



Annual Report
of the
Independent Monitoring Board
at

HMP Pentonville

for reporting year
April 2016 – March 2017

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Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody

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A Sections 1 – 3

1 STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB

The Prison Act 1952 requires every prison to be monitored by an independent Board appointed by the Secretary of State from members of the community in which the prison 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.

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction to the report

This report presents the findings of the IMB at HMP Pentonville for the period 1/4/2016 to 31/3/2017. IMB members visit Pentonville every week of the year, for several days each week, including monitoring serious incidents. The information in this report comes from rota visits, conversations with prisoners and staff, IMB applications, and meetings with the Governor and his staff.

A homicide occurred on the afternoon of 18 October. Staff were faced with one of the toughest tests of their careers, and responded valiantly. Many worked through the night, and some received commendations. We wish to add our tribute here to their courage and professionalism.

Main judgements

Are prisoners treated fairly?

The Board believes that prisoners are generally treated fairly except that more must be done to:

- address Young Adults' (YAs) offending behaviour while at Pentonville – waiting until they are sentenced and transferred to Young Offender Institutions (YOIs) denies these 18,19 and 20 year olds the chance to make changes to their lives from the start of their time in custody (see page 9)
- expedite the transfer of prisoners who have committed serious offences to prisons where they can undertake the courses they must complete before they can be considered for parole (see page 20)
- improve the work and education opportunities available to the Vulnerable Prisoners; many are bored and idle but keen to get involved (see pages 11,18,19)

Are prisoners treated humanely?

The Board believes that aspects of the physical environment of Pentonville are inhumane, namely:

- the size and condition of many cells, the majority of which are shared by two men (see page 14)
- Carillion's failure to repair the fabric of the prison in a timely fashion has left prisoners without showers, clean clothes and hot food (see pages 10, 14)
- until all 700 cell windows are replaced, contraband received by drone or thrown over the wall will continue to put staff and prisoners' safety at risk (see page 10)
- that the seriously mentally ill are held in prison rather than hospital (see page 17)

Are prisoners prepared well for their release?

The Board believes that preparation has improved but that more needs to be done, namely:

- there must be sufficient staff to allow for a predictable regime so prisoners can regularly attend education and work (see pages 15,18)
- links with external employers must now be translated into real employment and training opportunities (see page 19)
- the Carpentry workshop must reopen quickly (it has been closed since February); Carillion must fix the floor as a matter of urgency(see page 19)
- there is little evidence of the effectiveness of through the gate provision for recovering addicts i.e. how well linked up the prison and external agencies are (see page 17)

Safety is paramount

Neither the Prisons Act nor the Ministry of Justice ask the IMB to make a judgement about safety.

In Pentonville there have been 6 deaths in custody this year: a homicide, three apparently self-inflicted and two from natural causes. The Coroner and the Prison and Probation Ombudsman have repeated critical recommendations; including the time taken to answer cell bells; and the thoroughness of risk assessments on arrival at prison.

Implementing these recommendations is not negotiable. But expectations need to be backed up with resources. Pentonville needs more prison officers on the landings and more nurses with the right expertise to assess risk.

Last year we drew attention to the risk to safety from dilapidated windows. The National Offender Management Service investigation immediately after the homicide in October recommended that “The replacement of the existing cell windows at HMP Pentonville with sealed windows should be completed as soon as possible.”

Less than a month later two prisoners escaped through a cell window.

Until all the windows are replaced contraband received by drone or from throw-overs will continue to put the safety of staff and prisoners at risk. If cells cannot contain prisoners, then the safety of the public is also at risk.

Main Areas for Development

TO THE MINISTER

The Carillion contract is not working for Pentonville or the taxpayer. How will the Ministry of Justice and the Prison Service ensure that Pentonville gets prompt maintenance and works services which are essential for the basics of decency? (pages 10,11,14,18,19)

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

Will the Prison Service commit to reduce Pentonville’s overcrowding? (page 14)

Will the Prison Service remedy the current squalid conditions in cells? (page 14)

Will the Prison Service provide assurance that the patrol dogs stationed at Pentonville are permanent? (page 10)

What is the Prison Estate Transformation programme doing to provide sufficient places on behavioural programmes for prisoners who have committed serious offences and, in particular, to remedy the injustice to those Imprisoned for Public Protection who are beyond tariff ? (page 21)

Over a thousand visitors a year are refused entry for failing to meet the ID requirements of the prison as a result of misleading guidance given by the telephone booking service. What steps will the Prison Service take to ensure the telephone booking service stops misleading callers and refers them to the Pentonville prison website instead? (page 11)

Transfer of prisoners' property from other establishments is slow or never happens. Will the Prison Service address the problem urgently and put in place a system which reunites the prisoner swiftly with the possessions he is allowed to keep? (pages 12,16)

Is the Prison Service satisfied that the needs of YAs are being properly met at Pentonville? Can a cap be set to keep numbers of YAs at a manageable level? (page 9)

Will the Prison Service ensure that smoking cessation products are freely available to prisoners and that they are encouraged to use them? (page 15)

TO THE GOVERNOR

Will the Governor consider funding dedicated officers to provide more support to Young Adults held at Pentonville? (page 9)

Will the Governor enable more individual learning and group education opportunities for the Vulnerable Prisoner population? (pages 11,18,19)

Will the Governor ensure that the Safer Custody team is adequately staffed to properly attend to prisoner safety and hold regular review meetings? (page 8)

Will the Governor ensure that there are trained Listeners available on every wing and adequate numbers of working Samaritans phones? (pages 8,13)

Improvements

There have been many improvements this year which are described in detail in this report. The Governor's focus on cleanliness and hope has discernibly raised standards in communal areas and a beautiful garden and pond have been built by Daycare.

Safety was reviewed with sharp focus after the autumn's events. Notable examples included: dogs being reinstated, and being used as part of the prison's drug and violence reduction strategy; new airport style metal detection portals and caged gates enable staff to manage prisoner movement more securely; all uniformed staff are required to wear Body Worn Video Cameras to record the incidents they attend; new CCTV has been installed on the wings as well as around the perimeter walls (the latter monitored by Islington Council); and improved security to exercise yards to prevent throw-overs.

Approximately a quarter of cell windows have been replaced, including in the Segregation Unit. The Unit has continued to run a progressive regime this year – a reflection of the work of the Segregation Unit's Governor and his experienced staff.

The number of paid employment and education spaces has increased by approximately 200 to 900, notwithstanding the Education department being short staffed for part of the year. Pleasingly, many more visits to the Library have been recorded. However, there is still plenty of room for improvement for both.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

Her Majesty's Prison Pentonville on Caledonian Road in inner North London is a Category B local prison primarily serving the Magistrates' and Crown Courts in north and east London. The four cell blocks remain much as they were when the prison was opened in 1842 though cells originally intended for one prisoner now overwhelmingly hold two.

Pentonville holds Category B and C adults and, since November 2013, Young Adult males (YAs) between the ages of 18 and 20. Almost half of the adults held are on remand. Most of the others are either prisoners serving short terms, those recently convicted but still awaiting sentence, or those sentenced to longer terms and awaiting transfer to other establishments. At the end of the reporting year approximately 20 Foreign Nationals were held as detainees beyond the end of their sentence at the request of the Home Office. Most of the YAs are on remand and once sentenced they are transferred to other prisons. Almost 70% of prisoners are held for three months or less and very few for more than twelve months. The high turnover has major implications for assessment, education and treatment programmes.

In Pentonville the Certified Normal Accommodation is 909 prisoners. During the first half of the year the population figure was around 1,290. After the homicide in October the Operational Capacity, the maximum number of prisoners it can hold without serious risk to safety, security, good order and the proper running of the planned regime, was reduced from 1,320 to 1,270. The population over the last quarter was around 1,250. The number of YAs was between 71-79 each week.

Providers

Maintenance - Carillion

Education – Novus (Manchester College)

Escort contractor – Serco

Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) – Penrose (subcontracted by MTCNovo via the London CRC)

Healthcare and Pharmacy – Care UK

Mental Health - Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health Trust NHS coordinates the work of Care UK primary mental health nurses with its own secondary mental health, inpatient and day care services.

Substance Misuse Programme – Phoenix Futures

Gym qualifications - Active IQ

Voluntary organisations

St Mungo's - housing resettlement

Catch 22 – gang violence reduction

Spurgeons - Visitors' Centre

Evidence sections 4 – 11

3 SAFETY

The Reception/First Night process is adequate, with important input and support from Insiders, amongst others. However, the Board is aware of new arrivals regularly not housed on the Induction wing due to space constraints, meaning:

- It is not so easy for staff to identify them (particularly important if prisoners are struggling to cope)
- They may not be collected for Induction in the following days, or at all, thus meaning they miss out on this valuable introduction to prison life.

For 11 of the last 12 months the proportion of prisoners failing the Mandatory Drugs Test (MDT) has been higher than the Government's target that there should be no more than than 12% of men with evidence of drugs in their system. In December 2016 the number was almost twice that target. In 2015-16 only 3 months were worse than target, with 9 months better than target. Due to the poor state of the majority of windows, the volume of throw-overs from the local roads, and some alleged staff corruption, there is undoubtedly a considerable drug problem which puts staff and prisoners at risk from violence associated with unpredictable behaviour caused by reactions to drugs, and bullying over debts.

Following the escape in November 2016, security patrol dogs were regularly deployed in the prison. They are a regular feature patrolling the perimeter, assisting the movement of recalcitrant prisoners and in breaking up fights. These are in addition to the specially trained dogs who detect concealed drugs on prisoners or in packages and assist in the conducting random searches of staff and visitors.

There have been six deaths in custody this year - three self-inflicted, two of natural causes and one homicide – compared to four in 2015-16. The investigating coroner has issued three Prevention of Future Death reports in the last year relating to deaths in custody which occurred between November 2015 and June 2016.

The coroner recorded that the following issues were of particular concern:

- Person Escort Records (PER) not accompanying the prisoner. Nevertheless PERs are still not always available during the initial reception screening.
- Staff (both nursing and prison officers) not being aware of the difference between a Code Red and Code Blue emergency. As a result of action taken, the Board believes that there is now awareness of the distinction. No relevant incidents have occurred to our knowledge since June 2016.
- First night healthcare screening interviews need to be more coordinated and probing. Training and system improvements are ongoing. Disciplinary action has been taken against nurses.

Recorded self-harming incidents increased this year, from 352 to 483. The population continues to be amongst the most challenging in the country. HMIP's 2017 report records that at this 'immensely challenging' prison, one in five men was taking anti-psychotic drugs and in 2016, 111 patients had been transferred or listed for transfer to a secure mental health unit – the largest number of psychiatric transfers the inspectorate had ever come across. Often the same prisoner is responsible for multiple acts of self-harm.

Preventative measures:

- Variety of in-cell 'distractions' with which a prisoner can be issued (wind-up radio, television, playing cards and drawing materials);
- Samaritan-trained Listeners available on all wings (but in limited supply on some);
- In-Reach mental health team;
- Occupational Therapists in Daycare;
- Samaritan phones – not always working on the wings, and the mobile phones with reportedly poor reception

- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons expects cell bells to be answered within 5 minutes. The Governor recently issued reminders to all uniform and civilian staff on the wings on this matter. All officers are now issued with body worn video cameras and should turn them on when attending to cell bells.

The quality of Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) documentation remains patchy. To address this the following actions have been taken:

- Regular sampling by the Safer Custody team checks for good practice;
- A new Senior Officer with particular responsibility for ACCTs will take up post in June 2017.
- A full Safer Custody audit by the Ministry of Justice took place in late April. High numbers of ACCTs (824 in the reporting year) are necessary because of the troubled population, and these are administratively burdensome for staff. However, it is hoped that lessons from the HMIP report and this audit will be disseminated promptly and be useful to staff with responsibility for ACCTs.

The Safer Custody team developed strategies this year to try to reduce violence, including a team of Peer Mediator prisoners whose remit is to aid the resolution of relatively low level disputes eg. between cell mates, and to assist new arrivals in Reception. This mediation scheme is unique to Pentonville and is evidence of a creative, proactive approach, using prisoners as a resource. Pairs of trained prisoners help others in difficult situations. Anecdotal evidence gathered by the IMB suggests that the scheme is having some success but it is too early to judge.

The recent introduction of a team from the 'gang advisers' Catch 22 helps identify allegiances, advise the prison on managing them and counsel members with a view to helping them leave. Once they are more established, they hope to employ Peer Mediators to assist their intervention work, and to offer conflict resolution between gang affiliated prisoners. This is perhaps particularly relevant to YAs.

Violence Reduction Boards appear to have mixed outcomes in terms of helping change the behaviour of the most challenging prisoners because many of these prisoners require more attention than the prison can facilitate. The prison's Enhanced Support Service (ESS) also works with approximately a dozen of the most disruptive prisoners.

Young Adults in Pentonville are adrift in an adult prison which has made no specific provision for them. None of the 86 in residence attended the last workshop organised for them in October 2016 in part, the Board believes, due to the fact that they lack the maturity to see the benefits, socially or otherwise, of coming together. If a member of staff had particular responsibility for engaging with them, perhaps more might attend.

An average of 15 Young Adults a month (over 9 months) were perpetrators in a violent incident. It is hoped that Catch 22 and other groups can make some inroads into the mindset of this complex population. After the homicide and escapes the Governor ordered all convicted YAs to be transferred, including those facing further charges. Of the 69 held in Pentonville at this time 18 had been sentenced.

Assaults on staff are recorded on average 10 times per month. In December 2016, 19 were recorded, perhaps due to the stress of Christmas and New Year as well as additional time spent locked up over bank holidays. Two female officers were sexually assaulted in two separate incidents in February 2017. The prison is proactive in trying to get the police more involved in bringing prosecutions in respect of the most serious offences. Wings can be very volatile places, notwithstanding all the interventions and monitoring described in this section.

Improvements in safety and security

- Planned re-rolling of staffing to create a group which will provide greater continuity of care for prisoners in their early days.
- New prisoners will be located in the smallest wing.
- An increase in the quality and volume of Intelligence Reports in recent months.
- Changes made to the Security Team to provide greater capacity.
- Metal detection portals installed at wing gates, for use at free flow times, or when prisoners go out to exercise.
- New procedure for searching and responses to ‘throw overs’ to reduce risk of contraband trafficked into the prison
- Netting repaired or replaced and higher vertical barriers round exercise yards
- 24 hour patrol dog cover
- Improvements to CCTV inside and outside
- Anti-drone technology
- Body worn video cameras are being used increasingly, including to monitor activity in the Segregation Unit and Special Accommodation cells where some prisoners have complained about the way they are treated.

181 out of the most dilapidated windows have been replaced. Approximately 520 remain. The National Offender Management Service investigation into the events leading up to the homicide recommended amongst other matters “The replacement of the existing cell windows at HMP Pentonville with sealed window units should be completed as soon as possible.” Until all the windows are replaced, drones and drops of contraband will continue to put the safety of staff and prisoners at risk.

4 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS

Rota reports indicate that prisoners in the VPU are frequently appreciative of the way that the staff treat them.

Less satisfactory:

- Periods during which a large overflow of prisoners was held on other landings. In December the overflow was around 20 on top of the usual population of around 40. Staff were stretched to give individual prisoners time for their concerns. Association periods were crowded and telephone queues were long. In March the overflow was around 3.
- Opportunities for work or education remain limited because of the need to keep VPU prisoners separate.
- Restricted access to the library, including the ability to use the Virtual Campus, or be trained as mentors for the prison literacy scheme which would enable them to help other prisoners on their wing.

The following visits arrangements are satisfactory:

- Very helpful staff and volunteers.
- Bright and clean hall with prisoners' paintings on the walls.
- Large well-equipped and professionally staffed children's play area for children aged 2 – 15.
- An increase in the number of interactive family days organised by various charities helping children and families affected by imprisonment. The number of sessions has increased from 18 last year to 35 in 2017.
- Efficient online booking service used by most visitors. Queries answered promptly and visits confirmed by email within 24 hours.

Less satisfactory are the logistics:

- Telephone booking service not as efficient as online service. Last year the average wait time to the national call centre was 7 minutes; this year it was 12 – 15 minutes. Several callers had to wait 45 minutes or more. Some call handlers misinform callers that a photo ID is not necessary if a birth/marriage certificate can be produced. As a result as many as 20 visitors are turned away each week for not having a suitable photo ID. More seriously, when booking a visit, call handlers do not always check if the prisoner is subject to any visit restrictions. This has resulted in children being booked to visit convicted child offenders or victims their aggressors.
- Prisoners and visitors are frustrated when the prisoner is waiting in the visits hall but is mistakenly reported as absent resulting in the visit being delayed or cancelled altogether. This happens about 20 times a week and happens when a prisoner, for one reason or another, fails to make his way to the visits hall on time and is reported as a "no show". When he arrives, there is a delay or failure in reporting his arrival.

Induction is broadly good with one caveat. Sessions are held every day except Sunday, are informative and well presented, using both officers and Insiders. However, allowance or consideration for prisoners who have little understanding of English appears inconsistent.

The Chaplaincy service is excellent:

Faith	% of prison population	Prayer attendance
Christians mainly C of E & RC	50	200 - Sunday
Muslim	33	230 - Friday

- The needs of all other minority faiths are met by a team of sessional chaplains and volunteers.
- Chaplaincy offers a number of faith based courses as well as four victim awareness courses throughout the year. All are well attended.
- As well as the pastoral support and counselling offered by the chaplains to anyone requesting it, there is also an in-depth one to one counselling service for prisoners in need. This is from a professional counsellor who comes in twice a week.
- Chaplaincy runs an Official Prison Visitors (OPV) scheme of volunteers visiting prisoners who are in need or would benefit from outside social contact. Five volunteers regularly come in and spend time with prisoners.

The downward trend in the number of complaints which started in January 2015 continued through this year.

- Complaints dealt with more quickly with 93% of the 213 complaints received in February 2017 getting a reply within 5 days.
- Fewer follow-up complaints perhaps indicating greater trust in the system.
- Monthly reporting of complaints data to Senior Management draws attention to which units are not responding quickly.
- Most complaints relate to property, visits and the Offender Management Unit
- Peaks in the numbers of complaints following incidents last year but otherwise no obvious trends in subjects or timings.

The Segregation Unit is generally satisfactory.

- The Segregation Unit provides a restricted regime for prisoners otherwise kept in solitary confinement, either as punishment for infringing prison rules, awaiting adjudication for more serious infringements, often assault, or to maintain Good Order or Discipline (GOoD).
- A progression regime –‘traffic lights’- has been introduced. Because of the limited time many prisoners spend in segregation, many remain on the lowest level.
- The Unit is often full to capacity. Space is limited because of damaged cells being out of action.
- From time to time the presence of disruptive prisoners can affect what is otherwise a calm and stable atmosphere. Difficult behaviour is generally handled well by an experienced, hand-picked staff.
- GOoD reviews are well-attended by staff and health professionals, and it is usual for the prisoner to be present. The prisoners are shown respect during the reviews, and efforts are made to put them at ease. The prisoner’s mental well-being is discussed and the aim is to move them to normal location whenever possible. When IMB members have concerns, they feel able to raise the issue with the relevant Governor present. Decisions taken by the Governor are well supported and the outcome is communicated effectively to the prisoner. Interpreters are used when required.
- Lengthy detention on GOoD is exceedingly rare.
- Dirty protests have been handled by officers appropriately, with regard to the individual involved and their particular circumstances.
- In the majority of cases, the IMB is informed promptly of a prisoner being moved to special accommodation. Use of special accommodation is for appropriately short periods of time. On two reported occasions, prisoners were detained in special accommodation for lengthier periods, for approximately 28 hours, both times as a result of a dirty protest. In view of the circumstances, the IMB considered this was appropriate.
- The IMB has adequate access to speak to prisoners. However, talking through cell doors does restrict meaningful conversations with prisoners.
- Few complaints were made about staff in the unit. A complaint of assault in special accommodation was investigated by the Deputy Governor of another prison. No wrongdoing was found. Recommendations were made about body worn video cameras, the use of restraint and the use of special accommodation.

Less satisfactory:

- Paperwork for prisoners on ACCTs was not always fully and expeditiously completed.
- When asked by the IMB, prisoners usually knew why they had been detained.
- There were no Listeners on the wing. Finding them from other wings was not usually a problem.
- Sometimes insufficient radios were available to replace those that were broken. In segregation a radio is very important.
- Solicitors noted the lack of suitable private space for consultation with prisoners.

6 ACCOMMODATION AND COMMUNICATION

Confining two men in a cell measuring 12 feet by 8 feet is not humane treatment. One has to eat his meal in the cell while the other may be sitting on a badly screened toilet a few feet away.

Pentonville's Victorian drainage is not decent:

- Sewage contractors were called out several times in the autumn to deal with drains under 3 wings.
- Raw sewage flowed between the basements of E and F wings.
- Blocked toilets in cells frequently meant moving prisoners – if space was available.

Prisoners need showers as a basic facility to help them feel decent. In Pentonville showers are often out of action:

- C&D wing showers were out of action for months - a 3 week project which has taken 6 months so far. (October)
- In November E & F wing showers had been running cold for 3 weeks
- At the end of March, only 3 showers on E wing were working properly
- There was no hot water on F wing in February and March.

Prisoners' meals are basic to a decent regime. But the kitchen has not been fully operational since last summer:

- 2 boilers were out of order in August
- The fire alarm shut off the gas supply in August. This meant no hot meal on a Sunday.
- Gas supply was out in September
- Equipment was not working in October
- Only 2 *Bratt* pans (for preparing hot food) were working in November and in January
- Electricity supply was out in January
- 4 hot trollies, to carry food to wing serveries, were out of action in February and March.
- Prisoners had no hot meals for 4 days in one week in March.

Carillion is responsible for most maintenance and works in Pentonville. In August 2016 the Board wrote about "... the complete lack of responsiveness by Carillion even when confronted with urgent situations." In March 2017 Carillion was running a 6-month, and cumulative, backlog of jobs required by Pentonville.

The Carillion contract is not working for Pentonville.

Among the backlog is a risk to the safety of prisoners in one part of the prison, identified by the Board in August and still waiting for action.

In respect of YAs, there is no budget to provide them with enhanced nutritional meals to reflect their needs as growing young men - many complain of feeling hungry much of the time. YAs and adult prisoners who earn money from prison work or education, or have families or friends on the outside to send in money, regularly supplement prison meals with food purchased from the Canteen shop - but not everyone has these options. Many prisoners report that they eat their breakfast packs (delivered with their evening meal) well before morning to stave off hunger.

On 30 December the Crown Premises Inspection Group (CPIG) issued enforcement notices against the Governor and Carillion because of a cell fire on one wing where the smoke detection system did not work. Two prisoners went to hospital and four staff members were sick from smoke inhalation. CPIG said this could have been avoided if Carillion had properly maintained the equipment. At briefings in March, staff were reminded of fire safety including reporting broken equipment, knowing fire evacuation procedures and understanding how to use equipment. This led to checks at prisons across London identifying the need for remedial action.

Improvements in decency

- Much cleaner prison, helped by The Grime Busters and more waste bins including new recycling bins on landings;
- Privacy screens for toilets ordered for four wings.
- Brighter décor throughout the prison and an appealing family visits area
- Much clearer signage around the prison
- A garden and pond outside Healthcare
- More reliable supply of kit than last year, with one-for-one exchanges and first night packs. Still occasional problems with supplies from the Prison Service National Distribution Centre at Branston.
- 200 kettles purchased direct when supplies faltered.
- 15 new washers and 15 new dryers.
- “Healthy options” were added to the food menu in the autumn. Salads were welcomed, but the portions were too small. The baguettes did not have enough filling. The kitchen manager is consulting the Prison Council to devise new menus and the Governor is increasing the food budget.
- Evening association and gym time introduced for enhanced prisoners

Progress towards a smoke-free prison is unsatisfactory. Pentonville is probably 75% smokers: 25% non-smokers. Healthcare is smoke-free. One wing was designated ‘smoke-free’ a year ago but smokers are sometimes placed on the wing on first night due to cell shortages. These prisoners cannot buy tobacco so have to move. Planned re-rolling of first night staff and accommodation should improve allocation. Smoking cessation products and classes provided by Care UK are not free, by contrast with pharmacy and NHS services for the public. The Prison Service needs to urgently sort out how incentives should work and be funded.

Communication

For much of the year the prison operated a Temporary Regime with a Prisoner Information Notice (PIN) issued to all cells on Sunday night. After the homicide, prisoners were locked up for 4 days; a PIN was issued every day for a week to let them know what was happening. After the double escape in November it was a 5-day lockdown.

Temporary regimes in routine weeks cause frustration and a sense of unfairness. Sometimes prisoners complain that they return from work and are told it is too late for a shower. This can be about staff shortage. Sometimes it seems to be about staff who lack the experience and confidence to deal with the situation flexibly and patiently.

Prisoner applications to the IMB are often not complaints but concerns of prisoners who want help, advice or confirmation that something is going to happen. They should be talking to staff, not the IMB. For some staff this needs a change of mind-set if it does not come naturally to them because of the pressures of the job.

A programme of *5 Minute Intervention* training which is underway may help some staff. Its purpose is to provide staff with training to assist them to live up to the mission set out for Pentonville by the Governor: *Providing Hope and Delivering Opportunity*, with the strong focus on being positive, helpful and professional at all times.

Prisoners' property accounts for 28% of complaints to the IMB.

- Property and parcels are hard to trace.
- Transfer of property from other prisons is slow or never happens.
- SERCO responsibility for any of this is impossible to pin down.
- Pentonville introduced a property management system and staff selected for the role are better trained but seem overwhelmed by the volume.
- The prison is considering a new property system to ensure those prisoners that have the greatest need for property receive it in a timely fashion
- Delays in delivering property can leave prisoners dependent on a single set of prison issue clothes (which may not even fit). It is indecent, and nigh impossible, to wash and dry a set of clothes without anything else to wear.

The stated objective is that care should be delivered to an equivalent standard of that achieved by the NHS in the external community. **The view of the board is that, generally, clinical standards of treatment appear to achieve that aim.**

Most in-patients are in Healthcare as a result of mental rather than physical conditions. There are nurses and dispensing services on the wings and a mental health in-reach team. **The Board is pleased to hear that the waiting time for sectioning and transfer out to NHS hospitals is now on average shorter than it has been in previous years.**

There is an excellent Daycare Centre offering a wide range of activities and psycho-educational and other activities. Prisoners regard this very highly but it can only deal with a small number of prisoners.

The following aspects are unsatisfactory:

- Pentonville has more prisoners with psychiatric conditions than any other local prison. It is a gateway for men returning to the prison system from secure units across the region.
- Given the high proportion of patients with challenging behaviour, there are too few uniformed officers to support medical staff leading to delays and constraints on the delivery of care to the extent that on occasion conditions fall below acceptable standards of decency. For example, in the case of patients who require 3-6 officers before they can be unlocked to have a shower.
- Difficulty in recruiting nurses means that there is an undue reliance on agency staff, which can compromise continuity of care.
- The opinion of medical and other staff, supported by the observation of IMB members, is that the prison holds many mentally ill men who receive little or no help because there are not sufficient staff or resources. It is wrong, both from the point of view of the patient and staff, that the seriously mentally ill should be held in prison rather than hospital conditions. Amongst other considerations, there is no power to medicate compulsorily under the Mental Health Act within the prison.
- For initial screening of prisoners on arrival, a shortage of officers and a lack of co-ordination between medical and prison staff can lead to inadequate identification and assessment of urgent medical needs; this has been criticised in recent inquest reports. On some occasions there are inadequate facilities for confidential discussion of a prisoner's immediate needs.
- Shortage of officers in the Healthcare Centre means that when – as happens frequently - there are several patients requiring at least three uniformed staff to unlock and supervise them, nursing and medical staff have very little time in which to look after such men. Even psychiatric assessments sometimes have to take place through locked doors. In addition the needs of other patients – for time out of their cells and showers - cannot be not adequately met.
- External hospital appointments are regularly cancelled and deferred because of a shortage of escort staff.

Pentonville has a large number of prisoners who have used illegal drugs before imprisonment. Many continue to do so within the prison, with random testing showing more prisoners than the target tested positive for the year. About 861 are provided opiate substitutes as part of the Integrated Drug Treatment System.

The drug problem is a dominant challenge in terms of violence, gang structures, corruption and rehabilitation. The increasing prevalence of 'spice' (Novel Psychoactive Substances) has further complicated the matter. The prison is in the process of introducing a new drugs strategy. **We remain unconvinced that a sufficient proportion of prisoners with drug problems are cared for on a through-the-gate basis** so that they are effectively handed on to external support agencies in order to achieve continuity in treatment on release.

9. EDUCATION AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

Education had a difficult year with several staffing changes. A new Education Manager took up post in July 2016.

The quality of the teaching remains variable but at its best the IMB has observed some very good teaching with enthusiastic tutors, purposeful activities and engaged students.

The quality of teaching and learning is monitored and measured regularly and an advanced practitioner works with tutors to improve standards. Some tutors have been required to undertake further professional development courses.

The Education provision for prisoners in VPU is not satisfactory. It is delivered on the unit and takes place in a public area of the wing which is not an ideal environment for quality learning. There is also very limited space so not all prisoners can attend.

The allocation system remains problematic. In order to achieve full classes the Activities Hub over-allocates prisoners but this can and does result in prisoners being deprived of classes through no fault of their own. In addition there are some unresolved issues concerning the quality of the risk assessments of prisoners wishing to undertake courses involving potentially dangerous equipment and the extent to which allocation to particular courses fits with a prisoner's needs and skills.

Attendance still requires improvement. It has been averaging around 60% over the year. This is largely due to staff shortages amongst prison officers and prison or wing shut downs due either to security concerns or lack of staff. There is now a planned review of allocations and attendance to be undertaken by a team including the manager of education and key staff from other areas of the prison.

There have been some positive developments in education:

- Whilst most provision is through City and Guilds (C&G), higher level provision has been developed, including a useful initiative involving Pentonville prisoners attending modules alongside degree-level students from two London universities. IMB members witnessed an inspiring graduation ceremony in the library for one of the modules.
- Distance learning has been developed and there are now sessions in the library where students can access computers and the Open University (OU) Virtual Campus as well as meet each other. There are now 43 prisoners undertaking OU modules – the most improved rate in the country. There is funding available from the Prisoners' Education Trust for prisoners' fees for access and level 3 modules
- An initiative to develop particular and unusual skills that might be sought-after in the local community e.g. stonemasonry and woodcarving.

Library

In recent months there was a welcome increase in the number of recorded visits to the library (1,364 from January to March 2016, and 2,039 from January-March 2017). This was due to the efforts of the Activities Hub who book visits and to prisoners getting used to the new system. It remains at a low level.

- The risk assessed maximum remains 15 prisoners per session, when managed by library staff only. Sometimes the maximum is not reached and some prisoners say they are missing out. The IMB would encourage the prison to ensure every available slot is used.
- The prison should consider what staff capacity could be allocated to the library to enable more prisoners to use the excellent facilities.
- **Pentonville continues to be a beacon for literacy programmes supported by the Shannon Trust and others.** Special events such as a visit by a poet or author are always packed out.

10. WORK, VOCATIONAL TRAINING and EMPLOYMENT

This is an area that has improved but still has significant challenges:

Pentonville is an overcrowded prison that was designed for a different regime. Its layout makes it difficult to move the large body of prisoners that need to get to their work place during free-flow periods, and temporary regime closures mean that attendance at work is 65-70% which is disappointingly low. Combined with a prisoner population that is transient (the average stay is about 7 weeks), it is hard for the prison to offer adequate preparation for release in terms of directly relevant vocational work and training.

The allocation of work is generally swift and the work that is carried out by prisoners fulfils the remit of 'purposeful activity'. For a minority of prisoners who work in areas such as the textiles shop, recycling and the barista station in the Prison Officers' Mess (all run by the prison), it offers a good opportunity to gain skills beyond that. So far, these areas of work do not offer a formal qualification that might better prepare them for release, but plans are in place to improve this situation, including the wider introduction of food hygiene qualifications for prisoners working in areas that handle food.

Prisoners on the VPU complained of limited opportunities for work and employment. Only about 50% of these prisoners get a job. Opportunities are limited to cleaning, recycling and working in the clothing store. It may well be difficult to increase these opportunities for safety reasons, which emphasises the need for transfers out of the VPU to more suitable provision.

Considerable progress has been made in the past year in introducing new vocational training. A popular painting and decorating course have been added leading to a C&G qualification. The Industrial Cleaning course also leads to a C&G qualification, and subsequent opportunity to work in the 'Grime Buster' team - the result is a cleaner prison.

A popular woodwork course that offered a qualification has been halted since February as a result of problems with the alarm in the workshop, and other health and safety issues that have not been promptly addressed by Carillion.

Improvements to the provision:

- In the gym the external provider offers level 1, 2 and 3 qualifications that are extremely popular.
- Job fairs have been introduced in the past year (August and December) that invite local employers into the prison to meet soon-to-be-released prisoners, improving their chances of finding a job. It has also strengthened the prison's ties with local employers, although the absence of Release On Temporary Licence (ROTL) means that there have been no opportunities for prisoners to experience employment outside the prison before being released.
- Pentonville has started from a low base in terms of its ability to prepare prisoners for their release by offering them work and training that is relevant to their future life outside the prison, but the green shoots of improvement in this area are extremely encouraging.
- Approximately 900 spaces for 'purposeful activity' in the morning and afternoon, Monday to Friday, compared with approximately 700 last year.

Areas for development

- There should be either formal accreditation or recognition of some of the roles undertaken by prisoners who are Listeners, Mediators or Insiders for example. There may be externally validated courses that are appropriate. If not, the prison should devise a method of certification.

11. RESETTLEMENT PREPARATION

Resettlement needs are assessed when a prisoner first arrives in Pentonville and again in the final 12 weeks before release. Preparation for resettlement starts with the effective management of a prisoner's sentence during his time in custody.

There were significant improvements in offender management during the year including:

- Increased numbers of dedicated prison officer Offender Supervisors.
- Protection from, and a reduction in, their cross deployment. The problem was particularly acute earlier in the reporting year, as a result of shortages of staff elsewhere in the prison.
- An emphasis on reducing the backlog of reports and assessments, resulting in a reduction in the backlog of Offender Assessment System (OASys) completions.
- An increase in Home Detention Curfew (HDC) releases.

There were significant improvements in relation to resettlement

- Around 40 prisoners requiring resettlement support are released each week. Virtually all will have been seen by a CRC worker and the CRC operates an effective follow-up system identifying prisoners who would otherwise have slipped through the net. There is now quality sampling of resettlement plans.
- The profile, visibility and integration within the prison of the small team of resettlement workers improved during the year. Links with other departments such as probation and accommodation support were seen as positive. Links with Healthcare were less well developed.

In relation to the Reducing Re-offending Pathways:

- Some aspects of attitudes, thinking and behaviour are addressed through the Getting it Right programme. Attendance on this unaccredited programme is voluntary and has been patchy. An accredited thinking skills programme is no longer run at Pentonville.
- Facilities to provide work that has positive implications for employment on release are, inevitably, limited. (Further details are covered in Section 10.) Links with outside employers have begun. These need further development. Transition into work could be improved by the introduction of ROTL. Consideration is being given to helping prisoners prepare CVs and develop their interview skills.
- There were positive developments in the provision for maintaining and developing prisoners' relationships with their families. (See Section 5)
- Arrangements for providing debt advice are weak, and with little or no face-to-face contact between prisoners and debt advisers, proved to be impracticable. Santander has agreed to open up to 40 bank accounts each month for prisoners.
- St Mungo's Broadway provides assistance and referral for prisoners who would otherwise be released homeless or who need help or advice with their tenancy. During the last six months of the reporting year, St Mungo's received an average of 65 referrals each month of whom 68% were released into settled accommodation. A further one in six were referred to local authority Homeless Persons Units. The figures suggest that despite the successes in placing prisoners into accommodation or signposting the availability of outside help, homelessness remains a significant problem in this client group.
- The prison has created a small Resettlement Wing designed to house men in the last 12 weeks of their sentence. Its function is compromised by the considerable proportion of men who do not meet its criteria but are located there because of pressures on space elsewhere. Plans for resettlement boards have not come to fruition, partly because of resource implications.

Areas for development

- Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) provides a stepping stone into the community, allowing prisoners to take up employment and re-establish family relationships and other

sources of support. No such scheme to aid resettlement operates or has operated in Pentonville, although one is planned.

No accredited offence or offending behaviour interventions are offered at Pentonville. This means that offence- and offending-based risk reduction cannot take place unless and until prisoners are transferred elsewhere.

Timely and appropriate transfers are inhibited by systemic and unresolved problems throughout the prison estate. This can cause particular injustice to prisoners sentenced to Imprisonment for Public Protection who are awaiting programmes designed to reduce their risk. Pentonville does not provide these programmes.

B Section – Work of Board

The board comprises 20 members, including 6 probationers. The board meets once a month for two hours, and each meeting is preceded by an hour's training which is delivered either by experienced members, prison staff, or outside speakers. The Governing (or Deputy) Governor attends every board meeting for approximately 45 minutes to answer questions from the board and to address issues raised in the previous month's rota reports.

One member alone is on rota, and will visit between 3 and 5 times during that week. The particular areas to be visited each week of the year are set out in a matrix which reflects perceived risk to prisoners. The Segregation Unit is visited every week (and all weekly Segregation Reviews attended except on the rare occasions when they are dealt with by the relevant Governor on paper), whereas the library is visited every six weeks. If a particular concern has been raised with the board about an area which is not due to be visited that week, it will then be visited as a matter of urgency.

Written applications to the IMB are dealt with by a team of three members between Wednesday and Friday, freeing up the rota member to concentrate their time on the regime and other matters affecting the prison at large (although they do take responsibility for any Confidential Applications addressed to the Chair that week). Many board members also take additional applications 'on the hoof'. Applications are also regularly sent to the Chair from other IMBs regarding prisoners who have transferred from Pentonville to their establishment, and these largely relate to missing property.

The board wrote to the Secretary of State for Justice on 10 November 2016 with respect to its concerns about safety and the state of the prison's windows. A reply was received from the Minister for Prisons Sam Gyimah on 6 December 2016.

The Board received two Freedom of Information requests: one, from a serving prisoner in August requesting board minutes from the last twelve months, was refused on the grounds of security. A second from William Perrin, a local civic campaigner, was granted in December. He received copies of two letters from Prisons Minister Gyimah (regarding the Board's Annual Report 2015-16 and a reply to the Board's 10th November letter referred to above) as well as previous Prisons Minister Selous' response to the Board's 2014-15 Annual Report.

The IMB attended two of the Coroner's Inquests on deaths in custody in November and March.

BOARD STATISTICS	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	23
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	20
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	20
Total number of visits to the Establishment	512
Total number of GooD review sessions attended	50

C Section - Applications

* Statistics for 2015-16 and 2016-17 were collected using the categories below:

Approx % of applications

Area	2016	2017
Property and cash	25	28
Medical	15	14
Transfers/category	7	9
Sentence calculation	4	6
Regime	6	6
Visits	3	2
Telephones	4	3
HDC	3	1
Legal Issues	2	2
Request/complaints	3	3
Bullying	4	4
General IMB advice	2	1
Housing/resettlement	2	1
Assault	2	3
Work	2	2
Education	2	1
Licence recall etc	2	1
Adjudications	1	1
Foreign Nationals	4	4
Probation	1	Less than 1
Food	2	1
E Man status	1	Less than 1
Racial abuse/incident	1	1
Miscellaneous	8	5