role briefs, allowing increased accountability for groups of prisoners and more staff visible at times of prisoner movement. This led to an immediate improvement in the organisation and control of the regime. In January there were sufficient Band 4 officers for new profile and shift patterns, allowing dedicated time for OMU functions. New OSG profiles have also been beneficial.

## **6:2 Substance Misuse Unit**

The 'Gateway to Recovery' Substance Misuse Unit continues to provide a highly regarded service. The Unit, on 2 floors, houses up to 31 prisoners, including those undergoing the 8 session programme, and those undergoing detoxification and awaiting entry. The atmosphere is calm and there is a strong Peer mentoring scheme. A very high proportion of prisoners who complete the programme remain off drugs 12 weeks later. The National Drug Treatment Agency monitors the longer term success rate. The Unit works with 'On the Road', an organisation in the community; one of their members will visit a vulnerable prisoner regularly before release, arrange pickup at the Gate and offer ongoing support to the prisoner and his family. There are other strong community links, and substance misusers are better supported with Resettlement opportunities than other prisoners.

In January 2016 'Dear Albert', an organisation based in Leicester began to provide group sessions twice monthly to address alcohol problems and the uptake has been good. During Alcohol Awareness week 16-22<sup>nd</sup> November the Substance Misuse team was based on the main landings to give information and advice to all prisoners, and on the SMU landing, themed group sessions were held in the afternoons focussing on the different aspects of alcohol.

## **6:3 New Psychoactive Substances (NPS)**

In common with other prisons, Leicester has experienced an increase in the use of NPS. The effects on the individual are unpredictable. Some become withdrawn and 'under the influence', some become aggressive and violent, often with poor memory of events afterwards, and some collapse or develop life threatening fits. It is to the credit of wing staff and Healthcare that cases were recognised and there was an immediate appropriate response, and no lives were lost. Occurrences were sporadic but frequent between June and September, when there were 12 on average per month, and 10 required paramedic assistance and 11 hospital treatment, including one admission to Intensive care. There were parallel good security finds and targeted searches, and the number of attacks fell to low levels after the transfer of certain prisoners. Packages have also been intercepted at visits and throwovers. Prisoners are however skilful at hiding and bringing in illicit substances, including through 'plugging'. Leicester has been chosen as part of a National Pilot project for the better detection of NPS.

## **6:4 Visits**

### **Accommodation**

The accommodation in the Visits Hall was rightly criticised by HMIP as bare and unwelcoming, especially for those with children. Volunteers from the Prison Visits Charity provide play equipment and supervision, but are not available for every visits session. The Salvation Army run a snack bar, but not on Sundays. IMB was pleased therefore when at the beginning of 2015 HMP Leicester was included in the Transforming Visits Pilot scheme, which was an opportunity to improve the facilities while at the same time making visits more family friendly. It was anticipated that a new Band 4 caterer would be appointed, and that prisoners would have the opportunity to gain hospitality skills and accredited qualifications. Preliminary survey work had been done, and the furniture replacements were ready in outside prison workshops. Unfortunately in September the scheme was cancelled after a funding review. The Visitors Waiting Area is also in need of renovation.

**Process**

The establishment promotes local family ties. It is easy to book, by prisoner application, on-line, by telephone or in person. There is a well regarded programme of monthly 'Family visits', offering pre-visit classroom sessions, support on literacy and numeracy and further learning over the preceding 3-4 weeks, in partnership with the LCC Adult Education Service. It is a pity that visits is one route by which contraband goods enter the prison, although there has been very good surveillance and security work, and a number of visitors found in possession of prohibited items were arrested during 2015, and one so far has received a custodial sentence.

## 7:1 The Work of the Independent Monitoring Board

### Membership:

	2015/16
Recommended complement of Board members	15
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	2
Number of members leaving within the reporting period	1
Total number of Board meetings during the reporting period	12
Total number of visits to the Establishment	385
Total number of segregation reviews held	Not available
Total number of segregation reviews attended	28
Date of Annual Team Performance Review	Sept 2016

\*Includes 2 Joint Board members

The Constitution currently adopted by the Board states that ‘the Board must select the most suitable candidates based on merit’. The composition of the present Board reflects the characteristics of applicants, rather than any bias in the selection process.

Two recruitment campaigns have been held over the past year, and a new recruitment leaflet has been designed, with the aim of more diverse recruitment. In November members took part in a Legal Volunteering and Networking Day at De Montfort University. The most recent recruitment campaign to fill 3 Board vacancies attracted 10 applicants, 5 of whom were from ethnic minority groups. The Board was commended for good recruitment practice in the response of the MOJ to the Harris report (Review by Lord Harris of Self-inflicted deaths in Custody of 18-24 year olds *gov-response-harris-review*).

Members make at least two rota visits to the establishment each week, and statutory areas are always covered. Reports are prepared promptly, with concerns highlighted, and are circulated immediately to members and to the Governing Governor who circulates them to members of the SMT for comment and action. It is reassuring for the Board that the issues it raises are usually known already to the establishment, through other pathways, both from staff and prisoners, and often solutions are already in hand, or plans ready for discussion.

Board members are made welcome in all areas of the prison and access to prisoners is readily and politely facilitated. Prison staff have willingly spent time explaining their role to new IMB members. The Board publicises its work and availability through posters at key sites, and through a locally produced DVD which is shown on the Prisoner Induction Course and the New Officer Induction course, and is streamed on the FNC together with films on Samaritans and NPS. The IMB Leicester Information Leaflet has been revised and reprinted, and is included in the new prisoner induction pack. New application boxes for prisoner applications have been provided by the establishment, and are located in Seg, L2, SMU, VPU, FNC and the staff entrance.

During 2015:

- 4 members attended the IMB National Foundation Course, and the Clerk attended the Clerks' course. One member joined the Annual Report Working Party of the IMB National Council.
- The Board received training sessions from members of the Prison Service on the following topics; FNC and prisoner induction, the work of the Muslim Imam, SMU and IDTS, self-harm and the ACCT process, Resettlement and the CRCs, and Catering. There were updates from the IMB NC representative, the Board Development Officer, the Writer in residence and the Leicester Prison Visits Centre Charity.
- Members attended the prison contingency exercises, and occasionally monitored the following meetings; the Daily Briefing, the Staff Briefing, the Prisoners' Council, Order and Control, the Adjudications Standardisation Meeting, EAT, and Safer Custody.
- A member had a further article published in Prison Service Journal (No 220)
- The Board hosted 3 visits from other establishments, and Leicester members visited HMP Glen Parva.

## 7:2 Applications

CODE	SUBJECT	2011/12	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
A	Accommodation	15	8	10	6
B	Adjudications	13	3	12	5
C	Equality& Diversity (including Religion)	10	0	3	3
D	Education/employment/training including IEP	13	12	14	9
E 1	Family/visits including mail & phone	10	8	9	10
E 2	Finance/pay	N/A	6	3	1
F	Food /kitchen related	1	3	9	5
G	Health related	48	28	31	56
H 1	Property (within current establishment)	N/A	12	7	13
H 2	Property (during transfer/in another establishment)	N/A	8	38	27
H 3	Canteen, facilities, Catalogue shopping, Argos	N/A	2	3	1
I	Sentence related (including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-categorisation, etc)	35	9	30	18
J	Staff/prisoner concerns including bullying	32	11	12	21
K	Transfers	6	20	56	26
L	Miscellaneous	45	23	32	19
	Total number of IMB Applications	228+	153	269	*220
	Number of Confidential Access			0	10

**\*Caution:** The total number of IMB applications can be misleading. Some prisoners make multiple applications on the same topic, and duplicates accounted for 24 apps. In respect of 84, the prisoner had not submitted a Comp 1, or had not waited for the response, or the matter had been solved by the time of the IMB visit. None of the Confidential Access apps was appropriate for that route. Overall there were 82 apps of significant substance – 27 for Healthcare, which included medication (9), Mental Health (7), and dental provision (7); 12 for property and for OMU; and 5 for landing supplies and for transfer. The remainder were divided between other departments. Overall the number of applications fell in 2015, despite the difficulties within the establishment.