



HMP/YOI ASKHAM GRANGE

ANNUAL REPORT

1 JULY 2015 – 30 JUNE 2016

**The Right Honourable the Secretary of State
For the Ministry of Justice**

Sir

I have the honour to submit the:

**ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD
HMP/YOI ASKHAM GRANGE
FOR THE PERIOD 1st July 2015 to 30th June 2016**

Members of the Board

Mr J Woolhouse Chair

Mr S Beyer

Ms E Watson

Mrs C Richardson (Appointed November 2015)

Mrs J M Carruthers (Appointed November 2015)

Mr C Golightly (Resigned January 2016)

Ms J Guilfoyle (Resigned March 2015)

Dr C Burchill (Appointed November 2015, Resigned August 2016)

STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB

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

The Board is specifically charged to:

1. Satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody within its prison and the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release.
2. Inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any other official to whom he has delegated authority as it judges appropriate, any concerns 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 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 the prison records.

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Brief description of the Prison and its Functions

- 1.1. HMP/YOI Askham Grange is a women's open prison in the rural village of Askham Richard just South of York
- 1.2. The baseline CNA of 151, an in-use CNA of 128 and an operational capacity of 126
- 1.3. The population, all convicted, ranges in age from Young Offenders to residents of mature years. They predominantly live in dormitory accommodation but those on Stage Two resettlement and lifer prisoners have priority for single rooms and are placed on a waiting list as appropriate to ensure fairness of allocation.
- 1.4. Askham Grange is an open prison in which the overriding ethos is for resettlement and preparation of the residents for their return to the community via its Interventions and Pathways regime which encompasses all aspects of the needs of the residents. It has provision for up to ten mothers with their babies, enabling them to maintain full time care of their child up to two years, whilst in prison, and it is complemented by a nursery. A family team works with them and all other mothers in Askham to prepare for life on release.
- 1.5. The regime is focussed on reducing the re-offending rate by developing a wide range of skills to enhance their opportunities on release. All departments contribute to this in their separate ways.

2. Executive Summary

HMP/YOI Askham Grange continues to receive the High Performance Status award. As we have commented before, this reflects the hard work of staff in all departments and their concern for the resettlement of residents after release. When set against the economies that have been made and the subsequent reduction in staff numbers, together with a concerted effort to keep the establishment at or near full capacity, this is a remarkable achievement and one that we as external monitors fully support.

During the year the prison has been visited at least once a week for monitoring, often more frequently and matters of housekeeping have generally been resolved by staff at the appropriate level.

Askham Grange is an establishment in which residents generally feel safe and think that their wellbeing is looked after. This is due to the good work of the staff and we list the various departments who have contributed in the relevant part of the report.

2.1 Key Issues

2.1.1 As a Board we were concerned that the reduction in staffing levels and uncertainty about the prisons future coupled with an increase in population could lead to problems, however support for the residents appears to have been maintained.

2.1.2 The success rate for not re-offending remains high, but the Board remains convinced that more work could be done for the good of women in prison by the right choice of residents being sent to Askham, with reasonable remaining lengths of sentence to serve transferring at the earliest appropriate moment to our open conditions. The shorter sentences also have an impact on the discipline within the prison and add an extra burden to already overstretched staff.

3. The Care and Treatment of Offenders

3.1 Healthcare

This has been a difficult year for the staff in Healthcare. There was a prolonged period when low staffing levels put the nursing staff under tremendous pressure. Some support was provided by New Hall but that did not provide a level of staff adequate to meet the demands on the service.

There was a prolonged period of uncertainty for staff concerning the outcome of the tendering process for the provision of the healthcare services. Care UK was ultimately successful and will take over responsibility for Healthcare from 1 September 2016. Staff had an initial meeting with Care UK but nothing had been put in place by the end of June. Staff did not know what services they would be providing or what the staffing levels would be.

Staff reported to the IMB that they have concerns regarding the attitude of prison staff towards Healthcare. Staff felt they did not have the support of prison staff and said they felt demoralised. As a result, several members of staff were seriously considering whether they would remain with the service when Care UK took over. The IMB subsequently reported those concerns to the Deputy Governor.

3.1.2 Residents' Medication

The Healthcare Department has continued to experience difficulty when residents are transferred from other prisons without their medication. The Healthcare staff have to determine, from the resident's medical records, which medication they are currently being prescribed. If the resident needs the medication urgently, they ask the GP to prescribe it and arrange for the pharmacy to make an additional delivery to the prison.

3.1.3 Residents' feedback on healthcare services (doctors, nurses, dentists and opticians)

Healthcare receives feedback from service users. In addition to the exit questionnaires below, the staff in Healthcare receive letters of thanks from residents. In those letters, residents have commented positively on the support provided by members of the Healthcare staff. The Matron is described as patient, kind, compassionate and caring.

Exit questionnaires are given to all residents on release and these are collated every quarter. Compliments are noted on the exit questionnaire collation. Below is a table providing a summary of the feedback received during the year July 2015 to June 2016. A total of 75 questionnaires were completed in the period.

Level of Access	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Average
Drs & Nurses	50	22	3	0
Dentist	23	23	4	3
Optician	5	9	8	9

Level of care received	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Average
Drs & Nurses	59	16	0	0
Dentist	21	22	6	1
Optician	2	9	9	8

Attitude/ professionalism	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Average	Not used or no comment
Drs & Nurses	59	14	2	0	0
Dentist	22	24	4	0	25
Optician	3	6	9	10	47
Mental Health Service	3	1	1		70

The majority of comments on the care provided by the Doctors and Nurses were very positive. They included such comments as *everyone has been more than helpful in every way; pleasant and helpful; great healthcare team; always helpful and kind; excellent service; quality of care outstanding; everyone has gone above and beyond to take care of my needs*. One negative comment was received from a resident who felt a member of staff had been abrupt on occasion.

Positive comments were also made about the Dental service. The Dentist is variously described as *very helpful; very pleasant; excellent; and very friendly and efficient*. It can be difficult to draw any firm conclusions from the small number of responses received on this service. For example while one resident felt she had to wait too long for an appointment another commented on the prompt professional service she had received.

Similarly only a small number of residents commented on the service provided by the Optician. Those who did were critical of the Optician's manner which was described as abrupt and his attitude which was considered rude and offhand.

3.2 Security and Safer Custody

3.2.1 Security

The Intelligence system at Askham Grange comprises Operational Intelligence and Strategic Intelligence and both form a vital part of the overall process.

Operational Intelligence indicates a specific threat to security or control such as contraband, absconds etc. Strategic Intelligence provides an up-to-date picture of an individual resident and her world; this is mainly achieved through the use of SIRs. Much of this work concentrates on drug misuse, bullying and alcohol abuse. Security meetings are held monthly to review the overall picture as well as individual concerns.

The Security staff keep well on top of the situation whilst allowing a relaxed overall atmosphere to be maintained.

3.2.3 Safer Custody

Residents in general feel very safe within the prison and this has been confirmed in surveys of the residents. An anonymous exit survey is done with those being released, particularly concerning bullying and results for the last year show a very positive result. This allows any problems to be diagnosed early and action taken if needed.

A robust anti-bullying policy is in place and investigations are thorough and outcomes followed through.

Few ACCTs are opened and are generally closed quite quickly. Those residents on ACCTs are monitored carefully and support is given.

3.3 Diversity

In line with previous years, the IMB of *HMP Askham Grange* is confident that the staff and management of the prison continue to be acutely conscious of all diversity matters, that they respond promptly to incidents that arise and ensure that appropriate educational information and procedures are in place for the support of residents and staff, independent of the nine protected characteristics of the Equalities Act (2010).

The prison has a robust anti bullying policy which it strongly enforces

3.4 Learning and Skills

The Learning and Skills Department has had another very successful year. Delivery at Askham Grange has been 157% efficient against planned delivery. All staff have achieved outstanding in their Observations of Teaching and Learning. The success rates have been consistently extremely high over the last 5 years.

The Department has a rigorous induction process which allows each resident to focus on one career aspiration. Following induction an Action Plan is drawn up with the resident. Women who have difficulties or disabilities are assessed and the Department provides any individual support they need.

In addition to their close working relationship across various departments of the prison, the Department works closely with the National Careers Service from the time of a resident's initial assessment to her release with a robust plan to help her gain employment. Other outside providers include the University of York St John's which provides drama and singing workshops and Clean Break which conducts one off intensive drama workshops. A recent Art Project created art work to exhibit around the prison focussed on the women's transformation at Askham Grange.

The Department runs courses in English, Maths, IT, Self-Employment, Professional Cookery, Hairdressing, Beauty and Nail Technology. The Department is placing more emphasis on self-employment. Residents can take part in a Small Firms Enterprise Development Initiative (SFEDI) course. The curriculum is under constant review to ensure provision meets both learners' and employers' changing requirements and demand. Reviews are conducted through QDP learner surveys, needs analysis, course reviews, focus-groups and end of course evaluation forms. Following a recent review the Department closed the Business and Administration Course and introduced Beauty Therapy. The Department works in close collaboration with HMP YOI New Hall. Staff from both prisons meet to share good practice and resources and to ensure that courses can be continued seamlessly when residents are transferred from New Hall to Askham Grange.

A number of residents undertake courses either at outside colleges or by distance learning. In the past year, residents have attended local colleges to take courses on Level 3 Hairdressing, Sugar Icing, Award in Education and Training and Level 1 Car mechanics.

Thirty three women are taking Distance Learning Courses provided by a number of colleges. A Distance Learning Tutor, funded jointly by The Manchester College and the Prison Service, provides support to those women. Women on Open University courses are allocated one session during the week for study. It is an indication of the women's commitment to their own learning and their future prospects, that those studying on other distance learning courses do so in their own time.

The residents help each other by sharing skills they acquired prior to arriving at Askham Grange. In the past year, residents have run courses in their own time on beading, crochet, card-making, dancing, zumba, accountancy and budget management.

The Hardman Trust was created in memory of Dick Hubbard, a previous member of the IMB who died last year. The Trust offers funding to residents who are serving a sentence of seven years or more and are within two years of release. This year two residents were given a Dick Hubbard award and attended the Award Ceremony at HMP Peterborough.

3.5 Pathways and Resettlement

The Pathways Department works with residents to help them gain work experience to assist their resettlement into the community and help them obtain employment when they are released. In addition to the staff in the Pathways Department, residents have access to staff from the National Careers Service and Job Centre Plus.

A number of residents are involved in Community Work at any one time. When the number of residents is low, opportunities for taking part in Community Work are restricted. The situation improved towards the end of the year as the number of residents rose. Residents are placed with a variety of charitable and voluntary organisations, a conservation centre, a nursery, a hairdresser, a library, the Farming Museum and the RSPCA. Once residents have achieved Stage 2 they are able to apply for paid work. The majority of paid opportunities are in the catering industry with a few in other occupations such as beauty and cleaning. A resident in last year's report, who became the manager of a prestigious hairdressing salon following her release, now recruits staff from Askham Grange.

The opportunity to gain work experience helps residents gain employment on their release. Others pursue education and training courses. Monthly Key Performance Targets (KPT) are set for discharged residents for those in full-time/part-time/self-employed. KPT = 33%. Monthly KPTs are also set for discharged residents in full-time education/part-time education and voluntary work. KPT = 31%. Below is the 12 month report for the period July 2015 to June 2016

	Discharges	Full/part time self employed	KPT	Achieved	Full part time Education/voluntary work	KTP	Achieved
July 2015	11	4	33%	36.40%	4	31%	36.40%
August 2015	5	0	33%	0%	2	31%	40%
September 2015	6	5	33%	83.30%	1	31%	16.70%
October 2015	5	3	33%	60.0%	2	31%	40%
November 2015	7	3	33%	42.90%	3	31%	42.90%
December 2015	13	3	33%	23.10%	4	31%	30.80%
January 2016	6	2	33%	33.30%	1	31%	16.70%
February 2016	6	3	33%	50.0%	2	31%	33.30%
March 2016	8	3	33%	37.50%	0	31%	0%
April 2016	5	2	33%	40.0%	0	31%	0%
May 2016	8	4	33%	50.0%	1	31%	12.50%

June 2016	9	5	33%	55.5%	4	31%	44.40%
Annual Average				42.66%			26.14%

3.6 Enterprise

3.6.1 Café Fairburn

Café Fairburn provides an enhancement to the conference facilities and also training for the residents who can achieve barista training up to NVQ level 2 of which some 20 residents have achieved this level. Average takings for a day are between £80 - £100 pounds and up to £200 when conferences are held. Residents can purchase drinks and snacks from the café and the 'spends' are deducted from their earnings. This, along with other initiatives where residents can purchase items, clothing and toiletries within the IEP scheme, helps residents take responsibility for their personal accounts and spending. Due to new government legislation the café has produced a file detailing all products sold that may contain food allergens. Café Fairburn has become a successful initiative offering training and responsibility for the residents.

3.6.2 Conference Academy

Askham Grange continues to provide conference facilities and during the past year conferences have taken place for various agencies e.g. prison service, NHS, Police and Manchester College along with other private agencies.

The reception for the conferences is controlled by a resident who is responsible for the conference diary and welcomes conference delegates.

Approximately 300 external and internal conferences have taken place at Askham Grange from July 2015 to June 2016. Connected with the conference initiative is the Food Preparation Course which takes up to 12 residents on a 1 year NVQ course up to level 2 and provides training in food preparation and hospitality.

Café Fairburn and the Conference Academy offer residents a unique opportunity to interact with the public, take responsibility, learn new skills and gain a qualification. This is undoubtedly an asset to residents when seeking employment when discharged.

3.6.3 Garden Centre

The Garden Centre includes the provision of a shop selling fruit, vegetables, all-season bedding plants and Christmas trees to the public. The shop sells such items as jam, preserves, cards and jewelry made by the residents. The card payment system introduced last year has also proved to be a success. Two bee hive colonies have been obtained with the prospect of producing Askham Grange honey, also to be sold in the shop. During May 2016 the Garden Centre achieved sales of £12,500. Residents employed in the Garden Centre can achieve NVQ standard in horticulture to level 2.

Planning permission has been granted by the local planning office to provide a café in the Garden Centre which would provide extra facilities for members of the public, training for the residents and increase profits for the Centre, however, funds for the café have not yet been allocated but the Governor is keen to implement the cafe to enhance this facility.

This is another excellent example of the Management at Askham Grange continually striving to provide better and more opportunities for residents to learn new skills, achieve qualifications and take responsibility in order to prepare them for release back into society.

3.6.4 Askham Resource Centre

Askham Grange Resource Centre (ARC) is managed by the Together Women Project (TWP) and is located in a self-contained unit away from the main building and named Inside Out. Employment is provided for up to 16 Residents training and gaining experience in business related and commercial skills e.g. back office support for businesses, book-keeping, social media, C.V writing, mailshots and database cleansing. Help and support is also provided for residents considering starting their own businesses on release

3.7 The Family Team

The Family Team meet on a weekly basis and consists of Mother and Baby Unit manager, Probation, Families pathways custodial manger, Barnardo's Team Manager and Family Support worker and Mother and Baby Unit Officer. They support all residents within Askham Grange regarding families and children. They discuss children and mothers on the unit Acorn house applications, Family day application and any other resident issues relating to children and Families.

3.7.1 Mother and Baby Unit

A modern, purpose built facility providing support and guidance to 10 mothers with children which is viewed as an essential part of the prison.

3.7.2 The Nursery

Adjoining the Mother and Baby unit, the nursery is managed by professionals from the Barnardo's team. It comprises indoor and outdoor areas which aim to stimulate and engage the residents and their children.

The Barnardo's team offer inductions to all residents within Askham Grange as well as facilitating coaching sessions with the aim of encouraging better parenting, strengthening families in the community and leading the new Nurturing programme, a family initiative managed by the charity Family Links. They also aid some visits on a weekend.

The nursery is also the venue for the regular family days, where residents' extended families are invited to spend the day with their relative under supervision.

	Numbers
Average inductions completed per month	4
Average numbers of nursery places per week	25
Average numbers of stay and play session supported per week	9
Average yearly parenting program participants	50
Average monthly external visitors to Askham facilitated nursery staff.	2
Average monthly visits supported	4
Average monthly Acorn House interventions	10
Yearly Family Days facilitated	5
Yearly average Family day resident participants	75
Yearly average adult visitors to family day	150
Yearly average child visitors to family day	225
Average monthly extra support given	10

3.7.3 The Family Worker

The interventions of the Family Support Worker and associated personnel at Askham Grange offer not only essential support to an average of 40 women per month, on an individual basis, but help the residents maintain contact with family and friends; along with finding out their problems and links in the additional support work needed from the other departments. Every resident has an induction with the family worker.

Due to the lack of funding Barnardo's has had to recently stop 2 very important roles in the prison; Post Adoption Care UK (PAC) and the Grandparents Association Drop In. Before a prison Outreach Worker had an average of 12 residents at a time. This has now been added to the stretched Family Worker.

It is considered, however, that these proactive efforts are an important contributor to the low recidivism rate at Askham Grange and are extremely constructive.

	Numbers	Comments
Average case load	36	
Average weekly drop in attendance	14	
Average monthly external visitors to Askham facilitated by service.	7	These would include meetings with social workers, police liaison, after adoption workers, family law advice, family mediation etc
Average monthly appointments in the community attended with resident as a support	3	This could include family court, social care review meetings, school meetings.

3.7.4 Acorn House

Co-ordinated by Barnardo's this offers all residents a positive and comfortable setting where residents spend some days and nights to establish and maintain relationships with their family with contact meeting. Organised by Barnardo's this also facilitates and assists in the transition to post custodial life.

3.8 Catering and Kitchens

Although constantly under pressure because of staff shortages, catering continues to provide an excellent range of food for the residents, providing good quality food for all ethnic backgrounds, dietary needs and food intolerances. The manager and team make a special effort to celebrate ethnic food festivals and the vast majority of notes from residents in the canteen comments book are positive.

All this is a considerable achievement when judged against the slender budget the kitchens work on.

3.9 Health and Safety

Health and Safety meetings are held by-monthly with representatives from relevant departments attending. Several Health and Safety issues are discussed including Health and Safety monitoring, inspections of all departments, risk assessments, first aid training, fire incidents / exercises and accident reports statistics to ensure the establishment meets its necessary legal requirements for the Health and Safety of residents, staff and visitors. Fire evacuation exercises were carried out to the Mother and Baby unit on the 11th August 2015. The main building on the 18th September. Acacia House on the 25th February 2016.

The local Fire Brigade attended Askham Grange on the 11th February to carry out a familiarisation exercise. The Board did have concerns regarding the transfer of responsibilities for the servicing and testing of the fire systems and equipment by the new maintenance provider Amey. However, during this reporting year Amey have completed all the necessary servicing and present reports on the meeting. The Board however still has concerns with other maintenance areas such as P.A.T testing (Portable Appliance Testing) and deep cleaning in the kitchens. In previous reports the Board has reported the necessary upgrade to the fire doors to the main building and money not being made available for this important upgrade. Due to this the item has been removed for discussion at the Health and Safety meetings.

Accidents reported in the accident book from 1st July 2015 to 30th June 2016 were :- Staff 7, Residents 33, children 12 totalling 52 accidents; none of which were serious.

Askham Grange continues to provide good Health and Safety practices with regular inspection, monitoring and reviewing of policies.

Health and Safety Concerns.

- Continue to monitor the necessary maintenance requirements undertaken by Amey.
- Money not being made available for the fire doors upgrade.

4 Statistics

4.1 Board Statistics

Recommended Complement of Board Members	9
Number of Board Members at the start of the reporting period	4
Number of Board Members at the end of the reporting period	6
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	3
Number of members leaving within the reporting period	1
Total number of Board meetings during the reporting period	11
Total number of attendances at meetings other than Board meetings	44
Total number of visits to the prison (including all meetings)	186
Date of Annual Team Performance Review	04-04-2016

4.2 Applications, Receptions, Adjudications and ACCTs

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Total number of written applications received	14	7	14	7
Total number of verbal applications received	8	13	9	11
Total number of receptions	145	150	181	151
Total number of Adjudications	72	80	64	75
Total number of ACCT's opened	6	1	8	3
Total number of request complaints	74	62	62	91
Code	Subject			2015/16
A	Accommodation			0
B	Adjudications			0
C	Equality & Diversity (inc. religion)			0
D	Education/employment/training inc IEP			0
E 1	Family/visits inc mail & phone			2
E 2	Finance/pay			2

F	Food/kitchen related	0
G	Health related	1
H 1	Property (within current establishment)	2
H 2	Property (during transfer/in another establishment)	0
H 3	Canteen, facilities, Catalogue shopping, Argos	1
I	Sentence related (inc. HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-cat etc)	5
J	Staff/prisoner/detainee concerns inc bullying	0
K	Transfers	0
L	Miscellaneous	5
	Total number of IMB applications	18
	Of total: number of IMB Confidential Access was:	0

5 Conclusion

Askham Grange offers an excellent opportunity to women from closed conditions to re-establish themselves in the community. Many of its residents have served lengthy sentences and have become institutionalised, so have to relearn how to take responsibility for themselves and their actions. Despite the uncertainty about its future, and against the odds, it has one of the lowest recidivism rates in the prison service, this success is not happenstance but is due to a dedicated staff team which focuses on all the issues surrounding resettlement including:

- Education
- Physical and mental health
- Accommodation
- Family life
- Employment and training

It is difficult to believe that the ethos and facilities at Askham Grange can be simply lifted and re-sited elsewhere.