



Independent Monitoring Board

HMP Highpoint Annual Report 2015

For the reporting period: 1st January to 31st December 2015

1. Statutory Role of the IMB

The Prisons 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 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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3. HMP Highpoint

3.1 Role of the Prison

HMP Highpoint (North and South) is a Category C Training prison situated some 10 miles south east of Newmarket in Suffolk. The prison is based on a former Royal Air Force base and lies on either side of the A143. Highpoint is also designated as a resettlement prison serving the London and Essex regions. The operational capacity for the reporting period was 1319.

Highpoint was opened as a prison in 1977 and has undergone a number of changes over the years. In November 1997 part of it (Highpoint North) was converted to hold women and in 2001 the North and South sites were formally separated. Highpoint North was renamed HMP Edmunds Hill and then in 2005 was once more returned to the male estate. The two establishments ran separately until 2010 when the process of re-uniting them began with the formal merger completed in April 2011.

During the 2015 reporting period, the establishment was classified at Level 3 in terms of performance. This means that it is meeting the majority of targets, experiencing no significant problems in doing so, and is delivering a reasonable and decent regime.

3.2 Accommodation and Facilities

Accommodation at the prison varies considerably from the older, brick residential units to the newer units which are bright and spacious with en-suite toilet and shower facilities in each cell.

Most residential units have in-cell sanitation except for Vickers and Halifax on the south and Lysander, Hawker and Dominie on the north, which have 24-hour access to lavatory and shower recesses. In-cell television is available to all prisoners with the exception of those on Basic regime. On the Induction Unit, on the south side, there are 24 double-occupancy cells. On the north side Lysander, Hawker and Dominie are mainly double rooms.

On the south side there are 10 residential Units:

- **The Tempest Units** (A – D) are the oldest and can accommodate 248 prisoners. Units A and D of Tempest are the designated IDTS Units for the prison.
- **Javelin, Wellington and Handley Units** are all two-storey buildings. Wellington Unit houses the Induction Unit on one of its spurs and can accommodate up to 148 prisoners. On this unit there are 24 doubled-up single cells. Javelin can accommodate up to 112 prisoners and is a Standard Unit. Handley can accommodate 120 prisoners and is also a Standard Unit.
- **Vickers and Halifax Units** accommodate “carefully risk assessed enhanced” prisoners including Category D outworkers and can accommodate up to 40 prisoners.
- **Blenheim Unit** houses prisoners participating in interventions treatments (Rehabilitation of Addicted Prisoners trust (RAPt) drug and alcohol

programmes). The unit can accommodate 120 prisoners. Each cell has en-suite facilities.

- **Vulcan Unit**, completed in 2008, can accommodate up to 64 enhanced prisoners and is bright and spacious with all cells having en-suite facilities.
- **Lancaster Unit** is identical in construction and facilities to Vulcan Unit. It houses the Lifer Unit and various prison services, such as Psychology and Probation.

On the north side there are six residential units:

- **Lysander, Hawker and Dominie** are old brick buildings each housing 69 prisoners.
- **Gloster and Meteor** Units are newer units each accommodating up to 80 prisoners with single en-suite cells. Meteor Unit is the Interventions Unit for the north side.

3.3 Agencies & Contractors

Resettlement providers include London and Essex Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC).

Drugs rehabilitation services are provided by RAPt.

Ormiston provides services for prisoners' families and children.

Children's Links provides services in the Visitor Centre (South).

Healthcare is provided by Care UK Ltd.

Escort Contractor provided by Serco Wincanton.

Learning and Skills - Education and Training is provided by Novus.

Maintenance is provided by Carillion.

4. Executive Summary

HMP Highpoint, with a population of over 1300, is one of the largest Category C training and resettlement prisons in the country.

The year has brought challenges for staff and the senior management team (SMT); again there has been a shortage of staff, particularly Band 2, OSG grades. This has led to curtailments to the regime and other grades having to cover support duties, taking them away from interaction with prisoners and duties on the wings (see also paragraphs 5.6, 6.4.4 and 6.11).

There has been a considerable amount of progress in the refurbishment of wings, but there is still work to be done particularly with some units, which have old and poor performing showers (see paragraph 5.7.3). The Board has concerns about the contracted out maintenance service provided by Carillion (see also paragraphs 4.1.1.2 and 6.1).

The population has changed since Highpoint became a resettlement prison for London and Essex, which has led to a feeling of unrest and a noticeable increase in incidents (see also paragraph 6.8). The SMT is to be commended in dealing with these challenging prisoners. Added to this the increase in New Psychoactive Substances (NPS), with prisoners often having bad reactions to these 'legal highs', has meant that staff have had to be one step ahead in detecting and blocking the supplies that come into the prison.

The year has also seen some positive changes, with a lot of work going into the 'Amends, Pathway to Opportunity' programme giving prisoners the tools to work towards their 'journey' to resettlement within the community. Many outside agencies and employers are working with the prison service to provide prisoners with the support they need prior to being released.

This year HMCIP visited the prison and initial feedback from them was on the whole positive. Although there were some identified areas which needed improvement.

Although the prison has still not achieved the highest level of performance, it is meeting most of its targets and delivering a reasonable and decent regime.

4.1 Items Requiring a Response

4.1.1 From the Minister

4.1.1.2 Maintenance Contract – Carillion

The Board asks the Minister to address the poor performance of Carillion who are contracted to provide the prison with a repairs and maintenance service. The Board is concerned that essential repairs are not carried out in a timely or efficient manner and everyday repairs are taking too long to be addressed. This has an impact on prisoners and staff alike, often leading to health and safety issues and, as in the case of CCTV cameras being out of action, the security of the establishment (see also paragraph 6.1).

4.1.1.3 Prisoners on Rule 45/O.I.

The Board asks the Minister to look at providing Highpoint with a Vulnerable Prisoner Unit or location. At the moment prisoners who request to go on Rule 45/OI are either being managed on normal location or within the Segregation Unit. Management on normal location does not always leave them feeling safe and secure. Segregation, while providing a safer environment, is not always an appropriate location for their particular needs (see also paragraph 5.5).

4.1.1.4 Prisoners' Property.

The Board is again raising the issue of prisoners' property and the way in which it is handled. The Board receive a large number of applications regarding property being mislaid or lost when prisoners transfer from one establishment to another. The Board again urges the Minister to hold a national and full review of the management and handling of transferring prisoners' property, with a view to ensuring there is a more accountable system in place and better communication between establishments when property goes missing (see also paragraphs 6.7 and 6.9).

4.1.1.5 Testing for New Psychoactive Substances (NPS).

NPS are a problem not just with within Highpoint, but across the wider prison estate. Although spoken of, no effective means of testing is yet available. The Board again urges the Minister to seize the initiative and ensure that a viable test will be introduced as a matter of urgency (see also paragraph 6.4.2).

4.1.1.6 OASys and Sentence Planning

The Board would like to see efforts taken to ensure that transferring prisons fulfil their duty to make sure that prisoners arriving at Highpoint have an up-to-date and complete OASys or sentence plan (see also paragraph 5.6).

4.1.2 From the Deputy Director of Custody

4.1.2.1 Counselling Services

The Board is still concerned that there is little opportunity for prisoners to access counselling services unless there is a clinical need. There are, within the Highpoint population, prisoners who do not fit this criteria, but would benefit from counselling. We urge the DDC to look at the possibility of providing counselling services for these prisoners (see also paragraph 5.3.1).

4.1.2.2 Healthcare – 24 Hour Cover.

As the Healthcare contract does not provide for 24 hour cover, the Board has concerns that there has been an increase of callouts to the paramedic and ambulance service because there are no healthcare staff available. This can have a significant impact on resources both within the prison and the wider community. The Board calls for the terms of the existing contract to be reviewed and amended to provide 24 hour cover in case of emergencies (see also paragraph 5.3.1 and 6.11).

4.1.2.3 Kitchen Maintenance.

The Board seeks assurance that the funding set aside to refurbish the damaged kitchen floor on the south estate has not been lost due to not having been repaired within the allotted time (see also paragraph 5.7.1).

4.1.2.4 Laundry Facilities.

Again the Board urges the DDC to press NOMS to carry forward a business plan for an industrial laundry facility at Highpoint. With such a high population and the laundry coming in from another establishments being problematic, this would be an asset to Highpoint (see paragraph 5.7.4).

4.1.3 From the Governor

4.1.3.1 Gymnasium and Physical Recreation Time.

The Board is concerned that with gym staff being deployed on other duties, on a regular basis, prisoners are missing out on a significant amount of time in the gym. This causes frustration within the population. We urge the Governor to look at ways of preserving gym and physical activity sessions and finding other ways to cover other duties without having to call on PE Instructors to undertake them. (see also paragraph 5.2.3).

4.1.3.2 Staffing at Night-time.

The Board has concerns about the tight level of staffing at night, in particular when there is a need for staff to respond to disruptive behaviour or health problems occurring simultaneously on both the north and south side of the prison (see also paragraph 6.11).

4.1.3.3 Staffing - MDT Officers and Dog Handlers.

The Board hopes that the re-deployment of the MDT officers and dog handlers

will not be a regular occurrence in the coming year, as they both have a valuable part to play in the establishment's drug and alcohol strategy (see also paragraph 6.4.4).

4.1.3.4 Prisoner Forums.

The Board regrets the irregular, and in some instances, the cessation of various prisoner forums. These valuable meetings with prisoners were a useful platform for prisoners to air their views, problems etc. Additionally, they provided opportunity for disgruntlement and dissatisfaction to be addressed before it became a more serious issue. The Board hopes that these will resume as soon as possible (see also paragraphs 5.7.2 and 6.6).

4.3 Comment on Previous Year's Concerns

4.3.1 Drugs (2014, paragraph 4.1.1.2).

The Board noted the Minister's response regarding work underway to develop new drug tests to detect NPS and reiterates its request for this (see paragraphs 4.1.1.5 and 6.4.2).

4.3.2 Lack of In-Cell Education within CSU (2014, paragraph 4.1.2.1).

This has been satisfactorily resolved. Prisoners undertaking education or training courses, who are transferred to the Segregation Unit, are now provided with course work materials including English and maths in-cell packages.

4.3.3 OASys (2014, paragraph 4.1.2.2).

This has not been satisfactorily resolved. Too many prisoners are still arriving at Highpoint with either no OASys, an out-of-date OASys or an incomplete OASys (see also paragraphs 4.1.1.6 and 5.6).

4.3.4 Staffing (2014, paragraph 4.1.2.3).

This has not been resolved (see also paragraphs 5.6, 6.4.4 and 6.11).

4.3.5 Prisoners on Rule 45/OI (2014, paragraph 4.1.3.1).

The Board's concerns have been partially addressed through better monitoring on normal location. However, there remain concerns about location for these prisoners within the SAU (see also paragraph 5.5).

4.3.6 SMARG Statistics (2014, paragraph 4.1.3.2).

The Board's concerns have been partially addressed, but meetings are not always taking place on a regular basis.

4.3.7 Complaints and Adjudication Procedures (2014, paragraph 4.1.3.3)

The Board's concerns have only been partially met (see also paragraph 6.3).

4.3.8 Prisoner Representatives (2014, paragraph 4.1.3.5).

The Board's concerns have been partially addressed, but concerns remain

about the regularity of forums (see also paragraphs 4.1.3.4, 5.7.2 and 6.6).

4.3.9 Refurbishment of Older Units (2014, paragraph 4.2.1).

This has been satisfactorily addressed and work is on-going (see paragraph 5.7.3).

4.3.10 Laundry Facilities (2104, paragraph 4.2.2).

This has not been addressed and the Board acknowledges that there are competing funding priorities (see paragraphs 4.1.2.4 and 5.7.4).

4.4 Overall Judgement

The Board acknowledges that staff and senior management continue to provide a safe and decent establishment. However, this is made difficult by cuts in budgets and shortages in staff. They remain committed to providing the best service they can in the circumstances.

There has been a lot of work done in making sure targets are met and prisoners are encouraged to be involved in purposeful activities. The regime has often been challenged by a small minority of prisoners who are determined to disrupt the day and it is noted that staff have risen to the challenge in managing these prisoners, especially in the Segregation Unit.

The Board has grave concerns that this situation could become critical. With more budget cuts, experienced staff leaving and a shortage of OSGs things could escalate, meaning more incidents and even less time out of cells for prisoners. This situation can only be detrimental to the good order and discipline of the prison and the safety and decency of the prisoners in the care of the Prison Service.

5. Required Reporting

5.1. Equality and Inclusion

Highpoint's small, but extremely competent and experienced Equality and Inclusion team continues to work well with the IMB. The team is made up of the team's leader, a serving prison officer, an administrator and a Community Diversity Officer, seconded from Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Race Equality (ISCRE) who works with the team for two days each week.

In 2015, the diversity team handled a total of 119 complaints. 46 of those came in on DIRFs and the remainder via either Comp1 or Comp 2s. This compares with a total of 100 in 2014 when 79 were on DIRFs. The last 5 years have seen a steady, if not dramatic, increase in incoming complaints.

The team looks into all complaints received and in 2015, 22 were rejected, twice the number rejected in 2014.

Matters of a racist nature continue to make up the majority of complaints received.

Tempest (1 and 2) and Javelin (3), Handley (5) and Blenheim (8) produce most problems as do industries/workshops.

Highpoint is now designated as a London and Essex prison, accepting an increasing number of men from the capital. However, so far this fact does not appear to have affected the number or nature of complaints received.

The team works hard and well, but feels disadvantaged since the working hours of its leader have diminished, as they are expected to work in other roles in the prison to a far greater extent than 12 months ago. In particular, team members feel that their leader's absence limits the number of focus group meetings that can be held, since these take time to plan, prepare and run. The Board would like to see an increase in the numbers of forums and a higher prisoner attendance level.

5.1.1. Equalities Action group

In 2015, four of these meetings were held and 12 forums met on the North and 8 on the South. A representative of the IMB attends these meetings, which the Board believes play an invaluable role in the prison and particularly for men with protected characteristics.

5.1.2 Ethnic Monitoring

The balance remains much as before with between 40 and 45% of the men white/British and the remainder from a variety of ethnicities.

5.1.3 Diversity Focus Group Meetings

Four Diversity Focus Group meetings were held on Highpoint south in 2015, one for each of the four protected characteristics; Gypsy/Roma/Traveller prisoners, Equality and Foreign Nationals, Disability and Older Prisoners and Sexual Orientation. Highpoint north held 10 Diversity Focus Group meetings.

5.1.4 Engagement with Outside Organisations

Both Black History Month and Holocaust Memorial Day were commemorated with two graphic displays in 2015. An external consultant from the Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Race Equality (ISCRE) continues to work with the Highpoint diversity team for two days a week and plays a valuable role in supporting and guiding the prison's approach to equality and diversity issues. The Board has found his contribution very useful. Prisoner orderlies also play an important part in providing support and advice to prisoners.

5.2. Purposeful Activity

5.2.1 Education, Learning and Skills

The education and vocational skills contract is undertaken by Novus. The focus of the education curriculum is on improving prisoners' English and mathematics skills and the vocational curriculum on improving employability prospects.

Highpoint Quality and Improvement Group meets bi-monthly and their role is to oversee the learning and skills programme, review its effectiveness and achievements and identify further vocational and training needs or opportunities. An IMB member is regularly invited.

Since the last report there has been an increase in the range of accredited vocational training and the number of activity places has been extended. During 2015 the prison offered 207 places on learning and skills activities all of which were filled. This potentially enhances the employability opportunities for prisoners on release.

However, the Board is aware that budget restraints have also impacted on provision. Approximately 80 activity places, and associated staffing, were lost due to the closing of IT and PSD programmes.

The Board has found that prisoners generally speak positively about their experiences in education, learning and skills. This is supported by the high retention/completion rate (98%) and attendance rate (85%). In teaching and learning sessions the Board has observed good levels of motivation and behaviour. Observations of vocational teaching and training found trainers to be enthusiastic and motivating and the prisoners engaged.

The Board is aware that there is some frustration that opportunities to participate in particular academic or vocational courses are often limited by a prisoner's location on either the north or south site. For example, accredited horticulture opportunities are only available on the north site.

The Board is pleased to note that during 2015 there has been minimal disruption (3 days) to the learning and skills programme due to regime curtailments and staff shortages.

Achievements and success rates for most of the accredited courses were high. During 2015 the prison achieved an overall of 85% of prisoners assessed at Level 1/2 or below.

The two library areas at Highpoint (north and south) are welcoming and well-appointed rooms. Book stock includes a broad range of fiction and non-fiction along with a number of foreign language books. A good selection of Prison Service Instructions and legal textbooks are available. IT facilities are also available and well used. A survey undertaken by the library during 2015 identified that only 55% of prisoners had taken at least one book on loan to read. Preferred genre was non-fiction 64% with fiction at 36%. Prisoner access to the library is generally good, but variable and evening access is cited as of most concern. Lack of staffing, regime curtailments, over-subscribed library places and clashes with gym allocation were just some of the reasons why some prisoners had difficulty in gaining library access. Those most affected are prisoners in full-time work employment or full-time education. As the evening provides the only opportunity for this group of prisoners to attend the library, the Board would welcome a review of evening access to increase opportunities for this group. Both libraries are underused during the daytime.

The Board acknowledges the good work of the library services to promote and support the improvement of reading confidence through initiatives such as the Six Book Challenge programme and reading groups.

Overall, the Board considers that within the education, learning and skills agenda Highpoint does a good job. There are good links with the world of work and it provides a curriculum and opportunities that raise functional skill levels, which reflect the needs of offenders on release.

5.2.2. Gym and Physical Activity

The use of the gym is a vital part of a prisoner's sentence, providing an opportunity for association with other prisoners and the chance to be out of the cell. Prisoners make good use of well-equipped weight training and cardio-vascular facilities. On the south site damage to the sports hall floor has reduced the type of physical activity that can take place and the Board understands that this is due to be addressed during 2016.

Prisoners have lost some gym and physical recreation sessions during 2015, due to regime curtailments and IMB Applications received from prisoners on the units suggests that this can be frustrating. This is particularly so for the unit cleaners because the evening is the only time they can access the gym because of day-time work commitments. However, the Board acknowledges that the situation has improved since the last report largely due to prison officers being seconded from other establishments to help cover staffing shortfalls. Access to physical activity at Highpoint is now generally good.

The IMB has not been informed of any gym meetings held during the 2015 reporting period.

5.2.3 Industries and Employment

The Reducing Re-offending team continues to develop purposeful activities and there are at present sufficient work places for the prison population.

All industries are located in Highpoint south prison.

Clothes recycling is currently the largest employer in the prison. A company called Amaryllis occupied workshop 5 with a MOD contract for the refurbishment of MOD

furniture for 6 months of the year and the other 6 months, workshop 5 refurbished wheel chairs for the NHS. There are currently 8 workshops as listed below:-

- Workshops 1, 2 & 8 clothes recycling employing about 150 prisoners.
- Workshop 3 tailors, employing 30 prisoners.
- Workshop 4 welding is currently closed, but is due to re-open in 2016 employing 12 prisoners.
- Workshop 5 recycling for the NHS employing 24 prisoners.
- Workshop 6 waste management employing 30 prisoners.
- Workshop 7 food (breakfast) packs for distribution around the prison estate employing 22 prisoners.

The industries generate a good income for the prison whilst employing approximately 268 prisoners.

Instructors work closely with the prisoners employed in their workshops and the Board acknowledges the good working relationships they established with the prisoners.

5.3. Healthcare and Mental Health

5.3.1 Primary Care

Care UK is contracted by NHS England to provide primary care (GP service) to HMP Highpoint. They took over the contract for the provision of healthcare in September 2011, which was renewed in September 2015 for a further 5 years and with the proviso of a further 2 years. Healthcare keeps abreast with all new training, working practises and legislation; always looking to improve and bring in new ideas.

The waiting time to see the GP from putting in an application on the wing remains an average of 7days; an emergency is seen on the same day. The healthcare orderly, as one of his duties, delivers all healthcare appointment slips (in envelopes) direct to prisoners' cells. This, together with the work from the administration team, continues to keep the unattended appointments to a minimum.

Healthcare has continued with the random stop checks on each unit to see if the correct medication is being held by prisoners. If the prisoner is misusing his medication he will have a consultation with the GP as this can have a detrimental effect on his health. When transferred in from another establishment the prisoner will arrive with 7 days medication and all his records are sent either electronically or paper based to the new provider.

Nurse-led clinics are run regularly for:

- Asthma
- BBV/Hep B
- Spirometry

- Blood Pressure
- Physio Triage
- Diabetes
- Smoking Cessation (both self-referral and medical referral)
- Chlamydia
- Pre-release
- IDTS
- NHS Health Checks (Patients aged 45-75)
- Sexual Health

Care UK has not been commissioned by NHS England to provide any counselling services to the prison. This has not been part of any of the contracts given to Care UK. The Board still has concerns that there should be opportunity for prisoners to access a counselling service within the prison NHS provision, in line with other GP practices in the wider community.

During the evening and at night time, healthcare staff members are not on duty. This is an arrangement which accords with the current contractual service level agreement and does not provide for twenty four hour cover. Consequently, the Suffolk Ambulance Service has had to provide paramedics to cover serious incidents. As this service is already stretched to capacity, this seems to the Board to be potentially dangerous for all concerned. The Board calls for the terms of the existing contract to be revisited and amended to provide a twenty four hour healthcare service.

5.3.2 Dentistry

The dentistry provider has also changed since the new contract started in September 2015 and is now well established in the prison. The dentist attends the prison twice a week and will see urgent appointments immediately. Routine check-ups wait approximately 38 days.

5.3.3 Podiatry

The podiatrist holds a clinic 3 times a month, more clinics are available if the need arises.

5.3.4 Optician

Since the new contract came into being in September 2015 Pen Optical has taken over the optician contract from Specsavers. This has proved to be better for Highpoint. The average number of clinics is 6 per month with a wait of 30 days for a routine appointment. An emergency is seen at the next clinic.

5.3.5 Physiotherapy

The physiotherapy wait is normally 7 days and prisoners are seen well within 6 weeks of referral and if further treatment is required, this is within the 18 week guidelines. The system is exactly the same as in the wider community.

5.3.6 Healthcare Complaints

The complaints system has been overhauled this year. In addition to the normal written answers to complaints, the prisoner can have a one to one with a senior nurse within 5 working days to discuss any concerns and complaints. This process has been invaluable and has ironed out the majority of the healthcare complaints. It has allowed the prisoner to have a full and frank discussion to help solve his problems.

Applications to the Board from prisoners regarding healthcare matters are for various issues, which the Board is able to deal with.

A member of the Board regularly attends the Healthcare Forums on both the south and north sites, which provides a very useful tool in accessing the way prisoners feel about their healthcare provision. The Board also attends the Governance and Service Delivery meetings and pharmacy meetings.

5.3.7 Mental Health

In May of 2014 Care UK released NSFT from providing the mental health care from Highpoint. A full review of all the services was implemented immediately. All the mental health staff were reviewed and a new structure was put in place. It took time to implement all the changes as well as keeping the services running and caring for the prisoners who need the input from the mental health team. The year started with a strong mental health team who work hard to look after vulnerable members of the prison and meet their needs in a professional manner.

A prisoner is triaged as a referral is made, and if need be, seen straight away. The prisoner can refer himself. All this is a welcome improvement on previous arrangements.

The team comprises of a team leader, 7 mental health nurses, (one of whom is an accredited CBT therapist), 1 mental health support nurse and 1 psychiatrist. Their caseload is an average of 90 patients out of 1300 prisoners. The team has excellent links with outside providers of secured accommodation, which enables a smoother transfer if a sectioned prisoner requires a move. This would normally take on average 6/7 weeks.

It is also good to report that in 2015 no prisoner in the Segregation Unit has been sectioned.

The healthcare and mental health teams are willing to engage with the Board at all levels, giving talks at Board meetings, providing the Board with information and updates on the overall state of service and training.

5.4. Safer Custody

The Board considers that HMP Highpoint is still, by and large, a safe prison. However, the Board is concerned that there is sometimes an unsettled feeling on some of the units and prisoners are more volatile and difficult to manage. Prisoners are resorting to barricading, damaging cells and assaulting other prisoners and staff. The population seems to be changing and the Board continues to observe that the changes in reallocation of discharge prisons has impacted on the stability of Highpoint. The arrival of members of a number of different London gangs has required additional management attention.

The ready availability of NPS within the prison is still a concern and is being actively addressed by Safer Custody management (see also paragraph 6.4.2).

There was a slight increase in reportable incidents during 2015 with 1327 in total, a 5.4% increase on last year. Reports of assaults increased from 2014 and self-harm incidents have also increased (see paragraph 6.10) as have barricading and damage.

The Board is concerned that ACCT documents do not always follow the prisoner and this is despite reassurances from the Senior Management Team that this would be addressed.

A Safer Custody meeting is held each month, at which issues and trends around safety, violence and self-harm are examined and addressed. Violence Reduction prisoner representatives and Listeners attend these meetings and report back their observations from walking the wings. A Board member attends.

5.5. Segregation and Assessment Unit

The north prison has a fully equipped Segregation Unit that is currently only used for adjudications of prisoners from the north site. Should prisoners from the north need to be moved to a segregation area they are transported to the Segregation Unit on the south site. The south Segregation Unit is run by a dedicated team lead by a Governor and supported by a Custodial Manager (CM).

The Board is aware that periods do occur when staff are seconded on to the unit and are often unfamiliar with the IMB procedures. The Board has not always been informed of new prisoner arrivals on the unit.

Segregation reviews are held every Monday and Thursday afternoons as set down by NOMS. As part of the Board's duties, a member of the Board attends the reviews and visits all prisoners.

All prisoners in the Segregation Unit have to adhere to the segregation rules regardless of why they are located there; this also applies to prisoners on OI.

The establishment is attempting to manage prisoners on OI on normal location and not in the Segregation Unit, but in this situation the Board is aware that prisoners still could be / feel under pressure from other prisoners and concerned about their safety and security. The Board would like the prison authorities to consider creating at Highpoint a unit that could be made available to prisoners designated as vulnerable.

Due to the need for additional space the small gym facility within the segregation unit has been removed and returned to cell accommodation.

Exercise is taken in the yard; the yard is split into two and is plain concrete and very drab and uninspiring.

The Board is pleased to report that in-cell education packs are now provided to those prisoners located in the unit and that prisoners are also given access to a small library.

5.5.1 Adjudications

Adjudications are normally carried out every day in the Segregation Unit. If a prisoner refuses to attend his adjudication this is carried out on normal location.

The Board note that it seems to have become a trend at adjudication for the prisoner to plead not guilty and ask for legal advice. In such circumstances, the adjudication is held over for seven days to enable this opportunity. However, with changes to Legal Aid provision, which can make access to legal advice problematic for some prisoners, the Board queries whether seven days provides sufficient time for this to occur.

5.6 Resettlement and Offender Management

The Board recognises that there are still aspects of the reducing re-offending agenda which are not working as well as they should. Work with offender management is too often undermined by the redeployment of Offender Supervisors to cover staff shortages on the Units. The impact of this is twofold:

- Prisoners report concerns about their sentence plan and opportunities to address this and meet with their Offender Supervisor for support or review purposes
- Staff in offender management roles feel frustrated by the lack of opportunity to undertake core work related to sentence planning with their designated prisoners. Time spent in doing OMU work by the Offender Supervisors averages out at approx. 45%. They express concern about the backlog and their capacity to manage this effectively.

The Board is aware that 70% of prisoners received from transferring prisons arrive without an OASys, or an in date OASys or sentence plan. This situation creates additional work for Highpoint staff, when their capacity is already challenged, and potentially limits the prisoners' opportunity to progress. Last year the Board was concerned that this could reach a critical situation and the Board reiterates this. As a start, the Board would like to see strenuous efforts taken to ensure that transferring prisons fulfil their duty to make sure that prisoners arriving at Highpoint have an up-to-date and complete OASys.

The Board is aware that other functions of the OMU are improving in their ability to manage prisoners' progress effectively. D Category reviews were mostly up-to date enabling a timely move to open conditions. Delays with HDC Boards are often outside the control of Highpoint OMU staff who are dependent on the requirement of Offender Managers in the community to complete reports.

The London and Essex Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRC) provide services to prisoners being released. The demand for their services has been reasonably high.

5.6.1 Breaking the Cycle through effective Partnership Working

The Board's Annual Report for 2011 welcomed the launch of 'Breaking the Cycle through Effective Partnership Working' and commented that it had been good to see the involvement of local businesses, national and local organisations and the support of the local MP.

Four years down the road, the partnership team within Highpoint maintains their high level of commitment to the project and at the end of last year launched a new logo; 'Amends, Pathway to Opportunity' with a green leaf symbol. This aptly re-focuses and reflects the aims of the initiative. Prisoners were actively involved in this re-naming and the design of the logo and remain at the heart of the Employer Engagement Days that are held regularly throughout the year.

More employers and organisations have come on board the partnership initiative. Programmes and training that Highpoint offers have been looked at objectively to see if they match up to the needs of future employers. One result of this is that a new plasterboard lining course will now be offered, starting in February 2016. Funding will be sourced by one of the partnership members.

Kier is one of the organisations that has been involved in the project right from the start. Their company has taken on ex-offenders, with one of them being named as their apprentice of the year. Extending their involvement the company now comes into Highpoint on a regular basis and offers prisoners a day of team exercises and selection interviews.

Broadening out the initiative and looking at the wider needs of prisoners, a successful 'Being a Dad Day' has been held. This had a positive impact upon the interaction of course participants and their children at subsequent visits and was a welcome outcome.

A mediation service 'Leap' has also been introduced. This is a service for prisoners, run by prisoners and looks to resolve conflicts between individuals. Highpoint is the first male Category C prison to run the programme. The Board commends the initiative, which provides a valuable way of helping to prevent arguments from erupting into violence.

As part of the Partnership Engagement Days, members were given the opportunity to observe a group of staff and prisoners taking part in the 'Offender Journey' – the journey covering the entire time spent by a prisoner at Highpoint. Staff involved covered all aspects of 'the journey', from the prisoner's initial assessment right through to his future re-settlement needs. A case study was prepared by a prisoner. The brief was to establish the best practice for dealing with every one of the issues raised, for example the need to provide for essential courses and at the most appropriate time to achieve maximum and positive impact. Partnership members observing found this gave them a unique insight into a prisoner's life and potentially enabled better provision to meet prisoner needs.

The Board is pleased to note that as well as meeting future employability and resettlement needs, the partnership initiative recognizes that addressing problem

behaviour and establishing healthy relationships and communication, is all crucial to preventing re-offending.

5.7 Residential Services

5.7.1 Catering and Kitchens

The Board notes that the two kitchen teams that prepare the meals at Highpoint are very dedicated, but work under challenging conditions, at times, due to the poorly maintained equipment. Across the two sites and kitchens, approximately 2600 meals are served each day.

Meals are collected from a unit servery and eaten either within the individual cell (where there may be an in-cell toilet area) or standing around in communal areas of the unit. The availability of tables or sitting areas is very limited on the units.

The Board notes that both of the kitchens are poorly maintained and in a poor state of repair. Some of these issues, such as the floor in the south kitchen, which is awaiting repair, present health and safety issues. Others, such as broken equipment, can impact on the quality and choice of food menu. Concern about kitchen maintenance was identified in the last report, but the Board has seen no significant improvement since the maintenance was contracted out and in some instances, the situation is worse. The Board is concerned to hear that because the works to refurbish the south kitchen floor have not been carried out within the set time allocated by NOMS, the agreed funding may have been lost.

The Board regularly attends the food meetings, which are held monthly, and most units send a representative. The discussions are informative and constructive and the kitchen staff endeavour to incorporate the suggestions, but this is not always possible due to financial restraints.

New menus are now in place on both north and south sites and the general view from the food meeting is positive.

5.7.2 Canteen

The canteen is an important element of a prisoner's sentence. Both north and south prisons have not held canteen meetings during the 2015 reporting period. This has prevented direct feedback on the efficiency and administration of the canteen service and the quality and nature of items available for purchase. This is despite requests being made to the Governor to reinstate these meetings.

The Board has attended the units when the canteen is being issued and has noted that the quality of the fruit and vegetables has improved since our last annual report.

5.7.3 Accommodation

The Board acknowledges that during 2015 there has been a considerable amount of progress with the refurbishment of units, but there is still work to be done particularly with some of the older units, which have old and poor performing showers

- The Tempest Units (A – D). Since the 2014 report all of the cells have been re-decorated. Toilets have had a deep clean and although all the communal

shower recesses have been refurbished, drainage and ventilation are on-going problems.

- Wellington Unit. The in cell lavatory facilities continue to cause the Board concern. Although the lavatory is screened, with limited space there is little privacy, which the Board considers unacceptable.
- Handley Unit. As reported in 2014, the staff office is located behind windows and locked gates. It is the only unit where prisoners are unable to knock directly on the wing office door to access and speak to staff. The Board considers this is a significant barrier to good prisoner/staff relationships. This issue has been raised in previous reports and with the MOJ. However, the recommendation that provision be made for a window in front of the office, to enable and improve staff and prisoner communication and accessibility, has not resulted in any actions during 2015 to address the Board's concerns. Since the previous report all of the cells have been decorated and toilets have had a deep clean. Money for the refurbishment of Handley Unit's 2 ground floor shower rooms was identified and this was pleasing, as the showers and shower rooms are in an appalling condition. However, planned work to refurbish the communal showers and toilets has not been undertaken within the set time allocated by NOMS and the funding agreed for this much needed improvement has now been lost.
- Vickers and Halifax Units. All of the cells have now been re-decorated and toilets have had a deep clean. As with other units, drainage and ventilation are on-going problems in the communal shower recesses, all the showers have been painted.
- Lysander, Hawker and Dominie Units are showing signs of wear and tear. There is no in-cell sanitation on these units, but there is 24-hour access to toilet and shower recesses, which receive heavy usage. In the Lysander Unit all of the toilets and showers have been refurbished and the cells painted. Communal lavatory and shower facilities in the Hawker unit have not benefitted from refurbishment and remain in a poor state and a concern, as reported in the 2014 report. The Board considers that it is now time to invest properly in renewing the facilities of this unit. In the Dominie Unit all of the lavatory and shower facilities have been refurbished and the cells painted.

5.7.4 Laundry Facilities

Laundry facilities on all residential units still continue to cause the Board concern and these have been compounded by a problem nationally with 'kit change' and the poor state of laundry distributed to Highpoint. This is often still soiled and short of the required type and number of items ordered. With heavy daily usage, machines often break down and there is then an unacceptable delay while awaiting repair or replacement. In the majority of residential units domestic machines are provided as it is understood the electrical supply to the units would not be adequate for larger, more powerful industrial machines. With budget constraints it would not be possible to do the necessary work to upgrade the present facilities, as it would attract a considerable cost. The Board feels that due to the size of the establishment consideration should be given to installing an industrial laundry on site. The Board is concerned that this matter causes such a problem resulting in the disgruntlement of the prisoners, for whom laundry is an important part of a decent environment.

6. Other Areas

6.1 Works Maintenance

A significant concern for the Board has been the delay experienced between the reporting of a maintenance matter and action undertaken to address the issue. During 2015 the Board has been deeply concerned about the performance of Carillion.

The Board understands that there are not enough staff with the relevant skills, particularly as regards electrical and plumbing issues. Inevitably, the impact on the prison has been evident in a number of areas. For example, kitchen equipment has not been adequately maintained, CCTV cameras in particularly sensitive areas are not always well maintained and frequently not working. Statutory checks on fire equipment in the early part of the year were not carried out despite the intervention of the Governor. These delays impact on prisoners' living arrangements, accommodation and opportunities, and in some instances, their health, safety and well-being.

The Board has learned that delays in carrying out certain maintenance projects has resulted in ear-marked funding being withdrawn. This is unacceptable and should be investigated and addressed immediately.

The Board acknowledges the concerted efforts made by the prison to refurbish units and cells, where necessary, and notes the introduction of new flat screen TVs across the Highpoint estate

Little, if any, improvement in the service provided by Carillion, both in terms of speed of service and quality of the work done, has been seen during the reporting period. The Board has been told that the Carillion team on-site has attempted to meet the requirements of the contract, however, this attempt appears to have failed due to external management. The operational structure does not always enable the on-site team. The Board recommends that the management team at Carillion takes this matter on board and makes a firm commitment to addressing the problem.

6.2 Chaplaincy

Chaplaincy and the IMB work in close co-operation to ensure that prisoners are treated courteously and fairly on the units, at work and particularly when men are placed in segregation. This sort of co-operative working is extremely effective and is something which prisoners value highly. The Board thanks the co-ordinating Chaplain and his team for their help and advice.

6.3 Complaints and Applications Procedure

The Board reported last year that the complaints process was in need of a thorough review and overhaul because prisoners reported little confidence in the process or the way in which complaints were managed and responded to. Replies to complaints are still mostly handwritten and sometimes difficult to read. Several times Board members have reported being asked by prisoners to 'interpret' hand written replies, and have found them to be badly written and hard to decipher.

NOMS comments in response to last year's annual report have not moved the situation forward, merely stating the existing process, with which the Board has no issues. However, it is the execution of this process and its variability with which the Board is concerned.

The Board wishes to acknowledge the dedication and commitment of the complaints clerk at HMP Highpoint, who handles complaints efficiently and is dedicated to resolving issues sometimes under difficult circumstances, however they are often left frustrated by the system and slow responses particularly from other establishments.

The Board seeks assurance from the Governor that there will be a thorough review of the complaints procedure with a view to making it more responsive, efficient and effective.

6.4 Drugs and Alcohol

The Board has some concerns that for operational reasons not all the bi-monthly Drug Strategy meetings went ahead in the year. The establishment policy on drugs and alcohol continued to be monitored and enforced. It is hoped that meetings will continue on a regular basis in 2016.

6.4.1 Alcohol

Staff have remained vigilant for the signs of 'hooch' being brewed on the units and in the period before Christmas took preventative action in terms of limiting access to the common ingredients for hooch. During the reporting period some 144 litres were found.

6.4.2 Drugs

The Board's main area of concern remains New Psychoactive Substances (NPS), commonly called 'Spice' within the prison. In 2015 some 1956g were found compared to 1634g in 2014. The Board commends all staff involved in these finds, but without a viable means of testing prisoners for usage, it is not known just how widespread the problem is within Highpoint. Reports of prisoners suspected of usage and displaying disruptive behaviour and/or signs of illness have been reported throughout the year and have drawn regularly on the resources and services of healthcare, the NHS ambulance and West Suffolk Hospital.

In their 2014 Annual Report the Board highlighted the need for a viable test for NPS and urged the Minister/NOMS to seize the initiative. This request is repeated again.

While a test is mooted, how long will it be before it is introduced and just how effective will it be? The Board appreciates the challenge in testing a substance when components can vary from batch to batch. This, however, is not just a problem for Highpoint, but for many establishments throughout the prison estate.

The Board understands that a new Psychoactive Substance Act is to be introduced early in 2016. The Board waits with interest to see whether it will have a noticeable impact upon the availability of NPS at Highpoint.

The Board was concerned to hear that some prisoners reported that they were being coerced by their fellow prisoners to take NPS to test the potency of the batch. With the impact upon health being so unpredictable this is a very worrying development.

6.4.3 Service Provider for Drugs & Alcohol Programmes

The contract for providing these programmes within Highpoint is up for renewal early in the New Year. If there is a change there could be a period of uncertainty for staff and prisoners until details are announced.

There was some discussion at the Drug Strategy meeting that the Interventions Programmes might move from Blenheim to a smaller unit. However, any decision has been put on hold until the contract provider has been confirmed.

6.4.4 Re-deployment of uniformed staff

The Board notes that because of staff shortages, the Mandatory Drug Testing (MDT) Officer and dog handlers have, at times, been re-deployed to other duties and hopes that this will not continue. Both have a valuable part to play in the establishment's drug and alcohol strategy.

The Board considers that the constant presence of a dog and handler at every visit acts as a valuable deterrent. Should visitors notice that this is not consistent then they might be more likely to be tempted to try and smuggle in substances and other items.

6.5 Personal Officer Scheme

The Board continues to have reservations about the consistent implementation of the scheme across the whole establishment. While the Board is aware of some good practice, where prisoners value the support, care and encouragement provided by their personal officers, it is also aware that a number of prisoners claim not to know their personal officer and some personal officers are not always familiar with matters relating to their prisoner. With staff shortages, the re-deployment of officers often means that the designated officer is not available and the Board has found that officers working on an unfamiliar unit do not always have knowledge of the on-going issues and problems of the prisoners on that unit. On some units cell cards with named personal officer and other details are missing and cannot serve as a reminder to the prisoner of their named officer.

Staff reductions have resulted in fewer officers on the wings, which has impacted on the time available for officers to spend with prisoners and deal with some of the immediate issues or concerns they may have. Issues that hitherto could have been simply solved by chatting with an officer, now often result in 'on the hoof' applications to Board members, or an escalation through the complaints process, which impacts further on time constraints of officers.

6.6 Prisoner Forum.

Regrettably, IMB has not been invited to all forums or informed of dates when they are taking place. Enquiries from the Board have not produced a response. The Board understands that staffing issues have impacted on the regularity of prisoner forums.

6.7 Property

Complaints to the prison relating to property not arriving at Highpoint when prisoners are transferred in from other establishments numbered 359. Of these, there were 137

where the other establishment was late in responding and 4 were not resolved at all. There appears to be no single cause for failure following transfer into Highpoint, and in many cases it is not clear if the fault lies with a failure of the sending establishment to secure and transmit property with a prisoner, or a failure of the transport contractor to carry the contracted amount of luggage with the prisoner. A worrying amount of property is lost without trace for which compensation has to be paid.

There were fewer complaints from other prisons (142) regarding the onward transmission of property, however this is still quite a high number and it is hoped that this will improve.

The Board notes that applications concerning property matters made up 25% of the total received. The majority of these came about as a result of transfers into Highpoint from other establishments.

The ability to access their own property is very important to prisoners since property is seen as a vital part of their identity. The meticulous management of it makes a significant contribution to the fair and decent treatment of prisoners and the good management of prisons.

The Board finds it necessary to highlight property issues again in this report and it appears that this is a national problem, with some prisoners moving around to different establishments only to find their property is misplaced or lost. Meaning valuable resources are wasted chasing property which can take months to catch up with its owner.

The Board calls for an urgent review of the handling and transportation of prisoners' property and better communication between establishments when property goes missing.

6.8 Security

2015 again saw an increase in the quantity of NPS. However, there was a significant drop in other drugs found (69.1% decrease in herbal cannabis). There was also an increase in heroin (opiates) of 74.9%. The main drug of choice seems to be NPS and it is more than likely that the use of this drug will increase in line with its take up in the community at large. The increase in the use of NPS is worrying since it remains very hard to detect (see also paragraphs 6.4.2 and 6.4.4). There has, however, been some progress as regards prosecutions as it is now illegal to throw anything over the fence that is not permitted in the establishment.

There was again a decrease in mobile phone finds, 173 in 2015 compared to 230 in 2014 and also a considerable decrease in finds of sim cards, 70 in 2015 compared with 184 in 2014.

The Board commends the vigilance of staff in detecting the following items during the reporting period 2015:

- 60 weapons
- 226.7 litres of Hooch (a sharp decrease in the amount compared with 2014)
- 141g Herbal cannabis

- 7.7g Heroin
- 2g Subutex
- 1999.2g NPS

Other finds in 2015 include:

- Unknown quantity of spice seized by police
- 4 drug pipes
- Weighing scales
- 41.5g green tablets
- 50 amitriptyline tablets
- Quantity of syringes
- Quantity of liquid steroids and liquid testosterone
- 14g amphetamines

The trafficking route or method of entry in to the prison is still via parcel throws over the fence, visits and through incoming mail.

Reportable Incidents – Annual Comparison

There was an increase in reportable incidents this year with 1327 in total, which represents 5.4% up on last year. Reports of assaults increased from 213 in 2014 to 245 in 2015 and self-harm incidents have more than doubled up from 186 in 2014 to 289 in 2015. Barricade incidents are also up from 50 in 2014 to 77 in 2015 and damage to cells or other property has increased from 148 in 2014 to 186 in 2015 (see Table 1 below).

Table 1

	2015	2014	2013	2012
Drugs	124 	119	93	115
Assaults/fights	245 	213	200	200
Self-Harm	289 	186	235	299
Barricade	77 	50	43	27

Damage	186		148	143	91
Tool loss	2		5	4	4
Food refusal	3		9	6	2
Escape/TRF	0		0	0	1
Incident at height	13		9	8	5
Other – hooch, weapon, phone, sim, tattoo equipment	338		520	474	415
Total	1327 (+5.4%)		1259 (+ 4%)	1206 (+4%)	1159 (+93%)

The Board is concerned that there is an unsettled feeling on some of the units. Prisoners are more volatile and difficult to manage and there has been an increase in assaults/fights, but more significantly in self-harm, which is supported by the statistics above.

2015 is the first full year of the new CPA reconfiguration and this may have had some influence on the increase in violent incidents. With Highpoint being designated as a resettlement prison for London and Essex, there has been an increase in respect of prisoners arriving with affiliations to known gangs. A number of the reported violent incidents are known to be gang-related in origin, which could account for an increase in assaults/fights.

Prisoner on prisoner assaults and fights have increased by 32.4%. Assaults on prison staff have also increased by 27.9%. Of these, 36.3% occurred in the SAU with the majority of assaults on staff taking place on normal residential units on the south. Prisoners are still resorting to barricading and damaging cells.

6.9 Transfers

In 2015, over 500 men were transferred from Highpoint to other prisons in the UK. Two D Category prisons, Hollesley Bay and Ford, took 135 prisoners, and 4 D Category establishments – The Mount, Wayland, Brixton and Huntercombe accepted 146 men. In total, men were transferred to 48 prisons in England.

In addition to achieving D Category status, men were transferred out for compassionate reasons, for specific medical requirements, to attend specific courses not available at Highpoint and because they were nearing the end of their sentences and were moved for resettlement purposes nearer to their homes.

Although it is not by any means easy to find a place in a particular prison, the Board recognises that transporting prisoners is often a major challenge too. In any event, transfers and the process involved are so often the reason that property goes missing. Investigating missing property matters takes up a significant proportion of the Board's time and the Board asks that during the transfer process, far greater thought and care be taken when moving men and their belongings from one establishment to another (see also paragraph 6.7).

6.10 Visitors and Visitor Centre

The Board has noted an overall improvement in the management of visits and they seem to run smoothly most of the time. However, there is still room for improvement in the management of visiting orders (VOs).

Despite being able to book and/or confirm visiting orders via the internet or by telephone, the Board is aware of both national and local issues with the process and arrangements. These can make it difficult for some prisoners to arrange VOs and is often a cause of frustration for families and prisoners alike. It would appear that the implementation of the internet based systems have not had the intended outcome of reducing telephone calls to the visits office, or made the process more accessible or easier. It is reported that some internet documentation and generated responses are not always clear or accurate. This can result in difficulties for visitors on arrival and in telephone calls to the visits office. Consequently, the lines are very busy and some prisoners have reported difficulty with their families getting through to the office to arrange visits. The Board is aware that staffing cuts at a local level has not helped this situation.

The Board would like to see an increased use of the drug dogs in Visits with the objective of reducing the contraband entering the prison.

6.11. Staffing

Staffing levels have again been a concern to the Board throughout the year. Highpoint ended the year with 25 Band 3 Officer and 35 Band 2 OSG vacancies. Although some new officers have been allocated to Highpoint this year, there have also been a number of experienced officers leaving the service, which means that their expertise and knowledge is lost. On several occasions this has meant that officers from other establishments are seconded in to make up the numbers. Due to OSG vacancies being high officers are often taken off normal locations to cover non-operational duties. The Board has seen regimes being curtailed on a regular basis, with prisoners locked up for longer periods and less opportunities for association in the evening and some prisoners missing out on gym and library (see also paragraphs 5.2.1 and 5.2.2).

The Board is also concerned about the tight level of staffing at night. The difficulties of staffing on a 'just in case' basis is appreciated. However the Board is concerned about the capacity of staff to respond and deal with more than one incident or emergency happening at once, particularly in cases of illness or self-harm. With a split site prison, the south side having more than 900 prisoners, the potential for more

than one emergency is high. Other difficulties could occur on the south and north side simultaneously, limiting the availability of additional staff who could be called upon. This is no reflection on the professionalism of staff, but it does seem that they could at times be placed in the unenviable position of having to assess and prioritise equally serious emergencies and incidents.

Vacancies, sickness or emergencies can mean that at times the Governor and his Senior Management Team face an unenviable challenge to ensure all essential daily tasks are covered and a safe and decent regime maintained.

6.12 Gardens

The Board is pleased to report that the management and maintenance of the gardens on both north and south sites continues to involve prisoners in purposeful activity and their good work to improve the estate environment is acknowledged by the Board. The Board is also pleased to note that there are now opportunities for prisoners working on the North gardens to achieve nationally accredited qualifications in horticulture (see also paragraph 5.2.1).

7. The Work of the IMB

7.1 The Year in focus

This year has been a busy one, with applications taking up a lot of the Boards' time. Many of the applications have been of a complex nature and members have been vigilant in pursuing answers and dealing with prisoners in a courteous and fair manner. Rota visits during the year have been carried out in a meaningful way and many issues are brought to the attention of the Governor. As well as their normal duties members have been called out on several Serious Incidents, some of which have been protracted and continued into the night. Board members are to be commended for carrying out their duties with diligence and commitment.

During the year we appointed three new members bringing our complement up to 13. Unfortunately, the Board lost six experienced members. This has put a strain on other members who have had to cover more duties than usual. The Chair thanks them for their hard work in making sure all duties were carried out.

The Chair also wishes to thank the Vice Chair and BDO for their support and hard work during this year, making the work of the Chair much easier.

The Chair acknowledges the work of the IMB Clerk, who provided the Board with exceptional support and help, always acting in a professional manner, sometimes in difficult circumstances.

The Chair appreciates the hard work of the whole Board. As always members have given freely of their time, volunteering to mentor new members, attend meetings, segregation reviews and being available for 'on call' duties, all this on top of their normal rota visits.

It is the Chair's final year in office and it has been made easier by the support given by the whole Board. The Chair would like to take this opportunity to wish her successor well for the year ahead.

7.2 Board Statistics – 2015

Recommended complement of Board Members	20
Number of Board Members at start of the reporting period	16
Number of Board Members at end of reporting period	13
Number of new Members joining within the reporting period	3
Number of Members leaving within the reporting period	6
Number of Members transferring out within the reporting period	0
Total number of Board meetings during the reporting period	11
Average number of attendances at Board meetings during the reporting period	10
Number of attendances at meetings other than Board Meetings	107
Total number of rota visits conducted	149
Total number of visits to the prison (includes 105 B/Meeting attendances)	667
Total number of Applications received	672
Total number of segregation reviews attended	103

7.3 Applications received by the Board

Code	Subject	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
A	Accommodation	9	26	62	107	69
B	Adjudications	19	9	23	12	13
C	Diversity related	0	16	20	30	10
D	Education/employment/training	98	53	48	85	40
E	Family/visits	70	35	31	15	20
F	Food kitchen related	9	11	17	14	11
G	Health related	88	89	84	94	79
H	Property	194	170	164	208	150
I	Sentence related	207	121	250	336	94
J	Staff/prisoner related	53	103	61	85	36
K	Transfers	81	90	108	137	80
L	Miscellaneous	188	185	154	116	32
Total number of subjects in Applications		1016	908	1022	1239	644
Total number of Applications		947	831	863	1053	672

7.4 Board Activities and Development.

3 new members were appointed during this year and received internal training and mentoring.

The Board visited HMP Wayland to continue its understanding of other Boards' ways of working, with a view to maintaining and developing further good practice at HMP Highpoint.

Two other Boards visited Highpoint this year: HMP Onley and HMP The Mount.

The Board attended two training sessions this year:

- Offender Management Unit
- Internal training on dealing with applications

Visits from two national organisations to the Board also took place:

- Parole Board
- Prison and Probation Ombudsman

The Board invited speakers to address them prior to the Board Meeting and these included the following topics:

- Official Prison Visitors
- Healthcare at Highpoint
- Resettlement
- New Psychoactive Substances (NPS)

The Board conducted its Annual Team Performance Review in November 2015 where current practices and future developments were discussed and an Action Plan put in place for the year ahead. In light of experience and feedback from members, operational procedures were decided and agreed for the coming year.

8. Glossary of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACCT	Assessment Care in Custody and Teamwork
ADTP	Alcohol Dependence Treatment Programme
ATPR	Annual Team Performance Review
BDO	Board Development Officer
C&R	Control and Restraint
CALM	Controlling Anger and Learning to Manage it
CBT	Cognitive Behaviour Therapy
CPA	Contract Package Area
DIRF	Discrimination Incident Reporting Form
IAPT	Improving Access to Psychological Therapies
IDTS	Integrated Drug Treatment Service
IEP	Incentive and Earned Privileges
ISCRE	Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Race Equality
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
NCS	National Careers Service
NICE	National Institute for Clinical Excellence
NOMS	National Offender Management Service
NVQ	National Vocational Training
OASys	Offender Assessment System
OMU	Offender Management Unit
PALS	Patient Advice & Liaison Service
PPCS	Public Protection casework section
RAPt	The Rehabilitation for Addicted Prisoners Trust
ROTL	Release on Temporary Licence
SAU	Segregation and Assessment Unit
SMARG	Segregation Monitoring and Review Group
SMT	Senior Management Team
VO	Visiting Order