



**Annual Report**  
of the  
**Independent Monitoring Board**  
at  
**HMP/YOI Hollesley Bay**

for reporting year

1 January to 31 December 2016

Published

19th June 2017



*Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody*

## **IMB Background**

It is well known to the MoJ that Hollesley Bay IMB has experienced a difficult and disrupted year.

However, thanks to the support of our regional representative on the National Board we were able to obtain the assistance of two experienced IMB members at Highpoint who became 'dual members' and their contribution to our efforts has been invaluable.

## **IMB Performance**

Notwithstanding the issues it faced, the Board has carried out its principal duties in their entirety.

We have maintained the weekly Rota system throughout the year and have met as a Board every month; we have dealt with every prisoner Application and many more random matters they have raised on an ad hoc basis; we have enjoyed excellent relations with the Governor and senior staff at both our monthly and numerous ad hoc meetings; and we have been vigilant in our periodic inspections of the Units, departments, and other parts of the establishment including workshops/training areas and other facilities.

However, because of our depleted numbers and partial inexperience, it is almost impossible to follow precisely the Secretariat's Annual Reporting guidelines and we trust the following concise report, in its brevity, may help readers focus on our more salient points and recommendations.

## **Applications**

Hollesley Bay is unquestionably well-managed and relatively happy for the kind of establishment that it is and consequently we have relatively few Applications.

Many of the Applications relate to Property, in particular property transfers from other prisons. Having thoroughly examined HB's own department in this regard we are largely satisfied that it is our 'donor' prisons at fault as illustrated in a recent example where the Prisons' Ombudsman recommended not only immediate recompense but also that an apology was due to one of our prisoners from his previous establishment.

Alongside Property the most numerous Applications are to do with RoTL. Added to the prescribed regulations concerning RoTL Hollesley Bay has its own issues not least due to its remote position and lack of transport facilities.

Among the many other miscellaneous Applications one of note concerned a prisoner who had to be sent to HMP Chelmsford for a Video-Link, a Cat B establishment, where he had to reside for some weeks before being returned to Hollesley Bay.

Please see **recommendations 1 &2.**

## **Site Issues and Security**

Hollesley Bay is a rambling, rural, Category D complex, an Open prison in every sense. Its buildings, including the central administrative block, all eight prisoner Units, gymnasium, extensive greenhouses, training workshops, faith centre and gardens require constant attention.

Moreover public roads run straight through the property.

Please see **recommendations 3 &4.**

## **Training and Rehabilitation**

Hollesley Bay are fortunate with their extensive outbuildings providing ample space for the many courses that prisoners can take to acquire nationally recognized qualifications. These include basic Multi-skills, painting and decorating, plastering, carpentry, motor mechanics, recycling and commercial cleaning.

There is also an initiative by senior management to secure relationships with businesses in the area, including East of England Co-op and Otley College, as both clients and partners.

Please see **recommendation 5.**

## **Communications**

As a board we find communications within the prison are excellent from the top down.

We frequently discuss matters of concern with the Governors and senior management and find them invariably responsive and helpful.

We are also impressed how knowledgeable and aware Unit officers are about their own inmates be it through general observance or specific intelligence as witnessed in regard to the occasional ACCT's in force, or as in one case this year, a bullying/victim support situation.

## Summary and Recommendations

We hope the foregoing provides a thumb-nail sketch of Hollesley Bay. Despite or perhaps on account of its rural and remote location it is to all close appearances a largely happy and admirable Cat D Open Prison, and a place where prisoners have every opportunity to learn skills of use on release and where the changing seasons have a noticeable effect on all its personnel.

However, there is always scope for improvement and we cite below the most obvious measures that could assist both staff and prisoners to reach higher levels of efficiency and fairness.

1. The Board greatly welcomes the initiative to devolve more autonomy upon the Governor and his senior management team. As a board we consider the Governor and SMT extremely experienced and well-qualified to make decisions outside nationally prescribed regulations, for the general benefit of all concerned; in particular concerning RoTL, but also regarding aspects of management of the prison as suggested in some of our recommendations below..
2. HB currently use the Video-link at Warren Hill next door but this is clearly not always available and it is grossly unfair for D-classed prisoners to be transferred to closed conditions indefinitely simply to access video facilities.
3. HB's extensive buildings require constant maintenance from minor to more significant works. Carillion frequently relegate minor repairs to 'low priority' status which incurs long delays. Some of the prison's inmates are expert at such work, others are learning the skills required on their relevant courses. The Board considers it wasteful and frustrating that these rich resources cannot handle more of the routine maintenance.
4. With no high walls at HB drones are not an issue in the supply of contraband but passing cars run straight through the property and the board considers some form of covert surveillance would both deter drop-offs and supply intelligence on those attempting them.
5. The Board fully supports the Governor and senior staff in their efforts to establish partnerships with local organisations and would, moreover, welcome more productive use of our unique greenhouse facilities for income-earning ventures of a horticultural nature with which some of our members' extensive experience could be of great assistance.

Signed by the Chair: G N Baly

Date: 8th April 2017