



Annual Report of the **Independent Monitoring Board**

at

HMP & YOI Downview

**for reporting Period
to 30 April 2017**

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Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody

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A Introductory Sections

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 or centre is situated.

The Board is specifically charged to:

- (1) satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody within its prison and the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release.
- (2) inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any 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

This report presents the findings of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP & YOI Downview (“Downview”) for the period 3 May 2016 to 30 April 2017. Downview, a closed prison for adult women and young offenders, reopened on 3 May 2016 after a non-operational period of 30 months. IMB evidence comes from observations made on visits, scrutiny of records and data, formal and informal contact with staff and prisoners, and prisoner applications.

Main judgements

Are prisoners treated fairly?

Overall prisoners receive fair treatment although the insufficient level of purposeful activities means that some prisoners are unoccupied or confined to their cell for longer periods than necessary (see paras 4.1, 9.1, 10.1, 10.2 & 10.3).

Are prisoners treated humanely?

We are satisfied that Downview has treated its prisoners humanely and justly during this reporting period.

Are prisoners prepared well for their release?

The prison and the agencies that work within it have programmes in place to prepare women for release. However, it is difficult to know at present how effective these programmes are as women are not followed up after they are released. The lack of purposeful activity cannot help with preparation for release (see paras 4.1, 9.1, 10.1, 10.2, 10.3 & Section 11).

Main Areas for Development

TO THE MINISTER

- The Board considers that the prison was given insufficient time to prepare accommodation and a full regime prior to re-opening. When the prison opened no education and very limited work was available. Some women were occupied with painting their own wings to make them habitable. Others had to wait to start work because appropriate kit and clothing – for example safety clothes – was unavailable. Also much of the available clothing was for men. The lack of time to properly prepare for re-opening has had knock-on effects for all aspects of prison life: facilities and the staffing team have had to be developed whilst the prison was taking in women. When the prison re-opened there was very limited purposeful activity and although the position has slowly improved over the course of the reporting period, it has been unable to keep pace with the increasing roll. The prison is still not running a full complement of purposeful activity, with some planned occupational activities unfortunately delayed both for administrative reasons outside of the prison’s control, and the inflexibility of the national works contract (see paras 4.1, 7.1, 9.1 and 10.2).

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

- Loss of property when women are transferred to Downview from other establishments is common and significant time and effort is taken by officers in following up missing items, which are sometimes of substantial emotional value. This is resource that could be better used elsewhere (see 7.4).
- The Board notes that a small but significant number of women at Downview are serving their sentences more than 100 miles from home. This makes it very difficult for families (including children) to visit. This situation affects particularly women with home addresses in Wales and the West Country (see 4.6).

TO THE GOVERNOR

- The Equality Action function requires further attention in the coming year to ensure that it is meeting the needs of all groups of prisoners, particularly those with protected characteristics (see 5.1).
- The shortage of some basic provisions such as towels and modesty and window curtains for decency and privacy should be addressed (see 7.3).
- The prison does not currently provide counselling for bereaved prisoners (see 8.7).
- The Board regrets the absence of therapeutic art, music or drama facilities which would enrich the lives of the women (see 9.6).
- The prison is disadvantaged in recruiting to teaching posts compared to local educational employers because Downview does not attract London weighting. HMP High Down, the adjacent prison, and the local further education college both offer London weighting (see 9.2).

TO THE PROVIDER of Education

- **Healthcare:** There is no dedicated cleaner with specialist training in healthcare. A trained specialist cleaner is required in our opinion as a matter of urgency (see 8.3).

Improvements

Downview was non-operational in the 30 months prior to this reporting period. As a result, there are no issues from previous years on which to report. In addition, the changes over the reporting year and lack of comparators mean that it is impossible to report on statistical trends in prison performance over the year.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

- 3.1 Downview is a closed prison for sentenced adult women and young offenders which reopened on 3 May 2016 following a non-operational period of 30 months. The majority of prisoners are adult women, with only a few young offenders.
- 3.2 It ceased operating on 28 October 2013 and at that time it was planned that the prison was to be re-opened to accommodate a mix of Category C and Category D adult male prisoners. These plans were reviewed early in 2016 because of the consequential pressure on accommodation within the female estate following the decision to close down HMP Holloway. As a result it was announced that HMP & YOI Downview would re-open as a closed prison for women, with a potential occupation date of August 2016. This was subsequently brought forward to May 2016, to accommodate the expedited closure of HMP Holloway. The prison staff teams and facilities had to be re-developed and operationalised very quickly, drawing on previous Downview staff and new recruits. There was a change of Governor shortly after re-opening. Much of the accommodation required extensive refurbishment, and the prison increased its prisoner roll quickly. As a result of these multiple pressures, many aspects of the regime had to be developed whilst the prison was taking in women. This report and the findings included in it should be read in this light.
- 3.3 The prison's Operational Capacity was 315 at the end of the reporting period. Of the current population, approximately 50 are Foreign National prisoners. Most of the accommodation is Victorian, built in 1872, (the prison used to be the nurses' accommodation for Banstead Hospital), but all blocks have been upgraded and accommodation is exclusively one prisoner per cell. Towards the end of the reporting year, the prison designated Wings for specific needs such as induction, methadone treatment, employed/unemployed prisoners and an enhanced category floor on one of the main Wings. D Wing is dedicated to enhanced category prisoners who are suitable for open conditions. E Wing, a purpose built block to accommodate young offenders, is currently unoccupied pending re-development as a Community Health and Wellbeing Centre.
- 3.4 Works and maintenance at the prison are carried out by Carillion. Healthcare is provided by Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust, with drug and addiction treatment by RAPt. Education facilities are provided by NOVUS. Resettlement support is provided through the London Community Rehabilitation Company. A number of charities offer support services within Downview, including PACT, Women in Prison, Working Chance, Shannon Trust, Storybook Mums, the Women's Institute, the Samaritans (Listener Scheme), Koestler Trust, Hibiscus, Fine Cell Work, and St. Mungo's.

B Evidence sections 4 – 11

4 SAFETY

- 4.1 The prison has put much emphasis on improving the regime and the offer of purposeful activity through this reporting year. When the prison re-opened the education classrooms were unusable: staff were not in post to plan and deliver the education requirements (courses and workshop/classroom configuration) and contracts were not in place to enable work to be carried out. Very limited work was available. Some women were occupied with painting their own Wings to make them habitable. Others had to wait to start work because appropriate kit and clothing – for example safety clothes – was unavailable. Much of the available clothing was for male prisoners. These combined factors left women, especially those who had experienced a full regime elsewhere, angry and frustrated with the regime. For example, the prison received 95 complaints in July 2016 (roll: c. 200 prisoners); compared with around 50 complaints a month now (roll: over 300). Whilst the provision of purposeful activity has improved throughout the year (see “Education and Other Activities”), the difficulty of providing sufficient activity has been a constant theme in IMB discussions with management and prisoners. The IMB considers that the prison was given insufficient time to prepare a full regime prior to re-opening.
- 4.2 During this reporting period there were 17 incidents of self-harm which required a visit to Accident and Emergency (ten concerned just two women). On three occasions, women were admitted to hospital. There was one death in custody.
- 4.3 Immediately after the death in custody prisoners were extremely supportive of each other, and indeed the staff. Afterwards, prisoners were keen to assure the Ombudsman’s representative and the IMB that the staff had done everything they could to support the woman on her ACCT. The family was informed promptly and assisted on their visit to the prison. A memorial service in the chapel was well attended and a memorial in the prison gardens is now proposed. The inquest has not yet been scheduled and is awaiting publication of the Ombudsman’s report.
- 4.4 The Board has been impressed by the knowledge staff have of the women in their care. The Listener scheme was introduced halfway through this reporting period, and women are able to access Listeners or the Samaritans confidentially (without calling out) by sliding a card under their door stating which they require.
- 4.5 There has been a relatively low level of mandatory drug testing with 5.8% of tests proving positive. However, incidents involving evident drug use, and some abuse and trading of anti-psychotic drugs do occur.
- 4.6 The Board notes that a small but significant number of women at Downview are serving their sentences more than 100 miles from home. The Board is aware of over thirty women having home addresses over 100 road miles from Downview. Serving a sentence a long way from home makes it hard for families, particularly children, to visit. Travelling long distances may involve significant time and cost, limiting the number of visits women can receive. The problem appears particularly acute for women from Wales and the West Country, with a number of women having home addresses more than 150 miles and in one case over 180 miles from the prison. A number of women were transferred to Downview from HMP Eastwood Park (110 miles away) shortly before Christmas and one woman missed her farewell visit with her brother who was due to be adopted. Downview runs specially-targeted family visiting days on a monthly basis, enabling women to engage with their families in the welcoming and well-equipped Sports Hall. Good feedback has been heard by the prison and the IMB and, in one case, publicised in a letter to a national prison

newspaper. Women whose families live a significant distance away are far less likely to be able to take advantage of this facility.

- 4.7 Reception staff make an effort to be welcoming and helpful, and each new prisoner receives a welcome pack containing greetings cards with stamps, puzzle books, colouring pencils, pens, a notebook, playing cards and other items. The bags are made by the London College of Fashion workshop. However, a formal induction programme for new intakes to the prison only started towards the end of the reporting period.
- 4.8 In part to counter the limitations of purposeful activity outlined in 4.1, the prison has put significant resource into developing activity/distraction packs for women. These are frequently praised by prisoners. The Safer Custody administrator was nominated by a Listener and won a 'Safer Custody, Security and Care' award at the 'Women's Estate Celebrating Excellence' awards.

5 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS

- 5.1 The Equality Action Team (EAT) function has hardly got off the ground in the year following re-opening – only one meeting has taken place and this was poorly attended. As yet there are no prisoner groups set up to support those with protected characteristics and no regular issue of statistics relating to prisoner characteristics. The IMB has only received one application with discrimination as the subject (<1% total applications). The prison has only received 4 Discrimination Incident Reporting Forms during the reporting period, and the Board believes these are well managed and investigated.
- 5.2 There has only been a Foreign National (“FN”) Officer for the last three months of the reporting year. There is one Equality prisoner representative for the c. 50 FN prisoners – but speaking with FN prisoners this fact is not yet widely known.
- 5.3 The Board regrets that Downview no longer has a dedicated part time Immigration Officer (“IO”) and now only has the services of a “mobile” IO every other week who tends to be a different person each time. The benefit of having a permanent IO was that through face to face interviews he could build up trust and rapport which resulted in greater co-operation and understanding of where FNs stood in relation to Home Office rules.
- 5.4 At the end of the reporting period there were c. 80 prisoners with identified special needs and comments from prisoners with disabilities were very positive. Comments from FN prisoners were rather less so, the main issues related to reactions from other prisoners, and not treatment by staff. An increase in ethnic minority staffing has promoted a more inclusive environment.
- 5.5 The Incentives and Earned Privileges (“IEP”) scheme provides opportunities for prisoners to progress. Separate landings with additional facilities are available for enhanced prisoners and upgraded facilities. D Wing opened earlier this year providing accommodation for prisoners categorised as suitable for open conditions. Occupation of these areas is much sought after and once achieved encourages continued good behaviour. At the end of the reporting period a small minority of prisoners (less than 3%) were on a basic regime. The remainder were split between standard and enhanced.
- 5.6 During this reporting period 5 new members joined the Board, which has had the effect of widening our age range. Despite an extensive campaign we were unable to extend the gender or ethnic mix so the Board remains 100% white, with 2 males and 7 females.

6 SEGREGATION/CARE AND SEPARATION UNIT

- 6.1 Downview policy is to keep women in the Segregation Unit under Rule 45 Good Order or Discipline for as short a time as possible, sometimes only a few days. They are reviewed at very frequent intervals, sometimes at short notice, and this can make it difficult for Board members to monitor the process. However, reviews we have attended have been conducted fairly and with the object of returning women as speedily as possible to normal location.
- 6.2 Board members visit Segregation on every visit.
- 6.3 There were over 300 adjudications during the reporting period. The most common charges were 'disobeys any lawful order' (largely under rule 51(22)), 'has in her possession any authorised article, or a greater quantity of any article than she is authorised to have' (51(12)), 'uses threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour' (mostly rule 51(20)) and assault (51(1)).
- 6.4 Women kept in Segregation on Cellular Confinement punishment may nonetheless take advantage of any improvement courses on which they are enrolled – for example mental health support courses – where possible.
- 6.5 During the reporting period there has been only one Segregation Monitoring and Review Group meeting.

7 ACCOMMODATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 7.1 When the prison re-opened the accommodation still required significant work: thirty of the initial prisoners transferred to Downview were occupied with painting A and B Wings as this was not able to be done before the prison was re-opened. Considerable work needed to be done to replace windows and upgrade rooms to make them habitable.
- 7.2 When the prison re-opened there were considerable problems arising from only men's kit and clothing being available, as well as a shortage of work and safety clothes highlighted in 4.1.
- 7.3 There remains a shortage of towels and of appropriate modesty (lavatory screening) and window curtains for prisoners who want them. Curtains should be available for decency and to screen windows easily visible from outside, and facility should be in place to enable them to be fitted promptly when required.
- 7.4 Property loss and control is a common problem, especially for women arriving from other prisons. The Board has received more applications which fall under category "Property during transfer or in another establishment or location" than any other category; applications in this category account for around 20% of the total received by the Board this year. It is unhelpful that different prisons operate different property volume controls and clothing rules, and distressing to women when they have to put property into storage rather than keep it in hand. Loss of property when women are transferred to Downview from other establishments is common: reception staff estimate that 10 – 20% of new arrivals are missing some property following transfer. Significant time and effort is taken by officers in following up missing items, which are sometimes of substantial emotional value. This is resource that could be better used elsewhere.
- 7.5 The nature of the accommodation can present problems: the prison is keen to introduce incentives such as microwaves and fridges on the landing for enhanced IEP prisoners; this requires additional works to provide sufficient power for the appliances. Similarly, there was an issue with damp on one wing which was keeping rooms out of use.

- 8.1 Healthcare is equally available to all prisoners and provided in line with National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance, and the Board considers the provision to be good. Prescriptions are obtained without delay, and anti-psychotic medication is now provided in liquid form making it harder to abuse or sell. This increases the opportunity for women to have in-possession medication, as they would do in the community.
- 8.2 Off-site inpatient care is available according to need. However, the organisation of attendance at outside hospitals is done through the one healthcare administration officer, with no effective cover during leave and possible illness. Although a prisoner is told that a specialist clinic appointment has been made, they are not told when it will be until the actual morning, for security reasons. If gynaecological appointments could be provided for within the prison it would reduce escort and security requirements.
- 8.3 The Board has been concerned for some time that there is no dedicated cleaner for healthcare. This raises risk of cross-infection given the specialist requirements of cleaning in a clinical setting. The Board understands that the appointment has to be made through Carillion, and it has been raised on multiple occasions. This matter is critical.
- 8.4 Mental Health provision has 'In Reach' and 'Options' available, but no longer has a 1:1 domestic violence counselling service, as funding for this service has ended. This is a serious loss for the prison. In addition, there is no service and treatment pathway for prisoners with dementia, cognitive impairment or ADHD.
- 8.5 The prison has been unable to recruit a psychiatrist and services are provided by a locum at significant cost. The GPs are unable to refer all the women they would wish to for psychiatric services.
- 8.6 Evidence (from talking to prisoners individually; within groups and feedback from healthcare) suggests there is a need for prisoners to access support for 'low-level' conditions such as anxiety and low mood, being conditions or states of mind not serious enough to meet the threshold for In Reach support, but estimated to affect about 90% of prisoners at some time.
- 8.7 The prison currently offers no bereavement counselling. There have been occasions where prisoners would have benefitted from such counselling.

- 9.1 Education includes basic functional skills and vocational pathways with embedded English, Maths and ICT requirements. For the earlier part of the reporting year, only basic numeracy and literacy were offered. Education and vocational training were phased in when rooms and facilities become available. Some vocational programmes have been put back because of significant delays in carrying out facilities installations and works by Carillion. For example, the prison re-opened in May 2016, but the hair and beauty workshop (offering up to level 3 study) and catering workshops (offering level 1 and 2 qualifications) only opened in March/April 2017. This is despite the equipment required for the workshop being available on site at Downview, having been transferred in from HMP Holloway. These delays have limited the range of progression opportunities open to women. Some women chose to remain unemployed until the facilities for their preferred training were available.
- 9.2 Recruitment to teaching posts has proved difficult because the posts do not attract London weighting. They are therefore not locally competitive. The IMB understands that positions at both HMP High Down (on an adjacent site to Downview), HMP Bronzefield (not local but similarly located on the outskirts of London) and the local further education college do attract London weighting. For one recent post, the education manager reports that 13 applications were received, five applicants were shortlisted, two confirmed for interview, one attended and the position was eventually filled by an individual recruited from another prison. The Board understands that HMPPS is on its third recruitment drive for an industrial cleaning teacher.
- 9.3 Education is incentivised by higher rates of pay than other activities with additional rewards for achievement.
- 9.4 Distance learning is increasingly popular, but not provided for within existing education contracts. The education department is nonetheless providing some support but this is resource-intensive and not a long-term solution.
- 9.5 The library made over 1000 loans in the first eight months, and provides a very active set of extra-curricular offers including reading support, writing groups and author visits. These appear from sign-up sheets to be popular and well-attended. Follow-up work is apparent in the education department and within the prisoner-produced newsletter.
- 9.6 The Board regrets during the period of this report the absence of therapeutic art, music or drama facilities which would enrich the lives of the women.

10 WORK, VOCATIONAL TRAINING and EMPLOYMENT

- 10.1 Work and vocational training have a strong focus on progression tailored towards women's career goals. This is supported by work on soft skills evaluated by the prison as well as qualifications and work experience. Some offers – for example a programme to encourage entrepreneurship – include post-release support.
- 10.2 Three workshop spaces still require development to bring them into use and jobs into the prison, and have been set back by administrative and financial delays. For example, the Clink catering unit which will offer both work and ROTL opportunities has been heavily delayed. The Board understands that the delay has been caused by administrative formalities which are outside the prison's control. The Board is concerned that this opportunity has not got off the ground, despite funding being available.
- 10.3 At the end of the reporting period, approximately 25% of prisoners were out of work (76 women, which will include a small number awaiting induction). The Governor's stated ambition is for 100% of women to be in employment or education. Some activities are seasonal in nature – for example with greater numbers of roles in gardens during the spring and summer months – and the number of posts in these roles will reduce later in the calendar year. Development of the remaining workshop spaces and further opportunities for purposeful activity should be prioritised.
- 10.4 The prison offers rewards such as barista coffees from the staff mess and beauty treatments in the Hair and Beauty workshop for progress in work and education.

11 RESETTLEMENT PREPARATION

- 11.1 The prison has introduced free-flow, offering women greater independence and responsibility for managing their appointments with different functions (for example, education, healthcare). The Board has observed that this has had the added benefit of creating a more positive atmosphere within the prison and minimises the time women are away from education or work.
- 11.2 A revised regime was introduced towards the end of this reporting period with longer morning and afternoon activity sessions. Whilst not yet replicating a full working day, this allows for six hours of purposeful activity daily: an additional hour on the original regime.
- 11.3 Offender management and resettlement planning are well coordinated and this collaboration has continued after release between Probation Services and the London Community Rehabilitation Company (“CRC”).
- 11.4 Reducing Reoffending has three functions:
- Services – co-ordinating education, training and employment programming within the prison.
 - Community Engagement – engaging outside business partners to provide workshops and counselling inside, and with finding suitable employments for prisoners outside both on temporary licence (ROTL) and after release.
 - Community Rehabilitation – in cooperation with the CRC, coordinating the activities of professional, charitable and volunteer services both within the prison and ‘through the gate’ into the community.
- 11.5 The prison works with the national charity ‘Working Chance’ which claims an 82% success rate in sustaining ex-prisoner work placements for 6 months or more. The charity trained two prisoner peer workers during the reporting year.
- 11.6 Release on Temporary Licence is an important factor in preparing prisoners for life after prison. The Governor has determined to make ROTL a genuine living and working experience for prisoners eligible for open conditions and the prison has made steady progress towards having women out on ROTL through the reporting period.

C Section – Work of Board

- The Board meets monthly. Whenever possible, the Governor or a Deputy Governor attends to inform the Board of developments in the prison and respond to observations the Board has made during rota visits.
- During this reporting period, the Board has conducted rota visits weekly. Rota visits cover all aspects of prison life. They involve visiting core areas and interacting with both prisoners and staff. Board members each have special interest areas and attend meetings to support this function.
- Applications are taken once a week. They are received in writing, and prisoners are always seen.
- The Board attends Segregation Reviews and Adjudications as far as is possible.
- The Board has been through a period of change this year with the recruitment of five (now four) new members shortly after the prison re-opened. This has put extra pressure on existing members both in terms of carrying out core duties and training probationary members.
- Board members receive some training at Board meetings when prison staff attend to discuss specific issues. Members also attend national training courses. Board members have been unable to attend staff training as there was no staff training schedule as of 30 April 2017. Each new Board member is mentored. The Board is reviewing its ways of working moving into the next reporting period, drawing on best practice elsewhere and with reference to both the requirements of the monitoring duties and the strengths of the Board members.
- The Board visited HMP Holloway (pre-closure) and, more recently, HMP & YOI Bronzefield to experience different environments, build relationships and exchange best practice with their IMB counterparts.

BOARD STATISTICS	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	14
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	8
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	9
Total number of visits to the Establishment	290
Total number of segregation reviews attended	16

D Section - Applications

Code	Subject	Current reporting year	Previous reporting year N/A
A	Accommodation including laundry, clothing, ablutions	4	
B	Discipline including adjudications, IEP, sanctions	0	
C	Equality	1	
D	Purposeful Activity including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	4	
E 1	Letters, visits, phones, public protection restrictions	9	
E 2	Finance including pay, private monies, spends	12	
F	Food and kitchens	2	
G	Health including physical, mental, social care	14	
H 1	Property within this establishment	13	
H 2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	23	
H 3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	0	
I	Sentence management including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-categorisation	9	
J	Staff/prisoner concerns including bullying	5	
K	Transfers	5	
	Total number of IMB applications	101	