



Bullington Community Prison

Annual Report

1 August 2015

to

31 July 2016

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 for Justice 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.

The Board wishes to thank all the prison staff for their cooperation, and in particular the Governing Governor, Mr Ian Blakeman. On those occasions when the Governing Governor has been unable to attend the monthly IMB Board meeting, the Deputy Governor, Ms Helen Clayton-Hoar, has attended.

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Section 3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

HMP Bullingdon is a local prison, designated as a Resettlement prison for the Thames Valley and Hampshire. Increasingly the prison is holding prisoners for short periods before allocating them into the training estate. It also serves as a function for holding sex offenders under treatment. The prison also holds young adults for short periods; the number varies but can be as high as 50 at times.

With a Certified Normal Accommodation of 869, the prison has an Operational Capacity of 1,114 and operated with an average occupancy of 1095 between 1 August 2015 and 31 July 2016 (compared with 1100 in 2014-2015, 1093 in 2013-2014 and 1063 in 2012-2013).

The prison serves Oxford, Reading and Swindon Crown Courts and the Magistrates' Courts in Oxfordshire and Berkshire. However, owing to overcrowding throughout the prison estate, Bullingdon holds prisoners from many other parts of England and Wales. Prisoners are often transferred at short notice in and out of the prison.

There are six accommodation units or wings, which normally house the following categories of prisoners:

- A – A mixture of convicted/unconvicted prisoners
- B – A mixture of convicted/unconvicted prisoners
- C – A mixture of convicted/unconvicted prisoners
- D – A mixture of convicted/unconvicted prisoners
- E – A mixture of convicted/unconvicted prisoners (sex offenders)
- F - Spur 1 – Induction; Spur 2 – Full time workers

The prison has generally good facilities but most of the prison is now over 20 years old: some of the building fabric no longer meets the latest standards and some of the intensively used areas are showing signs of dilapidation. The outdoor multi-purpose artificial pitch has been unusable for about four years, as it has not been possible to find funding to make the repairs required to return it to use.

Facilities include a library, a chapel, kitchens, a gymnasium, a multi-purpose block housing workshops and classrooms, further workshops including a laundry, a healthcare centre (HCC), an area for delivery of programmes for sex offenders, a separation, support and care unit (SSCU) and garden facilities.

Various services are delivered by outside contractors. These include healthcare (Care UK), education (Milton Keynes College (MKC)) and Works (Carillion).

Section 4 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overall summary and judgments

HMP Bullingdon is a 'local' prison but it is also a complex establishment which receives a wide range of offenders from many parts of the country. The very high rate of prisoner 'churn' continues undiminished as the proportion of remand and short-stay prisoners is high and prisoners are transferred in and out at short notice.

There are many issues which require sustained attention. They include:

- improving allocation to work and attendance at education to develop a more rehabilitative culture
- reducing violence and combating the effects of substance abuse
- making available effective interpreting/translation services for prisoners who are insecure in English
- implementing more consistently good practice in the use of ACCTs
- placing all vulnerable prisoners in appropriate accommodation in order for them to follow a normal regime
- expediting case processing and sentence planning
- making sure that repairs and works projects are carried out so that delays do not impinge on safety, decency and the development of rehabilitative services.

The performance of outside contractors can, and does, have a substantial impact on the effective and efficient functioning of the prison. Unfortunately, the performance of some of these contractors, especially but not only, in the Works area, has been far from satisfactory and has caused significant difficulties for staff and prisoners.

Difficulties in recruiting and retaining sufficient operational and non-operational staff even to maintain Benchmark levels for a range of functions seriously constrain the prison's ability to tackle effectively the issues facing it. The IMB believes that the continuing pressures resulting from the reduction in staffing levels since the introduction of Benchmarking have eroded relationships with prisoners so that indiscipline is more likely to occur; staff morale has also been damaged. Throughout the prison it is proving difficult to retain the experienced staff who are essential for the smooth and safe running of the establishment. This is a matter of concern, not least because of the need to provide support for less experienced staff. There is over-reliance on agency staff in Healthcare where the turnover of staff is high.

Despite the many pressures, staff continue to show commitment and professionalism. Various examples of good practice have been noted by the IMB towards developing a rehabilitative culture. These include cooperation with outside bodies, family days for prisoners, wing-based OMU surgeries and awareness-raising sessions for staff to which prisoners contribute. Officers' skilled interactions with some of the most volatile prisoners, such as those suffering from mental illness or substance abuse, have been observed on many occasions.

The changes in policy and practice initiated by the incoming Governing Governor last year have started to bring improvements. Nevertheless, given the range of issues the prison faces, time is needed to embed and extend change.

Particular issues requiring a response

Policy issues for reply by Minister

It has become increasingly difficult to maintain staffing even at Benchmark levels. It is apparent that this difficulty has had a detrimental effect on the quantity and quality of the interactions of staff with individual prisoners and may relate to the rise in violence and indiscipline.

Operational issues for reply by Prison Service

The unsatisfactory levels of service experienced through the Carillion contract throughout the reporting period were brought to the Minister's attention by letter earlier this year. Despite the promise of sustained improvements, these have not been delivered and cumulatively the failure to address this serious shortcoming has impacted on the decency of the prison environment. What substantive changes will be required of Carillion to remedy this unacceptable situation?

Section 5 AREAS THAT MUST BE REPORTED ON

5.1 Equality and Inclusion

5.1.1 The Bullingdon Equalities Action Group (BEAT) was re-established in 2015; more monitoring information is available now than formerly.

5.1.2 The BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) population comprised about a quarter of the prison's population during the year. In July 2016, the main ethnic groups were : White 74% , Black 12%, Asian 7%, Mixed 4%, Other 1% , preferred not to say 1%.

5.1.3 Foreign Nationals made up some 10 % of Bullingdon's population during the reporting year. In July 2016 they comprised 42 nationalities; the nationalities most represented were: Polish 18, Indian 8, Jamaican 6, Irish 6, Somalian 6, Albanian 4, Romanian 4, Bangladeshi 3, Lithuanian 3, Libyan 3.

5.1.4 Staff are now better informed about access to the Language Line¹ service, particularly its use in Reception and First Night, and are encouraged to use it. [see also Safer Custody below]. The use of the service has increased substantially.

5.1.5 The library holds a range of publications in languages other than English which is reviewed in the light of demand and as the pattern of languages spoken by prisoners changes.

5.1.6 Bullingdon has two full-time chaplains; one is Muslim (the Managing Chaplain, an Imam) and the other Christian (an Anglican priest). The team also includes a number of sessional chaplains drawn from a range of World Faiths and different Christian traditions. Opportunities are provided for corporate and personal worship for members of all faiths represented in the prison. Volunteers assist the Chaplains in their faith-based work with prisoners.

5.1.7 In July 2016, 32 prisoners (compared with 38 in July 2015) were aged 60-69 and 17 aged 70+, compared with 20 over 70 in July 2015. The oldest prisoner was 83.

5.1.8 The figures produced for BEAT fairly consistently recorded that prisoners in the age range 21-25 were over-represented in the statistics showing Adjudications², Adjudications proved, and Segregation Days. It was thought that this age group was most likely to be involved in incidents of impulsive/violent behaviour

5.1.9 In a survey of disabilities carried out in 2016 487 men declared that they had no disabilities; 406 declared a disability, 98 of these declared more than one disability. The disabilities declared were: autism, reduced physical capacity, visual and audio impairments, reduced mobility, dyslexia, and learning difficulties. Suffering from a mental disorder was declared by 106 men. Of the men surveyed, 211 declined to disclose any disability information.

¹ Language Line is a telephone-based interpreting system available in a wide range of languages.

² An adjudication is a hearing in which a prisoner charged with misconduct appears before a governor, or a judge in more serious cases.

5.1.10 Until recently there was no readily available central statistical information on the number of ex-service personnel in the prison. However, men are now asked as part of the BCST2 process (see 5.5.9 below) if they are veterans and this information is collated by the TVCRC (Thames Valley Community Rehabilitation Company). Support from the TVCRC has been uneven during the year, for example when the designated member of staff was absent on sick leave. A SSAFA³ volunteer visits the prison about once a month to see those men who request a visit.

5.1.11 Staff are reminded of the need to be aware of the Care and Management of Transsexual Prisoners and care plans are in place to ensure that the needs of individual transgender prisoners are respected. An LGBT Forum has been held and was attended by various Wing reps. However, it was felt that men often did not feel safe enough to speak openly about sexual orientation.

5.2 Education, Learning and Skills

Teaching and Learning

5.2.1 At the end of the 2015-2016 reporting year, the proportion of teaching judged by Milton Keynes College (MKC) to be good or better was 85%, compared with 70% a year earlier.

5.2.2 Measures such as focused 'learning walks' by senior members of staff, weekly meetings of subject teams and fortnightly staff training, have contributed to this improvement, particularly in the last two years.

5.2.3 Relaxed but respectful prisoner-staff and prisoner-prisoner relationships were noted in a sample of classes visited by the IMB. The learners showed interest, remained on task and asked pertinent questions. The teachers provided clear explanations. They showed awareness of the range of ability and prior knowledge, making regular checks on understanding, particularly of key language.

5.2.4 A very successful session for a combined group organised by the English tutors with a museum outreach officer provided an excellent opportunity for prisoners to exercise their speaking skills during a responsible discussion in which they were invited to hypothesise about the origins of a range of artefacts from different cultures. The prisoners interacted constructively with their tutors and their peers. Those who had taken their children to museums were able to share their experience with other fathers.

5.2.5 The improvement in the performance of those prisoners who complete their courses is being sustained with good success and achievement rates⁴ across a range of courses and overall rates of over 90%. The discontinuities caused by prisoners moving on, owing to (unexpected) transfer to other establishments or the completion of short sentences, are a significant factor in the non-completion of courses.

³ The Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen and Families Association.

⁴ Achievement rate is the proportion of learners completing a course who achieve a qualification. Success rate is the proportion of learners starting a course who obtain a qualification (learners whose withdrawal is not within the prison's control, e.g. on transfer to another establishment, are not included in the calculation of success rate).

5.2.6 Poor attendance at classes continues to be a major issue. In July 2015 attendance had reached almost 70%; in recent months, it has been 'flatlining' at about 65%. Attendance at education and other activities varies from one wing to another. This may reflect the extent to which education is seen as a priority by wing staff and/or differences in applying the sanctions for refusal to attend. During the reporting year, up to a third of classes had, at times, to be cancelled by the provider for various reasons. This situation has improved and there were no cancellations in a five-week period at the end of the reporting year.

Providing education for a diverse population of learners

5.2.7 Bullingdon's diverse population of learners includes a high proportion of remand and short-sentence prisoners. The average stay is between three and six months. In July 2016 about 18% of the prisoner population was on remand and the length of stay of about 70% of sentenced prisoners was under six months. This situation makes it difficult to plan education and other activities, for example prisoners on short sentences have insufficient time to gain Level 2 qualifications. Prisoners who are close to their release date may only have time to take 'stepping stones' courses (see 5.2.10 below).

5.2.8 In 2015 HMIP acknowledged that, while educational provision 'required improvement', the steps being taken were in the right direction. The recovery plan, set in place to address areas for improvement identified in the MKC 2014 self-assessment report, has had an impact, although a number of important issues need further attention.

5.2.9 Allocation of prisoners to classes has improved and is close to 100%, compared with 78% in August 2015, but filling places on educational courses is still a challenge, given the attraction for prisoners of better pay in the industrial workshops.

5.2.10 Prisoners assessed as below Level 1⁵ in English and mathematics on arrival are required to complete Entry Level courses before they can undertake work. Prisoners who need ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) tuition are required to attend ESOL classes as a prior stage. Attendance is noticeably better in ESOL than in other classes. An extra push is needed on functional skills, which in the 2015 learners' survey (see below) were seen as a priority by only 13% of respondents. The possibility of pursuing unitised qualifications (City & Guilds) through short 'roll on, roll off' courses ('stepping stones') offers a way ahead. Remand prisoners are encouraged to undertake education or other activities but cannot be required to do so.

5.2.11 A range of vocational courses is funded under the OLASS 4⁶ contract. Resettlement courses include parentcraft, money management and cookery.

5.2.12 Adjustments to the provision of vocational courses continue to be made, for example the first cohort of prisoners has completed a Timpson's Academy employability course, which can lead to a two-week placement on release and a route into work. The barbering course, first mooted in 2014, is now close to launch. Although the location was identified some time ago, there have been significant delays in installing plumbing and electrics.

⁵ Roughly equivalent to GCSE grades D-G.

⁶ Offender Learning & Skills Service.

Horticulture courses have been reintroduced after a gap of about eight months now that a tutor vacancy has been filled.

5.2.13 The One2One numeracy initiative has started well on E wing, where it has received strong support from staff. The challenge is to extend access to this provision across the prison. Prisoners are more likely to admit to numeracy difficulties and seek help when in contact with an individual mentor than in an open class situation.

5.2.14 In July, there were ten teaching vacancies. It will be difficult to maintain the variety and quality of course provision if the recruitment situation does not improve. Bullingdon's out-of-town location may partly explain the limited response to (re)advertisements.

5.2.15 Ten prisoners are studying Open University modules; two others are registering for Master's degrees. Thirty-five other prisoners are undertaking distance learning.

Library

5.2.16 The library is under-used despite the new regime introduced in April 2016 which has reduced the possibility of clashes, for example between library and gym attendance. There is a lack of officers to return prisoners to wings so prisoners may have to rush visits or remain in the library beyond the purpose of their visit.

5.2.17 Men taking part in 'Dads Aloud' (an arrangement which enables men to record stories to send to their children) were invited to make Christmas cards for their children. Fifteen took part but this the activity needs to be advertised earlier in order to ensure a larger take-up.

5.2.18 Part-time orderlies have been recruited on A, B, C and E wings for 'Turning Pages' (under the Shannon Trust Reading Scheme) to provide individual support for reading. In addition, a 'red band' prisoner⁷ is present at induction for this scheme. Recruitment is a challenge because it is difficult to find prisoners with the right skills, the necessary commitment, and security clearance. Officer support for the programme varies considerably among the wings.

5.2.19 The library has loaned 25 'distraction packs' to Inpatients, the SSCU and A Wing. These packs of puzzles, paper and colouring crayons are aimed at improving the mental health of prisoners and benefit those with poor literacy skills. The packs are appreciated by prisoners and demand for them is increasing.

5.3 Healthcare and Mental Health

Healthcare

5.3.1 Until 31 March 2016 healthcare services were provided by Virgin Care; since then, services have been provided by Care UK.

5.3.2 Cleanliness within the department has been an ongoing concern and remained below required NHS standards throughout the reporting year. Carillion is contracted to provide this

⁷ A 'red band' is a prisoner who has earned privileges and can be given more responsibility.

service but has not done so. As an interim measure, the prison has provided a cleaner for the main healthcare suite, but there has been no cover for healthcare reception, wing treatment rooms, mental health and substance misuse, where cleaning has been undertaken by wing orderlies and nursing staff. Carillion schedules for the cleaning of these areas are yet to be received.

5.3.3 At the end of July, several healthcare cells were out of use; they had been awaiting repairs since early June.

5.3.4 During the period of transition from one provider to another, recruitment and retention of staff has been a challenging process; the service currently relies heavily on agency support. Senior Management is taking steps towards stabilising the situation.

5.3.5 The waiting list for prisoners to see a GP was one week at the end of the reporting year. Significant improvements to the GP clinic DNA (Did Not Attend) rates were achieved during the previous year; they are averaging 8%. DNA rates remain high in some clinics/services run by secondary healthcare providers and further work is required to reduce them.

5.3.6 Waiting lists for outpatient services, i.e. Physiotherapy, Nutrition and Dietetics, Podiatry, and Diabetes Services, continue to be at least equal to those found within the general community.

5.3.7 Dental Services are now provided by 'Time for Teeth'; demand continues to be high. At the end of July urgent referrals were being seen the same or the next working day; the waiting list for routine treatments was up to 35 days.

5.3.8 Delayed attendance of GPs in Reception during the evening continues, at times, to cause problems and delays. On occasions, prisoners are kept in the holding cells for long periods waiting to be seen prior to location on the Induction wing (F1). Delays are also attributable to a lack of rooms and particularly of rooms suitable to ensure patient confidentiality during consultations.

5.3.9 'Health Champions' were introduced on the wings in 2014. This welcome initiative has not been sustainable across all wings.

Mental Health and Mental Health In-Reach services

5.3.10 Primary Mental Health (MHT) services are managed and staffed by Care UK. At the end of the reporting year, urgent referrals were seen within 72 hours. Routine referrals have increased by at least a third over the past year and a triage system is in place. All referrals are seen within 10 days. A regular weekend service is provided by the team. Recruitment of additional staff is currently in progress.

5.3.11 There has been a number of 3-officer unlocks⁸ within Inpatients, particularly during the first six months of the reporting year. This has caused significant disruption to the daily

⁸ A prisoner is normally unlocked by one officer, but in the case of a prisoner with a recent record of violence, the Governor may decide that three officers should be present.

regime of patients and also has a significant effect on the establishment as a whole when Control and Restraint (C&R) team support is required.

5.3.12 Since April 2016, In-reach and Forensic services have been provided by Inclusion, under the South Staffordshire and Shropshire Healthcare Foundation Trust (SSSFT). Urgent referrals are seen within 72 hours and routine referrals are seen within 5 days. All patients are managed and supported through CPA (Care Programme Approach).

5.3.13 At present there is no targeted short- or long-term care for prisoners who have diagnosed Personality Disorders. The In-Reach team is able to provide symptom management but the Board believes the introduction of 'Improving Access to Psychological Therapies' (IAPT) support within the prison environment would be beneficial.

5.3.14 Currently the transfer of identified patients to 'secure units' in mental hospitals within the Thames Valley appears to be working well. However, the transfer of patients outside the Thames Valley areas can, at times, be lengthy and is managed by 'best practice' guidelines⁹. The Board believes statutory guidance from the Ministry of Justice would enable these processes to be expedited, not only for the benefit of the patients concerned, but also for other prisoners whose 'core day' routines can be considerably disrupted when delays occur.

Substance Misuse

5.3.15 The Integrated Substance Misuse Service and the Rehabilitation for Addicted Prisoners Trust (RAPt) was replaced in April 2016 by Inclusion (SSSFT). Cotswold Medicare Ltd (CML) continues to provide GP services.

5.3.16 During the period January to March 2016, leading up to the change in service provider, some programmes offered by RAPt were either shortened or had to be cancelled. Since April 2016, Inclusion (SSSFT) has been providing psychosocial interventions. The 'churn' of prisoner numbers continues to impact on case management and treatment programmes. Good liaison links with community teams continue to be fostered to facilitate continuity of care for prisoners on release from prison.

5.3.17 A considerable challenge to the safety of prisoners and staff is presented, as in other prisons, by the extensive use of new psychoactive substances (NPS), notably 'Spice', by prisoners. 'Spice' is a synthetic cannabinoid that can be mixed with a variety of other substances. The components constantly change: 'Spice' is therefore difficult to detect by drug tests and clinical staff find it difficult to diagnose and treat a patient if they are unsure about the components of what he has taken. The symptoms of taking 'Spice' include paranoia, hallucinations and an unpredictable tendency to violence. The prison continues to raise the awareness of staff about the very serious implications of 'Spice'. Information posters to highlight the dangers to prisoners are displayed around the prison. Taking 'Spice' can be life-threatening: for example, in an incident in May a prisoner would almost certainly have died but for the very quick and skilled response of officers and healthcare staff.

⁹ The transfer and remission of adult prisoners under Sections 47 and 48 of the Mental Health Act.

5.4 Purposeful Activity

See also 5.2 Education, Learning and Skills above

5.4.1 The monitoring of activities (including education) has improved considerably since the re-establishment of the Quality Improvement Group (QiG). Initiatives include the extension to industries of 'learning walks' by senior staff, following their implementation last year in education. Following a 'low key' introductory period, these are being given a sharper focus through a redesigned template.

5.4.2 The overall allocation to activities stood at 73% in July 2016. Attendance at activities other than education stood at about 80%. Prisoners in the last few months of their sentence are often reluctant to start new courses or jobs. An unemployment rate of 20% can create a vacuum which is filled by poor behaviour which makes the prison less safe.

5.4.3 Some vocational areas experience difficulty in engaging a sufficient number of prisoners cleared for work without considerable delays. Areas of higher-level work which are also deemed to be 'high risk', such as the kitchens, tailoring, and greening (waste management) often have vacancies. For example, Farms and Gardens had only fifteen places filled in February - about half its complement.

5.4.4 The pay structure has again been adjusted in order to incentivise jobs providing vocational training, such as painting and decorating, and education courses. The structure involves a link to IEP status¹⁰ for low- and high-level jobs respectively. The rates of bonus paid in productivity-related jobs are being reduced in order to encourage prisoners to apply for jobs that carry responsibility such as 'red band' roles.

5.4.5 The laundry continues to operate with full-time workers for six days per week. Owing to recent issues with steam generation, it has not always been able to operate at full capacity.

5.4.6 The 'barista' style coffee bar, proposed last year, is scheduled to start later this summer; there have been significant delays in installing plumbing and electrics.

5.4.7 At the end of the reporting year, Glazparts, a company making components for double glazing, expanded into a second workshop. Working for this company in the prison offers a possible avenue for post-release employment in the Banbury area.

5.4.8 Fine Cell¹¹ work of high quality by prisoners from E Wing featured in an exhibition in February. The prisoners took pride in learning a new skill and felt that the commitment fostered concentration and patience. They said that the long hours behind the cell door, particularly at weekends, passed quickly when they were engaged in this work.

¹⁰ The Incentives and Earned Privileges (IEP) is a scheme which has three levels: Basic, Standard and Enhanced.

¹¹ 'Fine Cell' [finecellwork.co.uk] is a national organisation which does work in over 20 prisons. Prisoners are taught needlecraft, embroidery, quilting etc which they can pursue in their cells. The work is sold on by Fine Cell and is an important source of income for prisoners. Samples are exhibited and sold nationally at prestigious venues.

5.4.9 A needs analysis based on a Prisoner Survey was carried out in July 2015 to find out more about prisoners' perceptions of employment and education and the reasons why they fail to attend. Questionnaires were distributed to all employed offenders and a range of randomly-chosen unemployed offenders. The response rate was 20%. The survey yielded useful information to inform planning, for example in aligning vocational course with local employment needs. However, the responses all came from prisoners already engaged in some kind of activity; a further survey is to be carried out, involving wing staff more closely, in order to ensure responses from those who are not employed.

5.4.10 A building to house recycling balers was assembled from flatpack by two members of staff and five prisoners who had to build the base, install electrics etc. This initiative provided a valuable rehabilitative experience for the prisoners and savings for the prison that will be ongoing as the prison's recycling bill is reduced.

Gymnasium

5.4.11 There is an extensive regular provision of PE sessions. Courses range from basketball and volleyball 'leaders' with Basketball and Volleyball England to a Level 3 personal trainer qualification that can provide a route into outside employment.

5.4.12 The new core day introduced earlier this year is working well. Full-time workers are no longer experiencing difficulties in getting access to the gym.

5.4.13 Bullingdon's application to the National Lottery via Sports England for funds to relay the worn artificial turf pitch was unsuccessful; the search for funding continues. This pitch had to be taken out of use on safety grounds about four years ago. Land outside F Wing has been assessed for a possible grassed pitch but the considerable investment that would be needed makes this unfeasible. The lack of outdoor facilities continues to restrict the range of opportunities for prisoners to develop their fitness. In the past outside teams came in for matches and this community dimension could not continue.

5.4.14 The successful family days organised five times a year in the gym make an important contribution to rehabilitation. They are appreciated by prisoners and their families, not least because each family has its own space and much more time to spend together than on an ordinary visit. Games and books are available for the children.

5.5 Resettlement.

Reducing Reoffending

5.5.1 The Reducing Reoffending function embraces a wide variety range of provision including Education, Learning and Skills (see 5.2 above), Purposeful Activity (see 5.4 above), Offender Behaviour Programmes and a range of rehabilitative services.

Programmes

5.5.2 Recruitment and retention of facilitators continue to present a challenge, although there was only one vacancy in July 2016 compared with three a year earlier. Training takes

up significant amounts of management time, not least because staff have to be trained long-term to cover all the programmes offered.

5.5.3 The Offender Behaviour courses provided in 2015-2016 comprised two for the general population:

Thinking Skills Programme (TSP¹²) (4 courses x 10 places)

RESOLVE¹³ (4 x 10);

and two for sex offenders:

Sex Offenders' Treatment Programme (SOTP)'Becoming New Me' (BNM¹⁴) (3 x 8)

The SOTP Healthy Sex Programme (HSP) (10 completions over the year).

5.5.4 The HSP is run by South Central Psychological Services on a one-to-one basis. There is a long waiting list for HSP; this situation can result in delays in a prisoner's case going to the Parole Board. The demand for BNM has fallen, owing to the changing nature of the prison's population; a proposal to replace it with a core SOTP course, for which there is a clear demand, is awaiting approval.

5.5.5 A very successful drop-in awareness-raising session took place in February at which staff could engage with members of the Programmes team. Prisoners were deployed at the stands for RESOLVE and TSP; they spoke positively about their work as mentors and ways in which they had been able to use their skills, for example to diffuse tension on their wing.

Thames Valley Community Rehabilitation Company

5.5.6 In May 2015 responsibility for various rehabilitative services (e.g. accommodation, debt reduction), previously provided by voluntary organisations passed to the TVCRC. Last year's report noted that the mobilisation of some pre-release work was slow and a cause of some concern, and that resources were stretched partly because Bullingdon's role as a resettlement prison covers Hampshire (about 100 prisoners) as well as the Thames Valley. It had previously been envisaged that Hampshire would be covered by another CRC.

5.5.7 It is evident that the scale and the complexity of providing a range of rehabilitative services were greatly underestimated, for example the operation began with only two members of staff. Provision has improved following the increase in staffing, but the six people in post are pressed to deliver and a case is being made to appoint two more.

5.5.8 With over 100 releases per month, a key post on site is that of a specialist adviser for housing. This post was vacant in July; staff have to be diverted from other tasks to cover that role. A housing workshop is run monthly by two housing advisers from Oxford. It is aimed

¹² The aim of TSP is to reduce reoffending by developing participants' thinking skills, for example so that they stop and think about costs before they act.

¹³ RESOLVE seeks to address aggression and violence ranging from verbal abuse to physical violence and criminal damage.

¹⁴ BNM is an SOTP programme adapted for offenders with learning difficulties.

specifically at prisoners who are to be released in that city, although others may attend for general advice and guidance.

5.5.9 A key document in the identification of needs and pathways to meet them is the Basic Custody Screen (BCS) 2. This complements BCS1 (see below) and is expected to be completed within five days of a prisoner's admission. The proportion completed on time over the period April-June was 96%.

5.5.10 An important element of identification of needs (pathways) via BCS2 is a face-to-face interview with the prisoner to complement documentary information. For a variety of reasons, including prisoner refusal to cooperate, this is not always possible. The proportion interviewed stood at 77% in June (target 80%). The information from the BCS2 is passed either to a CRC responsible officer or to a probation officer from the National Probation Service (NPS), according to the type of prisoner.

5.5.11 The TVCRC's role extends beyond the signposting originally envisaged and involves more contacts with external agencies, for example for housing. Some pathway needs can be addressed initially in-house, for example education/training (Adult learning, MKC), employment (National Careers Service (NCS)), drugs and alcohol abuse (Inclusion) and Thinking and Behaviour (see Programmes above). Other areas, including relationships and domestic violence, are referred to outside agencies. The charity Aspire¹⁵ has a pathway with a particular link with Bullingdon; this is intended to furnish prisoners with employable skills and credible work experience on release.

5.5.12 The 'Getting it Right' course, available to sentenced prisoners from the Thames Valley in the last twelve weeks of their stay, can play an important part in helping prisoners to reflect on how they may become more responsible citizens. Unfortunately, it has so far been poorly attended. Steps are needed to improve this situation.

5.5.13 Ixion¹⁶ complements the work of the TVCRC; it focuses on 'hard to reach' prisoners including prisoners in the SSCU, those with a low IQ and those from outside the TVCRC area. Each participant has a dedicated case manager to help him engage with other services in custody and in the community.

Offender Management

Offender Management Unit (OMU)

5.5.14 The OMU comprises two complementary branches: Case Administration and Offender Supervisors. Case Administration prepares the paperwork; Offender Supervisors do the interfacing with prisoners.

5.5.15 Given the diversity of the Bullingdon population and the range of sentences, case administrators need a substantial period of training, particularly as some of the work is very complex. Maintaining continuity of staffing presents a significant and ongoing challenge.

¹⁵ Aspire exists to find employment opportunities and accommodation for people with personal difficulties, especially ex-offenders and those trapped in drug or alcohol abuse.

¹⁶ Ixion is a national independent learning provider which is part of Anglia Ruskin University

5.5.16 An Offender Supervisor is allocated to each convicted prisoner serving a sentence of 12 months or more. Each Offender Supervisor has a hybrid role, embracing residential and operational support duties as well as offender management. Consequently, there can be heavy calls on their time, for example in June 2016 staff shortages in the prison meant that Offender Supervisors provided almost 2000 hours carrying out residential duties on wings, which meant that they were not able to act as Offender Supervisors in this time. There are proposals to provide more protection of Offender Supervisor time; these are due for implementation in August.

5.5.17 The OMU is placed under strain by the high churn; there are frequent drafts to other prisons to make room for prisoners who are to await trial in local courts. Bullingdon's increased resettlement role¹⁷ has further increased churn.

5.5.18 Each prisoner has a mandatory BCS1, which consists of an interview with a uniformed officer within 72 hours of admission to signpost him to relevant services. As Bullingdon can receive as many as 50 new prisoners in a day and completion of the document itself takes 20 or more minutes, this is a time-consuming process. However, the OMU has consistently surpassed its target of 90% completion of BCS1¹⁸ on time: completion rates of around 99% were reached at the end of the reporting year.

5.5.19 A prisoner's Initial Categorisation Assessment (ICA) determines his security category. ICAs are initiated by Case Administration but are passed to Offender Supervisors for completion. During June 2016, the number of ICAs outstanding fluctuated between 22 and 76.

5.5.20 The Offender Assessment System (OASys) is a risk and needs assessment tool comprising computer-based forms with a total of 40 questions. The document is based on previous records and on interviews with the prisoner. As well as risk assessments, it includes positive statements, for example, concerning education and employment experience in prison. It leads into a sentence plan and then to a plan for release.

5.5.21 Compiling an OASys document is a time-consuming process and delays are experienced. The backlog persists although it fluctuates. For example, 53 were outstanding in January 2016 (compared with 167 in June 2015), but the number rose to 180 in May. The backlog was reduced to about 150 by July as a result of a joint effort by Offender Supervisors and probation with a dedicated team of three focussing on the backlog.

5.5.22 Although there has been some improvement, delays in processing applications for Home Detention Curfews (HDC) continue. Delays were reduced with the introduction at the end of June of a system for 24-hour turnaround of wing comments. Factors contributing to backlogs continue to include delayed reports from outside probation and the lack of approved accommodation to which a prisoner may be released.

5.5.23 An initiative in 2015 set up weekly wing-based surgeries in order to provide an opportunity for prisoners to put specific queries to Offender Supervisors about their

¹⁷ As Bullingdon is a resettlement prison for Hampshire as well as the Thames Valley, it can be the 'local' prison for a prisoner whose home is on the South Coast.

¹⁸ See 5.5.10 above

circumstances, for example their categorisation or eligibility for HDC. The surgeries have proved popular; prisoner awareness is rising and, perhaps as a consequence, demand has fallen in recent months. Wing officers are being encouraged to answer basic questions from P-NOMIS¹⁹ rather than refer these to Offender Supervisors; this may be helping to reduce the demand.

5.5.24 In theory, a prisoner's personal officer has a valuable contribution to make to the daily life of the prisoner and regular contacts can complement the work of the OMU. Unfortunately, a prisoner may have very intermittent contact over several weeks with his personal officer, for example if the officer is regularly deployed outside his usual wing. In Bullingdon, the personal officer scheme seems to have broken down almost completely. Limited personal contact and the ratio of officers to prisoners also have implications for Safer Custody (see 5.6 below) and for the rehabilitation of prisoners.

5.6 Safer Custody

See also Reception and Induction in Section 6 below.

5.6.1 Bullingdon is to share in additional national funding to improve safety in prisons. Some of this funding, announced at the end of the reporting year, will be used to increase the number of officers on each wing. Although the prison has been successful in recruiting new staff, a ratio which can reach more than thirty prisoners to one officer when prisoners are unlocked on their wings makes it difficult for officers to develop meaningful relationships with prisoners. The reduction in staffing has also meant that staff frequently only have time to fulfil their 'custodial duties' and this has led to reduced job satisfaction and lowered morale. The reduced ability of officers to develop relationships with prisoners has meant that it is more difficult to anticipate or defuse potentially violent incidents before they arise, or to be aware when vulnerable prisoners may be under increased pressure and consequent risk of self-harm or suicide (or indeed to take a purposeful role in rehabilitation and planning for resettlement). When prisoners have to spend additional time locked in their cells because the staffing detail is too tight, this further constrains the development of constructive relationships. The average time spent out of cell by prisoners has in any case decreased considerably over the last two years.

5.6.2 Separate funding has been awarded to the prison for the installation of CCTV coverage. Additional body-worn video cameras will also be made available so that all uniformed officers can carry one when on duty.

5.6.3 The Safer Custody (SC) team is led by a governor. It also includes a custodial manager and three members of administrative staff who act respectively as violence reduction coordinator, suicide prevention coordinator, and equalities coordinator.

5.6.4 The team analyses a range of data relating to safer custody and violence reduction, and produces a monthly newsletter available to all prison staff. The newsletter is a helpful initiative that provides useful information for staff working directly with prisoners, although it

¹⁹ P-NOMIS is the national database holding information about offenders.

is not always clear to what extent the data impact on operational procedures on the wings and elsewhere.

5.6.5 A meeting focused on safer custody and reducing violence now takes place on a monthly basis (not quarterly, as before). The meeting offers an opportunity for members of the SC team and other staff to monitor incidents, note trends, and reflect on how the prison might manage and respond to what is happening. It is not always clear to what extent this analysis leads to changes in operational practice.

5.6.6 HMIP, in its report published in September 2015 (based on an inspection that took place in June), reported that the quality of ACCT (Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork) paperwork, which is designed to help to support prisoners at risk of self-harm or suicide, was improving, but not yet at the required level.

5.6.7 There has been a focus on the need for the prison to be more proactive in dealing with prisoners at risk, and making better use of ACCT procedures. A number of training sessions have been organised for officers and for other staff. One factor that has been emphasised is the need for staff to make use of appropriate interpreting/translation services for prisoners who have little or no facility in English (see also 5.1.4 above and 5.6.15 below). Another is the need for staff to take into consideration the whole range of factors that might be relevant when assessing prisoners for risk of suicide and self-harm, not just on how a prisoner presents at a particular time. Some improvements have been made, but there is still considerable scope for further progress in ACCT documentation and reviews.

5.6.8 During the reporting year, 656 ACCT files were opened on prisoners considered to be at the risk of self-harm, including suicide. This compares with 528 ACCTs opened in the previous year.

5.6.9 The Chaplaincy Team aims to see all new prisoners within 24 hours of their arrival in the prison, and a Chaplain makes daily visits to HCC, SSCU, and to Reception to see prisoners who are about to be discharged. Where possible, each prisoner on an open ACCT will be visited daily. One member of the chaplaincy team works as a bereavement counsellor. The Chaplaincy is responsible for the management of a volunteer counselling service and a local prison visitor scheme for prisoners.

5.6.10 Recorded levels of violence fluctuate but increased towards the end of the reporting year. A significant factor in the increase is trade in 'Spice' (see 5.3.17 above). Experienced members of staff have spoken to the IMB about concerns for their own safety and that of others (both prisoners and staff); experienced members of the IMB share those concerns. About a third of officers are in their first two years of service; they face a very demanding start to their career. Bullingdon has done well to recruit these new officers, but only time will allow them to gain experience in the range of tasks that they are required to fulfill; overall pressures on staffing make it difficult for experienced officers to spend time training new colleagues, and inexperienced officers have less opportunity than in the past to learn from their more experienced colleagues. The skilled interactions of experienced officers with some of the most volatile prisoners, such as those suffering from mental illness or substance abuse, have been observed on many occasions.

5.6.11 During the reporting year there were seven deaths in custody, compared with two the previous year. After each death the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) conducts an investigation, but its report is not made public until after the Coroner's Court has reached a conclusion on the circumstances of the death. The Coroner's Court has yet to reach a conclusion on the circumstances of the four most recent deaths, which took place on 1 October 2015, 11 December 2015, 10 May 2016, and 11 July 2016. In the case of two prisoners, who each died on 16 February 2016, the Coroner concluded that each had died from natural causes. The PPO had not yet posted its report on these deaths at the time when this report was written.

5.6.12 In the case of a prisoner who died of natural causes on 10 September 2015, the PPO reported that he had 'received a standard of care equivalent to that he could have expected to receive in the community', but expressed concern about the appropriateness of using restraints when he was taken to hospital three days before his death.

5.6.13 During the 2015-16 reporting year, the PPO published two reports relating to deaths in Bullingdon during the 2014-2015 reporting year.

5.6.14 In the case of a prisoner who died of natural causes on 29 July 2015, and had recently been moved from HMP Stafford in order to be nearer to his family, the PPO reported that he had 'received commendably good care at Stafford and Bullingdon, equivalent to that he could have expected to receive in the community.'

5.6.15 The PPO expressed a number of concerns in the case of a prisoner whose death on 6 May 2015 was self-inflicted. They included the fact that the prison did not use a professional interpreter/translator to communicate with him, despite the fact that he spoke and understood little English. Recommendations included (a) that the prison make better use of accredited interpreting services, (b) that the prison 'ensure that reception staff consider and record all the known risk factors of a newly arrived prisoner when determining risk of suicide and self-harm', and (c) that the prison 'ensure that officers have meaningful contact with every prisoner, through an effective personal officer scheme, which ensures that officers get to know prisoners and identify their needs backed up by regular case history notes'.

5.7 Separation, Support and Care Unit (SSCU)

5.7.1 The SSCU continues to face a number of challenges including the difficulty of relocating some prisoners who have been in the Unit for over 42 days. For most of the year the SSCU has been filled almost to capacity. This has brought added pressures for officers, particularly when staffing is tight and several cells are out of use awaiting repairs. Despite the very demanding circumstances, the professional approach of officers contributes to the generally good relationships observed by IMB members between staff and prisoners in the SSCU, although officers often have to cope with severe provocation.

5.7.2 The IMB attended 185 Good Order and Discipline (GOOD) Boards (301 in 2014-15). Receiving documentation from the SSCU office for the Boards not attended by the IMB has been at best intermittent, but this matter is being addressed under new management arrangements (see 5.7.7 below)

5.7.3 For most of the reporting year, the Board have not been formally informed of new arrivals in the SSCU. However, by routinely visiting the unit, IMB members have been able to undertake their obligation to see each prisoner within 72 hours of his arrival, except on very rare occasions.

5.7.4 In the course of the reporting year, 23 prisoners were held in the SSCU for more than 42 days, at which point the Deputy Director of Custody (DDC) must be informed of their continued location in the SSCU. On 31 July 2016 three prisoners were past this length of stay, standing at 75, 58 and 50 days respectively. The IMB repeats its concern that wherever possible prisoners should not remain in the SSCU for long periods. It supports initiatives to relocate long-stay prisoners back to the wings where possible or their removal to other more suitable establishments. However, removal usually entails a one-for-one swop between the SSCUs of the two establishments.

5.7.5 Adjudications take place most mornings in the SSCU and require the participation of SSCU officers. If they are finished by 11.30 (which is not always the case), prisoners collect their midday meal direct from the servery; if not, lunch is brought to each prisoner at his cell door. Staffing levels permitting, this practice is repeated for breakfast and the evening meal. The IMB acknowledges that serving meals to prisoners at the servery, whenever possible, is a considerable improvement on the situation noted at the end of the previous reporting year, but is aware that it is does not always happen.

5.7.6 Delays in the transfer to the SSCU of property, personal papers and medication can occur following the removal of a prisoner from a wing. These delays may cause the SSCU staff difficulties with their prisoners. A formal process needs to be implemented whereby a prisoner's personal possessions are stored safely and are easily accessible if required. There are instances where property has gone astray; attempts to trace it causes unnecessary extra work for officers who are already stretched.

5.7.7. A change in the managerial responsibilities at the start of 2016 has seen a new governor appointed to cover the SSCU. A revised regime for the SSCU is currently being drawn up and some amendments to the working routine have already been implemented. The proposed appointment from September of a designated Supervising Officer for the SSCU should help.

5.8 Residential services

Food

5.8.1 An outside contractor runs the kitchens. Eighteen prisoners can be employed each morning and afternoon, although shortfalls in the number of workers are not uncommon, particularly during visits and at weekends. When longer shortfalls occur, this is attributable to a range of factors including the reluctance of prisoners to apply for kitchen work, delays between the initial application and security checks, and movement within the Estate. However, for much of the reporting year, shortfalls occurred less often than the previous year.

5.8.2 During Ramadan, some Muslim prisoners are employed as extra workers to prepare and fill vacuum flasks with the main meal for those fasting (about 130). Preparing these

meals presents a considerable catering and logistical challenge but the arrangements again ran smoothly.

5.8.3 The caterers work on a budget of £2.02 per head per day – unchanged since 2014. This amount includes covering the special diets, such as vegan, gluten-free or nutritional support, which are needed by certain prisoners.

5.8.4 A snack meal is provided at lunchtime (Monday-Friday) or suppertime (Saturday and Sunday). This normally includes a hot/cold choice. Soup is available to all as an additional item at lunchtime; the takeup of soup has generally increased during the year.

5.8.5 The IMB receives few complaints about the main meals (evening on weekdays, lunchtime at weekends), but frequent criticism is made of the quality and the portion size of the snack meals. Although prisoners are encouraged to enter comments in the Food Comments logs which should be available at the serveries, they do so infrequently. This may be partly because logs are more accessible on some wings than others. Another factor may be that prisoners do not expect that their comments will be taken seriously or will lead to change. The logs should be checked weekly by kitchen staff but it is not clear how often this happens. Prisoners often complain particularly about the size of the breakfast packs issued each evening for the following morning: they regularly complain they have to supplement these from their own personal resources from foods available on the 'canteen sheets'.

5.8.6 It has been difficult to encourage men to volunteer to represent the wings on the Canteen and Catering committee; this is partly due to the 'churn' of prisoners.

5.8.7 Repairs to kitchen or servery equipment have been subject to considerable delays at times but fewer delays were noted in the second half of the reporting year.

Prisoners' Monies

5.8.8 The Business Hub has produced a useful new guide to prisoners' monies. This includes details on how to send money out of Bullingdon and ordering items from approved suppliers through DHL.

5.8.9 The prison is trialling a new cash transfer system for family and friends to send money to prisoners. Payments can now be made from a bank account via a secure online web page.

Prison Environment

5.8.10 Bullingdon is overcrowded: about 80% of the 521 cells designed for single occupancy are occupied by two prisoners. After more than 20 years, many areas of the prison are showing signs of wear and tear and fittings are wearing out. The state of showers and the implications for decency were a particular cause of concern for the IMB during the year, particular on D Wing, where at one point almost half the showers were out of action, and C Wing. Reference was made to the showers situation in correspondence with the Minister and NOMS from April onwards (see 6.23 below).

5.8.11 Continuing efforts have been made to improve the prison environment. In general, the improvement in standards of cleanliness noted last year has been maintained. The overall

amount of litter is lower, but litter still reaches unacceptable levels in particular areas of the site. This is very unfortunate given the commitment that has been shown to ensuring that the lawns and cultivated spaces within the precinct are well maintained and create an attractive environment.

5.8.12 Further progress has been made on overcoming vermin infestation, but the presence of rats in the grounds presents an ongoing problem, particularly in the area between B Wing and the kitchens. The presence of considerable amounts of litter does not help.

Section 6 OTHER AREAS OF THE PRISON REGIME ON WHICH THE BOARD HAS ISSUES TO REPORT

Reception

6.1 This area of the prison has been particularly busy with the 'churn' reaching record levels during the reporting year. There were 14,633 movements through Reception. New admissions, transfers of prisoners between establishments and releases accounted for 8,578 of the total. This represents a monthly average change in the prison community of 714, equivalent to about 64% of the prison's population. The remaining 6,055 movements comprised daily movements to and from courts or for hospital appointments. The staff have done very well to cope with the pressures resulting from the high volume of movement.

6.2 There is a pool of 32 officers to cover duties required in Reception and in the induction wing (F Wing). Owing to the pressure on staff, there is very little opportunity for new members of the team to receive more than piecemeal training in their new roles.

6.3 There have been several occasions when it has not been possible for newly-arrived prisoners to be taken to the wings before 22.00 hours or for the related paperwork to be completed by officers until close to midnight.

6.4 The small holding cell in Reception for vulnerable prisoners (VP) is totally inappropriate for the increasing number of VPs arriving. The IMB has raised this issue repeatedly. To date an alternative solution has not been found, but it is hoped the situation might be resolved in the coming months with a relocation of accommodation. In the meantime, when there are more than four VPs to be held, officers use one of the holding cells situated at the far end of the initial Reception area. The IMB has identified a need for a television or radio to be installed in the current VP holding room but unfortunately neither has so far been installed.

Induction

6.5 All prisoners arriving at Bullingdon go initially to F Wing, Spur 1, which holds 60 prisoners in single cells. Induction sessions lasting approximate 30 minutes presented by prisoners run about five times a week, guiding newly-arrived prisoners in all aspects of Bullingdon's regime. The morning after arrival, individual prisoners are interviewed by staff who explain what to expect on normal location and also the prison's expectations of prisoners. A separate induction is run for VPs on E Wing, where they will eventually be located.

6.6 Prisoners ideally remain on Spur 1 for three to five days depending on availability of spaces on other wings, unless they are on 'detox' in which case they remain for longer. However, there is such pressure on places on Spur 1, owing to the VP overspill (see 6.8 below), that some prisoners unfortunately have to be moved off the Induction Wing within 24 hours.

6.7 A prisoner should normally be assessed while on Spur 1 as to which is the most appropriate wing for him, as well as being risk-assessed for cell sharing. If a prisoner refuses to relocate, he is put on Basic and asked regularly if he will move to normal location.

If he continues to refuse, he attends an Adjudication; if he is then shown to have valid reasons for not going on to a general wing, his case will be reviewed.

Vulnerable Prisoners

6.8 As mentioned last year, overspill VPs are now held on Spur 1 of Finmere Wing. This has now become a permanent feature for F wing. The highest number held for any one day was 41. The total at the end of July stood at 22, despite 35 prisoners being transferred out during the month from E Wing (the VP Wing).

6.9 Holding so many VPs on F Wing has necessitated changes to the normal regime there. Officers have responded very well to the challenge of ensuring all prisoners receive their facilities time, exercise and association safely. Despite this, VPs spend considerably more time behind their doors than the other prisoners on F Wing.

6.10 Senior management are well aware that the current situation cannot continue, particularly as the number of VPs arriving at Bullingdon is likely to increase. Solutions are being sought in order to enable the overspill VPs to benefit from a more normal regime.

Property

6.11 When prisoners are moved within or between establishments, bags and/or other items of property can be delayed or go missing. This causes considerable frustration for prisoners and for staff who have to spend time in trying to locate the missing items. Chasing up missing items on transfer from other establishments can take several weeks to resolve, with some replies being long delayed. Locating missing property still continues to generate the highest proportion of applications to the IMB: 191 out of 792 during the reporting year.

6.12 Loss of property following a cell clearance is another subject of complaints, particularly when a prisoner who was sharing a cell has been taken down to the SSCU and his shared cell has not been sealed, thus leaving his property vulnerable to theft. (See also 5.7.6 SSCU above.)

Visits

6.13 Visitor numbers were low in January and February 2016 but increased in the months to July.

6.14 In order to meet the three-day response time target, the prison paid overtime to visitor centre staff to process email booking requests during a shortfall in staffing in visits booking. This arrangement ended in May because visits booking now has three staff members.

6.15 The slowness of computer equipment is a source of frustration for visits booking staff as this impacts on their ability to process emailed requests efficiently.

6.16 Prisoners with reading/writing issues face considerable difficulties in completing booking request forms. Visits booking staff suggest a staff member on the induction wing (F Wing) should be available to advise prisoners how to fill in the form.

6.17 Notices advising visitors about the dress code have been posted in the visits centre and at the main gate. This clarification in both locations has helped reduce any inconsistency in enforcing regulations; inconsistency was previously a significant source of frustration for both visitors and staff.

Estates

6.18 The Works Department contract was taken up by Carillion plc in June 2015. As this was close to the end of the 2014-2015 reporting year, no observations were made about the impact of the change in last year's report.

6.19 The IMB believes the task of running the Works department of a large and complex prison was greatly underestimated by the contractor. Other IMBs are understood to hold similar views.

6.20 As noted in various sections above, there have been unacceptable delays in carrying out basic repairs and in installing facilities (plumbing, electrics etc) for new education or work projects to be implemented. Such delays make it very difficult for the prison to maintain a decent custodial environment and to develop opportunities for purposeful activity.

6.21 The reasons for the delays appear to include:

- an overstretched workforce without the full range of in-house specialist expertise: the team is much smaller than a few years ago; this reflects a significant shortfall in the workforce nationally in recent years;
- stockholding policies which result in delays to urgent repairs because of the lack of spares on site;
- delays in the reporting chain.

6.22 The IMB is particularly concerned because it believes the contractors have been slow to take into account that, while vandalism is predictable in any prison, when it will occur is unpredictable. When damage does occur, it is essential that repairs are not delayed, particularly where cells, especially those in the SSCU and HCC, are left out of action.

6.23 The concerns of the IMB were drawn to the attention of the Minister and NOMS in a letter from the Chair in April, particularly concerning issues of decency. Some improvements have followed but the timescales and financing of others are uncertain. The IMB will continue to monitor the situation closely.

Section 7

THE WORK OF THE BOARD

7.1 The Board usually invites a speaker to its monthly meeting. Topics covered during the reporting year included TVCRC, SSCU, Probation, PREVENT (preventing radicalisation and violent extremism), the Samaritans, and Learning and Skills.

7.2 Separate training sessions included Violence Reduction, 'First on Scene' and specific training for new members.

7.3 The Board made slightly fewer visits to Bullingdon (465) than in 2014-2015 (489).

7.4 The number of applications to the Board in 2015-2016 stood at 792, compared with 805 in 2014-2015. Applications to the IMB concerning property, 191(192 in 2014-2015), again accounted for almost a quarter of all applications. (see p. 29).

7.5 A new system for handling general applications from prisoners was introduced by the prison during the reporting year. This has had an impact on complaints and may in turn have contributed to stabilising the level of applications to the IMB.

7.6 Owing to the many organisational changes in the prison and redeployment of staff during the year, it was often difficult for Board members to obtain data which would have been more readily available in previous years. Prison staff were helpful but many were learning new roles in posts into which they had recently moved. Some detailed data are no longer recorded by the prison owing to resource constraints or to changes of policy.

7.7 The Board has operated well below its complement throughout the year and several of the newer members were still in training; this has had an impact on the range of its monitoring.

Applications to the Board

Subject	2014-15	2015-16
Confidential Access	11	10
Transfer	76	35
Post/Telephone/Newspapers	34	43
Property	192	191
Complaints	62	61
Medical/Dental	94	112
Visits	12	17
Monies	35	27
Adjudications/MDT	9	19
Regime	17	12
Education/Library/Gym	13	5
Employment	8	21
Categorisation/IEP	34	17
Food/Diet	13	18
HDC/Parole/Release/ROTL	59	45
Deportation/Foreign Nationals	29	13
CARATS/RAPT	0	0
Canteen/Argos/M&M	9	20
Resettlement/Sentence Planning/Probation	17	23
Withdrawn	8	0
Police Liaison/Legal/Security	17	25
Recall	6	3
Wing/Cell Move	9	2
Heating	1	3
No Reason Given	0	1
Other	40	69
Total	805	792

Board Statistics	2015-16
Recommended complement of Board Members	20
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	12
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	13
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	6
Number of members leaving within reporting period	5
Total number of Board meetings during reporting period	12
Average number of attendances at Board meetings during reporting period	11
Total number of visits to the prison (including all meetings)	465
Total number of applications received	792
Total number of segregation reviews held	N/A*
Total number of segregation reviews attended	185