



# **HMP/YOI STANDFORD HILL**

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

**OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD**

**YEAR ENDING 30 APRIL 2016**

**HMP/YOI STANDFORD HILL**

**CHURCH ROAD**

**EASTCHURCH**

**SHEPPEY**

**KENT ME12 4AA**

## **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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## Section 3

### DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

- 3.1 Stanford Hill is an open prison (Category D) occupying over 300 acres of farm land with a very large perimeter. It is immediately adjacent to HMP Elmley (Category B Local/Dispersal) and HMP Swaleside and, though no longer part of a cluster, a small number of services are shared by the prison.
- 3.2 There is accommodation for 464 male offenders categorised as suitable for open conditions by the source prison. Each offender is housed in a single room with access to communal toilet and bathroom facilities.
- 3.3 There are two conventional cell blocks. A and B wing each have 192 spaces with three landings and four spurs on each. In addition there is a 'Quick Build Unit' (C wing), which leaks in times of heavy rain but provides space for 80 residents.
- 3.4 Each wing has its own Served which allows prisoners to take meals to their own rooms. Food is prepared at HMP Swaleside and brought to the prison by road.
- 3.5 The Governor undertakes responsibility for the prison's main objective of preparing prisoners for Resettlement and Reducing Reoffending upon release.

## Section 4

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 4.2.1 This has been a most positive year for the prison. In the Board's view, this is a safe, well-managed and productive environment. The level of both paid and unpaid work is at its highest levels and deserves much commendation. The Civil Service Award for Operational Excellence reflects over 60 years wealth of community work – 500 hours each week of paid and unpaid work is also a great achievement. There are areas of concern which could all be remedied with a little effort and good will.
- 4.2.2 **Outside Probation** continues to be in disarray, disadvantaging prisoners and lengthening sentences at a cost to both prisoner and country.
- 4.2.3 **Carillion** – the service provided by this company has been deplorable; as it appears the Board is unable to view the contract because of “commercial confidentiality” we cannot decide whether it is the incompetence of the contract or the company. The sooner the Governor is permitted to use local firms the better.
- 4.2.4 **Property** – lost property is always with us but the attitude of the private prisons is not professional and matters can sometimes only be resolved Governor to Governor.
- 4.2.5 **Rolls Avenue** – it remains disappointing that what could be a great asset remains dormant through lack of appropriate finance, despite a great deal of work undertaken by the prison to move matters forward.
- 4.2.6 **Aircraft Buildings** – it is almost a national disgrace that the building which was the Cradle of Aviation and peopled by the Short and the Wright Brothers and Charles Rolls, is in grave danger of completely disintegrating – this under the care of the Ministry of Justice.

### 4.3 PREVIOUS YEARS CONCERNS

- |       |                               |              |
|-------|-------------------------------|--------------|
| 4.3.1 | Use of Spice                  | (Ref. 7.4.4) |
| 4.3.2 | Reduction of Staff            | (Ref. 5.6)   |
| 4.3.3 | Privatisation of Resettlement | (Ref. 7.8)   |

## **Section 5**

### **MAIN AREAS OF THE PRISON.**

#### **5.1 SAFER CUSTODY**

- 5.1.1 Safer Custody meetings chaired by the Governor, Head of Residence and Safer Custody, are held regularly and include representation from RAPT, Healthcare, Education, Diversity, Chaplaincy, Samaritans, peer support workers and listeners. Wing representatives and Listeners report that prisoners generally felt safe. Incidents of bullying were usually confined to the import and use of drugs (particularly Spice), and where this was discovered, action was quickly taken.
- 5.1.2 Care and consideration for the health and well-being of the prisoners is good, with those at risk of self-harm or experiencing distress caused by domestic issues receiving sympathetic support from prison staff. On six occasions only was it felt necessary that ACCT documents be opened during the year.

#### **5.2 EQUALITIES**

- 5.2.1 The changing face of the prison population continues to be manifested in a gradual increase in the proportion of offenders who are over 50 years of age; much of this cohort being comprised of those who have moved to a Category D prison after completing most of a long term sentence in a Secure (A or B) prison. This trend is accompanied by the regular monitoring of PEEPs and provision of gym and swimming sessions for the prisons older cohort.
- 5.2.2 Just under two thirds of the prison population are white/ British so it is not unsurprising that very few DIRF submissions were made during the year, and of these all were related to staff. Following comments made by offenders during the last inspection much greater care has been taken by the prison authorities to mitigate the fears of prejudice and discrimination amongst BME prisoners. An increasing proportion of those involved in Working Out are now Black or Asian whilst there has been no evidence of discrimination in race or culture where offenders subject to Adjudications are concerned.

#### **5.3 ISPs and LIFERS**

- 5.3.1 There are on average 100 indeterminate sentenced prisoners in Standford Hill – they are well catered for and are moved through their sentences well. The two Lifer peer support workers are helpful and available to prisoners. Small bi-monthly meetings with the number one Governor are particularly helpful in resolving matters and the all-comers bi-monthly meeting allows prisoners to feel their concerns are heard.

#### **5.4 PROBATION**

- 5.4.1 A vital part of a prison sentence. In the prison a caseload of between 35/44 is extremely challenging for the officers. After a difficult period things have improved with the addition of a Senior Probation Officer for 4 days a week. The outside probation officers are a different matter and it can be very hard to make contact with at all, even to the level of phones not being answered – this can increase a sentence unnecessarily and should be remedied; one prisoner is on his eighth probation officer!

## **5.5 HEALTHCARE**

- 5.5.1 Healthcare continues to operate in a very positive way to serve the needs of the prisoners and a very good range of services are provided.
- 5.5.2 A proposed counselling service for prisoners with mental health problems is not now going ahead as a result, we understand, of budget cuts; a great shame.
- 5.5.3 The IMB are viewed by staff, in general, in Healthcare with some suspicion and are kept at a distance, with reluctance to engage in conversation.

## **5.6 STAFF**

- 5.6.1 The Board continue to enjoy a good relationship with staff. Despite pressures resulting from consistent under-staffing, uniformed staff remain co-operative and helpful and have maintained their efforts to treat prisoners with a polite, yet authoritative, approach.

## **5.7 ADJUDICATIONS**

- 5.7.1 During the reporting period adjudications have been observed by Board members and found to be have been conducted by the adjudicating officer in a fair and professional manner with respect being shown to the prisoner who is the subject of the adjudication.

## **5.8 GYMNASIUM**

- 5.8.1 The extensive grounds of Standford Hill provide access to a 1.25 mile cycle track/woodland walk and accommodate a full size football pitch which is employed at weekends by some prisoners. The 'mountain bikes' allocated to the prisoners proved to be insufficiently robust and had to be withdrawn but the established circuit has provided a popular walk which caters for the over 50s on two days each week.

Regulated attendance at the gymnasium is available for prisoners between 8.30am and 7.30pm, and the prison's swimming pool is available during week days between 3.00 and 4.00pm and in early evening between 6.00 and 7.00pm. RAPT has instituted a daytime swimming session for designated prisoners and sessions for over 50s are timetabled for two days each week. The pool is also enjoyed by senior citizens who use the facility on Friday morning permitting prisoners to obtain Lifeguard (Level III) and Spinal Board Management qualifications Those using the gym who wish to do so are able to qualify as Fitness Instructors (II & III), Food & Nutrition(II) and Health Trainer (II) as well as First Aid at Work (III) .

## **5.9 PERSONAL OFFICER SCHEME**

- 5.9.1 We have seen some improvement in the interaction between prisoner and personal officer and more improvements are in the pipeline.

## **Section 6**

### **PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY**

#### **6.1 LAUNDRY**

6.1.1 A team of prisoners deal efficiently with the laundry and there are few complaints, despite machines continually breaking down and taking a very long time to repair.

#### **6.2 RECYCLING**

6.2.1 Recycling continues to be a successful enterprise despite having several problems including rats, leaking roof and a broken shredder. Income from this area amounts to £27000.000 pa plus £1500.00 pa from the wood working shop. Up to twenty four prisoners can be working in this enterprise if they are available. Four drivers are employed by WOS. The two prison officers have taken the WAMITB course.

#### **6.3 MOTORMEX**

6.3.1 Six prisoners take the level two course in four months. Training to be a fitter is a four month full time course to gain the IMI award, this includes twelve assessments of which four are done online in education. Teaching staff for the year had been reduced to one, the ratio should be 4:1.

#### **6.4 PRINT SHOP**

6.4.1 Print Shop has had a good year, attracting some new investment, installing a new label printing machine for self-adhesive bar code labels and also a new T-shirt printing machine.

6.4.2 There are now extra opportunities for suitable inmates to participate in learning new skills; our workshop is currently at its maximum capacity for inmates. We are in the process of delivering City and Guilds Level 1 qualifications in Storage and Warehousing and there is a great opportunity for some when we offer a course in Forklift training through the Education department, offering another qualification for Logistics.

#### **6.5 EDUCATION**

6.5.1 This has been a very successful year for the Education Dept. They were Ofsted/HMPI inspected and were Graded 2, with many positive comments from the Inspectors on the range of courses and partnership working.

6.5.2 There is a full time Employment Broker in place in the region who works with prisoners coming up to release to move them into paid employment once through the gate. The Magistrates and Business people who come in to do interviews are now doing this every week as it has proved very popular and has been of great value to many pre-release prisoners.

6.5.3 The retention figures are at 99% (the numbers completing courses they start) and the success rate for this year is forecast to be 95%, although this could improve by the year end.

## **6.6 THE OLD MILL**

- 6.6.1 The plumbing course does not qualify the participants as plumbers but merely as assistants. The Gas course has similar problems as they are unable to have outside placements – none the less, there have been successes with one prisoner obtaining an overall distinction.
- 6.6.2 There has been a lack of consistency in staff which is felt to be part of the problem with the drop-out rate at level 2.
- 6.6.3 It was felt that prisoners had a reasonable chance of getting a job with a mentor to assist.

## **6.7 THE CAFE**

- 6.7.1 Sheppey Matters continue to run the café; they have invested £10,000 this year extending the seating area. Customer numbers have greatly increased.
- 6.7.2 Twenty prisoners have taken part in the hospitality course to level 1. Five prisoners have successfully engaged in the Barista coffee course. One prisoner has successfully gained employment with the Mormon Charity. Working hours are 08:30 to 15:30 with operatives staying until 17:00 for cleaning.

## **6.8 OIL WORKS**

- 6.8.1 Sadly, the Oil Works will be closing in June as it no longer is part of the prison plans.

## **Section 7**

### **OTHER AREAS OF THE PRISON**

#### **7.1 GROUNDS/GARDENS**

7.1.1 A period of considerable and beneficial change has taken place; they have the Carillion problem of repairs to machines but the grounds and gardens look splendid. The team is enthusiastic and well led.

#### **7.2 RECEPTION**

7.2.1 The staff deal with all prisoners with consideration and professionalism – the area is not ideal to handle many incomers with many possessions but the difficulties are overcome.

#### **7.3 SECURITY**

7.3.1 With over 300 acres of ground to supervise, a long unguarded perimeter, and 50% of the prison population leaving for outside employment each day, maintaining security at HMP Stanford Hill represents a significant challenge. It is pleasing to report that the compact entered into by incoming offenders and the prison has been largely effective, with only one abscond recorded throughout the year and only a small number of prisoners being returned to closed conditions because of the zero tolerance policy regarding drugs, alcohol and mobile phones.

7.3.2 The import and distribution of these latter has exercised Stanford Hill's officers and staff whose main focus is security. One particular area of weakness concerns the daily transfer of food between nearby HMP Swaleside and this 'open' prison. Efforts to reduce this threat rely upon the vigilance of staff in both establishments, constant monitoring of the food trolleys and containers which pass between both establishments and SIRs.

7.3.4 Steroids, opiates and alcohol are occasionally detected by mandatory and voluntary drug tests but the main drug threat encountered in the prison has been from NPS (New Psychoactive Substances), usually referred to as 'Spice'. Though these 'legal highs' are no longer as readily available from local outlets as they once were, their import onto the site has continued throughout the year and, despite occasional life threatening reactions resulting in medical emergencies and the efforts of RAPT and uniformed staff to minimise NPS use within the prison, the import of this drug has carried on throughout the year.

7.3.4 Security meetings are held monthly and are generally well attended.

7.3.5 The latest Security audit was Green.

#### **7.4 OFFENDER MANAGEMENT UNIT (OMU)**

7.4.1 The OMU continues to function at the heart of the resettlement process and has coped particularly well with a year of almost constant change both in the composition of the prison population and the demands of the administrative process, especially PSI 13/15.

7.4.2 Over 50% of the offender population benefit from release on licence on a daily basis so completion of each OASys review and Risk Assessments for Standard and Restricted ROTL prisoners (ISPP or High Risk of serious harm) who may be seeking RDR and ROR generates considerable work for HMPS and NPS.

- 7.4.3 The backlog in processing OASys (the majority being attributable to NPS), showed a significant reduction over the year whilst a change in the PSI allowing OSs to deal with less complex offender cases caused a noticeable fall in the number of complaints and applications to the IMB.
- 7.4.4 OMU staff have made great efforts to ensure that transfer checks are completed on time so ROTL is not delayed but, with a fair number of prisoners arriving at Stanford Hill within a few weeks of their HDC eligibility, re-submission of forms and awaiting reports from NPS still causes frustration and angst among the prison population, resulting in complaints and applications to the IMB.
- 7.4.5 PERS (Pathways Enhanced Resettlement Services), providing support for offenders exhibiting personality disorder, was introduced in September 2015, with 20 prisoners engaging with this service to date.

## 7.5 **RAPT**

- 7.5.1 RAPT is a national charity that is contracted to provide support and training in substance abuse within the prison. At the time of writing two prisoners are under prescription for oral methadone but, as in most establishments, other prisoners have had substance issues over many years. The more recent impact of NPS has been noted in 7.4.4. RAPT provide training on a personal and group basis and this can be very effective in facilitating a successful resettlement after release.
- 7.5.2 RAPT are also contracted separately to provide family support activities. This again is done on a single and group basis but also by working with families during RDR and ROR and before the prisoner is released. The period post release can be traumatic due to the changes that can happen to the dynamics of the family while the offender has not been living with them. The training and support is intended to address problems before they cause significant problems within the family post release.

## 7.6 **FOOD**

- 7.6.1 The food provided on the wings is satisfactory and varied. Few complaints are received from prisoners with the food continuing to be sourced from HMP Swaleside. The Board continue to be concerned that the Governor of one prison is responsible for the preparation and delivery of food to another establishment which is controlled by a different Governor.
- 7.6.2 Daily delivery of food etc from one prison to prisoners operating food services in another establishment has obvious security implications and constant vigilance is required by staff to ensure that contraband is not smuggled between the two.

## 7.7 **WORKING OUT SCHEME**

- 7.7.1 The Working Out Scheme is one of the significant successes of HMP Stanford Hill. Prisoners are encouraged to engage with the service with the objective of facilitating reintegration into society and obtain meaningful employment post-release. The most recent figures show that 298 prisoners are engaged with the service in some way.
- 7.7.2 There are different levels of activity. Community Service is carried out in many forms and at the time of writing 122 prisoners were engaged with this. 35 prisoners are undergoing external training, either within a company or at outside training establishments.

- 7.7.3 40 Prisoners undertake regular paid work outside of the prison with local employers. This allows prisoners to get used to the realities of working and many of the prisoners on C Wing are involved in outside work, returning to the prison after work. Many prisoners are offered employment post-release by their employers.

## **7.8 RESETTLEMENT**

- 7.8.1 Resettlement services are provided by a private provider, Seetec. They provide support to assist offenders prior to release in the following key areas:

Accommodation

Employment

Finance and Debt

Specific support for any victim of domestic abuse or history as a sex worker

- 7.8.2 Support is given from 3-4 months prior to release and offenders are offered three sessions in which an action plan can be formulated and support can be requested. The support given is often essential in enabling offenders to deal successfully with life outside of prison.

## **7.9 CES**

- 7.9.1 Continues to operate well with few, if any, concerns raised by prisoners.

## **7.10 CHAPLAINCY**

- 7.10.1 The chaplaincy works well and caters for all religions as appropriate.

## **7.11 LIBRARY**

- 7.11.1 The prison Library is open from 08:30 – 11:15 / 12:30 – 16:30 / 18:00 – 19:00 each weekday, and Saturday and Sunday 09:00 – 11:00 / 13:00 – 15:00. Prisoners act as Library Assistants throughout the day with professional help from a KCC librarian, whose time is shared with HMPs Swaleside and Elmley.

- 7.11.2 The Library maintains a good stock of books and provides a range of daily papers. Some prisoners purchase daily newspapers via the library; tabloids and television guides comprise the bulk of purchases. Prisoners seeking books and journals are able to request publications not held by Standford Hill's library but must access Virtual Campus in the Education wing if information or data provided via the internet is required. The earlier part of the year was marked by KCC software problems which meant that recording loans and registering returned books proved difficult.

## **7.12 FIRE SAFETY**

- 7.12.1 Fire Safety has much improved with regular fire drills taking place on the wings and fire appliances serviced annually. Uniformed staff are aware of the requirements in the event of a wing evacuation.

- 7.12.2 The final exit doors from A and B wings still requires manual operation to open/close. The Board do feel that this should be controlled from the wing office by a remote control operation by a member of the uniformed staff.

### **7.13 HIGH SHERIFF'S VISIT**

7.13.1 The High Sheriff of Kent came to Standford Hill to announce and present his annual awards. Four of the awards were won by Standford Hill prisoners – a great achievement.

### **7.14 FAMILY DAYS**

7.14.1 Family days are held periodically to allow prisoners association with members of their family. These events have proved to be very successful and well attended. It is hoped the prisoners will maintain a further bond with their family.

7.14.2 There are six Family Days per calendar year and they are held in Visits with activities for children to enable family ties to be maintained.

### **7.15 VISITS**

7.15.1 This area continues to operate well and is light, open and comfortable, well maintained and with good facilities. The uniformed staff are sympathetic to the atmosphere of the area and allow prisoner family meetings to be conducted in a flexible manner.

7.15.2 The Visits area is, of course, an area vulnerable to the exchange of illegal substances/drugs between prisoners and visitors and uniformed staff are constantly vigilant to this.

## **Section 8**

### **8.1 THE WORK OF THE IMB**

- 8.1.1 The Board meets once a month to discuss the previous month's report from the Governor and members individual reports, notes and observations. There is an opportunity to raise issues with the Governor which requires response or action.
- 8.1.2 Each weekday, a board member visits the prison and observes areas of interest and other areas identified for particular attention. The member makes a written report of the inspection which is available in a diary kept securely in the IMB office.

### **8.2 INDUCTION**

- 8.2.1 Each Thursday of the week a member of the IMB attends the prison to take part in the Induction Programme for new prisoners to Standford Hill. The member explains the role of the IMB and how to make contact should a prisoner wish to talk to a member of the Board. In many cases, this is the first time prisoners would have had face-to-face information about the IMB.
- 8.2.2 During the past year, the control of the Induction process has been greatly improved and attendance at these briefings is 100%.

### **8.3 EVENING SURGERY**

- 8.3.1 The "drop in" evening surgery, held once a month for the benefit of prisoners who are out of the prison during the core part of the day and are therefore unable to speak face to face with a member of the IMB continues to prove helpful.
- 8.3.2 The Board are grateful to the Chaplaincy of Standford Hill for their co-operation in allowing the surgery to be held within the quiet atmosphere of the prison chapel and adjoining rooms.

## 8.4 STATISTICS

### 8.4.1 BOARD STATISTICS

Recommended complement of Board Members	10
Number of Members at start of reporting period	8
Number of Members at end of reporting period	8
Number of new Members joining within the reporting period	1
Number of Members leaving within the reporting period.	1
Total number of visits to the prison	<b>382</b>
Total number of applications received	112
Total number of segregation reviews held	N/app
Total number of segregation reviews attended	N/app

## 8.4.2

The following table contains the statistics of applications to the Board:

<b>Code</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/2016</b>
A	Accommodation	1	0
B	Adjudications	3	2
C	Diversity Related	3	2
D	Education/Employment	4	6
E	Family Visits	4	5
F	Food	6	3
G	Heath Related	15	13
H1	Property/Money S. Hill	19	5
H2	Property/Money Other	25	16
I	Sentence Related	22	16
J	Staff/Prisoner Related	6	8
K	Transfers	3	1
L	Miscellaneous	0	21
M	HDC	0	4
N	ROTL/Town Visits	55	10
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>166 (+16%)</b>	<b>112 (-33%)</b>