



ANNUAL REPORT

OF

THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD

AT

HM YOUNG OFFENDERS INSTITUTION AYLESBURY

1 JULY 2015 TO 30 JUNE 2016

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

The Board is specifically charged to:

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

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

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1. Aylesbury Young Offenders Institution

- 1.1. Aylesbury Young Offenders Institution is housed in a mixture of buildings, whose ages range from Victorian to early twenty-first century. It holds the longest sentenced young adult males in the English prison system, the majority serving a sentence of four years or more and are aged between 18 and 21. The Institution has a capacity of 444 although during the year the population fluctuated and at the end of our reporting year in June stood at 437. 31% of prisoners were of Black or Black British origin and 10% were of Asian or Black Asian in the mid point of the reporting year. Prisoner intake covers most of England and Wales. Prisoners do not come directly from court, having begun their sentences at other Young Offender Institutions or the Juvenile estate. The prisoners are some of the most disruptive and challenging young men in the prison system. At the close of our reporting period the number of prisoners who were serving life sentences was 57 (representing approximately 13% of the population) compared with 33 last year.
- 1.2. Numbers of both uniformed and Learning and Skills staff have continued to be below required levels. Recruitment has been ongoing but has proven to be difficult. The prison has been helped by the deployment of uniformed staff from other establishments on detached duty and their presence has been extremely helpful over the period of this report.
- 1.3. The establishment has seven residential units of differing sizes and ages. The majority of cells are for single occupancy. The three oldest wings are of traditional Victorian pattern but have been modernized over the years. The two which are the next oldest are showing signs of ageing, although they too have been modernized. The two newest units all date from the last quarter of the twentieth century. The Segregation Unit is five years old. The Reception Unit is housed in the modern healthcare building.
- 1.4. The Learning and Skills provider under the extended OLASS 4 contract remains Milton Keynes College. Following another highly critical Ofsted report in 2015, senior staff from the prison and Milton Keynes College have worked hard to improve the delivery of education. There was a significant amount of teacher observation coupled with the very necessary recruitment of new teachers and the provision of more teachers in order to improve the quality of classroom teaching.
- 1.5. During the year three experienced members left the Board. At the end of the reporting year there were eight members on the board one of whom is a probationer member. Members have a unique and privileged position within the establishment with access to observe the daily running of the prison and to feed back our observations and concerns to the management. Fortunately we have a good relationship within the prison where areas of concern are discussed openly.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. There were no deaths in custody during the reporting year (8.1)
- 2.2. The use of mobile phones continue to be widespread in the prison (6.4)
- 2.3. Pathways Service is understaffed (6.3)
- 2.4. The staffing level is too low (7.3)
- 2.5. The kitchen situation (in respect of staffing by prisoners) is far from satisfactory (7.2)
- 2.6. The laundry suffers from frequent breakdowns (7.2)
- 2.7. Insufficient activities provided to keep each prisoner out of his cell during every working day (7.1)
- 2.8. Prisoners refusing to return to normal accommodation from the CSU (9.5)

3. Particular Issues Requiring a Response

- 3.1. There are not enough activities provided to keep every prisoner out of their cell during every weekday. The prison struggles to attract business from outside its walls, and the pay levels appear to be insufficient to attract instructors and other professionals to work with the young offenders.
- 3.2. The rate at which mobile phones are discovered suggests that they continue to be widespread in the prison. The installation of signal blocking systems would have a major impact in the fight against illicit drug use and remove some of the issues between prisoners.
- 3.3. A prisoner can still spend three months or more in the CSU, holding out for a transfer to another prison. This is a major issue for the prison, with almost half of all cells in the wing occupied by “bed-blockers”. We are concerned for the mental welfare of these prisoners kept in segregation.
- 3.4. There are emerging signs of predominately anti-social personality disorder amongst a high proportion of the young offenders. The Pathways Service offered to the young offenders that display emotional and behaviour problems is, in our view, understaffed and under resourced.
- 3.5. Although the use of staff on detached duty from other prisons has decreased over the reporting year, the prison is still not fully staffed. The pay and conditions of service are clearly not good enough to attract applicants for empty posts in this region of England.
- 3.6. The current staffing level, significantly reduced over the last five years, has made the prison a more dangerous place for staff and prisoners. Additionally, due to the prominence of gangs across the establishment, the complexity of delivering programmes, education and training, coupled with difficulties in delivering prisoners to their activities, suggest staff levels need to be improved considerably if goals are to be met.

4. Equality and Inclusion

- 4.1. In the middle of our reporting year 10% of the population was Asian or Asia British, 31% Black or Black British and 4% Mixed. There is an effective prison council organized through *User Voice*. Representatives are elected by prisoners and staff and the attendance at meetings with senior management is high and effective.
- 4.2. The lead Chaplain is an Imam who is supported by members of other faiths who look after the spiritual needs of the prisoners. There is a Mosque within the prison. Eid-ul-Fitr took place after the reporting year so the quality of food for the festival will be reported on in next year's report. The IMB did not receive any complaints concerning equality.
- 4.3. The provision of food considers religious and cultural requirements and the only complaint received about food was that some doughnuts were still frozen when served.

5. Learning and Skills

- 5.1. The Learning and Skills provider under the extended OLASS 4 contract remains Milton Keynes College. Following another highly critical Ofsted report in 2015, senior staff from the prison and Milton Keynes College have worked hard to improve the delivery of education. There was a significant amount of teacher observation coupled with the very necessary recruitment of new teachers and the provision of more teachers in order to improve the quality of classroom teaching. Two workshops have lain empty for a large part of the reporting year. At the end of the year Milton Keynes College have only recruited staff for the motorcycle and bricklaying workshops by offering the post at enhanced pay levels. The horticultural teacher who resigned early in the reporting year had yet to be replaced so the gardening courses were running at half their intended extent
- 5.2. In addition to the programmes delivered by Milton Keynes College the establishment itself delivers a Sex Offender Treatment Programme and a Living Skills Programme.

6. Healthcare and Mental Health

- 6.1. The health care provision continued to be provided by Care UK which delivered excellent physical and mental health care.
- 6.2. The Board received four complaints about healthcare compared with two last year but this figure is considerably lower than the figure for the 2012/2013 year (nine). A new Healthcare Manager, Christopher Law was appointed in

September, but has since been promoted to a new position in another prison. Care UK are in the process of recruiting a replacement.

- 6.3. The Pathways Service tailors treatment to the young prisoners with signs of an emerging personality disorder. Although the Pathways service does not diagnose the young males, there are emerging signs of predominately anti-social personality disorder amongst a high proportion of the young offenders. The programme is offered to the young offenders that display emotional and behavioural problems. The Pathways service is however understaffed and under resourced.

Drug Strategy and Mobile Phones

- 6.4. The number of prisoners failing their Mandatory Drugs Tests increased from last year's figure of 5% to 7% against a target of 4.5%. The use of the New Psychotic Substances is causing problems within the prison. With so many variables, possibly 430 of this substance, an effective test does not exist. The use of mobile phones is linked with drug trafficking of which some are impounded when they are thrown over the prison wall, seized from visitors, or discovered by trained dogs. A mobile phone is a valuable piece of equipment in a prison and is often rented to other prisoners but if the phone is seized during a cell search the debt continues to rise leading to bullying and assaults. We have commented before on the installation of signal blocking systems which would have a major impact in the fight against illicit drug use and also remove some of the issues between prisoners

7. Purposeful Activity including Work

- 7.1. An activity, for the purposes of this report, is anything which gets a prisoner out of their cell for something purposeful such as working or education. For some time now, the prison has aspired to offer a regime where every prisoner is involved in activity during the working day, with leisure activities such as association and exercise restricted to evenings and weekends. This aspiration is currently as far away as it ever was, not only because not enough staff have been recruited to run this type of regime safely, but also because there are not enough activities to go round.
- 7.2. Other opportunities for activity include the kitchens, the laundry, recycling, various workshops and cleaning. The prison struggles to find enough prisoners who are deemed to be safe in the working environment of a kitchen. Given that the prison cannot fill two posts for professional cooks, even on elevated pay scales, the kitchen situation is far from satisfactory. The laundry is plagued with frequent breakdowns of its machinery and the dilatory and expensive response of Carillion, the sole provider of repairs. Even if it were able to attract contracts from outside the prison, the laundry would struggle to fulfil them with its current technical support from Carillion. The Contract Services Workshop now lies empty after the contractor pulled out of using the prison labour force.

- 7.3. Even if one includes offence-related programs to challenge selected prisoners' attitudes to sex and drugs, there are not enough activities provided to keep every prisoner out of their cell during every weekday. The prison struggles to attract business from outside its walls, and the pay levels appear to be insufficient to attract instructors and other professionals to work with the young offenders.

8. Safer Custody (including Violence reduction)

- 8.1. The Board is pleased to report that there were no deaths in custody during our reporting year and would like to note that a great deal of hard work is always being undertaken by staff in identifying potential problems with young prisoners.
- 8.2. There is an effective Listener programme for distressed prisoners and there is a two-cell buddy suite on the induction wing for use by an individual prisoner and a Listener.
- 8.3. During the period April 2016 to September 2016 there were 165 incidents of self-harm; 102 ACCT plans were opened and 103 closed; 9 serious assaults on staff; 87 assaults prisoner on prisoner; 34 assaults prisoner on staff; 77 fights; 1 sexual assault; 599 instances of prisoners placed on basic; use of force was used 348 times and there were 32 drug finds.
- 8.4. While there has been a concerted effort to recruit and train new prison officers, the prison did rely on a number of detached duty staff to ensure that staff numbers were reasonable and safety maintained. Although on a few occasions regimes were reduced because of leave, sickness and to ensure that the prison remained secure. The knock on effect with young men of the age group (18-21+) results in frustration causing further incidents. As noted, there has been an increase in assaults, prisoner on prisoner and against staff. Gang issues do present significant problems especially with 130+ gangs over the whole prison estate.
- 8.5. Drug use especially MPS is difficult to detect but can result in severe side effects requiring external hospital treatment. Prisoners requiring external hospital treatment need the escort of two members of staff taking them away from their duties and straining the regime. Further strain results from prisoners who need to be observed on Constant Watch because of concern for their mental state. We believe that despite these staffing difficulties, this prison has ensured that prisoners who have mental health issues and who self-harm are managed well under the ACCT framework. There have been no Deaths in Custody for a number of years.
- 8.6. While the prison has an effective CCTV system for areas outside the prison wings, the CCTV system on the wings is extremely limited. We understand

that some funds have been allocated, but this is insufficient for such a large project.

- 8.7. This year, the prison has suffered several fights in the Visits Hall, an area which was historically considered sacrosanct. Additionally with the prison sharing a sniffer dog with two other prisons, there is limited access to this resource.

9. Segregation

- 9.1. The Care and Separation Unit (CSU, or more usually referred to as the SEG) has 21 cells situated on two levels in a specialist wing completed in 2011. The wing does not have safer cells, as such, but employs anti-ligature materials. A number of the cells have hatches for the serving of food to the more problematic prisoners. The wing has three shower facilities and two adjacent exercise yards.
- 9.2. IMB members plan to visit the CSU on a daily basis and complete a full face-to-face meeting with each prisoner at least once a week. The Independent Adjudicator holds his/her hearings in the room adjacent to the staff office which is also used for internal adjudications and GOOD boards. IMB members are advised in advance of all GOOD boards and attend the overwhelming majority of these, along with a number of internal and external adjudications. During the year, members attended 309 GOOD reviews which is more than double the number for last year]. We are satisfied that proper procedures are followed during these reviews.
- 9.3. The IMB continues to be impressed with the management and staff of the wing, who handle some of the most difficult prisoners with patience and care. We are obviously disappointed to note the number of prisoner on staff attacks is 43.
- 9.4. We note the CSU has been run to near capacity throughout the year, with average levels of occupancy well in excess of 16-18 most of the time. Indeed on several occasions during the year, the wing has been full and unable to accept further prisoners who would otherwise have been placed there as a result of incidents. To a large degree, the level of occupancy has been exacerbated by prisoners who have refused a lawful order to return to normal accommodation or are placed in the unit for their own protection.
- 9.5. Similar to other youth prisons, much too often prisoners believe that placement in the CSU is a passport to another establishment. Accordingly some of the incidents which see them brought to the wing are engineered to gain entry. Governors and staff have talked at length with prisoners about alternative routes to transfers, but these young prisoners are not persuaded which increases pressure on the system. The new Governing Governor (Laura Sapwell) has relaunched an initiative to get the message round that transfers from CSU are not to be expected and that the 42 and 84 day DDC reports are

not restrictions in themselves, but reports to higher authority. Notwithstanding, this is a major issue for the prison, seeing almost half of all cells in the wing occupied by “bed-blockers”. All staff and the IMB are concerned for the mental welfare of prisoners kept in segregation.

10. Resettlement

10.1. As noted in previous reports a few prisoners, up to eight a month are released into the community. The other transfers are to the adult estate or to other YOIs for their own protection

10.2. There remained 57 life sentence prisoners

11. Residential Services, including accommodation, including food and kitchens

Prisoner Inductions

11.1. The new arrivals have inductions from the IMB and, initially, are held mostly on D wing Some new prisoners have already been transferred to other wings by the time IMB members get to see them. The number of new arrivals varies from five to sixteen.

Reception

11.2. The reception process is friendly and efficient however complaints from prisoners concern their property which had not arrived with them on transfer. We encourage prisoners to use the complaints system in first instance and frequently we have to help because the sending establishments are somewhat slow with their responses and sometimes unhelpful. Members of Aylesbury’s Business Hub are most helpful when we can do no more.

Kitchens and Food

11.3. The Board is impressed by the high standard of the food produced and for the fifth year running the Board has received no complaints about the food We have heard compliments about the food at Christmas and Eid al Fitr. One of the duties of the Board is to monitor the serving of the food and to taste a sample.

12. The Work of the Board

12.1. This year three experienced members including the Chair left the Board due to tenure. One probationer joined the Board. At the end of the year the Board had eight members against a complement of fifteen. Interviews for new members were held at the end of the year. Six potential members applied to join the Board but two withdrew their applications soon after a tour of the prison.

12.2. There were twelve Board meetings during the year with most of the members in attendance. Some meetings were preceded by a training session. The Governing Governor or a member of the Senior Management Team attended for part of the time to deliver the Governor's monthly report for the IMB.

12.3. Members visited the establishment 267 times.

12.4. Members of the IMB on 30 June 2016

Chair: David Carpenter

Vice Chair: Ray Stone

Board Development Officer: Michael Brimicombe

Par Allender

Eddy Divito

Aimee Eldridge

Colin Lambert

Mei-Lin Chapman

1 Appendix

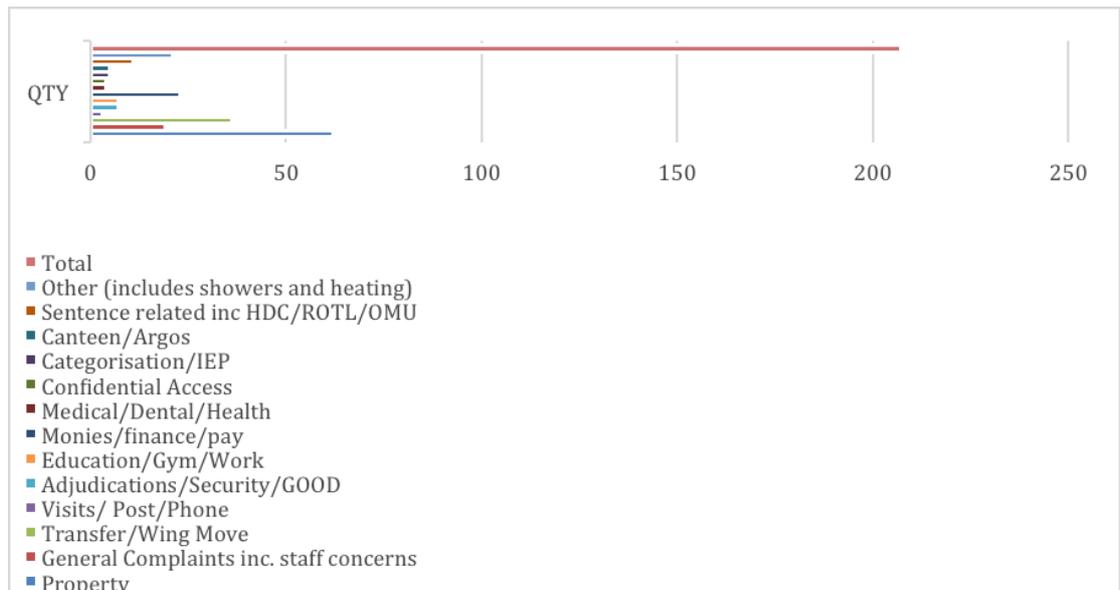
Applications to the Board

During the year the Board received 207 applications from prisoners 44 more than last year. Property issues were the major reason for complaints and below is a record of the categories for the last two years and a record for this reporting year.

	2014/15	2013/14
Property	59	29
General Complaints inc. staff concerns	26	16
Transfer/Wing Move	16	11
Visits/ Post/Phone	14	10
Adjudications/Security/GOOD	2	2
Education/Gym/Work	9	4
Monies/finance/pay	2	6
Medical/Dental/Health	2	6
Confidential Access	6	0
Categorisation/IEP	4	6
Canteen/Argos	1	1
Sentence related – inc HDC/ROTL/OMU	2	6
Other (includes showers and heating)	1	8

2 Applications received 2015/16

Property	62
General complaints including staff concerns	19
Transfer/wing move	36
Visits/post/phone	3
Adjudications/Security/GOOD	7
Education/Gym/Work	7
Monies/Finance/pay	23
Medical/Dental/Health	4
Confidential Access	4
Categorisation/IEP	5
Canteen/Argos/Amazon	5
Sentence related: HDC/ROTL/OMU	11
Other (includes showers and heating)	21
Total	207



Glossary

ACCT:	Assessment Care in Custody teamwork
BOSS:	Body Orifice Security Scanner
BME:	Black Minority Ethnic
CALM:	Controlling Anger and Learning to Manage
CANTEEN:	Prison shop.
CARATS:	Counselling, Assessment, Referral advice and Throughcare relating to drugs
CC:	Cellular confinement- a punishment for breaking prison rules
CNA:	Certified normal accommodation – the number of prisoners who can be accommodated without overcrowding
CPS:	Crown Prosecution Service
CRC;	Community Rehabilitation Company
DART:	Drug and Alcohol Recovery Team
ETS:	Enhanced Thinking Skills
GOOD:	Good Order or Discipline – prisoners segregated under prison rule 45 to achieve GOOD
IRP:	Inclusion Recovery Programme – new OBP for substance misuse.
IEP:	Incentives and earned privileges
MAPPA:	Multi Agency public protection arrangements – statutory framework for dealing with violent and sex offenders.
NOMS:	National Offender Management Service
P-NOMIS:	Prison-National Offender management System – multi agency computer system (Replaced LIDS)
OBP;	Offending Behaviour Programme
OASys:	Offender assessment system
OLASS:	Offender Learning and Skills Service
PIP:	Personal Intervention Plan
SFA:	Skills Funding Agency (An agency of the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills and responsible for all Offender learning)
SOTP:	Sex Offender Treatment Programme