



**HMP Springhill
Annual Report
January 2014 – December 2015**



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

The Board is specifically charged to:

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

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

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Section 3

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

- 3.1 HMP Springhill is an open establishment (Category D) and accommodates up to 335 adult men. Prisoners are those who can be trusted in open conditions, including those coming to the end of their long sentences as well as those serving shorter sentences.
- 3.2 Springhill was the first open prison in the country, and opened in 1953. The “Big House” was built as a family home in 1872 and used in wartime as a base for MI6 and then Special Operations Executive (SOE).
- 3.4 All prisoners not serving a short sentence are encouraged to join a resettlement scheme that allows them to carry out work for the local community and to seek work experience and full time work for the last months of their sentences.
- 3.5 At the start of the period, the prison was releasing approximately 90 men daily into the community to carry out charity work, assist with other community-based projects and attend paid employment. About 10 prisoners were on Home Leave at any one time. There were around 200 movements in and out of the prison each day. During the course of 2014, these numbers gradually declined as the impact of revisions to the licensing provisions for men in open conditions were felt. Revisions were initially by interim guidance in August 2014 and ultimately final guidance and revision in March 2015. The greatest impact on the number of men being released on license occurred during the course of 2015 with numbers as low as 10 to 15 released daily in the final part of the year.
- 3.6 Prisoners are accommodated in 13 huts. In ten of the huts, prisoners are mostly two per room. Each hut has a communal lounge, kitchen, showers and separate toilets. There are three huts with 40 single rooms each – these are allocated according to a structured incentive system. There is one 16 bed unit which is dedicated for prisoners with substance misuse support needs. Office accommodation and Springs restaurant (used by visitors and staff from Springhill and Grendon) are in the Big House.
- 3.7 HMP Springhill is jointly managed with HMP Grendon (located next door), and a single Independent Monitoring Board monitors both prisons.
- 3.8 Certain facilities (e.g. the dental suite in Grendon) and an increasing number of staff teams (e.g. OMU, Business Hub, Security) serve both prisons. However, Springhill and Grendon cater for different categories of prisoner and have very different regimes.
- 3.9 Healthcare services are provided by Care UK under contract with the local healthcare commissioning body (Health & Justice Commissioning NHS England, Thames Valley Area Team). Nurse clinics include Wellman, Diabetes, Asthma and Immunisations. There are visiting Podiatry and Physiotherapy services. Mental Health In Reach is provided by Oxford and Bucks Mental Health Trust. There are Dental (Haddenham Dental Centre) and Optician (Howcroft and Selby) services providing regular clinics.
- 3.10 A drug and alcohol intervention service contract is provided by Inclusion under contract with the healthcare commissioning body.
- 3.11 Education services are provided by Milton Keynes College.

Section 4

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 4.1 There were a number of significant events which affected Springhill in 2014 and their impact continued to affect the prison in 2015. These were:
- The gradual introduction of changes to the provision of Release on Temporary License (ROTL) culminating in the completion of a prison wide ROTL review and publication of new guidance on processes in March 2015. Pending the outcome of the ROTL review and throughout 2014, changes were introduced on an ongoing basis resulting in confusion and anxiety for both prisoners and staff who endured a constantly shifting landscape of new or anticipated change in regulation. The ultimate issuance of the new guidance in early 2015 necessitated additional unforeseen changes. Overall, the Board welcomed the improving rigour with which licensing decisions are being made including the reduction in certain RDR's and agency work which did not contribute to useful resettlement, however the transition had a damaging impact on the resettlement regime at Springhill, highlighting weaknesses in the functioning of the Offender Management Unit (OMU) (as well as outside probation services) and its capacity to cope with the new regime. While ROTL had declined by approximately 20% in 2014 compared to 2013, the declines in 2015 – and especially after July 2015 – were significantly greater and performance was, at times, below comparable prisons.
 - The long awaited visit of the Benchmarking Team which did not commence until January 2014 and the report was finally accepted and published in August 2014. The report resulted ultimately in a very welcome increase in resources for Springhill (and Grendon with which it shares resources) including for the OMU. However, the delay in introducing benchmarking did mean that Springhill (and Grendon) operated with a difficult staffing situation throughout 2014, relying on agency staffing and PP's to make up shortfalls. The POA reported upwards of 30 vacancies in mid-2014 increasing to a peak of 68 positions by early 2015 (this is a combined Grendon and Springhill total). This had a significant impact on the prisoner experience and contributed to what the Board felt was deterioration in the overall regime including staff- prisoner relationships, availability of information, delivery of education and purposeful activity, the physical condition of the accommodation, safer custody and security. The Board would like to commend staff and management who, despite these difficulties, did succeed in maintaining the regime to a level not seen in many other prisons in the system. The Board is impressed with the level of recruitment which has successfully taken place in 2015 and which allowed the new staffing profile to commence implementation late in the year.
 - The inspection of Springhill by HMIP which took place in May 2014 and which graded Springhill as not sufficiently good in the areas of Purposeful Activity and Resettlement, reasonably good in Respect and good in Safety. Recommendations for improvement highlighted in the report have been accepted by prison management but their implementation through the end of 2014 was hindered by the lack of resources especially in the areas of Resettlement and Purposeful Activity. However, the Board is pleased to see some improvements beginning to be developed especially in areas of Respect. Improvement in Resettlement has been hampered by the lack of progress on ROTL processes and difficulties in the performance of the OMU.

4.2 The Board would like to highlight the following areas of concern during 2014/5:

- **Prisoner accommodation** – This is provided in 13 huts, which continue to deteriorate. The Board welcomed the continuing renovation of the showers in some of the huts in 2014. However, the failure to secure funding for the refurbishment of Y hut showers left that facility in a disgraceful, degrading and unsafe condition. Notwithstanding the availability of funding for this renovation in 2015, the timing for its commencement (let alone completion) remained uncertain through the year end. The contracting out of the works department which commenced in 2015 (with the national contract with Carillion) has all but stopped the continued renovations of other shower areas (as well as other works projects) leaving them also in a disgraceful state. While there is agreement in the Carillion contract to continue to employ prisoner labour (as has been the case in recent years), it is disappointing that this important source of employment for men was interrupted in 2015. The Board is concerned that, in the interim, accommodation will become more dilapidated, especially with the increased wear and tear attributable to more men being on camp more often due to the decline in access to ROTL. Accommodation for those with physical disabilities is very limited and some other areas remain inaccessible for those with mobility problems including parts of education, the new association room, the OMU, the chapel and other locations.
- **Impact of changes to Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL)** While the Board supports the more rigorous risk analysis included in the new ROTL procedures and accepts that there will be a consequential reduction the availability of ROTL in the future as compared to the pre-2014 period, the impact in the short term on those who have been in Springhill during this period of transition was, at least, unfortunate if not unfair. The ability of the OMU department to cope with ongoing changes was not sufficiently anticipated or managed to ensure that men were progressing toward resettlement successfully. On many occasions the relationship between OMU staff and prisoners became hostile. Due to pressure of work within the OMU, access to OMU staff has become more and more limited. The flow of information between the OMU staff and the men in their care has been interrupted or changeable and this further increased the anxieties of the men at Springhill. While these issues should gradually be resolved, the Board remained concerned through the end of 2015 with the ability of the OMU to cope with the new ROTL processes and to deliver a dependable service to the prison.
- **Presence of mobile phones, drugs and alcohol** –All of these, in particular, NPS (otherwise known as Spice or other “legal” highs) highlighted in our 2013 report were even more prevalent in 2014 and 2015. Anecdotal evidence from prisoners testifies to significant drug and alcohol use. This situation was exacerbated through the impact of ROTL changes, lack of staff and the lack of a consistent drug strategy. Staffing difficulties, in particular, led to some break down in the Mandatory Drug Testing (MDT) administration and reporting. The Board was concerned about the lack of a cohesive strategy for control of drugs (see 6.2) during this period.

4.3 The Board would like to highlight the following areas of excellence:

- **Prison Council** –has continued to develop and is recognized and valued by management as a way for information to be disseminated from staff and management to prisoners as well as from prisoners to management. During 2014, the Council developed the idea of the Prisoner Association room which was subsequently renovated and realized using prisoner labour. This facility is a valuable additional resource in the prison. The Board also welcomes the new prisoner run Information

and Guidance (IAG) room which was developed in 2015.

- The Board welcomes the decision by management to develop Springhill as an “**Enabling Environment**” and to seek this award from the Royal College of Psychiatrists. While this process may take time to achieve the Board commends senior management for promoting this as a means to improve relationships across all members of the Springhill community, as it should thereby contribute to outcomes for prisoners in Springhill.

Section 5

OBLIGATORY REPORTS

5.1 Equality and Inclusion

- There is a well-established team of equality mentors at Springhill who, supported also by the Prison Council and staff, take responsibility for helping to organize a wide range of events and celebration days which were held across Springhill during the year ranging from a Romany Traveler week, Black History month events, the re-dedication of the Buddha Grove, LGBT events, and a day each month to celebrate and to focus on differing cultures and countries. Prisoners assist with devising and cooking special meals in the kitchens and other events including sports events and quizzes are included. The team has produced a newsletter highlighting diversity events and providing further information aimed at supporting diversity. Events are well publicized and all are encouraged to attend. There is a designated hut which is used by the equality mentors and is the base of their activities on camp.
- Special meetings for particular groups of men (a lack highlighted in the inspection report) have begun to be developed. For example, there is now a meeting of older prisoners which takes place weekly in the evenings.
- More than 50 prisoners observed Ramadan in June/July 2014 and 2015, with the kitchen staff ensuring that food, including hot meals, were available in accordance with the requirements of the fast. Observance of Eid, especially in 2015 with a feast laid on for prisoners and their families and guests, was especially well done.
- The Chaplaincy team is inclusive and multi-faith and represents various Christian denominations together with Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, pagan and Sikh faiths. There is a chapel and a mosque along with a multi-faith room at Springhill. The Chaplaincy hosts a popular Christmas carol service each year. The Team runs the Sycamore Tree Project to enable prisoners to understand the impact of their crime on victims, with a positive effect on attitudes and behaviours. A Relationship course was also made available. The Team is responsive, and is well supported. The lead chaplain was on sick leave through part of 2014 and retired in 2015. This position should be filled by the end of 2015.
- The use and analysis of data on diversity and equality characteristics has increased. The DEAT team produced a study analyzing whether adjudication results were unfairly biased against BME prisoners. The study proved that this was not an issue. The Board welcomes the greater use and scrutiny of this data. As of 2015 there is now a dedicated Custodial Manager (CM) and supporting administrative member of staff to underpin the work in the area of diversity and equality.

5.2 Education, Learning and Skills

- The on-site education programmes at Springhill are provided by tutors employed by Milton Keynes College. In 2014, a new form of contract was introduced, under OLASS Phase 4, using a payment by results approach. As of 1st August 2014, MKC is paid only on actual registrations and achievements. The final 20% of funding for a course is received only if a student passes the course.
- Considerable work was done during 2014 and continuing in 2015 to reduce the impact of lesson interruptions and to increase prisoner engagement. Tutors and staff worked

to highlight absenteeism and men were placed on report for unexplained absences. Efforts were also made to avoid absences due to appointments in healthcare or the OMU which had accounted for the majority of missed lessons.

- Course take-up has increased during 2014 and 2015. However, unfortunately, staff vacancies and absences during 2015 had an adverse impact upon education and vocational delivery, in particular in Plumbing, IT, CSCS, Business and PE. Other challenges have included reluctance to enroll for functional Maths and English and to complete the courses, particularly once men are on ROTL and are moved to evening classes; the need for more direct allocation to courses; difficulty in phasing allocation of men from shorter to longer courses within Maths and English; difficulty in fitting in part time courses with camp labour; the effect of the stricter ROTL regime; and the difficulty in getting placements. Efforts were made to address these issues and in particular to increase uptake and success rates for Functional Skill in English and Maths. A Focus Group was set up in May 2015 comprising MKC staff and prisoner students to consider options for improving success rates.
- While many men come to Springhill without Functional Maths and English some have fulfilled education on courses up to level 2. This presents an ongoing problem as provision is only available under OLASS 4 through level 2. As a result, it is necessary to expand educational opportunities beyond those offered under OLASS.
- An important development in 2014 was the Start Up Loans scheme. Springhill is one of two locations in the UK piloting a Start Up Loans Programme through the Start Up Loans Co. Ltd (SULCO). It is an offshoot of a government scheme started about three years ago. It is being run with the assistance of the Bright Ideas Trust. It was commenced at Springhill in April 2014 and ended in March 2015. Prisoners in groups develop their own business plans and cash flows which they then pitch individually to a panel. This pitch can be done before or after release. The panel may then agree to loans being provided, subject to consent from Prison Service that the business proposal is suitable from the point of view of parole and the nature of the man's offence. University College is evaluating the pilot. Oxford Brookes students attend the prison one evening a week to provide online research support for the Start Up Loans Programme. It has proved a popular and successful initiative and it is hoped that it can be mainstreamed at Springhill.
- Oxford Brookes University has a small fund for degree courses for prisoners from Springhill. The money covers transport, course fees and a meals allowance. It also helps with mean-tested maintenance grants on release. Up to 10 places are available, and in 2015, five men took up this opportunity. However, there have been some problems with granting licenses to allow men to continue attending this course. The Board will continue to monitor this situation in the hope that this valuable opportunity can be fully utilised. Oxford Brookes also supports a mentoring program for Springhill men where OB students assist with online research for students at the Open University.
- Other educational opportunities available during 2014/5 have included Finding Rhythms – a one-off week long course which provided an NVQ in music production for a group of 10 prisoners (9 completed the course).
- Education opportunities in 2014 were negatively affected with the closure of the PICTA suite which was never fully re-opened. This was a national problem. In 2015, 15 of its 22 spaces were made available through the support of Milton Keynes College

tutors. It is hoped that the remaining spaces on this valuable IT course will become available.

- The Board notes the commitment of the Governor and the education staff to continue to improve the education regime. Prisoner orderlies are tasked to help ensure regular attendance at classes. Discussion in the Focus Group has also thrown up positive comments from the prison students regarding the dedication and ability of the tutors and also demonstrates a real desire amongst the prisoners on the Focus Group to help progress education more widely and successfully within Springhill.

5.3 Healthcare

- Both 2014 and 2015 saw a marked improvement in the provision of Healthcare services at both Grendon and Springhill brought about through the effective management and liaison between CareUK, the primary healthcare provider, and prison management.
- The Service Manager Victoria Kurrein has led these changes, and received recognition as recipient of the 'Inspirational Leader' awarded by Care UK for her efforts, and also by the Butler Trust with a Commendation. Additionally other staff were recognised and rewarded for their contribution: Jackqui Wizard received a Great Care Award for her contribution to the Springhill Healthcare Team. (Ms Wizard was also recognised through promotion to Clinical Lead with special responsibility for streamlining clinical practices).
- Communication between all of the Healthcare services has seen significant improvement with the introduction of 'functional mailboxes' enabling more effective communication within the Healthcare cluster, and improved data sharing. A weekly Multi-agency Shared Care Meeting has been implemented to discuss patient care and improve communication between the various providers and prison staff.
- The Dental Contract has been an area of concern on several occasions during 2014/15. The main issues have been the contractual ambiguity for the identification of responsibilities between the prison, the provider and the commissioning of dental services. For example on two separate occasions in September 2014 and November 2014 there was no treatment available for prisoners due to:
 - Inoperable dental chair inspection lamp
 - Broken x-ray machine
 - Broken Dental chair
 - Broken 'autoclave' leading to failure to be able to sterilize dental instruments.

All of these incidents took longer than was satisfactory to resolve and impacted negatively upon the men.

The contract is now an issue that is for further resolution and is under discussion.

- The introduction of the Care Act 2014 and Health and Social Care (Safety and Quality) Act 2015 is raising questions about new responsibilities of local councils and the role of social services within the prison. Work is currently underway to develop prison, social care and healthcare pathways.
- During the early part of this year difficulties with availability of heating in the healthcare facility impacted upon the care provided to the men. The availability of clinics was also affected with lack of heating for several weeks which resulted in

considerable extra work by the staff to provide an environment that was fit for purpose. Temporary heaters had to be sourced and examination rooms heated to ensure they were suitable for physical examination when this was required. Towards the end of March/April this year there was some improvement.

- The Board is concerned about the transfers of prisoners already undergoing medical treatment into Springhill from other prisons. Healthcare staff have raised incidents where a consultant appointment has been made through their existing prison, resulting in the appointment being missed and considerable time added before a new appointment can be arranged, and insufficient notice being provided by a sending prison of a prisoner's urgent medication or treatment needs.

5.4 Purposeful Activities

- There is a well-defined pathway to employment at Springhill, with prisoners starting work on Camp, progressing to community and voluntary work on camp and then outside, and finally the goal of working in paid employment leading up to release. Included in this pathway are opportunities for education and training which should lead to resettlement and employment.
- Springhill's significant number of restricted status prisoners has necessitated the dedication of additional resources because of the requirement of additional checks with outside probation for job placements, staff vetting of placements as well as random job place checks by staff.
- The Board welcomes a more rigorous integration of these pathways with the risk assessment and sentence planning called for under the new ROTL processes. However, difficulties with staffing both in the OMU, outside probation and among uniformed staff on camp delayed the full implementation of the new ROTL processes and therefore reduced activities available to men. Analysis of community work placements highlighted that they were of low quality and often did not contribute to future work prospects outlined in a prisoner's sentence plan. Nor was there sufficient staff in some instances to provide the work place checks which would allow a placement to continue or to generate a new placement.
- While the level of placements, both for community work and paid employment, were maintained during 2014 at a level similar to 2013, there was a critical decline in these activities in 2015. There was a significant drop in jobs available through agencies (historically an important source of work for Springhill men) because the new ROTL requirements dictated that all work places are vetted as part of the license approval. Once the licenses which pre-existed the introduction of new ROTL processes expired in September 2015, the OMU was unable to maintain the license re-approvals necessary nor were suitable work placements to replace agency work found. As a result, many men were prevented from working out in paid employment and community work. While this situation is expected to be resolved eventually, it meant that a very large number of men remained on camp on a daily basis and it has negatively impacted their resettlement progression as well as placing extra demands on the prison's facilities and staff.

Purposeful activities are also covered under Education, Learning & Skills (see 5.2).

5.5 Resettlement

- Preparation for successful resettlement and rehabilitation is meant to be at the heart of the work a prisoner does whilst he is at Springhill, and it is key in reducing reoffending rates. During 2014 and despite the ongoing introduction of changes to ROTL, Springhill did well to meet its targets for housing, employment and training upon release. Meeting these targets in 2015 was a more considerable effort and targets were not met.
- In 2014, NOMS announced the contracting out of resettlement services for non-restricted status prisoners through new Community Resettlement Companies (CRC's). The contract for Springhill was won by MTCNovo which commenced operations in Springhill in the spring of 2015 and is meant to supply resettlement services (including housing assistance, debt support, opening bank accounts and signposting to other support services) to all prisoners at Springhill (either directly or subcontracted through Thames Valley probation) as they come to the end of their sentences. Initially there was some confusion and overlap of services between the new CRC and Thames Valley probation, however this situation is beginning to resolve itself. The Board will continue to monitor the work of the CRC through 2016.
- The Board welcomes the development of new prisoner feedback logs which were introduced in October 2015. This will allow men to develop an ongoing record of their performance in work and education which will be an important part of evidencing their preparation for resettlement and release.

5.6 Safer Custody

- In 2014 and into 2015, Safer Custody was negatively impacted by the presence of men who were inappropriate for open conditions as well as the changes and gaps in staffing levels in the prison at a time when more men were being kept on camp for longer periods of time due to ROTL changes.
- A significant number of men (131 in 2014 and 117 in 2015) were removed from open conditions during this time either by being "lodged" at Grendon (86 in 2014 and 64 in 2015) or being sent on to other closed establishments. This high number of men failing in open conditions is evidence that men who were inappropriate for open conditions are being sent to Springhill. Among men moved to Grendon, in particular, there was evidence of problems of bullying and men getting into debt.
- In 2014 there was a significant increase in Absconds (13 up from 6 in the previous year) with 'Failure to Returns' at 6 (11 in the previous year), although these numbers reduced again in 2015.
- The Board is concerned that, although aspects of safer custody are well documented and well reported, the Safer Custody meetings have often been poorly attended or attended by continually changing members of staff and analysis of data has not always been consistent. The Board is concerned that the presence of bullying and men getting into debt, supported by anecdotal evidence, is not being fully addressed by Safer Custody processes.
- In the summer of 2015, increased vandalism on Camp combined with evidence of greater drug, alcohol and phone use as well as concerns over men getting into debt

and trying to get themselves returned to closed conditions led to a threatened clamp down on ROTL. While the clamp down did not materialize the Board felt that the manner in which this intervention took place was de-stabilising.

- In 2015, there have begun to be some important improvements in staff/prisoner interactions. The “hatch” in the Centre was specifically identified as inefficient, inappropriate and a contributor to perceptions of staff rudeness and it was removed in September. The creation of the Information and Guidance (IAG) room, while still developing, should enhance prisoner staff relationships and improve the prisoner experience. Better organisation of the OMU drop in sessions and creating a triage system for appointments is welcome so as to allow OMU staff more time to focus on their work, however the Board is concerned that it has further removed access of men to OMU staff at a critical time. The Board is aware of a considerable amount of negative feeling to the OMU by prisoners and is concerned that limiting access will increase rather than diminish this feeling.
- The complaints system is generally good however there is a strong anxiety among prisoners that it is ineffective or that its use will create unwanted negative attention upon a prisoner and could result in disciplinary reprisals. The Board reviews responses to complaints on a weekly basis and generally finds the responses appropriate although inadequate responses concerning the OMU and lost property were highlighted frequently in both 2014 and 2015. The Board has also highlighted that complaints are not always delivered to the Complaints clerk in a timely manner and they have been answered by the officer/staff member about whom the complaint was made.
- The Board welcomes plans to enhance the personal officer system in the wake of the new staff profiling created by benchmarking. This is an area which is much needed and should help diffuse the sense that staff can be unapproachable or unhelpful. The Board will monitor this development.

5.7 Segregation, Care and Separation

- Because there is no Segregation Unit at Springhill, prisoners who need to be removed from open conditions at short notice are often moved to Grendon. Once there, as there is no Segregation Unit either, prisoners are accommodated on various Wings (where they are known as “Lodgers”).
- No ACCTs (Assessment, Care in Custody & Teamwork) were opened during 2014 or 2015 in Springhill, and there is little or no use of bullying documentation. ACCT’s however, have been opened on Lodgers but these are included in Grendon information. The Board is concerned that, despite anecdotal evidence from Lodgers of the presence of bullying and intimidation, that there has limited use of bullying documentation.
- Throughout 2014, the Board raised concerns about the lack of a consistent protocol to cover transfers of Lodgers to Grendon, in particular the healthcare aspects. There were also a significant number of problems with property where men were “lodging” in Grendon for significant time without access to their property or where property had gone missing due to badly executed cell clearances.

5.8 Residential Services

- **Catering:**

During the year, catering continued to encounter a number of recurrent challenges, including equipment faults and failures, staff shortages, delivery errors and budget pressures. These were managed, and, based on our observations, a good standard of service delivery was maintained. The catering services manager is to be highly commended for maintaining an impressive service despite the many difficulties. Catering also plays an important role in contributing to diversity events as well as the provision of food for visits.

The introduction of microwaves on the huts has allowed men some increase in self-catering opportunities however this has also led to concerns over food hygiene and the importance of staff oversight of the hygiene in the hut kitchen areas.

- **Accommodation**

The accommodation remains in a poor state. There were continued efforts to renovate shower areas in some of the huts in 2014. This was done effectively using prisoner labour. However the advent of the contracting out of the Works department to Carillion which commenced in 2015, has stopped this programme.

The Board was very disappointed to learn of the withdrawal of funding for refurbishment of showers in Y hut in 2014 and a further delay for their refurbishment in 2015. This refurbishment should have been a priority as the showers were a disgrace, certainly not fit for use and a health risk to prisoners.

The showers in huts Y were unusable for 9 months. The remaining un-refurbished showers and toilets in other huts should also be upgraded as a matter of urgency. The showers in N hut were unusable for a period of 12 months.

While a new contracted service does take time to settle in, the Board has not been impressed with the delays related to the Carillion contract which has, as of now, failed to provide a reliable and consistent service. There is a serious risk that the accommodation will continue to decline.

The presence of more men on camp for longer periods of time due to the lack of ROTL has also meant that the accommodation is subject to greater wear and tear. The Board is concerned that this and the lack of support from Carillion will further lead to dilapidations in the already poor accommodation. At the end of 2015, there were 13 Estates issues reported by Members on Rota Visits in Springhill which had been outstanding for more than 6 months. Of these 9 were related to the Kitchen, leaking roof and broken equipment. In addition, the contract does not appear to facilitate the use of prisoner labour, with appropriate safeguards, as was possible under the previous Estates/Works arrangements – this can be both beneficial for the prisoners, and cost effective for Springhill.

There was a significant increase in the amount of vandalism and destruction of property in 2014 and early 2015. This was seen to be related to frustrations over the decline in availability of ROTL, as well as the presence of prisoners who were unsuited to open conditions. The Board hopes that the increase in permanent staff at Springhill and a move to the post benchmark detailing will lead to improved staff prisoner relations and a reduction in poor behavior and vandalism.

The creation of the new prisoner association room which was created by prisoner labour under the auspices of the Prison Council is a great improvement. It was completed quickly but lack of staff meant that its use was limited initially. It is a welcome addition to facilities on camp for prisoners.

- **Gym:**
This continued to provide a very supportive offering despite staff shortages due to resignations and illness during part of the year. A full schedule of activities for men who are employed or in education during the day is offered in the early mornings and evenings.
- **Library:**
In our previous report, the Board noted improvements in the Library provision. A new Librarian introduced improved opening hours and a more diverse offering, including reading groups and readings events. Unfortunately these improvements were set back in 2015 with the loss of the librarian. The library also suffers from the lack of access to catalogues and the lack of easily accessible PSI's and PSO's. The Board has also highlighted that some books listed as required are not available in the library.
- **Visits:**
The loss of ROTL especially during 2015 led to a dramatic increase in demand for visits. In 2014 the Visits Coordinator retired and was replaced by an experienced staff member which has ensured continuity of this valued service. There was initially considerable confusion about booking visits when the system shifted to online booking. The problems have now largely been resolved. The capacity of visits has grown from 40 tables to 50 and finally to 55, with additional visits days added commencing in November 2015. There is concern, as ROTL restrictions continue, that demand for visits may outstrip capacity. The Board will continue to review this.
There has also been the recognition that the system for welcoming visitors needs improving and this is being investigated. A significant menu of food including hot options was introduced during 2015. Under the guidance of a staff member, prisoners created a new food servery area which is very welcoming. The children's play area was also improved.

Section 6

OTHER ESSENTIAL REPORTS

6.1. Reception, Induction and early days at Springhill

- Reception at Springhill registers a variable number of new prisoners each week averaging between eight to ten men. Men are accommodated in double rooms in the Induction Hut for the first week.
- The first week or two are spent with the Induction Orderly, finding their way around facilities and being interviewed about education and employment opportunities. During this time men are expected to make contact with their offender supervisor/manager in the OMU to ensure paperwork is updated and commence the processes which will ultimately lead to ROTL. All men are assigned to a named OMU team. In early 2014, a significant number of men came to Springhill with out of date or missing paperwork including OASYS documents. This increased the backlog of paperwork in the OMU and put further pressure on work being done for Risk Boards. This was an ongoing problem through 2014 and into 2015. However the Board is also aware of a number of incidents where men coming to Springhill have had to wait a significant number of weeks even to meet their OMU team. This is a source of anxiety and frustration to them.
- Difficulties in staffing the Reception has raised some issues with property – especially for those men who are returned to closed conditions either directly or via Grendon. A significant number of property complaints were generated in this way.
- The IMB is part of the Induction process, and Board Members try to visit the Induction Hut each week to meet new arrivals

6.2 Drug Strategy

- Drug Strategy continued to be a problem area through 2014/15. Drug Strategy meetings were inconsistently and poorly attended, and subject to a continual change in leadership.
- Drug and alcohol problems contributed to a significant number of men failing in open conditions, including violence, increase in debt issues and men being bullied or used as “runners”. New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) especially are an ongoing and damaging contributor to problems in the prison.
- During 2014 and 2015, Mandatory Drug Testing (MDT) was poorly profiled, leading to a lack of consistent testing, occasional failure to process the tests or to act upon receipt of results. Logs were poorly maintained as was the MDT suite.
- Grendon and Springhill jointly hosted a drug awareness conference in May 2015. This event was highly innovative, and included prisoners from both Grendon and Springhill, and staff drawn from both prisons as well as from the broader prison system. Recognized and experienced professionals delivered talks which formed the basis of valuable discussion among all participants. Contributions during

these discussions were intended to feed into forming the new drug strategy. It is disappointing that this did not materialize until late in 2015.

- Inclusion continues to offer a good service valued by the men. Communication between DART teams and Healthcare has improved. The DART team is valued by the men for the support it offers.
- The Board is pleased to note that the prison is once again, when available, using drugs dogs in support of its efforts to control illicit items on camp. Use of this valuable resource was discontinued in 2013 which the Board had felt was unfortunate.

Section 7

THE WORK OF THE BOARD

7.1 Members of the Board attended meetings and events throughout the year across the following subjects:

- Springhill Senior Management Team
- Healthcare
- Security
- Catering
- Drug Strategy
- Diversity
- Social events
- Carol Service
- Visits
- Training
- Safer Custody
- Education
- Prison Council.

7.2 Prisons visited/ IMB visits hosted: The Board visited HMP Bullingdon in 2014 and hosted a group of 15 members of AMIMB in June 2015.

7.3 External training/conferences

Members of the Board have attended the following training courses:

- C & R training (external)
- Personal Protection training
- T-CAT training

The 2014 IMB Conference was attended by 1 member.
The 2015 IMB Conference was attended by 2 members.

7.4 Internal training

Members of the Board have attended training mornings in 2014/15 when talks from various departments in the prisons were given. The Board is grateful for the time and effort given by those members of the prison staff that gave these informative talks.

7.5 **Appointments**

Four new members joined in 2014 -15.

7.6 Board Statistics – 2014 & 2015

BOARD STATISTICS - GRENDON & SPRINGHILL 2014 & 2015	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	15
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	10
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period (Y/E 2015)	10
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	4
Number of members leaving within the reporting period	4
Total number of board meetings during reporting period	24
Average number of attendances at Board meetings during reporting period	9

7.7 Applications

Code	Subject	2014	2015
A	Accommodation	0	0
B	Adjudications	1	3
C	Equality & Diversity (incl religion)	0	0
D	Education/employment/training inc IEP	2	1
E 1	Family/visits inc mail & phone	0	1
E 2	Finance/pay	2	2
F	Food/kitchen related	0	0
G	Health related	1	3
H 1	Property (within current establishment)	1	3
H 2	Property (during transfer/in another establishment)	1	4
H 3	Canteen, facilities, Catalogue shopping, Argos	0	0
I	Sentence related (incl HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-cat etc)	16	16
J	Staff/prisoner/detainee concerns incl bullying	5	3
K	Transfers	0	2
L	Miscellaneous	3	6
	TOTAL NUMBER OF IMB APPLICATIONS (Springhill)	32	44

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of the Springhill Board and our IMB Clerk for their hard work and support over the last two years.

Margaret Cripps and Jean Morgan

IMB Chairs, Grendon & Springhill