



Annual Report
of the
Independent Monitoring Board
at
HMP The Mount

Bovingdon, Hemel Hempstead

**for reporting year
1 March 2016 to 28 February 2017**

**Published
July 2017**



Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody

CONTENTS

Section	Page
1. Contents	2
2. Statutory role of the Board	3
3. Description of The Mount	3
4. Executive Summary	
4.1 Overall performance	5
4.2 Particular issues requiring a response	6
4.3 Previous year's concerns	6
4.4 Other matters of serious concern or excellence	7
5. Mandatory areas on which the Board must report	
5.1 Equality and Inclusion	7
5.2 Education, Learning and Skills	9
5.3 Healthcare and Mental Health	11
5.4 Purposeful activity	12
5.5 Resettlement	12
5.6 Safer Custody	14
5.7 Segregation	15
5.8 Residential Services	16
6. Other areas on which the Board desires to report	
6.1 Drugs	17
6.2 Security	18
7. Work of the Board	
7.1 Activities of the Board	18
7.2 Applications	19
7.3 Board statistics	20
8. Appendix A: Glossary	21

2. STATUTORY ROLE OF THE BOARD

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 state of the prison premises, the administration of the prison and the just and humane treatment of the prisoners; and
- to inquire into and report upon any matter into which the Secretary of State asks it to inquire.

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.

Diversity statement

The Board at The Mount monitors that diversity encompasses and promotes greater interaction and understanding between people of different backgrounds, including race, religion, gender, sexuality, marital status, disability, and age, and actively promotes equality of opportunity.

The Board recognises that diversity and equality is also about respecting and responding to needs and differences that cut across social and cultural categories, such as mental health, literacy and drug addiction.

Engaging diversity and equality should enable all individuals to express their values, perspectives and beliefs without disrespecting or discriminating against others.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE MOUNT

The Mount opened in 1987 as a Young Offenders Institution. Initially there were five residential wings: Annexe, Brister, Ellis, Fowler, and Lakes. Most of these wings have their cells configured in a four spur design on two landings which creates difficulty in observing prisoner behaviour.

The Mount was re-rolled as a Category C Adult Male Training Prison in 1989.

During the 1990's two more wings, Howard and Dixon, were built. These are of a two landing galleried design that allows improved observation of prisoners.

In 2007 a further wing, Narey, became operational, housing many older prisoners.

The construction of Nash Wing was completed in 2015 with 94 double cells and 62 single cells. New kitchen, gymnasium and healthcare units were also constructed.

In addition to its expansion, The Mount has been re-rolled as a hybrid prison with the aim of providing training and rehabilitation for 75% of its population and a resettlement service for the remaining 25% during the final 3-4 months of their sentence. The resettlement service is intended for prisoners from Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire.

The following table shows the location of the prisoners on the Wings.

Wing	Regime	Prisoners at 28th Feb 2017	CNA at 28th Feb 2017	Op Cap at 28th Feb 2017	Prisoners at 29th Feb 2016
Dixon Wing	Standard	118	120	120	118
Howard Wing	Standard	109	104	110	110
Lakes Wing	Standard/RAPt	113	112	117	114
Ellis Wing	Standard	112	110	117	112
Fowler Wing	Enhanced	112	112	112	112
Brister Wing	Enhanced	112	110	112	112
Annexe	Enhanced	44	44	44	48
Narey Wing	Standard/Enhanced	48	48	48	48
Nash Wing	Induction/ Resettlement	223	248	248	230
CSU		18	N/A	N/A	16
TOTAL		1009	1008	1028	1020

The following table shows the population breakdown by sentence length.

Length of Sentence	Number of Prisoners	
	February 2017	February 2016
Less than 12 months	1	4
12 months to 2 years	58	42
2 - 3 years	65	91
3 - 4 years	74	87
4 - 10 years	452	474
More than 10 years	167	110
Indeterminately Sentenced	189	210
Sentence Expired Detainees	3	2
TOTAL	1009	1020

4 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

4.1 OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Back in the summer of 2016, all the ingredients were in place for The Mount to suffer disorder such as has been experienced in other prisons – staff shortages, readily available drugs, mounting violence. In May 2016, Gov. Leggett assumed office as the new governing Governor. It is to the credit of the Governor and all his staff that The Mount ended the year as a safe prison where prisoners have a good chance of rehabilitation.

During the year The Mount has struggled with staff shortages driven by uncompetitive pay scales. Experienced staff have left and not been fully replaced, so that at the end of February there were 24 vacancies out of a complement of 136 officers, and a high proportion of officers and managers had less than two years' experience.

Notwithstanding these severe shortages, the Governor and staff have managed to:

(i) Control violence and keep The Mount a safe prison. In August, violent incidents reached a peak with 32 incidents requiring the use of force but, with intelligence identifying and enabling the removal of the most violent and threatening prisoners, the number of violent incidents reduced. There were only 19 incidents in December and these were generally less serious than those which had occurred previously. The Mount's approach to this problem could be a model for other prisons.

(ii) Run a reasonable regime for the prisoners. The prisoners have continued to get out to activities, with only limited extra periods spent behind their doors.

The staff shortages have though had their consequences:

(i) Staff who should have been working in the OMU have been put on wing duty with the result that prisoners are not being assessed for transfer to Cat D in a timely way. In January and February, there was a backlog of 158 prisoners who were due to be assessed for Cat D transfer but only one assessment was completed. However OMU managed to catch up with this backlog by March 2017. More generally, prisoners are often unable to talk to their Offender Manager and gain the guidance they need.

(ii) Wing staff are very busy and are moved often from Wing to Wing with the result that they find it difficult to get to know the prisoners in their charge. This may be one of the factors behind the increase in Adjudications. Issues could be resolved informally if officers had more time to talk to prisoners and get to know them better.

Drugs are readily available at The Mount. The drug problem was most acute in November when a number of prisoners suffered serious short-term health problems with 70 emergency call-outs in the month, mainly for drug related problems, the majority occurring in a single week. By way of comparison, there were just 16 call-outs in February.

Carillion has continued to provide an unsatisfactory service. In the past year, The Mount has suffered, inter alia, long-running failures to repair kitchen equipment, delays in repairing damaged cells, cold showers, loss of control in the stores and expensive quotes for additional work not covered by the base contract. This has showed recent signs of improvement following the appointment of a new site manager which continues to date.

In general, the Workshops, Education and other work opportunities offered to prisoners are good. But The Mount does not have enough work and education places. The Board is disappointed that the enterprise shown by staff has been frustrated by the central PSPI team. For example, The Mount has been waiting for a year for PSPI to move engineering machinery from the closed Engineering Workshop and facilitate its use for other activities creating 20 to 30 badly needed new work places.

The staff at St Mungo's and St Giles work hard, but many prisoners leave with no place to go to. Prisoners without pre-existing accommodation have little chance of being permanently housed on release. During the period of this report only 7 prisoners have been released into employment which is a matter for concern.

Healthcare has been excellent, but prisoners who needed to be treated in a secure mental hospital have had to be located for weeks in the CSU.

4.2 PARTICULAR ISSUES REQUIRING A RESPONSE

Policy matter for the Minister

The Mount has been continually short of officers with 24 vacancies out of a complement of 136 at the end of February. The Mount was never fully staffed to cope with the opening of Nash Wing and since then uncompetitive salaries have seen officers leave and not be fully replaced in terms of numbers let alone experience. Given the costs of the prison and probation service and the greater cost to society of re-offending not fully staffing prisons is a false economy.

Operational matters for the Prison Service

Please refer to the matters raised in Section 4.3 and Section 4.4 (Other matters of concern).

4.3 PREVIOUS YEAR'S CONCERNS

The Board notes that no response was received from the Ministry of Justice to last year's Annual Report.

Staffing issues

See Sections 5.1, 5.5, 5.8, and 6.2.

Existing infrastructure

Heating and hot water systems. There have been many complaints about cold showers and the decorative state of several shower blocks has been poor.

Lack of Sentence Plans

Prisoners commonly arrive without completed OASys reports and The Mount is not resourced to produce them. Such prisoners often have informal sentence plans.

Network Access

Slow and exasperating.

4.4 OTHER MATTERS OF SERIOUS CONCERN OR EXCELLENCE

Other matters of serious concern

(i) Death in Custody

It is sad to report that 2 further Deaths in Custody occurred.

(ii) Purposeful Activity

Since the expansion of The Mount in 2015, it has been difficult to provide enough work. The greater utilisation of Workshop space is desirable.

(iii) CSU

The fact that the CSU is often full has the effect that some prisoners who should be located in the CSU, whether for discipline or their own protection, must remain on the Wings. This significantly increases the task of Wing staff.

(iv) Carillion

Among the external organisations with which The Mount co-operates, difficulties have arisen persistently with Carillion in its role as contractor for building and equipment maintenance, as provider of cleaning services and as manager of the stores.

Other matters of excellence

(i) As a development of the assistance provided to prisoners by the RAPt team, and with the full support of the SMT, a band of prisoners known as “the Health and Wellbeing Champions” (“the HAWCs”) has been trained to assist prisoners in need of counselling, whether in connection with health, addiction, debt, threats, activities, family contacts or any other matter. They wear distinctive blue tops and have freedom to travel around the prison. They have achieved great success.

(ii) The Mount has appointed two OMU representatives to meet all prisoners during their Induction programme and to conduct “surgeries” on the Wings and in the Education Department. They have been carefully selected and well trained and are able to provide guidance to prisoners and feedback to the OMU on prisoners’ concerns and issues. They have filled part of the gap created by staff shortages.

(iii) The Mount benefits from the services of a wide range of other volunteers, both prisoners and members of the public. (See Section 5.5 “Community Links”). It is fair also to mention here the role of the Board whose 14 members averaged over 40 visits each to The Mount during the year.

5. MANDATORY AREAS ON WHICH THE BOARD MUST REPORT

5.1 EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

Maintaining a full and proper Equalities programme has been challenging as staff shortages have taken their toll on the amount of dedicated time that can be devoted. However, notwithstanding this, there continues to be a culture ensuring that Equality is maintained across the establishment and the Board receives few applications in relation to Equality or Discrimination. Posters with photographs of the Equalities team are displayed on the Wings and in the Workshops which helps to ensure accessibility.

The team is dedicated and enthusiastic, but their time is very limited. For example, the Equalities Officer should have 18 hours per week to dedicate to Diversity issues, but currently is only able to achieve approximately 4 hours per month due to being deployed on other duties. Staff shortages have resulted in Equalities Meetings and prisoner forums being cancelled. Prisoner representatives have been appointed for all the Protected Characteristics groups, including those currently not relevant at The Mount, i.e. Pregnancy & Maternity, Marriage & Civil Partnership and Gender Realignment, but the cancellation of forums means that information is not exchanged.

Outstanding issues regarding Equality and Diversity have been tackled and the number of DIRF applications remains low. There were peaks in September, November and December, which are unexplained as they do not match the Use of Force statistics or those relating to the increase in NPS usage.

DIRF applications	
February 2017	1
January 2017	1
December 2016	4
November 2016	5
October 2016	2
September 2016	4
August 2016	0
July 2016	0
June 2016	1
May 2016	3
April 2016	3
March 2016	2

A recent survey on DIRFs showed that forms are not always readily available on Wings, but that 93% of prisoners know how to make a complaint relating to Discrimination. The completed forms reflect the current ethnicity figures, the highest being W1 (White British). This survey indicates that prisoners of all ethnic groups know of the DIRF application process and use it as needed.

Ethnicity

The population distribution by ethnicity at The Mount shows that the White British population constitutes nearly 40%, BME nearly 45% and White Gypsy/Irish Travellers 2%. The proven Adjudications reflect these percentages, with the

exception of White Gypsy/Irish Travellers whose proven Adjudications constitute over 5%. No data is available to show that there is Discrimination against this particular group and their representative states that they are happy with the way they are treated.

Indeed, there would appear to be few perceived differences in the way that different racial groups are treated and there is little racial tension. The Chaplaincy team works hard to ensure that all groups are supported in their beliefs. The Imams are conscious of the dangers of radicalisation within the Prison Estate and work constantly with the Muslim worshippers. There has been no apparent emergence of any radicalisation at The Mount.

Age

There are approximately 130 prisoners (13%) over the age of 50. Half of these are allocated places on the specialist residential unit (Narey Wing) where they have a quieter and more flexible regime. Whilst some prisoners do not want to move to the 'OP Wing', there is a constant waiting list of those who do wish to be located there, so it would be helpful if more places could be allocated for the older population.

Unfortunately, due to staff shortages and a more restricted regime, there are fewer opportunities for activities for older prisoners with no dedicated education classes and few gym sessions. However, a garden is being developed within Narey Wing, so prisoners can sit outside and do their own gardening.

Disability

There are only 2 purpose built cells for prisoners using wheelchairs where they can be supported by a prisoner carer though there are hopes to develop more. 128 prisoners are identified as disabled. On Induction, they are assessed by Healthcare to establish their needs and appropriate work places. Disabled prisoners often do not seem to be treated with great sympathy and only a limited range of suitable work places are available though they are allocated on capabilities and some adjustment made where possible..

Sexual Orientation

Currently there are no Gay or Bisexual prisoners declared which does not reflect the national picture, so it would seem likely that prisoners choose to conceal their sexuality in order to avoid victimisation.

In summary, despite the limited facilities and range of activities for some prisoners with Protected Characteristics, there is an overall culture which supports Diversity. It is important to ensure that such prisoners have an effective forum in which they can express perceived unfairness and lack of Equality.

5.2 EDUCATION, LEARNING AND SKILLS

Education

People Plus remains the main provider and aims to support staff to provide a wide range of education classes for the prisoners

The new Education Manager is keen to maintain high standards of provision and has embraced the Directives of the Head of Learning and Skills at NOMS with curriculum changes which require management in balancing staffing issues and course provision.

The curriculum changes have not affected performance with success rates above 90%. This is a testament to the staff for which they should be applauded.

Library

The Library is an excellent facility and is well used by prisoners. It has a wide range of books and services in an appropriate setting. Additionally, it operates the Story-Book Dads project giving prisoners the opportunity to record personalised CDs for their children.

Co-ordination with the Open University continues with a high success rate. Currently 35 prisoners are taking OU courses.

Computer provision has been increased with an additional four computers.

Thankfully, the uncertainty regarding funding following the move from the East of England Region to the London and Thames Valley Region has been resolved satisfactorily.

Workshops

The Workshops aim to provide training and qualifications in a variety of trades, as well as generating some income.

The Workshops are designated as follows:

Workshop 1	Double glazing
Workshop 1A	Bicycle renovation
Workshop 2	DHL Canteen packing
Workshop 3	Closed
Workshop 3A	Woodwork/card packing
Workshop 4	Laing's Bricklaying & Plastering
Workshop 5	Rags
Workshop 6	PICTA
Workshop 7	Laing's Multiskills
Workshop 8	Refurbishment and Waste Management
Workshop 9	Camouflage netting for the MOD
Workshop 10	Printing

During the year there have been some changes in the work conducted in the Workshops. In Workshop 5, John Laing's Painting and Decorating training has been replaced by contract work cutting and bailing rags for a local company. Workshop 9 which was vacant is now in use for the production of camouflage netting for the MOD. Workshop 3 remains unused.

Workshops 1 and 10 both rely on PSPI for orders and often request more work.

The Bike Renovation Workshop continues to be busy and the plan to relocate it in the larger Workshop 3 (formerly Engineering) to allow expansion of its activity has been approved, but frustrated by the failure of PSPI to remove the engineering machines. This relocation will in turn allow DHL to expand its activity into Workshop 1A. Carillion has supplied DHL with costings for electrics and new flooring which will be funded by DHL. These moves will provide an additional 20/30 work places, but are dependent on the engineering machinery in Workshop 3 being removed.

Farms and Gardens

Farms and Gardens perform well and the prison grounds are well maintained. This unit is fully staffed and is looking into the possibility of being able to offer prisoners a work qualification.

Skills Centre

The Barbering class which opened last year in the Skills Centre is proving to be popular. Plans to install a Call Centre are proceeding. The necessary wiring has been installed and interviews for an instructor have been successful. It is hoped that a contract will soon be in place.

General

Some problems arise with activity allocation resulting in prisoners being placed in education classes or workshops to which they have neither inclination nor aptitude, leading to non-attendance and IEPs.

Understandably, The Mount wishes to maximise attendance statistics, whilst Education and the Workshops want to ensure that prisoners are allocated to work which is appropriate to their needs and abilities. Better communication is needed.

It would be desirable for more work qualifications to be obtainable.

Attendance rates average 82%, which is modest, although shortage or illness of instructors is a contributory factor.

5.3 HEALTHCARE AND MENTAL HEALTH

West Hertfordshire NHS Trust provides a range of healthcare services, including physical and mental health care, physiotherapy, chiropody and GP visits.

The nursing team has 5 nurse prescribers who run their own clinics. This includes a respiratory clinic and a pain management clinic. The number of prescriptions for analgesia have reduced significantly. The number of prescriptions per month was 70 in January 2016, but has reduced to below 15.

An innovation is the training of the HAWCs to undertake a variety of responsibilities including promoting smoking cessation, raising awareness of using the drug NPS, promoting oral hygiene, holding wellbeing clinics, and providing support for older prisoners and those with mental health issues.

The use of NPS with potentially serious side effects remains an ongoing problem.

There is a waiting list to see the dentist. In order to prioritise care, a nurse-led triage clinic is in place.

Mental health

Mental healthcare is provided by a multi-disciplinary team. This comprises mental health nurses, a consultant psychiatrist, and a psychologist. A junior psychiatrist also visits weekly.

There is a problem with some prisoners not attending their appointments.

There are delays in finding secure unit placements for prisoners who need mental health treatment. There is a national NHS shortage of such specialist beds.

RAPt

This charity helps prisoners with drug and alcohol problems. It provides a variety of courses.

Awards

NHS Health and Justice gave an award to two of The Mount's physiotherapists for Healthcare Professional of the Year.

West Herts Community NHS Trust gave a Leading Lights award for physiotherapy and a runner up award to the Healthcare team for excellence in partnership working.

A Friends and Family test completed by prisoners as to how likely they would recommend the service scored 98%.

Staff retention and attendance is very good. 33% of Healthcare staff have not had any sickness absence during the year.

5.4 PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY

A wide range of work, training and education is available as detailed in the Section 5.2. Additionally, opportunities exist to work as orderlies, prisoner representatives, listeners, wing cleaners or server staff.

In addition, The Mount has gymnasium and library facilities which every prisoner is able to use on a weekly basis.

The AAP deals with prisoner work applications and allocates spaces. However there are insufficient workplaces and a significant number of prisoners are unemployed.

The average weekly number of hours of Purposeful Activity of each prisoner is no longer recorded.

5.5 RESETTLEMENT

Resettlement services are provided by Sodexo, with its partners, St Giles Trust and St Mungo.

The management of high risk offenders is placed with the NPS and management of other offenders with one of the CRCs. The former requires permission to be granted by their probation officer to work face to face with the prisoner concerned, but this is not the case with the latter. This raises issues as prisoners are being placed in two categories and sometimes are not supported equally since delays take place in receiving written permission from probation officers. If an NPS prisoner wishes to be proactive in preparing for release, support has to be declined until permission is granted. A CRC prisoner can receive help immediately.

Resettlement prisoners are approached at least 12 weeks before release and those being supported at The Mount will normally be residents of Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire or Northamptonshire. It is national policy to focus resettlement in a small number of prisons selected on a regional basis. It is noted that some resettlement prisoners from other Cat C prisons, such as HMP Peterborough, who are transferred to The Mount for onward release can sometimes be moving away from their home area which is disruptive to their family ties. Currently, 66 prisoners are being prepared for release.

During the year under review, 363 prisoners were discharged. The CRC and SGT completed 300 release plans. There were 263 referrals for Education and Training but only seven prisoners were released into employment. The staff at St Mungo's and St Giles work hard but 10% of those prisoners released leave with no place to go to. Prisoners without pre-existing accommodation have little chance of being permanently housed on release reflecting the national housing shortage.

The strategy to reduce re-offending is based on seven pathways: Accommodation; Employment, Training and Education; Mental and Physical Health; Drugs and Alcohol; Finance, Benefit and Debt; Children and Families; and Attitudes, Thinking and Behaviour.

Reports on developments in the seven pathways form part of the agenda of the bi-monthly Reducing Re-offending meetings to which a member of the Board is invited. These meetings provide an opportunity for co-ordination of resettlement activities.

“Sequencing” was introduced with the aim of better structuring each prisoner’s progression at The Mount. All prisoners are interviewed by Education and NCS during their first week at The Mount to enable early identification of their needs, which may relate to education, their offence, and/or training. This information is passed to the Offender Supervisor in the OMU.

During the year, the OMU was badly affected by staff shortages. Not only was the OMU not fully staffed, but staff were frequently taken off OMU duties and sent to the Wings.

In consequence, prisoners were not assessed for progression in a timely fashion. For example, in January and February 2017, 158 prisoners were due to be assessed for Cat D transfer, but only 1 assessment was completed. There were also delays in assessing prisoners for home detention, partly caused by the need to wait for reports from external probation officers.

These delays cause anxiety to prisoners, especially to the best behaved prisoners with the greatest chance of transfer to open conditions or home detention. Board members are often approached by prisoners with worries about pending or delayed assessments.

It is common for prisoners to arrive at The Mount without completed OASys reports. The budget to complete these reports is held at the local prison and The Mount is not resourced to complete them. The consequence is that, at the end of February, 322 prisoners did not have completed OASys reports or, to put it into starker terms, nearly one-third of prisoners did not have formal sentence plans. Cat D prisons are now insisting on OASys being completed before they accept prisoners.

Community Links

The Mount has a well-established Community Links Department. This Department aims to promote links with employers to develop employment opportunities for prisoners on their release.

The Community Links Department also works with a number of local and national agencies which deliver a range of programmes and services to help prisoners reduce their risk of reoffending. Successful schemes such as the Black Self-Development Programme, which includes a 5 week training programme, has helped prisoners to plan for employment after their release.

The Mount values the contribution of volunteers in many areas. The Community Links Department plays a co-ordinating and liaison role and also arranges an annual training programme for volunteers, which covers not only the statutory training for work inside prison, but also a range of optional sessions that volunteers find valuable. “The Friends of The Mount” was launched in 2014 as a local project to try to build closer links with the local community.

5.6 SAFER CUSTODY

During the course of the year, violence towards staff and prisoner fights and assaults grew considerably. This coincided with large amounts of Spice being available at The Mount.

A revised Safer Custody strategy was developed with the aim of preventing further violence occurring. Regular meetings are now held by a multi-disciplinary group, including security and wing staff, to identify perpetrators and to locate them in the CSU prior to transfer. This has achieved great success. See Section 6.2.

Incidents to staff and prisoners are closely monitored and are recorded, even if it is shoving, which may not have been recorded formerly. The number of serious incidents has now fallen, with fewer resulting in visits to hospitals. In the 3 months ended 31st December 2016, the number of Adjudications for assault fell by 25% from 48 to 37. During the same period, the number of Adjudications for possession of unauthorised articles, including drugs, rose from 156 to 284, reflecting greater success in detecting contraband.

The number of “regime refusers”, formerly called “self-isolators”, is recorded. There were 31 in February.

During the year, 354 ACCT documents were opened. 60 prisoners accounted for 154 of them. Although most were opened due to self harm, 40 were opened due to staff concerns. Prisoners on constant watch are also logged, with 4 in January and 5 in February.

The Listeners and the HAWCs are an integral part of the Safer Custody programme, meeting prisoners on Induction.

At the end of the year, Lakes Wing was designated as “the Wellbeing Wing” and it is planned to locate vulnerable prisoners there. RAPT and the HAWCs will also be based there.

There were 2 deaths in custody during the year, one with a ligature and the other connected with the use of Spice.

Spice remains a big concern and while drone deliveries have declined, the supply is still getting in. Hopefully the increase of CCTV cameras and secure grills around the windows will serve as a deterrent and barrier.

5.7 SEGREGATION

The CSU at The Mount is well run. The officers are experienced and well-trained and treat the prisoners with care, firmness and respect. On a regular basis, they are required to work with exceptionally demanding prisoners who express their frustration by unrelenting cell door banging which is audible throughout the CSU. The Board continues to be impressed at the high level of service which they perform.

During the year, there has been a significant change in the nature of the prisoners located in the CSU.

In the first part of the year, many were prisoners who were in debt and who had offended in order to get moved into the CSU and then transferred to another prison. These men were often troubled, demanding and difficult to manage.

From August onwards, an increasing proportion were located in the CSU because they had been identified through intelligence as being involved in the supply of drugs and mobile phones or in bullying other prisoners. These prisoners, once located in the CSU, were often ready to comply with the regime.

The CSU staff have been assiduous in informing the Board whenever prisoners are located in the CSU, placed in special accommodation or start dirty protests. Prisoners are typically moved out of special accommodation within very few hours and dirty protests have been few in number and usually end quickly. The Board member on rota duty each week meets every prisoner in the CSU.

As shown in Section 7.3, Board members regularly attend Rule 45 hearings. They report that the reviews are conducted well, ascertaining how the prisoners are coping in the CSU and discussing their future location, often involving transfer to another prison.

Prisoners in the CSU are often under mental strain. The Board is pleased that the primary care mental health nurse now holds weekly surgeries in the CSU. But a prisoner diagnosed with a serious mental illness had to be held in the CSU for a long period because there was no bed available for him in a secure mental hospital. The CSU and medical staff did their best to care for him.

The showers in the CSU are in poor condition. The Board understands that budgetary approval has been given for their renovation.

5.8 RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

Induction

A comprehensive Induction programme is arranged each week commencing with an Introductory Session held daily on Nash Wing when the newly arrived prisoners are addressed by one or more prisoners, including one of the HAWCs.

Accommodation

The accommodation on the Wings is generally clean and satisfactory.

Problems have arisen with showers providing only cold water.

There have also been problems with Stores with delays in providing prisoners with essential equipment and consumables. In both cases, the responsibility rests with Carillion. Despite regular meetings with Carillion, service failures often occur.

Kitchen

The Kitchen continues to provide an excellent service, despite a restricted budget, a diverse prison population, staffing difficulties and equipment failures.

Canteen

DHL likewise provides an excellent service and Workshop 2 is a model of efficiency.

Reception

The list of those prisoners to be released, transferred or attend legal or medical appointments is prepared daily. Frustration occurs when prisoners are not brought down from the Wings promptly. It is a time-consuming process to check each item listed on the Property Cards against those in the bags on each departure and arrival. The records are still maintained manually.

Limited information is provided as to when transport will arrive. It sometimes arrives during the lunch period requiring the staff to continue working. When a lot of prisoners arrive at once, Reception becomes extremely crowded and pressurised.

The number of bags each prisoner brings varies and seems to be dependent on how many bags the transport company is willing to carry. A representative of Serco

admitted that, whilst supposed to carry only 2 bags for each prisoner, if they have space they may take more.

Since the increase in the prison roll in 2015, the storage facilities have been inadequate. A request has been submitted to Carillion to survey the reception facility with a view to maximising the space available, but this does not appear to be regarded as a matter of priority.

Loss of personal property complaints are regularly received by the Board. Most relate to property not arriving from a previous establishment.

Despite the problems, Reception operates with reasonable efficiency.

Visits

The Visits booking line has experienced disruption recently due to a change in the booking system and severe staff shortages. From the beginning of December until the 21st February, a total of 35 complaints were received by the Board, predominately relating to problems experienced by family members trying to book Visits, either online or by telephone. The recent appointment of a full time agency staff member and an updated online booking system will hopefully improve matters.

Both prisoner and visitor feedback is positive with regard to the actual Visits experience. The staff are welcoming and inform visitors of the procedures clearly. The food and drink facilities in the Visits Hall have been praised by visitors.

Mailroom

The Mailroom has experienced problems in recent months. These include missing money and parcels, delayed post and Rule 39 post being opened. It appears to be a generic problem caused by the length of time it takes to process the mail, forward parcels to Reception, record the contents on the prisoner's Property Cards, and arrange for the prisoner to visit Reception.

The Mailroom staff vacancies have now been filled by agency staff, who are undergoing their training.

Gymnasiums

Difficulties have been experienced regarding the use of the 2 Gymnasiums due to shortage of staff. The Department functions ideally with nine members. Currently, there are seven.

Furthermore, with other staff shortages at The Mount, the Gym staff are from time to time required to carry out other duties.

In consequence, many Gym sessions have had to be cancelled and Courses, such as First Aid and Gym Instructor, Level 2, which should take a few weeks are taking months to complete.

6. OTHER AREAS ON WHICH THE BOARD DESIRES TO REPORT

6.1 DRUGS

The amount of drugs at the Mount increased significantly during the course of the year. In particular, there was a big increase in Spice, which is a chemical concoction loosely based on cannabis and only recently been made illegal outside prisons. Spice has proved highly dangerous to the health of individuals, particularly the strain "Death" which was seemingly widely available and led to a number of hospital visits.

For some time, The Mount has run a successful Drug Rehabilitation programme RAPt, with many full groups of up to 12 people. This was discontinued in December 2016 following the massive influx of Spice onto Dixon Wing. This was attributed mainly to lack of staff and to cell windows not being "gridded". With no netting, drones arrived nightly. This has been rectified and the windows are now "gridded".

In February, the RAPt programme restarted, with only 5 prisoners, on Lakes Wing, which is to be classified as "the Wellbeing Wing".

The programme is in a state of transition, but the Board has confidence that the RAPt team will restore the programme to the level of success previously achieved.

6.2 SECURITY

An initiative has been taken for a re-invigorated violence reduction team working with security and the police to identify and remove the prisoners who were the leaders of the drug trade and responsible for related debt problems and violence (referred to as "prominent nominals") based on intelligence gathered and graded by them.

This collaboration has proved very effective in identifying prominent nominals and in reducing the supply of drugs and other contraband entering The Mount and the levels of serious violence and indebtedness.

Staff shortages at The Mount and inexperience of new officers have caused some frustration. The canine unit has been obliged to second one of the dogs and handler to HMP Pentonville. Dog handlers may be called to perform other duties at The Mount.

In recent months, drone activity has reduced due to the police apprehending a major drone supplier and operator. Action has been taken to install new window grills on Howard and Dixon Wings to frustrate drone deliveries.

Throw-overs persist, but regular patrols of the sterile areas and outside the perimeter fence conducted with the aid of CCTV have resulted in interceptions.

A mobile phone blocker is on order and is expected to be functional soon.

7. WORK OF THE BOARD

7.1 ACTIVITIES OF THE BOARD

During the year two members left the Board and no new members joined the Board. At the end of the year, the Board comprised 14 members, 4 members below its recommended complement.

The Board has a training session prior to each meeting. At each meeting, the Governor provides the Board with a comprehensive report and answers questions raised by members of the Board on any issue.

An ATPR exercise was held in November 2016 and the resultant action plan regularly monitored.

7.2 APPLICATIONS

Applications made to the Board

Code	Subject	2016/17	2015/16	2014/15
A	Accommodation	46	26	25
B	Adjudications	6	12	6
C	Equality and Diversity (inc religion)	7	7	2
D	Education/employment/training inc IEP	65	67	62
E1	Family/visits inc mail & phone	118	28	24
E2	Finance and Pay	2	3	1
F	Food/kitchen related	1	2	7
G	Health related	29	36	36
H	Property	87	127	85
I	Sentence related (inc.HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-cat etc)	31	55	39
J	Staff/prisoner/detainee concerns inc bullying	32	24	16
K	Transfers	21	36	22
L	Miscellaneous	121	166	73
Total number of IMB applications		566	589	398
The number of Confidential Access Applications included above was:		15	35	19

7.3 BOARD STATISTICS

Recommended complement of Board Members	18
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	16
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	14
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	0
Number of members leaving within the reporting period	2
Total number of Board meetings during the reporting period	12
Total number of visits to the prison	612
Total number of segregation reviews held	534
Total number of segregation reviews attended	528
Date of Annual Team Performance Review	9 th Nov 2016

For and on behalf of the members of the Board at HMP The Mount

Chair

2017

8. Appendix A: Glossary

AAP Activities Allocation Panel	NACRO National Association for Care & Resettlement of Offenders
ACCT Assessment, Care in Custody & Teamwork	NC National Council for IMBs
ADA Additional Days Awarded	NCS National Careers Service
AQA Assessment and Qualifications Alliance	NOMS National Offender Management Service
ATPR Annual Team Performance Review	NPS New psychoactive substance (aka Spice)
BME Black & Minority Ethnic	NVQ National Vocational Qualification
BDG Business Development Group	NWOW New Ways of Working
CAB Citizens Advice Bureau	OASys Offender Assessment System
CALM Crisis & Aggression Limitation & Management	OBP Offending Behaviour Programme
C&R Control & Restraint	OCA Observation, Classification & Allocations
CARATS Counselling, Assessment, Referral, Advice & Throughcare Scheme	OI/OP Own Interest/Own Protection
CC Cellular Confinement	OLASS Offender Learning and Skills Service
CLAIT Computer Literacy and Information Technology	OMU Offender Management Unit
CM Custodial Manager	Op Cap Operational Capacity
CNA Certified Normal Accommodation	OSG Operational Support Grade
CPN Community Psychiatric Nurse	PALS Patient Advisory Liaison Service
CQC Care Quality Commission	PER Prisoner Escort Record
CRC Community Rehabilitation Company	PICTA Prisons Information & Communications Technology Academy
CRD Conditional Release Date	PIN Personal Identification Number
CSH Contracted Service Hours	PO Principal Officer
CSRA Cell sharing risk assessment	POA Prison Officers Association
CSU Care and Separation Unit	POELT Prison Officer Entry Level Training
DEO Diversity and Equality Officer	PMU Population Management Unit
DIRF Diversity Incident Reporting Form	P-NOMIS Prison-National Offender Management Information System
DPSM Developing Prison Service Manager	PPO Persistent & Prolific Offender
EDR Earliest Date of Release	PRRRC Prisoner Race Relations Representative Committee
ERS Early Release Scheme	PRT Prison Reform Trust
ESOL English for Speakers of Other Languages	PSI/PSO Prison Service Instruction/Order
ETS Enhanced Thinking Skills	PSPI Public Sector Prison Industries
FN Foreign National	RAPt Rehabilitation for Addicted Prisoners Trust
FRS Facilitated Removal Scheme	R 45 Prison Rule 45 concerning segregation of prisoners
GOOD Good Order or Discipline	REAG Race and Equality Action Group
HACRO Herts Association for Care & Resettlement of Offenders	ROTL Release On Temporary Licence
HAWCs Health and Wellbeing Champions	RRMT Race Relations Management Team
HDC Home Detention Curfew	SED Sentence Expiry Date
HMCIP Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons	SIN Staff Information Notice
HMPS Her Majesty's Prison Service	SIPS Safety in Prison Supporters
IA Independent Adjudicator	SIR Security Information Report
IBAD Illicitly Brewed Alcohol Detection	SLA Service Level Agreement
ICAS Independent Complaints Advocacy Service	SMARG Segregation & Monitoring Review Group
ICT Information and Communication Technology	SMART Systematic Monitoring & Analysis of Race Equality Template
IDTS Integrated Drug Treatment Service	SMT Senior Management Team
IEP Incentives and Earned Privileges	SO Supervising Officer
IIP Investors in People	SPDR Staff Performance & Development Review
IMB Independent Monitoring Board	TOC Time Out of Cell
IR Intelligence Report	TOIL Time Off In Lieu
ISPP Indeterminate Sentence of Imprisonment for Public Protection	TSP Thinking Skills Programme
IT Information Technology	UKBA UK Border Agency
JLT John Laing Training	VC Virtual Campus
KPI/KPT Key Performance Indicator/Target	VDT Voluntary Drug Test
LINKs Local Involvement Networks	VEDS Voluntary Early Departure Scheme
LSC Learning & Skills Council	VO Visiting Order
MAPPA Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements	VR Violence Reduction
MDT Mandatory Drugs Testing	
MQPL Measuring the Quality of Prison Life	
MSL Minimum Staffing Level	