



HMP CHANNINGS WOOD

ANNUAL REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2015

TO

AUGUST 2016

Contents

Section 1: Statutory role of the IMB Equality and Inclusion Statement	Page 3
Section 2: Description of the prison	Page 3
Section 3: Executive summary	Page 4
Section 4: Mandatory reports	Pages 6 -15
Section 5: The Work of the Board and Statistics	Pages 15-18

Section 1 Statutory role of the IMB

The Prisons Act 1952 and the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 require every prison to be monitored by an Independent Board appointed by the Justice Secretary from members of the community.

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 its standards and requirements placed on it and what impact these have on those in custody.

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

Equality and Inclusion Statement

The Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) of HMP Channing's Wood is committed to treating all with whom members interact with respect and fairness, regardless of race, colour, ethnicity, religion, belief, national origin, gender, age, marital status, sexual orientation or disability.

Section 2 Description of the prison

HMP Channing's Wood is a medium sized Category "C" Training and Resettlement prison in a rural area of South Devon close to Newton Abbot. Its population fluctuates around 700, a large proportion of whom are considered vulnerable due to the nature of their offences.

It has limited access by public transport with no public transport on Sundays. Offenders' accommodation is split into three separate areas: the main wings, the Vulnerable Prisoner Unit (incorporating LB1) and LB8 where Drug Rehabilitation courses mainly take place.

None of the buildings is higher than two stories and the grounds are spacious, well landscaped with some attractive gardens. Five of the living blocks are designed around a central entrance area with offices, classrooms, a servery and two association rooms. All the cells are off four corridors on each wing, two corridors on each floor, are arranged at

right angles to each other and around two corners from the main area. Thus all the activity in and around the cells is around corners and some distance from the main offices. Although there are wing offices in this area, the main staff work and relaxation areas are very separate from the cells and this has been identified as a factor that inhibits staff prisoner relationships on a number of levels. It also provides hidden areas making any time out of cell difficult for the staff to supervise.

Three of the main living blocks are surrounded by an open connecting outdoor area which also has many hidden areas and is therefore difficult to supervise and allows unrestricted inter block association.

Contained within the perimeter fence are a sports field and an area that is used for horticulture. The whole is contained within a very large perimeter fence, most of which is accessible on the outside to the general public.

Education and vocational courses are provided by Weston College, the Resettlement group, Catch 22 and Prospects which is concerned with careers guidance. Psychology and Substance Misuse Services are regionally managed across the Devon cluster and deliver Offender Behaviour courses.

Healthcare has been provided by Dorset NHS University Trust. There are no In-patient beds. Nurses are on duty every day and out of hours GP service is provided by Devon Doctors.

Section 3 Executive Summary

Once again, our main concerns about the day to day running of the prison focus on the staffing levels. There is a general consensus that those set by the Business Development Group in 2014 have proved to be inadequate when set against unpredictable events such as detached duties, hospital visits and staff sickness. The lack of leeway in dealing with such events inevitably results in regime changes, staff being asked, at short notice, to extend and change shifts and to work in different and unfamiliar locations. All of these measures foster high levels of resentment and, although the Senior Management Team, (SMT) are constantly trying to find effective ways of dealing with daily staffing crises, there is a frequent perception that the lower ranks are not given due consideration or appreciation for the disruption and extra effort that results. The overall effect is an atmosphere of antipathy in which care and respect play little or no part.

Added to this already very serious situation is the disruption caused by being a Resettlement Prison which has greatly increased the numbers of transfers. In addition, the fallout from HMP Dartmoor becoming an integrated prison has resulted in prisoners who are non-compliant with the integrated principle, being transferred to Channing's Wood.

We cannot stress strongly enough that, not only is the barely containable negative atmosphere undermining the rehabilitative aspects of the prison but the inevitable eruptions that we are witnessing are likely to become increasingly serious and dangerous.

As a board, we do feel that we are in line with the ideals of the Governance at Channing's Wood. They are generally responsive to issues we raise with them and as far as they can, address our concerns. However, funding constraints and staffing limitations severely restrict

what can be achieved. The compound effects of working with these limitations is impacting ever more seriously on all aspects of prison life. The manifestation of this is not just anecdotal but evidenced in the rising number of extremely serious incidents, the cost of which is measured not only financially but with an unpleasantly threatening atmosphere.

3.1 Questions for the Minister

Does the Minister feel that the policy of operating Channing's Wood as a Resettlement Prison justifies the disruption caused by transferring prisoners there for the last six months of their sentences? As we note in section 4.4, we commend the work being done by the Community Resettlement Company (CRC) and the links they have developed with agencies within and outside the prison. However there are no more staff involved than in other, non-resettlement, prisons and the influx of short term transfers both compromises the work in Education and Industries and causes distress and frustration among the men who are moved away from their homes in the North and East of the Compact Packaging Area, (CPA) to the far South West.

Mental health provision in the prison falls far short of what is available in the community and also of the recommendations of the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman, (PPO) in their report of January 2016. Given the high prevalence of conditions from depression to Severe Personality Disorder amongst prisoners, there should be, at a minimum, access to a range of psychological and talking therapies. When does the minister intend to implement the recommendations of this report?

3.2 Questions for NOMS

We are receiving an increasing number of applications from prisoners wanting to be transferred to a location nearer their families. Some of these have come to the far end of their CPA which, though regrettable is at least explicable. A significant number, however, are from more distant areas of the country. Whilst we understand that the principles and logistics of transferring prisoners from jail to jail often have to be opaque, and we understand that prisoners are often selective with their information, our investigations frequently indicate some rather random decisions that are not based on a geographical knowledge of the country. Does NOMS have a Nation-wide policy on transfers and is it possible to restrict movements to minimize separation and save on costs?

At present, the dentist at Channing's Wood can only access dental records from HMP Exeter. Up to date, dedicated Dental Software installed throughout the prison estate would enable the dentists to continue treatment started elsewhere, improve the provision and cut down on waste. Does NOMS agree that a limited investment would greatly benefit this basic but essential service?

Section 4 Mandatory Reports

4.1 Last year's concerns – an update

The fabric of the prison is in a generally poor state of repair but most specifically, the provision of adapted facilities for disabled prisoners still lag far behind what would be expected in comparable institutions. Last year we referred back to our 2012/2013 report on this issue and were told that reviews and bids for funds would be taking place this year but there are still no showers for wheel chair users on any wings and no cell doors wide enough to allow access for the wheel chairs provided in the prison.

We acknowledge that the social care and support scheme is working well and there is a room available to over 60s with a library and board games on the enhanced VPU living block.

Health care continues to be a cause for concern as borne out by the very many applications we receive on this subject. Most worrying is the length of time it takes to see a doctor or to access specialist services.

As noted in the Health care section of this report, the most serious absence in this area however is in Mental health. The recruitment and realignment of staff into this area that was promised last year, has not brought forth any fundamental improvement. There is still no acknowledgement of the serious and long term issues that many men suffer. It is increasingly common to find men confining themselves to their cells, excluding themselves from all association or resorting to aggression as an outlet for their anger and pain.

We have noticed a small improvement to the lost property issues and appreciate that more care is being taken in this area.

We also note a very slight improvement in the numbers of ROTL, though these remain in single figures.

4.2 Equality & Inclusion

- The Board can report that the Equality & Diversity Action Team has met regularly throughout 2105-6 including offender representation, and that the Equality audit rated as RED/AMBER last year is now judged to be AMBER/GREEN. There remains only two areas of focus going forward which are:
 - the completion of the equality impact assessment
 - staff equality reporting issues.
- The fractional post of Equalities Officer continues however, the staff shortages throughout the year have resulted in the officer being frequently redeployed to general duties. Recent steps to ring fence the equality role have been taken to improve its effectiveness.
- The number of Discrimination Incident Report Forms (DIRFs) processed by staff have been increasing this year. This appears to be attributed to the introduction of the smoking cessation programme at the prison in May and whilst the number of serious

incidences involving Spice reduced, the production and use of Hooch increased. The subsequent removal of fruit and sugar resulted in several issues of discrimination being reported to the Board and a period of careful monitoring of its impact followed.

- The Board is disappointed that the provision for Offenders with disabilities remains patchy and recommends that better accommodation and facilities for them is addressed. Currently there are 179 declared disabilities in the prison. (some offenders may claim more than one or multiple disabilities.) In addition almost 6% of offenders are aged between 65 and 89 years of age. The prison has no dedicated living area for offenders requiring specialised physical support, adaptations or sleeping arrangements. However, the prison is part of the Buddy Scheme programme delivered by RECOOP, offering a level 2 training in care and associated employment opportunities. Four buddies are currently employed across the prison. In partnership with Devon County Council a social worker and an Occupational Therapist assess the needs of Offenders requiring support within the framework of The Care Act. It appears that this referral arrangement is working effectively and supports the provision of external care staff providing personal care.
- The Board has found restrictions and alterations to the regime due to staff shortages have impacted on many aspects of the Offenders' daily living, work and study during 2015-16. It is regrettable that whilst the systems and processes are in place to support a culture of inclusion, offenders frequently feel that they do not experience a consistent atmosphere of mutual respect.

4.3 Foreign National Offenders (FNO)

There remain about 20 FN offenders. An FNO policy is in place and access to the facilities is provided as required.

We have however noted incidences where the particular needs of FNOs have not been picked up and the offender has not felt supported.

4.4 Education, Learning and Skills

The department continues to have to deal with restrictions imposed by the Resettlement agenda creating higher demand for shorter courses. Longer ones with higher qualifications have been cut and those include some which would meet regional skills needs for example in the construction industry.

Furthermore, those transferred with only a few months to their release dates, frequently have difficulty in finding a course that they can or want to do and when they do they may have difficulty in finishing especially when, as in some cases, the course has to be extended.

In addition to these difficulties, the department has had to contend with closures due to regime changes and lock downs. It is not unusual to find only two of five potential classes running, the tutors having had to collect their learners from the various blocks for those two classes.

However, due in part to a well devised and managed inductions programme, offenders needs are accurately assessed and the attendance, retention, achievement and success rates are all improved on last year and respectively, 95%, 99%, 97% and 97%.

Horticulture: The contract with the Devon Chili Farm was cancelled due to unsuitability of the Prison based location. Horticulture, struggling to overcome logistical problems of staff shortages and working round the growing season, is now able to offer Level 1 and 2 NVQ to Mains and VPU prisoners.

The aim of supplying the Prison kitchens with fresh vegetables grown on site was short lived. No one has managed to find a means of achieving this despite high levels of quality and quantity of production. Apparently the design and size of the kitchen make it difficult to clean and prepare fresh vegetables. However, an arrangement made with Newton Abbot Food Bank meant that produce grown this year was put to good use.

The waste of the potential use of horticultural land and the uncovered poly tunnels continues to be a source of regret and frustration.

Bicycle Repair: The bicycle repair workshop is a popular and successful unit with ample work and the tutor received a Pearson Gold award for the Further education lecturer of the year. Changes in the regime and lockdowns are a source of frustration and have delayed the completion of courses.

Catering: A new tutor has taken over and NVQ Levels one and two courses are being offered to Main and VPU offenders. The kitchens are well resourced and a lot of energy and commitment is going into setting up the men with useful qualifications.

Functional Skills; After last year's poor performance in this area, the department has worked hard to improve the provision. Two new staff have been recruited, which, along with good use of peer mentor support, improved teaching methods and attention to reinforcing the usefulness of English and Maths, has greatly improved the success rate to 97%

The Shannon Trust reading programme has recruited and trained offenders to work individually with those who have reading difficulties and is achieving very good results. The prison has recognised the benefits and has been very supportive in facilitating the teaching to take place.

The provision for those with learning disabilities has also greatly improved using more inclusive strategies and in class support. Assessment is personalised with a Do It Profiler that identifies specific learning needs. Those with complex needs that can't be met within a classroom get one to one assistance.

Story Book Dads: This appears to be the single most popular activity available to prisoners at Channing's Wood. Twenty men work on producing edited and polished recordings of stories read for their children by prisoners from all over the Estate. Along with the radio production team, these are the only activities available in this prison that encourage a freedom of expression and it is regrettable that there isn't more opportunity for a creative outlet of energy for men otherwise deprived of their freedom.

Story Book Dads has been nominated for the Robin Corbett award for charities working in prisons.

Psychology: The psychology courses run to capacity and report a good year with a high success rate in both the Thinking Skills Programme (TSP), the Sex Offenders Thinking Skills (SOTP) courses and Resolve, the anger management course.

Staff and prisoners have observed that follow up resources are seriously lacking and that men, having challenged a lifetime's worth of behavior and thought patterns, would benefit from further emotional support to help them come to terms with the consequences. The Healthy Sex Programme (HSP) is a one to one course to follow on from the SOTP but due to its limited availability within the prison estate, the waiting list for the course is often in excess of three years.

Thirteen qualified and trainee psychologists carry out assessments, attend reviews and do one to one intervention work across the South West region. They are fully occupied and involved in the work but operating throughout such a large area involves a lot of time wasted on travel between the prisons.

CF03: This is an EC funded initiative that works with Offenders who are failing to engage with every aspect of life in prison. It also works in the community with Offenders preparing for and who have been released. They are currently working with 40 men. Their aims are to establish links between prison, work and housing opportunities and to motivate disengaged individuals to play a more active role.

After a little over a year, it is too early to judge their success. It has been observed that their remit crosses over the work of existing agencies and is not sufficiently integrated with it.

The Substance Misuse Service (SMS): Achieving approximately 170 completions a year the groups are usually fully engaged and generally perceive positive outcomes for themselves on completion. In fact it is not unusual for an offender to do an entire course a second time to strengthen his resolve.

The groups run to capacity and there is a waiting list of would be participants. Unfortunately there is a staffing shortfall and though the Recovery Workers make every effort not to reduce the courses this is sometimes inevitable. They also run a limited number of one to ones.

Purposeful Activity:

Recycling: The staff and offenders work together as a productive unit, recycling all the waste materials produced from Channing's Wood. The offenders are designated essential workers so any alteration in the prison regime does not affect their day to day working.

The offenders work hard often undertaking unglamorous tasks in the outdoors and in all weathers, they clearly take a pride the work that they do.

There was a leak in the roof of the indoor area, early in the year that made it very difficult to work in this area when it rained and it was eventually repaired.

The current flooring is in a dangerous condition, there are large potholes in the concrete flooring that presents a health and safety hazard, the main area where the flooring is unsafe and between the indoor section and the area outside, Carillion's solution is to install a large metal plate over the area. This is clearly a temporary and unsatisfactory fix as offenders have to lift the large container crates onto the metal plate.

Materials that are sent for recycling must be completely free of any dirt or food material and this requires each item being thoroughly cleaned. This is currently being by done in the outdoor area using hosepipes. A more efficient use of resources would be to install a sink but despite numerous requests, nothing has been forthcoming as yet.

The recycling plant is a very efficient work area within the prison and both staff and offenders work very hard, a small investment in their work environment would produce increased

productivity and a greater reward for the workforce.

Wood preparation, Laundry, Tailors, Woodwork Finishing and Spray Shop: These industries are generally busy though they could usually employ more prisoners to complete their contracts. The prison regime hampers their work with the full compliment of workers constantly falling short They are generally able to accommodate short term prisoners though the training potential might be limited. The woodwork shops produce a range of high quality furniture with prisons and MOD contracts currently being supplied. The instructors are extremely enthusiastic and take great pride in the quality of the work produced.. Training takes place in the workshops and both instructors and offenders feel rightly proud of the high standard of work produced.

A new Industries Manager has recently taken up the post and is creating a stronger base as far as the strategic management is concerned.

4.5 Healthcare and Mental Health

Feedback on a recent Operational Assessment commented that Healthcare raised no major issues. Whilst this may be the case from their perspective, the cumulative effects of a multitude of smaller issues makes it, for many, in a less than satisfactory experience. The Healthcare provision is characterised by a series of “peaks and troughs” in provision which contribute to inconsistent service.

This appears to be largely due to a basic shortage of nurses, pharmacists, health care assistants and doctors which becomes seriously inadequate when dealing with scheduled or unscheduled absences. Recent sick absence by doctors has pushed the waiting time for non-urgent appointments up to eight weeks. Recruitment of permanent and temporary staff is a continual problem and agency staff continue to make up the numbers on a daily basis. The electronic pharmacy has improved the safety and efficiency of dispensing medication but its potential is undermined by a lack of training for new and agency staff and the necessary reliance on a system not universally understood, creates problems in itself.

In many situations medication is a problem for offenders. There are alternatives to prescribed medications that do not appear to be actively explored. For example physiotherapy can provide alternative approaches to pain relief. More offenders could self-medicate if appropriate safeguards were put in place.

The prison population is ageing and health services are not geared to their health needs which include an inevitable increase in external hospital appointments. There is an increase in the incidence of Dementia but no identified specialist Dementia service within the establishment. Diabetes rates are rising both inside and outside of the prison. Diabetes education course are lacking at HMP Channing’s Wood, and Diabetes screening and Retinal Screening do not appear to be as tightly managed as they could be. Likewise screening for Bowel cancer does not appear to be carried out within the establishment. All of these services are readily available in the community.

The wait for dental treatment is still too long in comparison with outside of the prison. The demand for optometry and podiatry services is also expected to rise in line with the ageing population.

Since becoming a resettlement prison, the numbers of transfers have greatly increased putting a strain on the health screening in reception. Whilst they appear to be meeting their targets, there is evidence that this masks an underlying lack of quality both in detection and care. There can be long delays in prescribed medication “catching up” with offenders, Hospital appointments are missed and smokers have failed to be enrolled on the smoking cessation programme.

Mental Health

The improvement in mental health provision that we noted last year was short lived. The recently appointed psychologist spent most of this year on maternity leave and there was no cover.

The Mental Health provision does not match the services that are provided in the outside community; apart from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) counselling provided to ex-service men by Resolve and a limited access to Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) course provided by one mental health nurse for anxiety and depression, there are no Talking Therapies available in the prison. An increase in the use of antidepressants and sleeping medication, brings further problems being both addictive and with a resale value.

Considering the prevalence of severe and enduring mental health problems, the high proportion of prisoners who may have experienced a lifetime of social exclusion and those for whom prison is not a suitable environment, it is incomprehensible that they are not receiving any sustained intervention. Many of these will serve their sentences without ever coming to the attention of the mental health team due to insufficiently thorough screening on arrival and to a general lack of training amongst officers to recognise symptoms.

We note welcome improvement in the numbers of Listeners, five in the Main prison and four in the VPU. They are trained by the Samaritans and have theoretical 24 hour access to those in need of their services. Though their access and role in the prison is not always fully appreciated by staff.

An increase in Self-harming incidents has been linked to transfer to HMP Channing’s Wood for resettlement purposes. It has also been suggested that this may be linked to nicotine withdrawal due to the smoking ban.

Overall the provision of Healthcare within the Establishment falls short of the services found in the outside Community. However we do commend the level of conscientiousness shown by many of the individuals who deal with stressful situations with calm dedication, turning up out of hours to attend serious incidents.

On the whole the department has a mutually supportive relationship with the prison though staff shortages have an impact, for example on dispensary queues. There are no health care staff inductions and access by health care staff to Quantum and to prison radios is limited. Medical intervention in the recent suicide was delayed by an absence of radio contact.

4.6 Resettlement

The team of four resettlement officers work with the Offender Supervisors in the prison and Offender Managers from outside to oversee the focus on the resettlement needs of the prisoners in the last twelve weeks of their sentence.

Over the year they have developed closer working relationships with the Offender Management Unit (OMU) and are branching out to collaborate with other departments such as SMS and Story Book Dads. All agencies report that they have effective communications with each other though it is often difficult to arrange meetings with the uniformed Offender Supervisors. Regime changes and a high volume of transfers have led to some new arrivals missing out on the induction process and not being made aware of the resettlement services offered by Catch 22 in the prison. Moreover, many arrive without their Basic Screening Tool, BST documents complete. This puts enormous pressure on the Catch 22 group as they must be attend to this process before they can start working with the Offender's resettlement needs. Most of the prisoners they interact with are medium to low risk and fall under the auspices of the Community Resettlement Company (CRC) however, at any one time it appears that the majority of prisoners in this category, are to be resettled out of the South West area, sometimes as distant as the North East of the country where Catch 22's contacts and links are few and tenuous. In the month of August, for example, 31% of their caseload was within CPA 14, the South West region. Thus it would appear that one of the main objectives of designating Resettlement Prisons, is not being fulfilled. We continue to feel that the prison population is more disrupted and generally ill-served by being the Resettlement Prison of the SW region. The success of Educational Courses and the experience and qualifications gained from working in the industries are all disrupted by transfers. We continue to receive very many complaints from prisoners who are moved from one end of the region to the other making family contacts more difficult. We are, furthermore, somewhat alarmed to find that no records are being kept for performance in this area. Thus it is not possible to demonstrate any degree of effectivity in any of the areas covered by the CRC.

Offender management Unit

Despite many initiatives and diligent work in the department, the backlog of incomplete OASyS continues to be of great concern. The number has risen to 200 this year. This is mainly due to the high volume of prisoners being transferred, frequently without completed OASyS. Lack of contact with their Offender Supervisors and incomplete sentence plans is a constant complaint in our Applications. Many express a lack of confidence in their Offender Supervisors and feel that without their active support, they are less able to progress and build up confidence to re-enter society at the end of their sentence. The numbers on ROTL have improved slightly but still fall far short of potential.

4.7 Safer Custody

The Safer Custody operation has not adequately dealt with the serious challenges it faced through most of this reporting year but a recognition by the new acting head that the fire-fighting approach needed to be replaced with a tighter strategic policy, has seen some effective initiatives put in place. It is desirable that the team operate proactively in administrative and guidance rather than spending their time reacting to situations that have already developed.

The prevalence of NPS made a significant contribution to unpredictable and extremely difficult prisoner behaviour. This declined with the change in law in April, assisted by the Smoking Ban which came into force in May. The smoking ban has, in itself, not had the negative impact that was anticipated. It probably features in some eruptions of violence, as a reason for transfer and there is a perception that it may have led to incidences of extremely low mood and acts of self-

harm. These negative impacts are generally handled sympathetically by staff.

The brewing of hooch has greatly increased through recent months; sixty-six litres were discovered in one month alone. All discoveries lead to adjudications by the Independent Adjudicator and a total of 245 days have been added to sentences this year. Measures to prevent this – sugar being removed from the canteen list and service of fresh fruit at lunch stopped - have been partially successful and the ban on fruit has now been lifted.

Bullying, theft of each other's property and violence have greatly increased. We receive many applications from prisoners who feel unsafe on their wings and whose property has been taken from their cells. In many instances, a casual attitude by the staff is both failing to prevent or address these issues. Evidence gained from the Violence Diagnostic Tool shows a higher level of prisoner on prisoner violence than national figures and has risen from 85 incidences last year to 124 this year. Assaults on staff have risen from 23 last year to 31 this year. An unacceptable level of violence and a very worrying increase. A number of injuries have resulted from Control and Restraint, C&R situations.

Incidences of self-harm and the use of ligatures have also increased through this year and two suicides are most extreme indications of an unsafe environment.

It is anticipated that internal fences separating the living blocks will provide more security between the blocks and allow the staff greater opportunity to contain association times.

Serious incidents:

The Board has attended a wide range of increasingly serious incidents this year. More razor wire has been placed round the more vulnerable buildings which has helped reduce the more serious incidents at height but cell barricades and destruction have taken their toll, financially and in the morale of all involved.

We note also that on a number of occasions, more serious incidents have been avoided when prolonged, low level discontent among prisoners has been contained by staff on the ground. On occasion this has necessitated altering regimes to restrict the number out of cell at any one time, adding several hours to the normal shifts of staff. Many officers have reported to us that they have not known such difficult, unsettled or unpleasant times in their many years of prison service. It has also been remarked that appreciation for extra effort and time has not always been forthcoming from the SMT.

There has been a substantial increase in the number of Assessment Care in Custody Teamwork (ACCTs) documents opened on prisoners who pose a threat to themselves. Too many of these offenders have to be located in the segregation unit because nowhere else can be found to keep them safe. Despite the best efforts of the conscientious staff in the unit, this is not a suitable location for such vulnerable individuals as was tragically demonstrated by the recent suicide of a long term inmate.

The Segregation unit:

We continue to be impressed by the professionalism of the staff in the Segregation unit. There are 10 cells which are frequently full and often have a very high turnover due to the high demand for prisoners to be segregated for reasons of own protection or punishment. These men are often very mentally unstable, demanding, aggressive and confused. Whatever their

particular needs, the staff endeavour to deal with them showing respect and consideration that is often lacking in the Living Blocks.

The number of adjudications appears to have risen through the year and is regularly over 100 a month. We have attended both those held by Governors and the Independent Adjudicator and always find them to be fair and sympathetically conducted.

There have been occasions this year when the Segregation unit has housed one or more offenders exhibiting extremely challenging, violent or disturbing behaviour. We strongly feel that officers who have had to work with such prisoners should have some extra support in the form of supervision or mentoring made available to them.

4.8 Residential Services including accommodation, food, catering and kitchens.

Post: We receive a few complaints about non or late arrival of post but they are always difficult to substantiate. Arranging visits by telephone appears to be less problematic than previously as the mail room is better attended.

Wing management: Regime changes and lock downs have increased through the year with complaints from staff and prisoners that there is little advanced notice or explanation as to when or why the change or delay has occurred. Despite management efforts to minimize the disruption, avoid loss of association and time in cell, these occur on a weekly if not daily basis. Complaints from enhanced prisoners on LB2 and LB5 observe that despite their enhanced status and theoretically being easier to manage, they are locked up at least as often if not more than the other units.

In line with the findings of the Operational Assessment we experience incidents that indicate a mutual lack of respect between wing staff and offenders.

Lost Property: Lost property continues to be the biggest single issue we deal with at applications though the balance has shifted to concern property within Channing's Wood rather than on transfer from another Prison. This often indicates bullying or intimidation by other prisoners and also a rather casual attitude by staff.

Reception appears to be generally better managed and the staff more helpful in trying to locate property from other establishments.

Food: It is our overall perception that the standard of food has deteriorated further, especially in terms of its nutritional value. We have noted that occasionally a tasty, home-made soup is on offer but often there is no soup at all and lunch consists of two rounds of sandwiches in white bread and a packet of cuppa soup. This is often due to the boiler in which soup is prepared being broken and though it is observed that many do not have the soup, it could well be because it is often inferior packet soup. The evening meal is generally better but an over-supply of carbohydrates and an absence of green or fresh vegetables is regrettable. Also home-made puddings are much less frequent.

Many of the Mains prisoners complain that the food, cooked by prisoners from the VPU, is deliberately tampered with and foreign objects are frequently found in it. Some even go so far as to refuse to eat it at all. A solution that has been suggested would be to integrate the prisoners from the Main units and we would wholeheartedly support this though the kitchen staff feel it would be an unworkable solution creating tension in an otherwise happy working environment.

Special diets are generally well catered for. Some of the wings have worked out systems that

accommodate late comers due to gym visits or other reasons without the servery workers losing their association time. Other wings would benefit from this more cooperative approach.

Offender Wellbeing:

We have had another large increase in the number of applications to the IMB this year and once again it often feels as if we are filling in for a member of staff.

The electronic complaints system works well for logging and referencing prison complaints but they are frequently not responded to within the time frame and there is no automatic follow up. Without a duplicate copy, it is difficult for a prisoner to prove or keep track of a complaint and the system becomes devalued and unreliable.

Little has changed since we complained of the poor quality of the showers, the lack of disability aids on the Living Blocks, the conditions of shared cells, and frequent absence of privacy curtains. More recently we have become aware of leaks in the flat roofs over some of the association areas and failures in hot water and heating boilers. We understand that money is being made available for some substantial work to be done on the fabric of the prison and sincerely hope that this will happen sooner rather than later and that this will not be piecemeal repairs.

Over the last couple years it has become noticeable that many of the class and meeting rooms on the living blocks have suffered some low level vandalism with broken furniture becoming increasingly common. The grounds also have become very much more untidy and strewn with litter. This could be seen to be a response by some to the degraded buildings and facilities they are living in and with.

Library and Sports Hall: 90% of prisoners use the library which is well stocked with books, CDs and DVDs. There is only one Librarian who has to check the books and control the flow of men in and out, so that she has 25 men in at any one time. Particularly at weekends, there is always a queue of men waiting outside on the stairs.

The Gym has had a new floor and the equipment is kept in good order. Access to the sports hall has improved overall with indoor and outdoor team games a regular feature.

The Chaplaincy Team: After an eighteen month gap, a managing Chaplain has been appointed. With a Team of six chaplains from different denominations and faiths, at least one member of the team is in the prison every day. They report that their services are valued through the prison though movement of prisoners due to staff shortages does interrupt attendance at Chapel or bible study classes. They are sometimes frustrated when a service has to be cancelled due to the Chapel being commandeered for a full staff meeting.

The Work of the Board

With a core team of five fully active members, two in training and two on limited duties, we have done well to fulfill nearly all our duties at the prison, only occasionally having to forgo a B Rota visit. Once again, our Chair has done well to get the best out of us without allowing us to feel overstretched. We have also been very successful in recruiting seven new members who were interviewed in April and have been cleared as members since the end of August and early September.

We are grateful to our new clerk who has looked after our requirements which have increased through the new member recruitment and training procedures. Also once again to the Governor's secretary.

Our visits to the prison always feel purposeful and we rarely leave without feeling that we have achieved something of value. We very much appreciated being consulted on the recent inspection by HMIP. However, in compiling this report we have often questioned its worth, particularly when we look back at the Minister's response to our 2014 – 2015 report which was as vacuous and condescending as a pat on the back. Whilst we appreciate that money doesn't flow readily into the prison service, our purpose of "Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody" is inextricably linked with that of the Prison Service's "Committed to reducing reoffending." We trust that this present government will be able to put more conviction into this commitment.

BOARD STATISTICS

Recommended Compliment of Board Members	16
Number of Board Members at the start of the reporting period	8
Number of Board Members at the end of the reporting period	14
Number of Board Members joining within the reporting period	9
Number of Board Members leaving within the reporting period	3
Total number of Board Meetings during the reporting period	12
Total visits to the Establishment	388
Total number of segregation reviews held	Not available
Total number of Segregation reviews attended	64
Date of Annual Team Performance Review	N/A

APPLICATION STATISTICS

Code	Subject	Year 2013	Year 2014	Year 2015	Year 2016
A	ACCOMMODATION	11	13	11	9
B	ADJUDICATIONS	9	1	8	10
C	EQUALITY & DIVERSITY inc. RELIGION	6	5	8	11
D	EDUCATION/EMPLOYMENT/ TRAINING inc. IEP	15	22	16	21
E1	FAMILY/VISITS INC. MAIL &PHONE	15	19	21	17
E2	FINANCE/PAY	6	13	4	23
F	FOOD/KITCHEN RELATED	3	6	5	12
G	HEALTH RELATED	36	43	59	56
H1	PROPERTY (WITHIN THE CURRENT ESTABLISHMENT)	19	24	18	29
H2	PROPERTY DURING TRANSFER/IN ANOTHER ESTABLISHMENT	38	43	83	42
H3	CANTEEN, FACILITIES, CATALOGUE SHOPPING,ARGOS	2	11	7	15
I	SENTENCE RELATED inc. HDC, ROTL, PAROLE, RELEASE DATES, RECAT etc.	61	61	60	82
J	STAFF, PRISONER/ DETAINEE CONCERNS inc. BULLYING	14	32	32	20
K	TRANSFERS	20	19	27	40
L	PRISON COMPLAINTS SYSTEM	(Not previously Identified)			11
M	MISCELLANEOUS	21	36	36	33
	Total number of IMB Applications	276	361	395	435

Visits to the Prison

Colin	89
Judy	77
Pat	43
Gerald	70
Simon	40
Trevor	24
Steve	17
Alex	21
Bob	10
Maggie	19
Becky	1
Hilary	7
Martin	4
Peter	6
Jan	2
Philip	0
Caroline	0