Annual Report
of the
Independent Monitoring Board
at
HMP Erlestoke

for reporting year
1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017

Published
July 2017

Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody
HMP Erlestoke,

Westbury Road, Devizes, Wiltshire, SN10 5TU
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:

- 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.
- 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, every part of the prison and also to the prison’s records.

The HMP Erlestoke Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) is currently composed of 8 volunteer members (this number varies throughout the year as people join and leave the Board) and is independent of the Prison Service and the Justice Ministry.

The IMB obtains information from many sources in the prison and this is reflected in this Annual Report:

- Informal face-to-face conversations with prisoners and staff whenever we are in the prison, not necessarily regarding complaints
- Our formal weekly rota visits generate points for our monthly meeting with the Governor (urgent matters are escalated immediately)
- Verbal and written applications made to us by individual prisoners
- Attendance at routine meetings, together with formal and informal briefings by the Governor and members of his management team
- Observation of peoples’ behaviour and the state of the prison
- Attendance at incidents when they occur

**We are the only independent presence in the prison on a day-to-day basis.**
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3) DESCRIPTION OF HMP ERLESTOKE

HMP Erlestoke is an adult male; Category ‘C’, predominately a Rehabilitation, closed programmes prison, built in the grounds of the former Erlestoke Park House. It is the only prison in Wiltshire and is situated in a rural location, some 21 miles from Salisbury, and 44 miles from Bristol and 26 miles from Swindon.

Category C prisoners are those who have neither the intention nor the resources to escape. Categorisation of prisoners is not, of itself, dependent on the prisoner’s offence. Hence even though HMP Erlestoke is a Category C prison, several its prisoners are classified as Indeterminate Sentence Prisoners (ISP), being Life and Indeterminate Public Protection (IPP), the remaining population should be serving not less than 4 years.

There are eight residential units; three are standard units, one of which is used for induction, four are enhanced units and one is dedicated to intervention programmes. The total operational capacity of the prison at the time of reporting is 388 prisoners. At the time of reporting two wings are out of use due to the major incident in June 2016 (see Appendix 1 page 30). However, these two wings are currently being reinstated.

HMP Erlestoke focuses on the intervention programmes to address drug and alcohol issues and prisoner past behaviours. Following successful completion of the programmes it is aimed to return prisoners to their original prison.

HMP Erlestoke continues to uphold a good image in the community and the Governor and his staff keep local residents involved and informed of relevant developments. The Board is pleased to note that the Friends of Erlestoke Prison continue to work with the management team to provide services outside the scope of prison service budgets.
### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Reference Page</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The life in prisons, that the media wish the general population to believe, is not a fair portrayal of all prisons nor is it a fair portrayal of HMP Erlestoke</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>This year</strong></td>
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<td>June 2016 a major incident occurred within HMP Erlestoke, the incident was not a riot and involved very few men, who were responsible for the considerable damage caused.</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>In the reporting year a new Governor, Deputy Governor and many of the Senior Management Team have been appointed implementing many changes to the regime.</td>
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<td>On the 1st April 2016, a new Health Care provider was appointed with a vast improvement in health care throughout the prison.</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>In May 2016 HMP Erlestoke became a smoke free prison.</td>
<td>14, 20</td>
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<td>Equality and Diversity meetings have not occurred during this reporting year, and although the backlog of complaints was entered onto the computer, no further action was taken.</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>There has been some improvement with the service provided by Carillion however replacements and repairs still take far longer than outside of the prison service.</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Issues carried over from last year</strong></td>
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<td>The general upkeep of the estate is poor, with boilers not working leaving wings without hot water or heating. Cells have had to be allocated as a 'shower room' through showers being out of order, and/or floors subsiding due to damp.</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complaints regarding the booking of visits and phones not being answered have continued; the facilities in which the visitor must wait; the area in which the visitor is searched continue to cause concern. The behaviour of a minority of the Visitors in the Visiting Room is unacceptable and firmly needs to be addressed.</td>
<td>24, 27, 31</td>
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Although the provision of movement slips has been discussed and new slips provided, still prisoners are leaving wings and arriving at another area without either the appropriate slip or no movement slip at all.

New Officers have been recruited and a Senior Officer has been appointed as Mentor for these new Officers. Of the 88 Prison Officers at HMP Erlestoke 34 are new and have served less than one year. Lack of experience and confidence is a concern.

Spice continues to cause concern with many prisoners being treated for the side effects, ambulances having to be called and some cases of hospitalisation, which takes Officers away from their duties within the prison.

Tobacco is now being smuggled into the prison and is an additional cause of debt, bullying and assault.

The smuggling of mobile phones especially smart phones into the prison has led to bullying and to some prisoners being in fear of their own safety.

The number of Prisoners who are sentenced to an Indeterminate Sentence for Public Protection (IPP) and are over tariff is still causing concern. As they have no indication as to when they may be released this leads to frustration and poor behaviour.

As reported in the IMB Report of the 2015/2016 the IMB are again unable in this Report to substantiate any of the claims made by the Safer Custody department as there are no figures available to support them.

**Good features**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good features</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The work of all the volunteers who come into the prison on a regular basis.</td>
<td>22, 29</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Listeners Service overseen by the Samaritans is available 24 hours a day to all prisoners.</td>
<td>17, 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Chaplaincy team who cover all the faiths listening, supporting and comforting.</td>
<td>8, 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farms and Gardens, who keep, tend, grow and plant all the flowers on site, together with vegetables for the kitchen and which are for sale in the Farm Shop at the end of the drive.</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Kitchen continues to offer a full and varied diet on a budget of £2.01 per head per day.</td>
<td>24</td>
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5) MANDATORY REPORTING AREAS

5.1 EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

Equality and Inclusion encompasses ethnicity, disability, religion, age and sexual orientation.

Last year the Board reported that there was an unacceptably long delay in the investigation of perceived discriminatory incidents with 33 Discrimination Incident Report Forms (DIRFS) awaiting investigation. This poor situation continued for much of 2016 with less than 20% of the 42 DIRFS being dealt with in the recommended timescale. Furthermore, no regular Equalities meetings were held over the reporting period.

The poor performance has been principally due to staff shortages and lack of any continuity in the team dealing with the issues. Some of the discrimination incidents are complex and staff need appropriate time to follow matters through to a conclusion. There are signs that matters may improve as staffing levels have increased. Quarterly Equalities meetings have been reinstated, and there is a renewed focus on this matter from the Governor and a new deputy governor.

The chaplaincy was subject to a Chaplaincy HQ Assurance and Compliance Check in February 2017 and achieved 100% compliance (the first chaplaincy to achieve full compliance). The evaluation stated “To have achieved 100% compliance with delivering Faith and Pastoral Care not only speaks of a Managing Chaplain and chaplaincy team that is highly performing, but of an establishment committed to providing this care.” Credit was also paid to “the highly supportive Catering Manager”.

Age Profile at Erlestoke at end of April 2017

- 30-39: 34%
- 21-29: 26%
- 40-49: 19%
- 50-59: 15%
- 60-69: 4%
- 70+: 2%

21-29 26%
30-39 34%
40-49 19%
50-59 15%
60-69 4%
70+ 2%
5.2 EDUCATION, LEARNING AND SKILLS

The steady improvement commented on in last year’s report has been maintained. The most recent internal Weston College inspection graded the department ‘borderline good’. Overall retention and success rates in both educational and vocational courses are high: retention is 100%, and success is at 84%. As before, these figures somewhat disguise the fact that attendance is at 76%, so some of the courses are not full. Naturally, the reduction of 130 in the prison population following the ‘incident’ of June 2016, and the stable nature of Erlestoke prison population (which means that many men have done the available courses); meant that there were fewer men available to allocate. The problem area remains the ‘functional skills’ of English and Maths. Here the courses are not full, and the success rate is only 46% (compared with 98% on the other courses). Education managers are having some success in getting the wing staff to cooperate in encouraging the reluctant learners to engage. The outreach work in Maths and English (‘contextualised functional skills’) only restarted in January of this year with the appointment of a ‘generalist’ tutor, and thus it is too early to assess its effectiveness. The ‘Turning Pages’ and ‘Times 2’ schemes are both operational.

The department is now fully staffed, but it has taken a whole year to find tutors for Horticulture and Construction courses. Clearly, the difficulty in recruiting staff continues: in part related to Erlestoke comparatively remote location, in part to the length of time taken by the security clearance process.

The great achievement of the year has been the flourishing of the extension activities which have considerably enhanced the prisoners’ experience. Most notable was the two-week literary festival, ‘Penned Up at Erlestoke’, during which many noted literary figures ran sessions attended by over 300 prisoners. The whole department is to be commended for staging this event, and they have rightly taken great encouragement from the prisoners’ response. In addition, several new courses have been established: Ceramics, Art, Creative Writing, Commercial Writing, and Origami (cards made are sold in the prison shop), Stone carving (in conjunction with Salisbury Cathedral), and a collaboration which has seen prisoners working alongside some criminology students from Bath Spa University. A Professional Cookery course is about to start. The NVQ course in Hotel and Catering in the Kitchen is not running, mainly because the kitchen does not have enough prisoners working there and the staff are having to do some of the cooking with the result that the trained Assessor has no time to supervise and assess.

The Library

The Library continues to play an important role in prison life. About 98% of prisoners join, and almost 300 of them use it weekly. The ‘Story Book Dads’ scheme has developed to include stories read on DVD in addition to CD. ‘Book Packs’ which prisoners can give to their young children at visits are still being requested, and are funded by the ‘Friends’. The ‘Reading Ahead’ 6 book challenge, promoted by Education but facilitated by the Library, has been very successful with 291 prisoners taking up the challenge.
The Gym

The gym and the fitness suite are used by 51% of prisoners. There are 20-30 sessions per week, with dedicated sessions for the over ‘50s. The Erlestoke Volley Ball team won the Wiltshire League Premier Division title in 2016.

The prison has been one Physical Education Instructor (PEI) understaffed for some while, but now has a recruit in training who should be fully qualified by December of this year.

It must be said that the Fitness Suite is in very poor condition. Many of the windows no longer fit their casements and do not close, only some lights work, and the roof continues to leak. Some improvement in this area is badly needed, as is an outdoor all-weather pitch, for which the prison has the perfect site, but not the money!
5.3 HEALTHCARE AND MENTAL HEALTH

On 1st April 2016 Inspire-Better-Health took over the contracts for medical, substance misuse and mental healthcare from The Great Western Hospital Healthcare Trust, RaPT and Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership respectively. The transformation in a comparatively short time from a failing, demoralised service to a service that provides healthcare to a standard at least comparable to that to be found in the community, has been quite remarkable. This has been achieved by a combination of properly targeted resources and strong leadership provided by the new band 8 nurse Head of Healthcare, an impressive and committed individual.

Inspire-Better-Health is a partnership between three main organisations namely Bristol Community Health (lead contractor), Avon and Wiltshire Partnership Mental Health Trust (mental health) and Hanham Health (GP services).

The Healthcare Team now totals 34 individuals which has meant that since December 2016 no agency staff have been employed, providing a measure of consistency of care not previously experienced. Further, sick leave absence has virtually disappeared, in itself a mark of a well-motivated team. The nursing staff complement has increased from 4 at the commencement of the reporting period to 9. In addition, there are 3 healthcare assistants (previously none) with two pharmacy technicians further recent additions. The Integrated Mental Health and Substance Misuse Team consists of ten health professionals led by a band 7 mental health nurse and there is a clinical substance misuse team led by a band 6 nurse.

GP cover is provided by 5 GPs. All GPs are contracted to the service with no recourse to locums, again providing consistency with clinical care.

A Psychiatrist, attends the prison for one monthly session. Although there is value in having the same psychiatrist providing such a facility, nevertheless, bearing in mind the prevalence of mental illness within any prison, half a day once a month might appear less than adequate.

Outside Hospital attendances are a potential problem with escorted visits reduced from 10 to 7 each week. With the restoration of a full establishment, seeing Alfred and Wessex wings again coming on line, it is anticipated that escorted visits will increase to 8. Currently there are approximately 100 outstanding visits with 64 booked in. With so few escorted visits and with those with serious medical issues naturally having to be given priority, there is concern that those with less acute medical problems are likely to be waiting for unacceptably long times for appointments, a situation beyond the control of Healthcare. The problem has been addressed to a limited extent by providing further in-house clinics. These currently consist of Audiology (GP Care), Dentistry (Time for Teeth), Opticians (Homecare Opticians), Podiatry (Bristol Community Health), Ultra Sound (GP Care) and Musculoskeletal Assessment and Treatment Service (MATS) – provides one clinic per month with a consultant physiotherapist, enabling direct referral to secondary care and in-house treatment.
A proactive approach has been taken regarding those on an open ACCT (Assessment Care in Custody Teamwork). Prior to 1st April 2016 there was lack of consistent healthcare input in the ACCT process, as highlighted in the findings of the Prison and Probation Ombudsman mentioned later in this report. Practice has changed so that upon an ACCT being opened (during Healthcare hours) Hotel 1 is bleeped thereby assuring a medical attendance. Thereafter there is a requirement that everyone on an ACCT is engaged by a healthcare professional at least daily, with a chart maintained at healthcare to ensure auditable compliance. Further, a representative from Healthcare will attend each ACCT review (albeit dependent on the prison notifying healthcare of an ACCT review). A death in custody is a tragedy that affects everyone and any initiative that seeks to avoid this terrible event is to be applauded.

An aspirational goal has been the establishment of a drug free wing. An application for Wessex wing in this regard was unsuccessful but a new application is in the course of being submitted in respect of Silbury A, upper. Drug misuse and in particular the misuse of Spice and other synthetic cannabinoids continues to be a blight within the prison, leading to frequent life-threatening emergencies and a constant source of debt, bullying and intimidation, anecdotally leading some prisoners to take refuge in the CSU (Care and Separation Unit). In the 11 months from May 2016 there were 86 code blue medical emergencies and 18 code reds. Most of the code blues were directly related to substance / Spice misuse. Many of these emergencies were life-threatening and it may be only a matter of time before there is a Spice related death. Any initiative that seeks to reduce substance misuse requires very careful consideration. Currently drug misuse engages a disproportionate amount of healthcare resources, threatens good order and discipline within the prison and has the potential to ruin the lives of inmates. However, it appears that many prisoners involved with Spice and potentially wanting help to deal with their problem, avoid contact with the Psychosocial substance misuse team, believing that a self-confessed drug problem will adversely affect parole outcomes. Healthcare completed a two-week Spice forum on 16th May 2016, partly to persuade drug users to seek help with their problem but also to identify how much of a problem Spice represents in Erlestoke and as to what prisoners felt the prison needed to do in order to tackle the problem. Healthcare produced a report of the findings and submitted it to the Substance Misuse Team. In addition, two prisoner peer mentors are in training to support substance misuse initiatives.

During the year Healthcare dealt with 15,869 patient interventions with a total of 1,200 Did Not Attend (DNAs). The figure for attendances in April 2016 at 904 contrasts with the figure for March 2017 at 1593, which in part may indicate both an increased regard for Healthcare services within the prison together with a more proactive approach by the Healthcare team. Healthcare related complaints in the 12-month period have reduced to 103 which figure includes the month of April 2016 where many of the complaints related to the previous regime. Although complaint figures for the previous year are not available, the reduction in complaints is reflected within IMB records which show a total of 32 Healthcare related complaints to the Board in the year 2015/2016 which reduced to 19 in the period 2016/2017.
In January 2017, the Prison and Probation Ombudsman published his report following a self-inflicted death on 13th May 2015. The report found several serious deficiencies in the healthcare provided. Adverse findings included poor management and monitoring of medication, a defective prescribing regime in respect of anti-depressants, inadequate record keeping and failure to provide a mental health review despite the emergence of suicidal thoughts. A further deficiency was the lack of healthcare input at any of the deceased three ACCT case reviews. The findings relating to healthcare reflect the concerns expressed in last year’s Annual Report by the Board in relation to the previous healthcare provider and the appointment of a new healthcare provider has been welcomed.

Work in progress includes the recent introduction of a Health Improvement Group providing a patient forum aimed to give prisoners a voice in relation to the provision of healthcare. Additionally, about to be launched is a health recovery passport. This is a document to be issued to every prisoner, prompting the recipient to record existing physical, emotional and mental health states, set goals, record medication routines and help plan beneficial sleep, exercise and nutritional standards. The day-to-day life of a prisoner is inevitably controlled by the prison where he is an inmate. It will be interesting to see whether giving a prisoner an opportunity to actively participate in his healthcare needs will lead to beneficial outcomes.

Erlestoke is now a smoking free prison. Smoking cessation therapy is led by 4 level 2 trained healthcare staff. A course of nicotine replacement patches is offered with supplementation for break-through nicotine craving, together with 1 to 1 smoking cessation support. The initiatives have limited success with instances of prisoners attempting to smoke their nicotine patches reported.

The sad death of a prisoner from a terminal illness has put palliative care in the spotlight. The clinical review produced as part of the independent investigation into the death, completed by the Prison and Probation Ombudsman praised the work of the healthcare department. However, there are deficiencies within the Southwest region in relation to in-house palliative care for category C prisoners. The nearest prison with a Palliative Care Unit (PICU) is Leyhill in Gloucestershire, a category D prison. In Devon there is Exeter, a category B prison. Erlestoke, a category C prison, does not have a PICU and must rely on the Dorothy House facility in Bath. Nevertheless, arrangements at Erlestoke appear to be as robust as they could be in the circumstances. A multi-disciplinary team including the patient (and his family if willing to participate) produces a care plan, a named nurse and named doctor are appointed and Social Care is involved.

In line with other prisons Erlestoke has an aging prison population. However, the responsibilities of the Prison and Local Authority under the Care Act 2014 are said not to be discharged to an adequate standard with referrals and uptake to Social Care slow. By way of example, several elderly and disabled prisoners have been issued with wheel chairs. However, the issue of only one wheel chair has been approved by Healthcare, the implication being that the remainder of wheel chairs may well not be adequate for the users to whom they have been issued, not having been matched with the prisoner in terms of suitability.

Last year the Board in its Annual Report expressed the hope that this year’s report would prove to be positive. That wish has largely been achieved.
PSYCHOLOGY

Psychology services at Erlestoke remain unconnected to Healthcare but with the demise of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), psychology is now part of the Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS).

At the time of the last report, psychological services in the South West were split into clusters, with Erlestoke housing the East Cluster. Since then clusters have disappeared and the service is managed on a regional basis. The band 9 service lead is based at Leyhill, visiting Erlestoke on average once a week.

The principal work of the registered / chartered psychologists revolves around the preparation of parole reports, each of which take a total of between 4 and 6 working days to produce, albeit that the work is spread over a much longer period. A parole report is given a deadline which on occasions will be extended following a request. For instance, the conclusion of a report may be dependent upon the completion by the instant prisoner of a programme not yet completed. By the time the report has been written a parole hearing date will have been set.

The region is short staffed with several vacancies for psychologists not filled. This has resulted in the continuation of the practice of commissioning outside agencies to undertake parole reports which the permanent staff are unable to produce themselves.

Psychology staff at the prison has increased with the enlistment of 2 new trainees bringing the total trainee figure to 9. The trainees work on average 3 days a week on interventions within the programmes department, acting as facilitators. The Programmes Team, which is part of the prison complement, is supported by the Psychology Service which produces training manuals which are then delivered by the programmes team. The particular programme or programmes that a prisoner will be required to complete is determined by the prisoner’s Offender Supervisor as part of sentence planning.

Parole work dominates the working schedule of the psychologists leaving little if any time for consultancy work. Frustration is expressed over the fact that there is no available time to help develop a rehabilitation culture within the prison. However, were staff shortages addressed, in the short-term this would not create extra opportunities for consultancy work but rather it would reduce the quantity of parole report work sent to outside agencies. In the last year 44 parole reports have been completed for prisoners at Erlestoke and psychologists have attended Parole Board hearings on 45 occasions.
There is a perception that prison procedures hamper the productive work of the psychologists. Heading a list of complaints is the lack of proper information management. Instead of digitalised records, large files of paper records tend to make a stately progress around the prison establishment, with documents on occasions lost or not in the correct place. Further, individuals such as Offender Supervisors and others, themselves struggling with impossible caseloads, have to be continually chased for information and other administrative type requirements hamper the making of assessments. In short, the interface between the prison service and the psychology service could be better managed.
5.4 PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY (INCLUDING WORK)

All prisoners of working age are encouraged and expected to engage with either work and/or education. On arrival at the prison during the induction period they are offered an assessment of their educational and work preferences and needs. This is done by Weston College and the majority of prisoners take up the offer. Failure to do so may result in loss of privileges.

Prisoners over retirement age are able to engage in work or educational activity if they so wish.

Concern was raised in the previous Annual Report about the number of unscheduled lockdowns resulting in loss of work time. Although there are no official figures available it is apparent that this situation has improved and, excepting the time around the prison disturbances in June, there have been no unscheduled lockdowns.

The contract with Speedy Hire, a major employer, was lost during the year. However, Opella, Grip It, and Chamois leather packing continue to employ 57 prisoners and a workshop preparing Pot Pourri is opening shortly.

A particular success is the Julian House Bicycle recycling workshop where over 500 hundred bicycles have been refurbished in the last year. An NVQ is available. This is a popular occupation despite relatively low pay.

Farms and Gardens maintain the estate gardens, and have supplied the Erlestoke Farm Shop with both vegetables and garden furniture made in the workshop. They also supply food for the prison kitchen in season. There is no longer the wastage that previously occurred. Recycling of prison waste is done in this area.

The smooth running of the prison depends on the work of prisoners employed doing a variety jobs in the establishment.

- 30 prisoners are cleaners or painters on their wings.
- 60 prisoners are employed as orderlies with special responsibilities in many departments: e.g. Library, Chapel, Healthcare, Equality and Diversity, Education, and CSU.
- 24 prisoners are mentors in Education and health training (unpaid).
- About 10 prisoners are Listeners, trained by the Samaritans. This is an unpaid commitment, much valued by prisoners in need. The Listeners may be called on at any time of day or night, and they have fortnightly offloading meetings with a counsellor from the charity.

Erlestoke is a designated establishment for intervention courses and prisoners from other areas are transferred to partake in them. They include Self Change programme, Healthy Relations programme, Thinking Skills, Resolve, Alcohol Related Violence and 12 Steps addressing drug dependence.
RESETTLEMENT.

Erlestoke is not a resettlement prison. However, during the last year 80 prisoners have been released following Parole Board hearings. Some of these have been IPP prisoners over tariff. As soon as release has been authorised the resettlement agency ‘Catch 22’ based at HMP Guys Marsh is informed and a member of the agency meets with the prisoner to arrange resettlement issues, accommodation, employment etc. OMU and community probation are also involved.

It is a condition of release that suitable accommodation is arranged.
5.5 OFFENDER MANAGEMENT UNIT (OMU)

A new Head of Offender Management started in February 2017 and is seeking to achieve staffing levels at the previously benchmarked figure of 10 Offender Supervisors (OS). This would give each a caseload of just over 50. This would be as many cases (particularly with many of the high-risk men within those caseloads) that can be reasonably managed by OSs. This would be an improvement on the 7 OSs with caseloads of 70 as reported in the 2015/2016 report.

On the 31st March 2017 HMP Erlestoke held 388 prisoners which included 69 serving Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) sentences and 115 Mandatory Life Sentences. 61 of the IPP prisoners are over tariff between 2 months and 10.5 years. 40 of the Life Sentence prisoners over tariff to a maximum of 31.5 years.

It must be noted that these figures are less than last year as there are currently 130 fewer prisoners in the establishment.

The OMU is addressing the issue of overdue Offender Assessment System (OASys) completions and it is hoped that the inclusion of Probation Officers during the coming year will assist. On that subject, for all but Lifers, there is now no minimum frequency of mandatory review (in the case of Lifers it is at least once every three years). Instead reviews are necessitated by significant changes in circumstances that may impact upon risk. The Offender Supervisors (OSs) are currently going through a process of reviewing their caseloads against the OASys review criteria to identify those in need of a review. Once that is done they will place those reviews in order of priority and we shall implement a plan for achieving completion of those reviews in order of that priority. This is in accordance with the OM mantra of "resources follow risk".

At the time of reporting a reasonable estimate would be around 25 cases where Parole Hearings are overdue.
5.6 SAFER CUSTODY

The Safer Custody department continues to be run by a dedicated team and, although there have been a number of staff changes within the reporting year; this has not affected the standard of work produced by the team.

Monthly Safer Custody meetings are held where interdepartmental support is evident. At each meeting, the Listener Coordinator and Violence Reduction Representative attend the first part to report on issues raised throughout the prison. The safe care of vulnerable and complex issues prisoners is paramount and a weekly Complex Prisoners Meeting is held to identify and address their needs.

Antisocial Social Behaviour (ASB) Forms were introduced during 2015/2016.

The numbers of Antisocial Behaviour Incident Reports (ASBIR) are increasing, IMB are told this is due to better reporting. A Violence Reduction Officer has also been appointed.

Even so, there are continuing reports of loud music being played on the wings, and the trading of Spice and tobacco leading to debt and bullying. The price of one ounce of tobacco has risen to £150 – encouraging smuggling. In some cases, families of prisoners in debt are being targeted to arrange payment outside.

In May 2016 HMP Erlestoke became a non-smoking prison with many ‘Stop Smoking’ events being held throughout the prison in the lead up to the date and beyond. Although the new Health Care Team had only taken up appointment on the 1st April 2016 they immediately swung into action with presentations being held on the wings, and advice on stopping smoking, and nicotine replacement aids. This helped to lessen the effects of giving up for a number of prisoners, some with complex issues who had been smokers for years.

Smart phones smuggled into the prison have enabled users to get information through the internet, and in some cases, this has led to bullying and misinformation about prisoners being circulated. The perpetrators are, when caught, challenged and punished, the victim offered support.

The searching of prison visitors and staff is carried out regularly with contraband being found and the offender(s) charged.

Assessment Care in Custody Teamwork (ACCTs).

The Safer Custody Team endeavour to train as many staff as possible: Anyone who has concerns regarding a prisoner’s welfare may open an ACCT. Closed ACCT’s are, we are told, regularly interdepartmentally reviewed to promote good practice.
There are concerns regarding the number of prisoners on ACCT’s held in Care and Separation Unit (CSU). This is often due to prisoners, transferring from another prison to undertake a course, finding no single cell accommodation. This has caused many issues, and it is hoped that this will improve once the two wings which are being refurbished are back in use. The percentage of ACCT’s opened compared to the incidents of self-harm continues to be high which shows the effectiveness of the ACCT process. ACCT’s opened in the CSU have seen a 25% increase in 2016/17 from the previous year, from 44 to 55. It has not been possible to determine whether this rise is through an increased level of self-harm in CSU or an improvement in the delivery of healthcare that is capturing more offenders at risk.

The level of assaults is contributed to by the fact that HMP Erlestoke holds above the average number of violent prisoners serving long term sentences, and by unsettled prisoners arriving at the prison earlier into their sentence.

Assaults in June and July 2016 we are told were higher than the National Average with Fridays being the worse days. This could be linked to Canteen arriving and debt. Prison officers are aware of this and able to intervene. A Violence Reduction representative attends the Zero Tolerance Meetings to assist with the prevention of bullying and assaults. By August the prison had become more settled due to the loss of 130 prisoners resulting from the major incident which occurred in June.

A Violence Reduction representative attends the Zero Tolerance Meetings to assist with the prevention of bullying and assaults. It would appear that by August the prison had become more settled due to the loss of 130 prisoners resulting from the major incident which occurred in June.

Cell Sharing Risk Assessments (CSRSA) are undertaken and by the end of the reporting year 60 were held to be high risk.

The illegal use of Spice continues with the side effects, in some cases, leading to near death incidents. The IMB has been told that in some cases other prisoners are coming to the aid of those under the influence. The concerns are that it will be only matter of time before there is a death. Health Care is not always notified of such occurrences which they and the IMB are monitoring.

As reported in the IMB Report of the 2015/2016 the IMB are again unable in this Report to substantiate any of the claims made by the Safer Custody department as there are no figures available to support the claims.
Samaritans

The Samaritans provide free phones which are available throughout the prison in addition to their role of overseeing and training the Listener Service.

Citizens Advice Service

The Citizens Advice Service regularly attends the Prison offering advice to all new intakes and serving prisoners. The service offers help with opening bank accounts, family matters, debt and the full range of their expertise.
5.7 CARE & SEPARATION, CLOSE SUPERVISION. (CSU)

The Care and Separation Unit (CSU) has been well supported by experienced staff who are equipped to deal with the most difficult and complex situations involving prisoners. Those housed in CSU continue to be a mix of particularly vulnerable prisoners, often self-referring for their own protection, and those requiring a period of increased discipline to restore good order. The staff have demonstrated that they are able to balance these competing needs and cater for all prisoners in a professional manner.

It is pleasing to report that over the past year there has been significant improvement in the delivery of healthcare to prisoners in CSU. This has included noticeable coverage at weekends and the more regular visits of Mental Health nurses to provide support to those requiring their assistance. The routine attendance of healthcare professionals at reviews is also a noteworthy change for the better.

The number of offenders in the CSU has seen a marginal increase this year, from 202 in 2015/16 to 216 offenders in 2016/17. However, more significant is the increase in Assessment Care in Custody Teamwork (ACCT’s) opened in the CSU which has seen a 25% increase in 2016/17 from the previous year, from 44 to 55. It has not been possible to determine whether this rise is through an increased level of self-harm in CSU or an improvement in the delivery of healthcare that is capturing more offenders at risk.

Improvements to the infrastructure in CSU are a constant battle, but it has been pleasing to see minor works undertaken throughout the year to repair damage that has been caused. A programme of painting in CSU has also improved the general appearance of the facility.

CSU will continue to be a challenging environment; however, the professional competence and dedication of the staff is to be commended.
5.8 RESIDENTIAL SERVICES (INCLUDES ACCOMMODATION, FOOD CATERING AND KITCHENS)

The maintenance services provided by Carillion continue to be unsatisfactory. General maintenance on the wings seems to take an extraordinarily long time and larger jobs seem to take months to be completed. Two new ovens to replace broken ones were uninstalled for nearly eleven months, during which time another oven broke down, and eleven showers in Kennett are still not fixed which were reported in last year’s report. New boilers are required in both the Administration block and Sarum to provide heating and hot water. These issues have been raised with the Governor on a number of occasions. It appears that there is a prioritisation of works and the IMB have been informed that showers and boilers will be part of a wider business case in 2017/2018.

Following a serious incident in June 2016, Alfred and Wessex wings had to be closed until repairs and refurbishments were carried out. This reduced the number of prisoners in Erlestoke. The works began in January 2017 and are due to finish in May 2017.

Missing property issues have significantly improved since last year’s report with applications relating to property dropping by over 50%. However, compensation paid to prisoners for the loss or damage to property came to £6229.54 for the year April 2016 to March 2017.

As reported in the last two years reports, the waiting area for visitors and the search cabin continue to be unacceptable. Visitors are required to wait in a bus shelter in all weathers which is having a detrimental effect on both visitors and prisoners as some friends and family are now choosing not to visit in inclement weather. The search cabin has still not been refurbished despite management assuring the Board last year that a number of changes would be made.

The successful NVQ in catering qualification which has been run in the Kitchens has stopped due to the lack of funds and staff; this is unfortunate as this qualification enabled, upon release, prisoners to gain jobs in canteens etc.

It will be noted that the number of complaints about food received by the IMB during 2016/2017 is zero compared with seven in the previous reporting year. This is due to the Kitchens printing on the back of the menu forms places for comments on the food. These replies are looked at monthly with both kitchen managers and prisoner wing representatives.
CHAPLAINCY

There is a full complement of chaplains representing the faith needs of the population, and demonstrating mutual respect and appreciation of each other’s gifts, talents and faith traditions. A Rastafarian chaplain has been identified and is undergoing clearance. Prisoners are enabled to attend the main religious observances each week.

The Imam publishes each month a list of the upcoming festivals so that all departments and prisoners are aware, and this enables the Head of Catering to encourage volunteers from the relevant faith tradition to help prepare festival foods.

For the Christmas period the Chaplaincy Team facilitated the Prison Fellowship Angel Tree project enabling prisoners to apply to send a Christmas present to their children.

The last report highlighted the difficulty experienced by prisoners seeking to attend chaplaincy activities on a Friday afternoon. This situation has improved considerably and has been monitored. While it is a situation that needs continued monitoring, the improvement is such that it needs not to be a Recommendation.

The Governor, with the assistance of the Managing Chaplain, organised a ‘Thank you’ to all volunteers, including chaplaincy volunteers, within the establishment to ensure that they are aware of their value. The new Quaker chaplain was hugely encouraged by this recognition.

The chapel and the multi-faith room are well presented and versatile. There is also a sensory garden next to the chapel which was enabled by funding from the very active Friends of Erlestoke. The Friends of Erlestoke are also providing funding to provide a cover to a small seated area. There is also a well-established system enabling prisoners to apply to be married. There have been four weddings since the last report.

The duty chaplain visits CSU each day.

The Chaplains are informed immediately when a prisoner is near to death or has died, so that they are able to support the dying prisoner, relatives, other prisoners and staff. Chaplains are informed that verification of the death is underway to give them time to make space for breaking the news, should the news prove to be correct. Chaplains would always break the news.
### THE WORK OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOARD STATISTICS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recommended Complement of Board Members</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of new members joining within the reporting period</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of members leaving within reporting period</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total number of Board meetings during reporting period</td>
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## APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY THE BOARD

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Accommodation</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Adjudications</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Equality &amp; Diversity (inc religion)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Education/employment/training inc IEP</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E 1</td>
<td>Family/visits inc mail &amp; phone</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>E 2</td>
<td>Finance/pay</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Food/kitchen related</td>
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<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Health related</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H 1</td>
<td>Property (within current establishment)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H 2</td>
<td>Property (during transfer/in another establishment)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H 3</td>
<td>Canteen, facilities, Catalogue shopping</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Sentence related (inc. HDC, parole, release dates, re-cat etc.)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Staff/prisoner/detainee concerns inc bullying</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Transfers</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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<td><strong>177</strong></td>
<td><strong>115</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Prison Population</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>530</strong></td>
<td><strong>388</strong></td>
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Note: Fewer Applications in the reporting year due to there being 134 fewer prisoners
FRIENDS OF ERLESTOKE

The prison continues to be supported by the Friends of Erlestoke Prison, which has been a registered charity since 2011. The Friends raise funds to support projects and activities, which are outside the scope of the prison service budgets, but that help prisoners and their families. They continue to invest in their transport scheme, which is growing in popularity. They now have a part-time co-coordinator who manages the scheme and 30 volunteers who use their own cars to provide lifts from Westbury station to the prison on visit days. During the past year they undertook 469 journeys, carrying 545 passengers 146 of whom were children under 12 years. They also campaigned relentlessly to open the portacabin by the main gate for use by visitors in bad weather or when the Visitor Centre was closed.

During this reporting period, the Friends have provided weekly Yoga and Tai Chi classes and have recently introduced a Friday morning art session. They also supported the Health Trainers programme by funding the certification and verification costs to enable participants to gain a recognised qualification at the end of the course.

The Concord Prison Trust "Person to Person" course was introduced into the prison this year, which helps participants to develop communication skills and improve the quality of their relationships with family and colleagues. The Friends match funded the pilot course with the Concord Prison Trust; and will support a further course later this year.

The Friends are embarking on an ambitious project for the future to raise funds for an all-weather sports pitch in the prison. It will be a costly project, but their aim is to greatly enhance the well-being of prisoners and staff by giving them access to an outdoor exercise facility.
In June 2016, a major incident occurred the consequence of which lead to 130 prisoners being transferred to other prisons around the country and two wings put out of action.

The IMB have heard that some B category prisoners were incorrectly categorised as C category prisoners and should therefore not have been sent to HMP Erlestoke. This contributed to the incident.

The repair to the wings will cost approximately £800,000.00 and will not be ready to receive inmates until April and May 2017.

During the refurbishment of the two wings significantly more secure cell doors and hinges, standardised observation panels are being fitted at cost of approximately £300,000.00. These doors will ensure that prisoners will not be able to break though as happened in June.

Following the incident, a comprehensive investigation was carried out externally, a report produced and recommendations made:

- **Staffing**
  
  The report highlighted the dedication of a number of Prison Officers arising from the incident.

  Prior to the incident there was a high turnover of staff leading to a shortage of officers, this led to more ‘lock downs’ and contributed to the incident.

  Since the incident the prison has been able to advertise and employ new Prison Officers, and at the time of reporting the prison is close to having the full complement of Prison Officers. However Operational Support Grades (OSG) have been more difficult to replace as the starting salary is some £5000.00 less other grades. Although the salary for Prison Officers was raised in February 2017 OSG money stayed the same; it is important to remember the strategic part the OSG’s play within the prison.

  New procedures have been put into place to ensure that, should a significant incident occur, sufficient Control, Restraint staff and Managers are automatically called to ensure all relevant issues are managed and the incident under control quickly.

- **Mobile phones**
  
  The use of smart phones smuggled into the prison enabled prisoners to communicate during incidents. Time has now been detailed for regular and intelligence searching of all staff, non-operational staff and visitors coming into and out of the prison. Out of hours cell searching has led to a high number of finds.
• **Visits**
  
The booking of prison visits was raised in the independent report, noting the difficulty that family and friends of prisoners are experiencing in being able to book a visit, with phones not being answered and the online booking system showing that no places are available.
  
The waiting area at the gate is open to the elements so unsuitable for the elderly, infirm, babies and small children.
  
The IMB have been monitoring and reporting on the problems with visits for some years and have been told that a full visits review is to take place. As yet visitors and the IMB are seeing no changes in the visit experience.

• **CSU**
  
The Care and Separation Unit (CSU) being regularly full was raised in the report, and a review of CSU policies and procedures was recommended.
  
Although the prison endeavours to keep spaces many held in CSU in recent months have been there due to their failure to comply with the regime or follow rules. Monitoring of those in CSU will continue to ensure that all prisoners segregated are appropriately in the CSU.