



HMP/YOI Elmley

Annual Report 2016

1 November 2015

to

31 October 2016

SECTION 1

STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB

The Prison Act 1952 and the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 require every prison and IRC to be monitored by an independent Board appointed by the Secretary of State from members of the community in which the prison or centre is situated.

The Board is specifically charged to:

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

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

SECTION 2

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SECTION 3

Description of the Prison

HMP Elmley is a local prison on the Isle of Sheppey in Kent. For a long period it was part of the 'Sheppey cluster' of the three prisons on the island; it is now a stand-alone establishment. The baseline Certified Normal Accommodation (CNA) is 995 and the Operational Capacity (OPCAP) is 1252. Actual occupancy was in 2015 was at the maximum level constantly. As like other prisons in the south east of England it struggled to deal with the pressures created by the difficulty in recruiting staff and thus a large number staff vacancies, it was granted a temporary lowering of OPCAP. This eased the pressures to a degree and allowed management to sustain a revised regime that created a safer and healthier establishment

It is the local prison for the whole of Kent, housing remand and sentenced adult prisoners (Category B & C) and now remands and sentenced young offenders. The prison continues to house a large number of Vulnerable prisoners, Foreign Nationals, those with Drug Dependency issues, Mental Health issues and Life sentenced prisoners.

Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody

SECTION 4

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1 The Governor who led his team and staff out of the wilderness of 2014 into the safer, calmer, less tense environment and an establishment with a significant reduction in violence was at least allowed to remain for 6 months to consolidate the huge improvement prior to being posted away. No Governor approaches the task of governing in an identical fashion, and invariably there are changes to operational approach, strategy and priorities. The prison was clearly more stable, but recruiting new staff remained problematical and slow. Detached duty was a bonus in plugging the gap, but they could never have the same knowledge or commitment of 'regular staff'. At least the Prison commenced its new direction under its new manager on a much firmer footing.

2 The Board welcome the new Governor, and are supportive of the outline of where she hoped to take the prison in the medium term. There were well thought plans on how best to use the estate and its existing facilities. These entailed some investment in resources to bring it all to fruition, but would have enhanced Elmley as a rehabilitation and resettlement establishment. The Board were encouraged and looked forward to monitoring these credible and positive developments with the current population of the prison. As Elmley has had 5 in charge Governors in a period of 7 years, it was hoped a period of stability might now prevail.

3 However, we must not become insular; there are bigger and wiser counsels afoot. Officials in Whitehall have wider lenses and a larger brief. So it is now a proposal that Elmley is considered to become one of the new 'super reception' prison. The fact that remand prisons were not a success in the past clearly does not enter the equation. It was a long time ago, and there is always somebody ready to reinvent the wheel.

4 The Board's role is to observe and report. However what is clear from historical evidence is that such a development will change the ethos of Elmley. It currently has a high turnover of prisoners, this will make that even more rapid. It does raise a whole series of questions for the Board, for example, Elmley currently has difficulty and a lack of support in moving on longer term prisoners, what extra support will be provided to the OCA and reception? Many prisons 'lock out' after 19.30, the staff at Elmley have always proved flexible and taken in late. As the Court area will be widened the incidence of late arrivals is likely to increase. Will additional staff be provided, as 'goodwill' from staff can be pushed only so far, and hours can only be used once, so other important work gets dropped!

5 Will Elmley still be expected to take in 'problem sentenced' prisoners from other establishments, will prisoners undergoing detoxification and drug rehabilitation be allowed to complete the programme, will prisoners be able to remain to complete educational or trade training course? What would be Elmley's responsibility in respect of OASYS, as it is already struggling to meet its commitment on a much lower turnover? Elmley holds a large

number of foreign nationals and vulnerable prisoners. Would this continue? The Board has already expressed its concern about the loss of 'trade training workshops,' it was also raised as an issue in the last Inspection Report, as prisoners need to be prepared to have the greatest chance to find employment on discharge. A majority of Remand Prisoners have strong ego belief that they are innocent, or that they can 'get away' with their crime. Their major pre-occupation is court centred and seeking legal advice. Therefore their commitment to the regime and to rehabilitation is much lower, how is this likely to affect the whole emphasis on resettlement which is supposed to be one of the current main thrusts?

6 The Board in its monitoring role needs to understand these issues and the resources that will be provided to meet the task. It would ask NOMS to provide an 'expert' in this area to come and speak to the Board, a special meeting can be arranged, so that it can prepare itself for this development. It would further ask to be directed to an existing; operational such establishment, in order that the Board might be in touch, and learn from our fellow Board members what are the key issues and problems the Board need to address.

VIOLENCE

7 The staff worked hard to make Elmley a safer, decent, less violent, and healthier prison, which it has achieved. Like other establishments, the levels of violence are increasing for a variety of reasons; but at Elmley not to the same degree as many other establishments. It is well known that a degree of the violence centres round illegal drug use. That can be the side effect of the drug itself, the means of obtaining drugs under duress, failure to meet a debt for drugs supplied, or pressure to get drugs in. Security is to be commended for its successful ongoing drive to reduce violence by targeted searches concentrating on key perpetrators of violence and those involved in organised crime. These searches recover a wide range of contraband, including mobile phones, weapons, debt lists, bank details, excess kit and quantities of prescription medication. This pro-active work by the security department is vital to everyone's safety.

8 It is now well documented that drones are the new technological method of delivering contraband. NOMS has stated it will make resources available to tackle all these issues, and some help has been offered. More than 2 years ago funding was approved for Elmley to purchase metal grills to be fitted over all the cell windows, partly to prevent rubbish being thrown out but more importantly to prevent illegal items getting in. 95% of these grills lay idle in a yard awaiting erection. In former times the Works Department would have been tasked to 'get on with it'. Not so now in this modern world of contracts! The Board cannot but regard this as a waste of capital expenditure, if the purchase is never going to be put in to effect. The need for these to be erected has never been greater. The Board request that the Head of NOMS advise when funding to fit these grills in place will be made available.

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9 The issue of the triple occupancy cells not meeting the safe and decent accommodation standard expected has been raised by the Board for at least 8 years. The Board is advised that certification of cell occupancy is the responsibility of the Deputy Director of Custody. The Board understands that the DDC is in agreement with the Board's concern about these cells. However, the only progress that has been made is down to the prison itself, it has reduced marginally the number of the triple cells by converting designated single cells to double. In a busy local prison with an operational capacity of 1252, as much flexibility as possible is essential. It is the Board's opinion that there is not further scope to convert more single cells.

10 Elmley recently had a small outbreak of scabies; fortunately it did not escalate but could easily have done so in such a confined community. The recommendation from our health providers was once the incidence had been diagnosed, in patient care was not necessary, but unidentified case needed to be placed in a single cell. There are therefore too many reasons why the small provision of single cells cannot reduce further,

11 It is noted and recorded, that when Elmley was reported as an unsafe and violent prison, NOMS immediately reduced the operational capacity as an interim measure. This was followed by a protracted period of bed bug infection on HB 6 which required the repeated decanting of half the wing on several occasions. Thus the operational capacity remained reduced for an extended period. Throughout that period the level of violence remained much reduced, though it is accepted other positive measures by staff also contributed. The evidence would suggest that a marginal reduction in operational capacity does create a less violent and safer prison

12 The Minister is on record as both accepting the level of violence in prisons is not acceptable and announcing that action has been taken to provide additional funding to recruit staff. There is no doubt that this is a positive move, unless the establishment is located in the South East where recruitment is patchy to say the least, and establishments struggle to even replace existing staff retiring or moving elsewhere, and are therefore still dependent on detached duty.

13 As it happens Mr Gove is on record today stating the number of offenders sent to prison should be reduced, so that prisons can get on with their rehabilitative role more effectively.

14 The Board would request that the Minister and NOMS display tangible support for Elmley by advising the DDC that they approve at least a marginal reduction in operational capacity, this would allow triple cells to be gradually eliminated whilst retaining maximum flexibility on the use of accommodation. This should be at no financial cost to the establishment as it is very competitive financially compared to other like size local prisons, particularly those in the private sector.

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PARTICULAR ISSUES REQUIRING A RESPONSE

MINISTER

15 1) Will the Minister encourage NOMS to resolve the long standing issue of the treble cells at Elmley?

16 2) With an ever increasing number of elderly and disabled prisoners, many serving long sentences; facilities in a local prison are now inadequate. Cells with adequate wheel chair access need to be provided, and health budgets need to be increased, and provision of staff training for the care of this group introduced (see Ombudsman's Report). Is there not a need for a dedicated establishment for this group of prisoners which is still growing in size? What action is taking place in this vital area?

17 3) The provision of secure psychiatric placements for prisoners with acute mental health problems has not improved. What is being done to improve this situation?

NOMS

18 1) Why is the shortage of kit still an issue?

19 2) Why has so little progress been made on the issue of prisoners' personal property on transfer?

20 3) Fining Carillion is one thing, how does it help Governors' get essential work undertaken?

21 4) When will funding be made available to fit the metal grills, already approved and purchased and lying idle for 12 months, to the cell windows?

22 5) Are any further measures being introduced to facilitate recruitment of staff in the South East of England? Detached duty staff are not the answer; an establishment requires a fully complemented staff to operate effectively.

23 6) Can Carillion be advised that maintenance, repair and installation of kitchen equipment have a high priority?

24 7) Is there a standard list of property that can be handed in on visits or does each establishment have discretion on what it allows?

25 8) Will NOMS implement the Boards strong recommendation to decrease Operational Capacity by 50 places as a proactive measure in combating violence in prisons?

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SECTION 5

MAIN AREAS OF THE PRISON

HOUSEBLOCK 1 AND INDUCTION

26 HB1 is the first night centre as well as being a residential wing, having to hold an overspill of vulnerable prisoners and 'outsiders'. The block will change in 2017 when plans are put in place when HB6 will be solely for Vulnerable Prisoner's and sex offenders.

27 There is a strong case to make House Block 1 purely for Induction. At present the mix of prisoners make it difficult to move prisoners onto other blocks due to the generic nature of other house blocks, i.e. foreign nationals, IDTS, vulnerable prisoners and those that are not enhanced. Therefore, when trying to move new prisoners on, there is nowhere for them to go.

28 Induction: The two day induction course is now running smoothly. All new prisoners are seen on the evening of entry, given general information, breakfast bags and fed. In the morning their next induction, seen by the Chaplain, nurse, OMU, In Reach and then take a test which needs to be undertaken prior to being enrolled in gym, work or education. There is now a clear syllabus partly led by an officer and a full education assessment and individual needs plan established. VP's are taken to HB6 after their first induction. Having spoken to some of the 'insiders' they commend Elmley Prison induction as being "one of the best they have experienced".

29 Pact was introduced in 2015/16 which enables the prisoners to develop skills to liaise with their families and has been highly successful.

EDUCATION, LEARNING AND SKILLS

30 The newly appointed Learning and Skills manager has made a vast improvement to this department. The departments include literacy and numeracy skills, basic English, social and life studies, IT and digital music and art to name a few. There are some learning and education skills that are only available through outreach

31 Attendance at activities can still be erratic but have improved considerably since 2015. ESOL classes were interrupted during the year due to the bed-bug issue on house-block 6 but have now resumed.

32 CRC's are embedded into the establishment and making good progress. They currently work alongside Education to support the Steps to the Gate (end of sentence) course and there are plans to expand this partnership working in other areas.

33 HMP Elmley Employment Events have run in February, July and October in conjunction with CXK and have proved extremely successful with firm job offers given to prisoners over the year.

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HOUSEBLOCK 2

34 This house block accommodates remand and convicted prisoners. There is no common denominator of prisoners on this house block, which sometimes can be challenging for the staff. This was reported last year, and is still of concern to the board. The staffing is sometimes difficult due to shortage of officers, but recently a new custodial manager has been put in situ who has a good reputation for “getting things done”. The board will continue to monitor this house block. During the last year there has been several incidents and the staff must be commended on their quick and efficient way in which they dealt with each incident. The general tidiness and cleanliness of the block is good, but the showers would benefit from either a refit or a professional deep clean.

HOUSEBLOCK 3

35 There is a big Action Plan in place for House Block 3 to make it a ‘Proper Substance Misuse Recovery Community’. Building work will be used to move the current dispensing area downstairs.

36 The spurs will then have dedicated roles:

- B spur will be a first night Reception and beds for prisoners who need to be medically monitored.
- A spur will be for those who have settled into their scripts and are engaging in group therapy.
- C spur will be for those nearing the end of their treatment journey.

37 Overall, House Block 3 has continued to develop well. They have won an award ‘The Most Collaborative Partner’ at the annual Recognition Awards given by our Substance Misuse Partner RAPT.

HOUSEBLOCK 4

38 Holds mainly remands and has had a generally steady year. It is always clean and tidy, and the staff are very positive. The Board find a very helpful response whenever they have an application to follow up on this unit.

HOUSEBLOCK 5

39 As a result of the repeated infestation of bed bugs on Houseblock 6 and the need to decant, HB5 now houses foreign national on one side and Category C+ on the other. There has been no real progress in developing the Cat C element as an outward looking pre-release unit. The proposal that Elmley becomes a Remand Prison probably means that this development will remain on hold.

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HOUSEBLOCK 6

40 Houseblock Six (HB6) has an operational Capacity (OP CAP) of 300 and is home to Vulnerable Prisoners (VP's). The 'historical sex crimes' trials are now producing many more elderly prisoners, some with very long sentences. These are in general requiring additional attention from staff, some needing wheel chairs for movement, and are still unable to access some facilities such as workshops and recreation and they place a heavy demand on medical facilities. Currently these comprise of 259 sex offenders (compared to 196 last year) and mainly 41 debtors.. As sex offenders continue to arrive each week, and the wing is full, some debtors have to be moved to other wings where they are less safe. On current projections this houseblock will be at capacity with only sex offenders by February 2017.

41 This houseblock provides the work force for the large modern laundry and on average 70 prisoners a day work there on shifts. Up to 40 work in other jobs and 18 are orderlies or cleaners on the wing.

42 At present there is no specific sex offender training conducted at Elmley, not even the Horizon treatment programme. However, staff training for working with sex offenders is scheduled to start in November 2016 for all officers working on houseblock 6.

43 On average there are around 90 prisoners on medication including 16 on drug rehabilitation programmes. The HB has a dedicated nurse 2 days a week to attend to prisoners requiring programmed medical appointments.

44 Last year there was an outbreak of 'bed bugs' on B Spur, thought to be a legacy of the foreign nationals, the previous occupants. This necessitated the complete evacuation of half the houseblock, then the other half whilst the whole wing was de-contaminated by a specialist firm. This major disruption had to be repeated again within a short period as the first attempt had not eradicated the problem.

45 It was deduced that a major contributory factor to this problem and its intensity was that this new wing (opened 2010) was designed with built in wooden bunk beds. Part of the overall solution the prison was advised was to remove all this built in furniture.. Due to financial restraints it was decided that this part would be carried out by prisoners, supervised by staff. They also assembled all the new traditional beds and located them prior to Carillion was employed to fix them securely for security safety. There was a further infestation on A spur in September which was initially confined to 2 cells. In late October there was a further outbreak, bringing the total of 9 cells affected. The commercial firm dealt with the chemical side of cleaning these cells.

46 The decision to employ prisoners and staff to successfully to sort out the furniture issue on the wing was a clear demonstration of Elmley at its best.

47 This has been both a disruptive and expensive incident, using up money that could have been used on other urgent remedial work to the fabric of the prison. It hoped that NOMS has digested the message that built in wooden beds was a major design fault, and should not be repeated in future new prisons

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48 Looking ahead, funding has been obtained for two new snooker tables and the creation of a flower pot garden to be set out in the exercise yard. A package of recreational activities is planned – including Chess, Carpet Bowls, and. Bingo.

49 In the spirit of Elmley, they just got on with the job both professionally and conscientiously.

CARE AND SEPARATION UNIT

50 This is a very well run unit and the staff work well as a team. The systems put in place last year are working well. The staff are always very helpful to everyone who has cause to visit.

51 The Board attends as many GOOD reviews as possible. The fact that healthcare do not always attend is a concern to the Board.

52 When a prisoner is placed in the special accommodation the IMB are informed on most occasions. If a member is in the prison they are alerted and attend to observe that correct procedures are carried out by staff.

53 Cleanliness is much improved including the showers, but these would benefit from a complete updating.

54 The staff are commended on the time they spend talking to prisoners and generally on the way they handle some of the most difficult prisoners.

55 The Visiting Judge has complemented the staff of the CSU on the way it is run and has stated ‘this is one of the best run segregation units I visit and the staff are excellent in carrying out their duties’.

CHAPLAINCY AND UGANDA

56 The Chaplaincy group work well as a team and support each other, and are very pro-active around the prison and have both a good knowledge of and the respect of their ‘parishioners’. They are active on numerous committees and are regular attendees with a sound contribution to make. They are lead trainers and quality controllers of the ACCT system. They take the lead in relation to relatives whenever a death occurs.. They always make Board members welcome, and offer support, guidance and advice when required. It is always an uplifting experience to be in their presence.

57 The Methodist Chaplain and a Governor are to be commended for the trip they arranged to visit several prisons in Uganda. They raised money and gifts of children’s clothing and basic food such as salt, sugar and soap from staff, and distributed them to the families of prison officers in Uganda. They also visited community projects, the Chaplain dedicated a new drinking water well funded by donations, and planted a mango tree. Other projects they supported included single mothers with AIDS/HIV who were scrapping a living by making bags from recycled materials.

SAFER CUSTODY

58 The setting up of a Safer Custody Team with the specific aim of reducing the levels of violence and self harm has proved valuable. This has assisted a decline in the number of violent incidences in the prison.

59 Elmley scored amber/green in the recent Safer Custody Audit, and had a little more paperwork been in order, it could have been higher; however it reflects on the high level of care and support that is provided for those who are at risk of suicide or self harm. Compared to the previous year Elmley had a 32% reduction in violent incidents; a 53% reduction of those on an open ACCT; and self harm incidents down by 61%. There were no self inflicted deaths in the year of this Report, and only 2 deaths from natural causes. This is commendable when looked in relation to the population, which on average has more than 70 prisoners who are over 60 years of age, the oldest being 88; and over 200 on average who are registered with a disability, and 40 with more than one disability. Comparable figures in 2014 were on average only 55 over 60 years of age and 169 with a disability. Many of these prisoners have quite long sentences, and have to remain at establishments that have full time medical services. All this puts a heavy strain on Elmley's medical team, its drugs bill and their administration. The ongoing negative media coverage on prisons does not make it an attractive career opportunity for medical staff in general and particularly for good nursing staff.

60 All this is put into perspective in the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman's Annual Report where he states, 'By contrast, the reason for the steady annual increase in deaths in custody from natural causes is more explicable; it is largely a result of the age related ill-health that attends a rapidly ageing prison population. This demographic shift has been dramatic, driven by increased sentence length and later in life prosecutions for historic sex offences. As a result the number of prisoners over 60 has tripled in 15 years and is now the fastest growing segment of the prison population. The projections are all upwards, with more than 15,000 prisoners over 50 predicted by June 2020.

61 One mournful consequence was that there were 172 deaths nationally from natural causes last year, 42% more than 5 years ago. Prisons must adapt to unplanned roles of care homes and even hospices. Increasingly prison staff are having to manage not just ageing prisoners, but the end of prisoner's lives and death itself

62 Unfortunately, there has been little strategic grip of this major change in the prison population. Prisons and their healthcare partners have been left to respond in a piecemeal fashion, resulting in variable end of life care for prisoners, and limited support for staff.'

63 In respect to violence in the latter part of the reporting period this has begun to climb again, the reason for this is a complex web, but includes:

64 Greater operational pressures have led to fewer members attending the Safer Custody/ Violence Reduction meetings.

65 The prison has returned to operational capacity resulting in 100 more prisoners in occupation, and thus reducing the flexibility in available cell space.

66 Increased target searches resulting in less drugs circulating in the prison forcing price increases which results in more prisoners being in debt, and liable to violence.

67 Media coverage of acts of indiscipline in other establishment has a copy cat effect even if at a lower key level.

68 Some of the perpetrators' of serious disruption at other establishment are now housed at Elmley and are influencing others.

69 Staff sickness, a high number of bedwatches, and hospital escorts results in insufficient staff to operate the full regime with consistency and predictability. This contributes to frustration amongst prisoners, and angry outbursts when matters do not go their way.

70 NOMS must make greater efforts to recruit and retain good quality staff to meet the agreed staff complement level of an establishment if the issue of violence is to be seriously tackled in the foreseeable future.

71 As this is unlikely to be achieved in the medium term, other measures are necessary. The Board is concerned that after all the effort put in by staff, the level of violence is now rising again for a variety of reasons outlined in this Report. The Board's considered opinion is that an immediate reduction in operational capacity of 50 places should be approved. This is a proven step that has been utilised before. Elmley is not immune to what is happening elsewhere in the Service, why wait for a riot, with all that entails, when a simple positive preventative step could both avoid such a situation, and also re-assure staff that their efforts are recognised and supported in tangible action.

72 The new head of Safer Custody has plans to reduce violence by introducing new ideas including initiatives which have been tried and tested at other establishments.

HEALTH CARE

Inpatients Department

73 The care of the inpatients department is provided by IC24.

74 The ban on smoking continues to be enforced in this department.

75 The Board reported last year on the long delays in finding suitable places in secure mental health facilities: this has not improved and puts extra pressure on the staff as well as causing a great deal of frustration for the prisoner, which often is acted out in unsocial behaviour. The Board is concerned that the inpatient department is housing more patients with mental health issues than sick prisoners. The Board would appreciate a response from the Minister.

76 The Board also reported that the officers allocated to healthcare were more absent than present. This has improved to a degree, but is not consistent. This shortfall leaves the decision of unlocking violent or mental health prisoners to the nursing staff, unfortunately due to the potential risk to the safety of the nursing staff a prisoner can remain in his cell for a considerable length of time. This is not a satisfactory situation for staff or prisoner.

77 The staff, the majority of which are agency, are to be commended for their continuing excellent care under sometimes very challenging conditions.

Outpatients Department

78 The department continues to run efficiently with a very caring team. It has to monitor and care for a wide variety of chronically ill prisoners.

79 Non-attendance at appointments is still a major problem, but over the last year this has been addressed and is improving with new systems in place.

80 The staff are always very helpful to the Board members when approached with enquiries. Overall this is a very well run department and cleanliness is excellent.

INREACH (MENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT)

81 There have been quite a lot of staff changes since our last report in the staffing of this area. The staff are a very committed team and continue to work under what sometimes is very difficult circumstances. Last year the board reported on the slow process to get a prisoner accommodated in a suitable mental health institution, unfortunately this situation has not improved and this causes bed blocking in the inpatients department and a delay in getting the correct treatment for the prisoner. This is of great concern to the Board.

82 The Board congratulate the Mental Health In-Reach Team on being recognised for their excellent work in the Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust staff awards. They achieved Highly Commended for Patient Safety after a nomination by the prison; and special congratulations to Team Leader Naomi Price who was awarded 'Nurse of the Year 2016' for her work at Elmley.

EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

83 The Equality and Inclusion (E &I) team comprises 4 members of staff managed by a Governor Grade and a Custodial Manager, who are also responsible for Violence Reduction and Self Harm.

84 The team focuses on all prisoners who fall into the E&I grouping, but there are some groups that are considered more vulnerable than others. The average numbers of prisoners

in these groups in the last year were: Travellers -28, Young Offenders – 86, Over 60's – 73, Prisoners with some form of Disability – 181 Foreign Nationals – 188 (11 of whom were Detainees) and Vulnerable Prisoners – 227.

85 It is observed that in the number of recorded Young Offenders very few, and at times only 2, reach 'enhanced status', and only 50% of that group in employment.

86 Minor issues raised by these groups are dealt with at wing level, usually by a Senior Officer. When a resolution is not forthcoming it is forwarded to the Governor via the Discrimination Incident Reporting Form. The governor can allocate responsibility for a response to a Custodial Manager. In the reporting period 23 DIRF's were submitted.

87 The Chaplaincy is engaged and active with these groups and is in consultation on their issues, including a high level of pastoral care when required. The team receives regular feedback from the Imam on Muslim activities, and in particular over Ramadan.

88 Plans are in hand to utilise the EMT Smart Data; and to introduce Impact Assessment on Activities, Adjudications, Complaints, Kitchen/Food and CSU.

89 The Equality and Inclusion policy is to be reviewed.

90 Pre -release rehabilitation training is to be introduced for ex-servicemen prisoners in liaison with the Soldiers, Sailors and Air Force Families Association (SSAFFA) and the British Legion.

91 The Team is currently establishing closer links with Social Services to identify, under the Care Act, what the entitlement is for elderly and disabled prisoners for access to such things as special footwear, perching stools(toileting), and 'wheelie walkers') etc.

92 Equality and Inclusion Meetings are held bi-monthly and in addition to the team, the Chaplaincy, prisoner representatives and other agencies are involved. Regrettably these are not as well attended as in relation to their importance. Regular forums are held for the traveller community and elderly prisoners and the Immigration Service is programmed to hold forums to advise foreign nationals. It is encouraging to note that the numbers of 'Detainees' has fallen in the last year.

GROUNDS

93 The horticultural team continue to provide a pleasant and colourful display of the extensive ground area in the prison, and in particular in the summer it is wonderful show of colour which raises ones spirit. It is a pity that this is marred to a degree by the rubbish thrown out of cell windows. The security grills, mention elsewhere in the Report, which should be fitted to all cell windows would eradicate a high degree of this. It is imperative that this installation should be funded and completed. Until then clearance of this unsightly rubbish has to be cleared by a prisoner work force which takes considerable time due to the extent of the ground area.

GYM AND PHYSICAL RECREATION

94 The gym and sports courts are popular and the small increase in staff has assisted in a much improved service this year. The maintenance of the equipment is problematic due to the length of time required in obtaining spare parts via the National Maintenance Contract. Purposeful activity is undertaken and includes verified certified courses for both staff and prisoners in C& R, First Aid, Manual Handling and Team Building.

INDUSTRIES

95 The Industrial cleaning Academy continues its excellent work in both basic cleaning and bio cleaning, and has trained over 200 prisoners to City and Guild standard, enhancing their work opportunities. It also saves the establishment up to £120,000 through the specialist cleaning it undertakes. The laundry continues its excellent work, but at a much reduced tonnage to the level it was achieving until contracts were taken away by Head Office. Though, due to temporary closure of some other laundries some extra tonnage is being processed. It makes no sense to the Board that Elmley undertakes laundry for Rochester but not Cookham Wood next door, especially as the Rochester lorry passes Cookham on its route to Elmley.

96 The other workshops, with the exception of Sharpack which has withdrawn, continue to function despite too many days when they are closed down for lack of staff. There has been a degree of improvement in the latter part of the year, but this all depends on Hospital escorts and bed watches which are unlikely to reduce with the current population.

97 There are plans to develop a repair shop and also a refurbishment programme of Dyson cleaners, but these as yet have to come to fruition.

KITCHEN

98 Given that the equipment in the kitchen is 20 years' old, and that it was originally designed for a much smaller population, and even after modification is not the easiest to supervise; the catering of prisoners meals is running reasonably well. The food trolleys used to deliver food to the wings are a particular cause for concern since there is no spare capacity when one brakes down. Some ovens had to be replaced this year and it is understood that it took some time for this to be achieved. At present there are two coppers not working properly and one completely defunct. (It is understood that funding to some degree for replacements is now being approved).

99 The permanent staff have coped well with the temporary loss of one or two members. The recent management changes need time to bed in. One of the band 6 has taken overall responsibility for kitchens in several prisons, including Sheppey, leaving the other to take responsibility for Elmley.

100 The management have taken a more rigorous approach with the prisoner workforce, they now return to their Houseblocks at lunchtime unless they are specifically needed. This more disciplined approach has contributed to a calmer and more efficiently organised workplace.

101 In May there was a change to cold lunches delivered to their cells in 'grab bags'. The 4/5 fillings that were offered severely limited the options for those with special 'dietary' requirements. For example a vegetarian had to take the same lunch 5 days in a row. There was disquiet even before it started due to rumours. The delivery of the 'grab bags' to the cells proved a logistical nightmare for prisoners and officers. This routine was abandoned after the first week thus creating a certain amount of wasted costs.

102 The re-establishing of a catering forum in October was in part a response to the rise in complaints about the lunchtime routine put in place in May. Meetings with food representatives from the Houseblocks are now held on a monthly basis and deal primarily with issues about the quality and quantity of food provided. The first meeting was well attended, and the relatively small changes that have resulted, such as offering Jacket potatoes as a hot lunchtime option, have been appreciated by prisoners and actually cheaper than the baguettes..

103 The catering staff play a key and vital role in their contribution in developing a safe and healthy prison. They are always there and deliver on time whatever is happening elsewhere in the prison, they support staff as well as prisoners when the need arises. Their dedication should be recognised and supported by ensuring that all kitchen equipment is maintained to the highest standard as a priority, and funding made available expeditiously when it needs replacing on all occasions. It is understood that waiting for 'spare parts' is the reason why things do not happen. Surely a firm as big as Carillion has expertise in this area and can assess what parts may need replacing and hold a buffer stock; especially as its own Market Update stated that it expected operating profit to increase next year thanks to strong revenue growth.

SECTION 6: OTHER AREAS OF THE PRISON

OFFENDER MANAGEMENT UNIT

104 **OASYS:** Regrettably the back log has increased over this time last year, to 192 at October 16, an increase of 12 cases. This gives the board cause for concern as it was hoped that it would be eliminated by this year. The causes seem to be in the main similar to last year, that is transferees not having a plan in place when they arrive at Elmley; the large turnover of inmates; and the seconding of personnel to fill the shortfall on wing duty, this

was pronounced during the summer holiday period; and finally the time it takes recruit, train and place new staff.

105 The Board are given to understand that we are 1 or 2 full time personnel down on the full compliment, this is an improvement on last year but all are not yet fully trained. Sickness now is not such a problem as in the past.

106 It should be born in mind that it takes between 4 – 6 hours to complete an OASYS so the loss of an ‘offender supervisor’ for 2 days creates a lot of work to be caught up. This only exasperates the backlog, and the offer of ‘Payment Plus’ (overtime) does not appear to be overly successful.

HOME DETENTION CURFEW

107 As far as Elmley is concerned they have now no backlog. Any delay now is due to the pending receipt of reports from the probation service. This is a great improvement on last year for Elmley.

RESETTLEMENT

108 This now seems to have bedded in and appears to be running smoothly.

LIFERS

109 There is not a great number of this category here and all reports and documents are delivered on time. One has to ask the question if this is the right type of establishment for this type of prisoner, for their planed needs.

LIBRARY

110 Progress is still being made in attendance and in delivery to the wings. Some house blocks are better than others in attendance. Prisoners are escorted by a movement’s officer to the library and left. They are then picked up later. This restricts the number there at any one time due to staff safety, but increases the availability and footfall.

THE LISTENERS

111 The Prison Listeners continue to provide a most valuable service to Safer Custody; they work with dedication and efficiency. They are well trained by the Samaritans, but due to the fact Elmley is a local prison, there is at times a high number transferring on to other establishments and the numbers at one point declined as low as five. Due to the high standing of the role of the Listeners in the Prison, other are prepared to put themselves forward. This puts a heavier burden on the Samaritans in terms of the training needs. The Board are appreciative of that commitment by the Samaritans.

RECEPTION

112 Being a large local prison means reception is a busy area with 20,000 movements each year. Prisoner’s property is always a challenging area but a more stable staff involvement has improved this area compared to previous years. Property issues dominate

the Applications received by the Board, and those involving transfers are the most difficult to solve.

VISITS

113 The visits facility is well run, clean and tidy with toys/activities for young children in a play area organised by the local PACT programme. There are plans to arrange a 'homework club' where fathers are encouraged to engage with their children in structured activities that promote the value of literacy and numeracy.

114 There is one issue that needs addressing in respect of property that visitors bring to the prison. They either do not know or are confused about what is allowed. The rules are available but not prominently displayed in the visits centre and it seems that different prisons operate a slightly different policy re. Clothing. This makes the receipt of property a long and laborious business for staff at the Gate who have to sort through every item and explain what is allowed and what not to the visitor. Unfortunately, the staff in the visitors centre can be subject to casual abuse that arises from such frustration in the heightened emotions of the day.

115 There was an incident this summer when three visitors who had been turned away by the Visitors Centre (for an entirely valid reason) harassed the 2 female members of staff, even following them out of the centre at the end of their duty. These visitors were subsequently placed on a banned list by management. The staff are sensitive to the difficulties that visitors experience and do not deserve this abuse they on occasions are subject to whilst carrying out their duties.

WORKS DEPARTMENT

116 The Board reported last year on the inefficiency of the service in the vital work of maintenance of the prison after it was outsourced to Carillion. The Board are aware that many other establishments have suffered similar or worse problems. The decision itself appeared an injudicious one to the Board; how such a company was selected when it has the highest level of debt to market capitalisation of all the 'FTSE 350' and has a pension deficit of £406m is an interesting question. It probably saw a chance to make a profit, and that is why every request for work to be undertaken creates a detailed contractual study at Carillion Headquarters, sometimes taking weeks before work is approved, let alone any activity commencing.

117 The Board do not regard this as in the best interest of the Governor trying to maintain a decent and safe prison. It is acknowledged, that due to the commitment of the Elmley staff taken over by Carillion that minor repairs on the whole do get attended to as they appear to be within a local remit.

118 The Board has to report that the National Maintenance Contract is still very problematic with issues arising from delays in waiting for spares, contractual problems and time scales for completing repairs. It is to be re-iterated that staff locally are helpful and understanding of the problems and do their best in keeping cells available and facilities

working despite the bureaucratic, rule dominated regime they appear to have to work under.

119 Carillion appears to want to flaunt its inefficiencies, the water leak that waited weeks to be repaired, was cordoned off by temporary barriers to protect the hole that had been dug. The repair was effected some months ago, the 'barriers' remain; despite having been drawn to their attention as an unnecessary 'eye sore', and a reminder of how long the leak persisted.

PRISONER CORRESPONDENCE

120 There have been ongoing problems with correspondence being delayed (or lost) causing friction amongst prisoners, Houseblock officers and staff in Correspondence. The staff are frequently moved to other duties, creating a backlog of mail. Although overtime is offered to clear the backlog, this appears to happen in response to a rise in complaints rather than the orderly running of the department.

121 The Board has raised the matter with the Governor who reports the issue is being addressed. Unfortunately, this is clearly another manifestation of how the staff shortages impact on the level calm within the prison population.

SECURITY

Aims and Priorities

To prevent escape.

122 Prevent the illegal supply of drugs and electronic devices entering the prison.
To provide continues monitoring of TACT prisoners (prisoners with a terrorist background).

Provision of oversight of prisoner safety.

123 To continue the development of an effective intelligence collection and collation system within the prison supported by outside agencies to identify those individuals who present a security risk.

Countermeasures in place

124 Intelligence led planned searches throughout the prison and spontaneous cell searches.

Random security search of staff entering the prison.

125 Use of search trained dogs.

Application of electronic detection equipment.

126 Patrols of prison both internally and externally and monitoring of the CCTV network

- 127 Meetings of security staff with Kent police on a weekly basis to discuss crimes referred by the establishment
- 128 Staff reporting system – IRS
- 129 Prisoner drug testing regime – MDT’s conducted in particular for the detection of psychotic substances.
- 130 Monthly testing of the Contingency Plan (Security)
- 131 The Board is satisfied that the Security Department has successfully kept pace with the changes and challenges presented by the prisoners and their outside collaborators over the past year. This incorporated:
- 132 The interception of a drone delivery in June which not only resulted in the recovery of the cache of drugs and mobile phones, but also of the successful prosecution of the sender.
- 133 Countering the illegal use of electronic devices.
- 134 Addressing the use of psychotic substances by prisoners in collaboration with the Violence Reduction Team.

Current and Future Development Plans

- 135 Drone detection equipment is being trialled at Elmley and if successful it is hoped it will be installed forthwith.
- 136 An updated system to intercept illegal transmissions has been introduced.
- 137 Additional staff have been recruited by Security, including a Collator, a dedicated dog handler and 2 dogs (passive and active).
- 138 Four additional CCTV cameras are to be installed at critical points around the prison, and more Body Worn Video Cameras have been procured.

Conclusion

- 139 A Security Audit was conducted in September 2016 by Internal Audit Assurance covering three areas. Two areas were graded GREEN and the third GREEN/AMBER.
- 140 The weekly liaison with Kent Police is now considered as ‘Best Practice’ by the NOMS Police Adviser.
- 141 The current close liaison with the Violence Reduction Team is an introduction that should be sustained.
- 142 One concern is that the monthly Security Meeting is not attended by all key staff that should be there, including at times our Board members.
- 143 All this supports the Board’s view that security overall is monitored efficiently with information and intelligence acted upon both timely and effectively by a focused and dedicated security team.

SHANNON TRUST

Activities -December 15 to November 2016

Number of mentors at start 20

Number trained during year 39

Number at end of November 30

LEARNERS

Number engaged during year 48

Number at end of November 19

Each coaching session lasts 20-30 minutes and should be undertaken 5 times a week.. Due to the churn of prisoners at Elmley only 1400 sessions were completed. The busiest month was September when 189 sessions were completed. Of the 50 learners enrolled all completed many manuals whist 5 completed the course and were delighted to receive their certificates, being the only certificate they had ever received.

During the year the SMT have been extremely helpful. Abbie Krovina and Vicky Mital are to be thanked for their valuable and continued support. Unfortunately although an officer had agreed to be the Reading plan lead this is yet to materialise. The role of Prisoner co-Coordinator has been shared with other activities such as Library Orderly. The Librarians have been very supportive, but when they are short of Orderlies, the library has to come first. The SMT Lead is aware of this and working on a solution. Meetings have not taken place on a monthly basis due to staff shortages, but the Volunteer Leader has regularly visited the Houseblocks to offer support and supply materials. Activities staff are now referring prisoners for English classes at BE1& E1 levels. English tutors have been extremely supportive and their Classroom Assistants have become Shannon Trust Mentors. Staff in the laundry and workshops have also been very supportive and have allowed learning lessons to take place, subject to work commitments.

During the year as part of the OFSTED inspection requirement, the Volunteer has accompanied the Head of Learning Skills when she carried out the required observations on the Mentors coaching their Learners.

Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody

SECTION : 7 THE BOARD

THE WORK OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD

144 The Board remains well below its complement of members; it lost a very experienced member but managed to recruit 2 new members during the reporting year. Two experienced members are only able to give less time to Board duties now due to heavy family commitments. The 2 new member's probation induction is going well, and both are booked on Induction Courses.

145 Despite that the Board meetings were attended on average at over 80% of members over the year; 311 Rota Visits were undertaken, and there 8 visits for specific meetings, and 3 related to incidents. There were 3 external meetings, and in total 417 visits were made in respect of Board Duties.

146 A visit was made to another establishment, and the Board hosted a visit from another establishment. The Deputy Lieutenant of Kent, Colonel Barry Duffield D L, visited and attended a Board Meeting. It is to be hoped that the Board can be further strengthened in the coming months and a campaign has been opened.

147 The Board would wish to express its gratitude to our clerk who is always cheerful, keeps us directed and could not be more helpful.

PRISONER APPLICATIONS

148 The Board processed 699 applications during the year, a 15% increase on last year. Quality of Health Care was the highest riser, but property issues remain the dominant concern raised. Receiving this amount puts a strain on members and detracts from other vital aspects of our role. The aim is to respond to each within days of receiving it; some clearly take longer depending on the degree of research required.

149 The Board believe a prompt, polite, balanced response to applications helps contribute to a sense of fairness in the system and thus aids the creation of a healthy and safe prison ethos. At the same time the Board has raised its concerns with the Governor that the formal Request and Complaint system is not working as effectively as it should. For example, one such Request generated an interim response, 4 months later the prisoner wrote to the Board to state that nothing further had happened. In fact it had been totally overlooked, and there appeared no mechanism in place to generate reminders that a reply was required.

Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody

150 Again the Board finds two observations on this in The Ombudsman's Report as very relevant to our own conclusions. Firstly, complaints in respect of property are the most frequent subject. 'That prisoner's often attach a great deal of importance to their personal belongings, especially as a way of maintaining their identity. Although this is an area where we can often make a great deal of difference, property complaints can be time consuming and take up resources that could be better used on other matters.'

151 Property as a concern was raised at the 2014 Independent Monitoring Board Conference and the Prison Department is on record of stating it would sort it out, it does not seem to be happening with any haste!

152 Secondly the Board agrees with the Ombudsman when he states, 'The real key to further improvement of the prisoner complaint process is better complaint management in prisons. This needs to be a focus of the reform programme, so that complaints are properly dealt with at source.'

153 The Board are encouraged that an 'Improving the Complaints System' committee has just been set up at Elmley to review the whole process and that Board members are to be involved in that.

BOARD STATISTICS	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	20
Number of Board Members at start of reporting period	10
Number of Board Members at end of reporting period	11
Number of Board Members joining within reporting period	2
Number of Board Members leaving within reporting period	1
Total number of Board Meetings during reporting period	12
Total number of visits to the Establishment	414
Total number of Segregation Reviews held	Figures not available
Total number of segregation reviews attended	84

Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody

IMB Applications:

Code	Subject	Year 2013	Year 2014	Year 2015	Year 2016
A	Accommodation	15	11	34	11
B	Adjudications	35	17	25	20
C	Equality & Diversity (inc religion)	8	4	0	2
D	Education/employment/training inc IEP	46	32	13	28
E 1	Family/visits inc mail & phone	64	35	22	51
E 2	Finance/pay	26	11	26	30
F	Food/kitchen related	23	14	7	22
G	Health related	125	108	71	102
H 1 & H2	Property	144	196	121	133
H 3	Canteen, facilities, Catalogue shopping, Argos	6	11	6	5
I	Sentence related (inc. HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-cat etc)	161	187	108	95
J	Staff/prisoner/detainee concerns inc bullying	68	45	42	46
K	Transfers	98	98	55	61
L	Miscellaneous	65	113	80	91
	Total number of IMB applications	882	857	604	697
	Of total: number of IMB Confidential Access was:	10	11	7	5

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