



**Annual Report**  
of the  
**Independent Monitoring Board**  
at  
**HMP Bullingdon**

for reporting Year  
1 August 2016 to 30 June 2017

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*Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody*

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## A Sections 1 - 3

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### 1 STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB

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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.

The Board wishes to thank all the prison staff for their cooperation with the IMB, and in particular the Governing Governor, Mr Ian Blakeman.

## 2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This report presents the findings of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Bullingdon for the eleven-month period 1 August 2016 to 30 June 2017. The evidence on which it draws comes from observations made on visits, informal contact with prisoners and staff, information obtained when responding to applications from prisoners, attendance at formal meetings in the prison, and our scrutiny of a wide range of prison records and data.

### **Main judgements**

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#### **Are prisoners treated fairly?**

HMP Bullingdon operates with tight budgetary constraints and with a substantial and chronic shortage of staff (see below 4.6, 4.9, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 8.5, 8.6, 8.7, 11.1). Given these circumstances, the prison manages to run a less restricted regime than might be expected, and its largely predictable regime contributes to the fair treatment of most prisoners. Some new arrivals are treated unfairly because of lack of space for the number of vulnerable prisoners being held in the prison (see below 7.2). Prisoners requiring social care are not treated fairly because of the absence of suitable provision for them (see below 8.9). Inconsistent use of interpreting services (and a lack of readily available printed information for prisoners in languages other than English) means that the IMB cannot be confident that foreign national prisoners with limited facility in English are treated fairly (see below 5.3). Inadequacies in the maintenance and repair of prison facilities lead to unfairness in many areas of prison life. (See below 4.4, 6.8, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6, 7.7, 7.12, 8.3, 9.5, 10.4, 11.8.)

#### **Are prisoners treated humanely?**

Most prisoners are treated humanely. The IMB has grave concerns about the length of time that some prisoners remain in the SSCU (Segregation Unit), where they are held in what amounts to solitary confinement (see below 6.10). It questions whether having many prisoners doubled up in cells designed for only one occupant is humane (see below 7.1).

#### **Are prisoners prepared well for their release?**

Low attendance, particularly at adult learning, continues to be a matter of serious concern (see below 9.3), although the prison delivers successfully a widening range of educational and other activities. More work opportunities have been created, despite delays in installation of facilities (see below 9.5, 10.4), and take into account the nature of the local/regional job market. Although there have been successes and improvements in some areas of resettlement preparation, backlogs in processing cases persist in others. The churn of prisoners and staffing pressures are significant factors in this situation (see below 4.1, 11.1).

## **Main Areas for Development**

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### **TO THE MINISTER**

1. Staff shortages undermine the effectiveness of much of what the prison seeks to do, including holding prisoners safely and preparing them for release. (See below 4.4, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6, 7.7, 7.12.) How will the Minister take steps to address the issues of recruiting and retaining staff, both nationally and locally, recognising that many factors are outside the control of the prison service, as well as outside the control of governors and staff in individual prisons?
2. Will the Minister review ongoing problems associated with the repair of faults and the construction of new facilities at the prison? Neither the budget for fabric and repairs nor the number of staff and available resources of the facilities maintenance contractor seems adequate for the work that needs to be done, and delays have a negative impact on the rehabilitation of prisoners and have the potential to contribute to violence. (See below 4.4, 6.8, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6, 7.7, 7.12, 8.3, 9.5, 9.12, 10.4, 11.8.)
3. Will the Minister review the provision for elderly and for vulnerable prisoners in the prison service as a whole, bearing in mind their increasing numbers and the examples in this report (see below 7.2, 8.9) of unequal treatment for these groups?

### **TO THE PRISON SERVICE**

1. Staff shortages undermine the effectiveness of much of what the prison seeks to do, including holding prisoners safely and preparing them for release. (See below 4.4, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6, 7.7, 7.12). How will the Prison Service take steps to address the issues of recruiting and retaining staff, both nationally and locally, recognising that many factors are outside the control of governors and staff in prisons such as Bullingdon?
2. How will the Prison Service address the endemic and systemic losses of prisoners' property when they are moving between establishments, as well as within prisons? (See below 7.13, 7.14).

### **TO THE GOVERNOR**

1. How will the Governor ensure that targets are met for staff to receive SASH (suicide and self-harm) training, including ACCT management, and that such training makes an improvement to the use of ACCT and associated procedures (and therefore the safer custody of prisoners at risk of self harm or suicide) throughout the prison? (See below 4.13, 4.14, 4.18, 4.19, 4.20, 4.21, 5.5.)

## **Improvements**

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1. A ceremony celebrating the achievements of prisoners on educational courses and other activities, to which family members were invited, is a welcome initiative (see below 9.8).
2. Another welcome initiative is the introduction of the opportunity for all new prisoners to make a canteen purchase within 24 hours of arriving in the prison (see below 4.5).
3. The appointment of a Violence Reduction analyst has been a very positive step (see below, 4.3).
4. The development of a violence reduction rep scheme is welcome, but much remains to be done (see below 4.4).

### **3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON**

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HMP Bullingdon is a local and resettlement prison situated near Bicester in Oxfordshire and is part of the London and Thames Valley Region of the prison service. The courts that it serves include Oxford, Reading and Swindon Crown Courts and the Magistrates' Courts in Oxfordshire and Berkshire. It serves as a resettlement prison for the Thames Valley and for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. It also holds sex offenders under treatment, and also some young adults. These differing functions mean that it is a complex prison that faces a range of operational challenges.

Its Certified Normal Accommodation is 869, but it has an Operational Capacity of 1114 and often accommodates in excess of 1100 prisoners. In the eleven months of this reporting year it operated with an average occupancy of 1109 (compared with 1095 in 2015-16, 1100 in 2014-15, 1093 in 2013-14 and 1063 in 2012-13). Prisoners are often transferred at short notice in or out of the prison.

In June 2017 the prison had a staff establishment of 368, but 65 of these positions were unfilled.

### 4 SAFETY

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#### Reception and Induction

4.1 Safety screening for prisoners begins when they arrive in Reception and should be completed after they have moved to first night cells on the prison's induction unit. The turnover ('churn') in the prison is high: an average of 77 new prisoners arrive per week, so there are more than 300 new prisoners a month out of a total population of about 1100 men.

#### Violence Reduction

4.2 One of the Governor's stated priorities is improving safety in the prison, thus reducing violence and creating an environment more conducive for enabling prisoners to engage in purposeful activity and be prepared for release. A new 'OFF' ('Operation Front Foot') meeting has been established as a way of coordinating this work. Additional and recurrent funding for safety measures was made available to the prison towards the start of the reporting year. It has enabled the installation of CCTV on one residential wing, and the purchase of body worn video cameras for all officers on duty, although some officers seem resistant to using these cameras. Some of the funding has been used for the purchase of new conference telephones to improve access to interpreting services for foreign prisoners with little English.

4.3 Another significant initiative that this new funding has made possible is the appointment of a former prison officer to the newly created position of Violence Reduction Analyst. His role is to improve the analysis of all reported violence, to support victims and to identify perpetrators so that they may be challenged and face appropriate sanctions. Other staff are encouraged to support this work by reporting incidents of violence on a new reporting form (VR1).

4.4 One potentially significant development has been the employment of prisoners as Violence Reduction reps on wings. This scheme offers purposeful activity for reps and contributes to their preparation for release. Violence Reduction reps on wings can play an important part in identifying and responding to issues (e.g. frustrations arising from poor communication between the prison and prisoners, or from broken facilities such as showers and washing and drying machines) or diffusing confrontations before they result in violence. Unfortunately some of the reps have felt demoralised and disillusioned because the attendance of senior staff at their meetings has been low and sporadic, and some reps do not think that staff at all levels pay sufficient attention to what the reps say. The employment of prisoners as VR reps has much to offer, but it requires more support from prison staff if it is to become embedded in prison life and make the positive difference that it has the potential to achieve.

4.5 Other initiatives that contribute to the reduction of bullying, debt and associated violence include the introduction of a new way of delivering prisoners' canteen (items that prisoners can buy through the prison shop), and the facility for all new prisoners to make purchases within 24 hours of arriving in the prison. Both initiatives make it less likely that prisoners will need to borrow from others and fall into debt as a consequence, which has been a significant cause of violence and bullying in the prison.

4.6 Unfortunately, despite these initiatives, and despite better collection and use of data about violence, the level of violence in the prison has increased, and also the use of force by officers. One reason appears to be a change in the prisoner population, which has led to increased incidences of gang activity and the emergence of organised crime groups. Another factor is that continuing pressures on staff mean that officers are not always as visible on wings and landings as they might be during times when violence is known to peak. The use of drugs continues to be a significant factor, both because drugs such as Spice can cause aggressive and violent behaviour, and because the use of drugs can lead to debt and associated bullying and violence.

4.7 Last year we reported that experienced members of staff had spoken to the IMB about concerns for their own safety and that of others (both prisoners and staff) and that experienced members of the IMB shared those concerns. This remains the case. Further, data collected in a survey conducted by HMIP showed that more prisoners than at similar prisons and than at the time of the previous inspection stated that they felt unsafe in the prison (57% versus 51% and 44% respectively).

4.8 There are no alarm bells in interview rooms on the wings where members of staff can conduct private conversations with prisoners, but the IMB understands that they are usually found in equivalent spaces in other prisons. Two members of staff were taken hostage in one of these rooms earlier this year. The incident was quickly and safely resolved through the negotiating skills of trained staff and is one of many examples in which the professionalism of staff has diffused or averted a threatening and dangerous situation.

4.9 The prison's greatest asset remains its staff, and good relationships between prisoners and officers who know them can play an important role in keeping the prison safe and contributing to the rehabilitation of prisoners. But the limited number of available staff makes this difficult. On Wings A to D the prison tries to sustain a ratio of one officer to thirty prisoners when prisoners are unlocked during the day, but staff shortages mean that the ratio is often much higher. This makes it difficult for officers to develop meaningful relationships with prisoners with the consequence that it is more difficult for officers to anticipate or defuse potentially violent incidents before they arise, to be aware when vulnerable prisoners may be under increased pressure and consequent risk of self-harm or suicide, or to take a purposeful and active role in rehabilitation and planning for resettlement. The lack of an effective and functioning personal officer scheme remains a concern.

4.10 There have been occasions when IMB members have observed officers clustering in wing offices rather than interacting with prisoners on the wings. But there have also been many occasions when we have observed officers interacting skillfully and professionally with prisoners, and we are aware of many situations in which officers have shown courage and resolve in very difficult circumstances. Two officers from Bullingdon were finalists in the Prison Officer of the Year awards for 2017, in the second consecutive year that Bullingdon was represented at the finals. One of these officers also won the Princess Royal Award presented by the Butler Trust. Another officer received a Governor's Commendation for an outstanding act of bravery, and another officer was recognised for a swift intervention that saved a prisoner's life.

4.11 In the period June 2017 to May 2017 45 serving prisoners at Bullingdon received convictions for a variety of crimes committed in the prison, totaling 30 years of additional sentences. This outcome has been achieved through the work of the prison's on-site police team.

4.12 As noted above (see 4.6), substance misuse remains an issue of concern and has an impact on the safety of prisoners and on levels of bullying and violence in the jail.

## **Supporting prisoners at known risk of self harm and suicide**

4.13 One management emphasis throughout the reporting year, as in the previous year, has been on the need for all staff to be trained in using ACCT paperwork (Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork), and to make better use of associated procedures in seeking to support prisoners who self harm and/or may be at known risk of suicide. The prison gives training in ACCT procedures, but for much of the reporting year the number of staff that took part was low. Prison records show that 217 members of staff trained in the period 4 May 2014 to 4 May 2017. As of 4 May this year only 42 out of 417 staff had training that was in date whereas 375 had training that was out of date. On 19 May the prison introduced new SASH (suicide and self-harm) training. This is a six-module course. It includes training in ACCT procedures, as well as related issues such as how to recognize risk and trigger factors for suicide and self-harm, how to speak to prisoners who are identified to be at risk, and how to refer them for specialist support (e.g. to the mental health team). By the end of June 8 members of staff (five trainers, and three members of the safer custody team had completed all six modules, and more than 100 members of staff had completed one module. All staff are to be trained in all six modules by March 2019, and to have refresher training every three years, and a target plan has been put in place to achieve this goal.

4.14 One point emphasised through training sessions and through prison communications such as notices to staff and the governor's newsletters is the need to ensure that ACCT reviews are interdisciplinary (i.e. involving healthcare and chaplaincy and other staff involved in supporting the prisoner on the ACCT, not just officers on his wing). Another is that ACCT reviewers need to take into account all known risk factors and all available data (using interpreting services if a prisoner has poor command of English), and not just a prisoner's own self assessment of how he may be feeling at a particular time. More improvement is required in the use of ACCTs, as noted by the HMIP inspection team who visited the prison in May 2017, by the HMIP inspection team who visited in June 2015, and also reflected in reports by the Prison and Probation Ombudsman (on which see below 4.19, 4.20, 4.21).

4.15 During the eleven months of the current reporting year 542 ACCT files were opened on prisoners considered to be at the risk of self-harm or suicide. This compares with 656 ACCT files opened in the twelve months of the previous reporting year.

## **Deaths in Custody**

4.16 During the reporting year there were two deaths in custody; one man died on 15 March 2017 and another man died on 24 April 2017. In the previous year there were seven deaths. Shortly after every death in custody the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) conducts an investigation, but its report is not made public until after the Coroner's Court has reached a conclusion on the circumstances of the death. The Coroner's Court has yet to reach a conclusion on the circumstances of the two deaths in the current year.

4.17 During the reporting year the PPO has published on its website six reports relating to deaths in custody at Bullingdon in the period January 2014 to October 2015, and one relating to a death in September 2011.

4.18 One report, posted online on 6 July 2016, refers to the self-inflicted death of a man who was found hanged in his cell on 6 May 2015. The Ombudsman expressed concerns that prison staff had not made use of a professional interpreting service, although the prisoner spoke little English, and did not assess whether he was at risk of self-harm and suicide, although he had a number of known risk factors. He also expressed concern that the emergency response after the man was found hanged was chaotic and that liaison with his family was deficient.

The Ombudsman made a number of recommendations, including better use of accredited telephone interpreting services, the appointment of a foreign national coordinator, regular meetings of foreign national prisoner forums, and the availability of translated material on every residential unit in line with local policy.

4.19 Another report, posted online 16 December 2016, refers to the self-inflicted death of a man who was found hanged in his cell on 1 October 2015. The Ombudsman was not satisfied that the prison's suicide and self-harm prevention procedures had operated effectively to support the prisoner, and that his monitoring ended without any consultation with mental health staff who were involved in his care. He also noted, however, that prior to the man's death there was little indication that he was at imminent and high risk of suicide, and he did not consider that staff could reasonably have anticipated or prevented his actions, which were sudden and unexpected. In addition, the Ombudsman found that the prison did not follow national instructions for informing and supporting families after a death in custody. The Ombudsman made a number of recommendations, including better use of ACCT procedures, and better family liaison, each in accordance with national policy.

4.20 Another report, posted online on 8 March 2017, refers to the self-inflicted death of a man who was found hanged in his cell on 11 December 2015. The Ombudsman found that the prison's suicide prevention procedures did not operate fully effectively, but although the prisoner had a long-term risk of suicide, and should have received better support from mental health services at the prison, he appeared to have settled at Bullingdon and there was little to indicate to staff that he was at imminent and high risk at the time of his death. The Ombudsman made a number of recommendations, including the need for better use of ACCT procedures (including the involvement of healthcare staff as well as prison officers in reviews), and that whenever a cell door is unlocked, staff should satisfy themselves of the safety of the prisoner, and that there are no immediate issues that need attention.

4.21 Another report, posted online on 20 April 2017, refers to the self-inflicted death of a man who was found hanged in his cell on 13 January 2014. The Ombudsman found that some of the prison's suicide and self-harm procedures could have been implemented more effectively. However he was satisfied that the man was generally well supported at Bullingdon and that it would have been very difficult to predict his actions or to prevent his death. The Ombudsman's recommendations included making better use of ACCT procedures, in line with national guidelines.

### Protected characteristics

5.1 More detailed monitoring information is now available via the Equalities Monitoring Tool (EMT); the data is analysed at the meetings of the Bullingdon Equalities Action Group (BEAT). Forums covering six 'protected characteristics' (age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation) involve men from across the prison; the prison considers issues raised at these forums alongside the quantitative data that it collects.

5.2 The BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) population comprised about a quarter of the prison's population during the reporting year. The prisoners present at the BME forum in March felt that race was not an issue at Bullingdon.

5.3 Foreign national prisoners (FNP), comprising some 40 nationalities, make up about 10% of the population. A telephone-based interpreting service is available in a range of languages. The new conference-calling equipment did not become operational until February. The equipment is still not consistently used across the prison; on some wings it is used barely twice a month. The new provider ('Big Word') also offers a useful translation service for documents. Healthcare uses a different provider, 'Language Line'. Use of this service fluctuates according to need, but is on average about six times a month. Face-to-face interpreting can be arranged for more complex cases. Following a suggestion at the FNP forum a prisoner is being employed to compile a pack of basic information related to the needs of FNP.

5.4 Staff in the prison library regularly review the range of publications held in languages other than English in the light of demand and as the pattern of languages spoken by prisoners changes.

5.5 There are opportunities for corporate and personal worship for members of all faiths represented in the prison. The most represented (Buddhist, Christian, Jehovah's Witnesses, Muslim, Sikh) have a weekly meeting with their faith chaplain; other faith groups meet monthly. The two full-time chaplains are supported by a number of sessional chaplains drawn from a range of world faiths and different Christian traditions, and by volunteers. Chaplains engage not only in faith-specific work but also in a wide range of activity in support of the welfare of prisoners and staff. The chaplaincy team aims to see all new prisoners within 24 hours of their arrival in the prison, and a Chaplain makes daily visits to the Healthcare Unit and the SSCU (Segregation/Care and Separation Unit), and to Reception to see prisoners who are about to be discharged. Where possible, chaplains visit prisoners on an open ACCT on a daily basis, although officers do not involve chaplains in ACCT reviews as often as they might. There is more work than the number of chaplains are able to do; pressures on their time mean that it is not easy for them to cover their regular duties, let alone to take initiatives in support of the rehabilitation and resettlement of prisoners.

5.6 About 12% of prisoners at Bullingdon are over the age of 50; they are defined as 'older' because they are more likely than men on the outside to suffer from poor health. In May 2017, 30 prisoners were aged 60-69 and 21 aged over 70.

5.7 About a third of the population (376 in May 2017) is in the age range 21-29. In line with national trends, prisoners in this age group are most likely to face an adjudication charge (i.e. a charge for an alleged offence, which is heard in the prison before a governor or a judge). The number of 'young adults' (aged 18-20), which stood at 63 in May, fluctuates and has been less than 20. The policy of a young adult not sharing a cell with an older prisoner is being reviewed as an older prisoner can have a steady influence on a younger one.

5.8. In June 2017 about a third of prisoners had a stated disability of some kind; of these men about one in three had more than one recorded disability.

5.9 Staff receive little training addressed at supporting prisoners with disabilities. One training course that did take place was about raising awareness of autism. The provider was an outside organisation called Autism Oxford. The training provided valuable insights into autism, not least because the main presenters were speaking from their experience as people with autism.

5.10 Staff are reminded of the need to be aware of the Care and Management of Transsexual Prisoners; care plans are in place to ensure that the needs of individual transgender prisoners (three in May 2017) are respected.

5.11 The point has been made in the LGBT forum that in a prison with a high churn, gay men are less likely to 'come out'. Available monitoring data suggest that LGBT groups are not disadvantaged, but the sample on which these data rest may be incomplete.

## **Visits**

5.12 The visits booking office is now fully staffed and response times are met. When complaints are received, they tend to arise from incomplete understanding of entitlements and procedures. Applications for visits are now made predominantly via email, but telephone bookings can be taken on weekdays: this is important for older relatives unfamiliar with IT or those without computer access. The bookings line can get busy, and callers may have to wait for a response. The Visitors' Centre, located just outside the prison, provides good support for visitors as they arrive. Given Bullingdon's location, this is particularly important for those families who are dependent on public transport and may have long waits before they can enter the prison.

## **Family Days**

5.13 Six family days were organised during the reporting year. These are much appreciated by prisoners and their families. Each family has its own space and much more time to spend together than on an ordinary visit. Two of the family days were specifically for E Wing prisoners.

## 6 SEGREGATION/CARE AND SEPARATION UNIT (SSCU)

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6.1 The Prison has identified the SSCU (Segregation/Care and Separation Unit) as one of its 'six to fix' priority areas. The goals that it seeks to meet in the SSCU include (1) making better use of the unit and positively challenging men who refuse to locate on the wings and (2) improved procedures relating to GOOD boards (on which see below 6.6) and adjudications (on which see below 6.7).

6.2 The SSCU continues to face many of the same challenges that we noted last year. A new Custodial Manager is now in place, and this appointment, together with the identification of the SSCU as one of the prison's current 'six to fix' suggests that the management of this unit should improve. One recent encouraging sign of progress is the introduction of SSCU action plans, but their use to date has been sporadic, and goals that they contain and the extent to which they are attained need to be monitored to assess how effective they will be.

6.3 The shortage of staff across the prison has a significant bearing on the operation of the SSCU as elsewhere. The large number of adjudications that take place in the SSCU in the morning take up a great deal of officers' time, and the time that officers spend preparing for and attending adjudications is time when they are not available for custodial duties with prisoners being held in cells in the unit.

6.4 One incident in the SSCU illustrates the difficult judgments that staff may need to make when their numbers are short. Two IMB members were on the landing with a governor and an officer, at a time when there were only two officers on the unit. Normally a cell door should not be opened with only two officers present in SSCU, but the governor and officer made the judgment that they needed to open cell doors in order to facilitate a governor's daily round of the SSCU. One prisoner whose cell was opened became agitated and volatile, because he was due to see a visitor in the Visits Hall. At this point the governor and officer conducting the round decided that one of the only two officers present should escort the prisoner to the Visits Hall, on the basis that it was better and less risky to enable the prisoner to attend his visit rather than to leave him to become frustrated and angry and possibly violent in his cell. No difficulties ensued, but the shortage of staff in the prison put both staff and a prisoner in a difficult and risky situation that they should not have had to face.

6.5 Staff shortages may account in part but not entirely for some deficiencies in routine administration in the SSCU. For most of the reporting year, the Board has not been formally informed of new arrivals in the SSCU. However, by routinely visiting the unit, IMB members have been able to undertake their obligation to see each prisoner within 72 hours of his arrival, except on very rare occasions. The Board is pleased to report that as of June 2017 the situation is improving, albeit from a very low base, and we are now being informed more regularly of new arrivals in the unit.

6.6 There have been inconsistencies in the preparation of paperwork for GOOD boards, and the times at which they have been held has been erratic. A new schedule for GOOD boards has been instituted with effect from 1 July 2017, and we hope that this will mean that none of those who attend will be kept waiting for long periods of time because the governor chairing the boards has been detained elsewhere in the prison. The quality of paperwork for GOOD boards needs to be improved, but the IMB has often been impressed with the way in which governors have dealt with prisoners whom they have seen at these boards, and with the ways in which they have worked to reduce the number of prisoners wishing to stay in the SSCU for their own protection (e.g. because of fears resulting from being in debt, or because of gang activity) and refusing to relocate to normal accommodation in the prison. During the reporting year the IMB attended 224 GOOD boards.

6.7 Paperwork relating to adjudications also needs to be improved; too many prisoners are being put on charges for adjudication when they could be dealt with in more effective ways, and too many adjudications are being dismissed because paperwork is not prepared on time or witnesses are not able to attend adjudications.

6.8 The level of occupancy has been high throughout much of the year, and pressure on the amount of accommodation has been exacerbated by delays in repairing cells damaged by prisoners.

6.9 One prisoner has been on a dirty protest since mid January. The way in which staff have responded to this one prisoner is indicative of the professionalism and resolve that we often observe among officers on the unit, even when they are dealing with difficult and provocative prisoners.

6.10 The IMB is concerned about the length of time that some prisoners have spent in the SSCU, where they are in effect in solitary confinement and locked up most of the day. As of the end of May there were four prisoners who had been on the unit for over 84 days and a further four had been there over 42 days. At the end of June one prisoner had been there 163 days, one prisoner had been there 147 days, one prisoner had been there 91 days, and one prisoner had been there 81 days. The IMB repeats its concern that wherever possible prisoners should not remain in the SSCU for long periods, even when they say that they wish to remain and are reluctant to engage with reasonable attempts to return them to normal location. It supports initiatives to relocate long-stay prisoners back to the wings where possible or their removal to other establishments where they may go on normal location, but recognizes the considerable challenges that this presents.

### Prison Environment

7.1 Bullingdon is overcrowded. It was designed to hold 869 prisoners, but frequently comes near or reaches its permitted maximum ('operational capacity') of 1114. About 80% of the 521 cells designed for single occupancy are occupied by two prisoners. This puts increased pressure on communal spaces and facilities, and has a particular impact on the fair and decent treatment of prisoners who are doubled up in cells designed for single use. Prisoners usually eat their meals in cells, and there is little or inadequate screening around the toilet in the cell. Many cells have damaged or insufficient furniture (e.g. missing toilet seats).

7.2 A lack of space on the wing where vulnerable prisoners (mainly sex offenders) are housed means that on their arrival in the prison these men spend much longer than other prisoners on the spur for new arrivals, where they are locked in their cells for most of the day. Their occupancy of these cells means that they are not available for other newly arrived prisoners who are not vulnerable prisoners and who may be moved from the induction wing to other wings before they have had time to acclimatise to prison life since there not enough cells for them on the induction wing. This is unfair for these vulnerable prisoners who are kept locked up for long periods while on the induction wing, and for other prisoners who are moved very quickly to other wings. This is the second year in which the IMB has noted in its annual report its concerns about the use of another wing as an overspill unit for vulnerable prisoners.

7.3 May 2017 was the twenty-fifth anniversary of the opening of the prison. Its buildings and other facilities are in heavy use and there are many signs of general dilapidation through wear and tear that are greater than the maintenance budget can address. In March 2017 the IMB wrote to the Ministry of Justice about the poor performance of Carillion, who are contracted to carry out maintenance work in the prison. There have been some improvements to their performance, but many problems remain, and have the potential to cause frustrations that may contribute to conflict and violence when prisoners are aggrieved because they are not treated fairly.

7.4 One area of concern is the showers, none of which have screens or any other means of offering privacy to prisoners using them. As of June 2017 two shower rooms on E wing did not have working extractor fans with the result that mould has spread across the ceiling and the doors are warped by condensation. The log book on the Wing shows that the problem was first reported in June 2015, and has been reported again at least four times, most recently on 3 March 2017 when the damaged door was reported in addition to the damaged extractor fan. This is an example of substandard maintenance that impinges on fair and decent treatment of prisoners, and the IMB has raised this issue with the Carillion manager at Bullingdon.

7.5 Another area of concern is to do with serveries on wings. For example, the IMB noted in August 2016 that there were no spitguards on the server in F1; they were still missing at the end of the reporting year. This is a breach of food hygiene regulations and impacts on fair and decent treatment of prisoners when they are served their meals.

7.6 Washing and drying machines have been out of order throughout the prison for much of the year. For example, faults on D wing were first reported in December 2016, and again in February and March. Plans have been made for the replacement or repair of machines across the prison, and the work is due to take place in summer 2017 (after the end of the reporting year). Inadequate washing and drying facilities impact on the decency with which prisoners

are treated. It is also a safety issue because clothing and towels hung out to dry on landing handrails can obscure sight lines along the landings (providing cover for violence). Items hung out to dry may also easily be stolen, which may also lead to violence and bullying.

7.7 The overall standard of cleanliness within the prison buildings is reasonable, but there is often litter in the grounds, and a continuing problem with rats. The deployment of prisoners to clean outside areas and the use of rat traps in the grounds increased notably in the period running up to the HMIP inspection in May, and we hope that this can be maintained.

7.8 Outside every cell there should be a cell card that displays the name, photograph and number of the prisoner or prisoners in each cell. Cell cards are important for security because they allow officers or others attending a cell to be sure that they know to whom they are speaking. The IMB noticed the absence of a significant number of cell cards and decided to monitor this regularly from March 2017. Whilst it was evident that large variations existed between the six residential units, a consistent pattern emerged overall with fewer than 50% of cells holding an identity card across the prison. On certain wings the incidence was as low as 10% on the occasions that we checked. The IMB has raised this matter with the prison on several occasions.

## **Food**

7.9 The contractor who provides Catering services in the prison is the Compass Group. Its head chef at Bullingdon was awarded the Public Sector Chef Award from the Craft Guild of Chefs, and is a member of the English Culinary Olympic Team. Professional caterers are assisted by prisoners who are employed to work in the kitchens. The optimal number is eighteen prisoners each morning and afternoon, but as of June there were only fifteen workers on each shift, as had been the case for several months. This has an impact on the food that can be served, as low numbers mean that the menu has to be changed to include more readymade and frozen food. It is also a lost opportunity to engage more prisoners in purposeful employment and to help to prepare them for release.

7.10 The amount spent on food stands at £2.02 per prisoner per day, and has not been changed since 2014. Special diets are catered for (vegetarian, vegan, gluten free, halal, etc) but there is no additional budget for any extra costs associated with these diets. Prisoners are provided with a breakfast pack on the evening of the preceding day. Lunch is a hot or cold snack meal with soup and fruit or yoghurt. A hot cooked supper (with a choice of five options) is provided in the evening. Prisoners choose menus a week in advance and the menu cycle is repeated every four weeks.

7.11 The number of written applications to the IMB concerning food is low (16 out of a total of 759 received) but prisoners complain frequently to IMB members observing lunches about both the quantity and quality of the meal provided at lunchtime. Our rota reports record a number of occasions at lunches when we observed that bread was mouldy, fruit was damaged, rotten or mouldy, or bread or other food was still frozen when it was being served, and officers on duty have confirmed that this is not uncommon. The addition of soup to the lunch menu has been a positive initiative, and hot evening meals are generally good, and include a choice of five options. The offering for breakfast is very meagre. There are no communal dining spaces and most meals are eaten in cells.

## **Property**

7.13 Complaints about missing property are consistently the most numerous applications received by the Board (22%, which is 165 out of 759 applications this year). Occasions when

the Prison Service may be responsible for the loss of a prisoner's property include during transit from one prison to another, or when a prisoner is moved from normal location within a prison to the SSCU (since the move is usually made at short notice, and sometimes under restraint, and a prisoner's property cannot be made secure if his cell is shared with another prisoner and therefore may be left open for a time after he has been removed).

7.14 During the eleven months of the reporting year Bullingdon paid a total of almost £4300 in compensation to prisoners whose property had been lost or damaged when the prison did not follow its own procedures (or could not demonstrate that it had done so). The total amount of compensation paid to prisoners (for the loss of property, for person injury claims, and for other reasons) was almost £36 000. The total amount spent on compensation (including compensation awarded, plus legal fees and other costs) was approximately £143 000. This expenditure comes from the prison's own budget, and does not include costs incurred by the Treasury solicitors who act for the Prison Service.

## **8 HEALTHCARE (including mental health and social care)**

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8.1 New governance arrangements have been put in place for healthcare within the prison. A Local Delivery Board was established in February 2017 and has met monthly since then. Its purpose is to ensure that standards required by NHS Commissioners are being met, and to provide closer working arrangements between the Commissioners, the healthcare providers and the prison. The main healthcare providers are Care UK, who provide primary health services. Secondary mental health services are subcontracted to South Staffordshire and Shropshire NHS Foundation Trust. GP services are sub-contracted to Cotswolds Medicare Ltd. Dentistry services are sub-contacted to Time for Teeth.

8.2 Care UK were appointed to provide primary healthcare in April 2016. Recruitment of staff has been a major challenge. Care UK inherited a shortage of 32.6 FTE posts from the previous provider, and had reduced this number to 15 by May 2017. Remaining vacancies are filled by regular agency staff. However the Senior Nurse post and Senior Mental Health Nurse post have now been recruited on a permanent basis. The substance misuse team has recently filled three outstanding vacancies. In order to better manage and respond to 'in-house' emergency calls a qualified paramedic has also been recruited.

8.3 As reported in the previous Annual Report cleanliness in the In-patients unit has remained an ongoing concern; NHS standards are still not being met. A quotation from Carillion for an uplift in the cleaning contract is awaited. Delays in repairs meant that some cells were out of use for much of the reporting year. Carillion took five months to repair the prison's only constant watch cell, which led to sustained difficulties when constant watch prisoners had to be monitored elsewhere.

8.4 The IMB has very significant concerns about the administration of the Healthcare complaint system. Many prisoners are not aware that they need to complain directly to Healthcare rather than go through the prison complaints system. This means a delay in the process when the prison returns the complaint form to the prisoner who sent it. Healthcare often has a backlog of complaints so there are usually unacceptable delays between them receiving and responding to any complaint. For example, one complaint sent on April 13 was acknowledged on April 18, and due for response by May 10. No response had been sent by June 2. Care UK's written account of its appeal process is so badly drafted as to be all but incomprehensible.

8.5 There is often only one prison officer on duty in the inpatients landing of the Healthcare Unit. This has led to restrictions in the daily regimes for patients whose cells may only be unlocked when three officers are present. Patients have also complained to the IMB that their time for association has been restricted on different occasions because of an insufficient number of prison staff being available to facilitate the unlocking of cells.

8.6 NHS England commissions 15 visits to hospitals per week. Medical emergencies and urgent appointments take precedence over other hospital visits, which means that some scheduled appointments are missed. Shortages of prison staff also mean that some hospital visits do not take place as arranged, leading to the postponement of some hospital appointments. The prison is making a bid for two more officers to be available as escorts on prison visits. A business case has also been submitted for the purchase of an x-ray machine and an ultrasound machine for use in the prison; NHS England has agreed to look at the bid in terms of responsiveness and security.

8.7 Shortages of prison officers can also mean that prisoners are not escorted from the wings to the healthcare unit and therefore that prisoners miss medical appointments in the prison.

8.8 The dentistry service available in the prison is generally good. However the facilities in the dentist's surgery are inadequate. A broken dentist's chair has led to the cancellation of many appointments (as of 17 May there was a backlog of 40 cancelled appointments). As of June the dentist's x-ray machine was also out of action. A case is being made for a completely new surgery.

8.9 At the end of the reporting year there were 5 overstays/social care patients in the In-patient unit, which has been the case for much of the current year. Care UK is not commissioned to facilitate the care needs for social care prisoners (as opposed to patients who require medical care). However, the general prison environment is not equipped to be able to meet some of the social care needs of these prisoners, who are often elderly. There are genuine concerns about putting these prisoners on the main wings, but keeping them on the healthcare unit is unfair because it means that they have a restricted regime (see above 8.5).

8.10 Bullingdon will be completely smoke free by 12 September 2017 in line with other prisons in the London and Thames Valley Region. Tobacco is no longer offered on the canteen list although one free electronic cigarette is available instead of the former "smokers pack" offered in Reception. Staff training is currently in progress to support the smoke free initiative; this includes the offer of nicotine patches and smoking cessation courses.

8.11 Following a recent 'Death In Custody' inquest the Oxford Coroner has requested an update on mental health provision by the end of September 2017. NHS commissioners are currently reviewing the provision of Mental Health Services for prisons across the London and Thames Valley Region in which Bullingdon is located.

8.12 Healthcare provision was inspected by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in the context of the HMIP inspection in May 2017. The CQC raised a number of concerns and has issued notice of two areas that require improvement. One is the complaints process (on which see above 8.4). The other is governance.

### Adult Learning

9.1 The improved performance of prisoners completing courses has been sustained with overall success and recognized achievement rates of over 90%, although there is a need for further improvement in some aspects of functional skills. Almost 80% of all achievements have been gained by learners who arrived at Bullingdon with no prior qualifications. The discontinuities caused by prisoners moving on, owing to (unexpected) transfer to other establishments or the completion of short sentences, are a significant factor in the non-completion of courses.

9.2 Bullingdon's population includes a high proportion of remand and short-sentence prisoners whose average stay is between three and six months. This means that many are not at Bullingdon for long enough to complete courses leading to Level 2 or Level 3 qualifications.

9.3 Poor attendance continues to be a major issue. Towards the end of the previous reporting year attendance was 'flatlining' at about 65%. Attendance has rarely exceeded 70% since then, although it did reach 73% in October 2016. Attendance in May 2017 was 59%. Attendance in June 2017 was 63%. Attendance varies considerably from one wing to another. As of May 2017 the prison had identified poor attendance at activities as one of its 'six to fix' priority areas.

9.4 Recently introduced weekly wing clinics provide information about education and other activities. Attendance at the clinics fluctuates between about six and twenty; those on Wings A and C tend to be less well attended than those on Wings B and D. There is now a 'red band' (a trusted prisoner who can move more freely round the prison than other prisoners in order to perform his duties) for adult learning who visits the wings to raise prisoners' awareness of the opportunities available.

9.4 In June 2017 74% of eligible prisoners were allocated to classes. However filling places is a continuing challenge, given the attraction of better pay in the industrial workshops. More tutoring in functional skills is to be provided using a 'pod' in one of the workshops, so that prisoners do not incur a loss of earnings.

9.5 The range of courses offered is being expanded; this is placing pressure on teaching accommodation and on supervision arrangements. The barbering course, first mooted in 2014, is now close to launch. The location for a salon was identified last year. Following significant delays with plumbing and electrical work, the installation was ready in June. The 'Steps into construction' course, launched in May, has made a promising start; it covers a range of relevant skills (e.g. 'banksman') and leads to a 'CSCS' card, needed for employment in the construction industry. New courses have been introduced to support parenting; these include 'Cooking with kids' and 'Reading with kids'.

9.6 The One2One numeracy initiative continues and is particularly well established on E wing which has a lower churn than other wings: it is less likely that peer mentors have to move on just when they have settled into the role. The 'Turning Pages' reading scheme (under the Shannon Trust), run by the Library, can experience difficulty in retaining peer mentors because of churn.

9.7 Twenty-seven prisoners, including seven on Open University courses, were undertaking distance learning at the end of the reporting year.

9.8 A ceremony celebrating the achievements of prisoners on educational courses and other activities, to which family members were invited, is a welcome initiative

## **Library**

9.9 The Library continues to provide a good service. The level of attendance has fluctuated during the reporting year.

9.10 Tutors are more likely than formerly to take their groups to the Library so that it can become more integrated into functional skills learning.

9.11 'Dads Aloud' (an arrangement which enables men to record stories to send to their children) continues and is now supported by a tutor from adult learning.

## **Gymnasium**

9.12 A wide range of PE sessions is provided, but it could be greatly expanded if the artificial sports pitch were brought back into use. The pitch has been unfit for use for over four years, which means that prisoners have not had access to the best outside exercise space in the prison, and the opportunity for outdoor sport and letting off steam. It has also meant that the Prison has been without a facility that allows it to develop community links by inviting in football teams from outside the Prison, so this budgetary constraint has an impact not only on the health of prisoners but also on safety and resettlement issues. Work to re-lay the pitch was approved in June, and it is expected that it will be completed this summer.

9.13 Courses include basketball and volleyball 'leaders' with Basketball and Volleyball England. The Level 3 personal trainer qualification (8-week course) provides progression from the Level 2 Gym Instructor qualification (6-week course) and offers a route into outside employment or self-employment.

9.14 The provision of showers is insufficient given the volume of men who need to use them at the end of sessions.

## **10 WORK, VOCATIONAL TRAINING and EMPLOYMENT**

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10.1 Attendance at work – 79% in June – is much better than attendance at education, but further improvement is needed. Prisoners in the last few months of their sentence are often reluctant to start new courses or jobs.

10.2 Some vocational areas, and particularly those deemed to be ‘high risk’, experience difficulty in engaging a sufficient number of prisoners cleared for work without considerable delays when the churn produces vacancies. For example, in April eight of the 30 places in Farms and Gardens were unfilled.

10.3 The pay structure has been adjusted in order to incentivise jobs providing vocational training, such as painting and decorating, and education courses. The structure involves a link to IEP (‘Incentives and Earned Privileges’) status for low- and high-level jobs respectively. The rates of bonus paid in productivity-related jobs has been reduced in order to encourage prisoners to apply for jobs that carry responsibility such as ‘red band’ roles.

10.4 Delays in maintenance, such as a disrupted supply of hot water to some areas over a period of weeks, have again interrupted the development of vocational activities. The ‘barista-style’ coffee bar, scheduled to start last summer, finally opened in April 2017, following significant delays in installing plumbing and electrics. The greenhouse was without proper heating for over two years until the reinstallation was completed in May. The compacter for waste management was out of action for some months, but was operational again at the end of the reporting year.

10.5 Skills tracking is now being piloted in a number of work areas (including Farms and Gardens, Warehousing and the Laundry) with staff signing off competences for certification.

10.6 A Learning and Skills Needs Report, based on a survey of prisoners 2016, was issued in the Autumn of 2016. The survey highlights areas where provision and need could be better matched and has influenced forward planning. Prisoners’ responses overall conveyed more positive attitudes towards learning and skills than the previous year. A further needs analysis questionnaire was distributed in May.

## 11 RESETTLEMENT PREPARATION

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### Offender Management Unit (OMU)

11.1 The OMU comprises two complementary branches: Case Administration and Offender Supervisors. An Offender Supervisor is allocated to each convicted prisoner serving a sentence of 12 months or more. The OMU is placed under strain by the high churn, the range of sentences and staffing pressures. Case administrators need a substantial period of training, particularly as some of the work is very complex, and continuity of staffing is therefore important. Each Offender Supervisor has a hybrid role, embracing residential and operational support duties as well as offender management. Consequently, officers are very often deployed outside the Unit; this makes it difficult for tasks to be completed on time. Cross-deployment has also made it difficult to maintain regularly the valuable wing-based OMU clinics at which prisoners may put specific queries to Offender Supervisors.

11.2 Despite the pressures, there have been significant successes. For example, the OMU has consistently been at or close to 100% in completing on time the mandatory initial screening process ('BCST1'), on which a prisoner's sentence plan is based. Releases on Home Detention Curfew (HDC) have increased during the reporting year, although the limited availability of approved accommodation and delayed returns from outside probation are still a source of holdups. In the first six months of 2017, all sentence calculations and peer checks were completed by Case Administration within the five-day window.

11.3 There are backlogs in other areas, notably on the risk and needs assessment known as the Offender Assessment System (OASys). One reason is that prison 'churn' means that more than 20 sentenced prisoners may arrive at Bullingdon in a week without an up-to-date OASys, and each full OASys can take up to six hours to complete. It would be a challenge to eliminate the backlog even without the cross-deployment of operational staff noted above. With support from probation staff in the prison, the backlog in OASys completions was reduced to about 135 in the first quarter of 2017, but by the end of June it had risen to about 160.

### Programmes

11.4 The Offender Behaviour courses delivered in 2016-2017 comprised two for the general population – the Thinking Skills Programme ('TSP') and 'RESOLVE' (which addresses aggression and violent behaviour) - and three for sex offenders – the Sex Offenders' Treatment Programme (SOTP), the SOTP 'Becoming New Me' ('BNM', which is a SOTP programme adapted for offenders with learning difficulties) and the SOTP Healthy Sex Programme (HSP). The overall target for completion has been met. The new Horizon course (to replace the core SOTP programme) is to begin in the Autumn.

11.5 Prisoners transfer to Bullingdon to take the (one-to-one) HSP course. There is a long waiting list (held nationally) and the time that that a prisoner has to wait depends on a number of factors. These include his sentence type, readiness for treatment, willingness to move around the estate for a place, and the availability of an appropriate therapist. Successful completion of the course is often a condition for a prisoner's release, but some prisoners may have to wait for six years or more for a place to become available.

11.6 Recruitment and retention of facilitators continue to be significant issues, for example when staff are lost to promotion elsewhere. Training takes up considerable amounts of management time.

11.7 A well-attended drop-in awareness session for staff was again organised. Each programme had its own display stand where prisoners from all the courses were able to explain how they perceived the value of the programme.

11.8 The course accommodation in the demountable buildings ('portacabins') is mostly in a poor state. Problems have been experienced with lighting and water leaks, and refurbishment has been delayed: the environment is not conducive to calm discussion with volatile prisoners about sensitive issues, particularly given the extremes of temperature which can be experienced.

### **Thames Valley Community Rehabilitation Company (TVCRC)**

11.9 The resources of the TVCRC are stretched partly because Bullingdon's role as a resettlement prison covers Hampshire and the Isle of Wight (about 10-15 prisoners per month) as well as the Thames Valley, although staffing has been increased significantly since 2015.

11.10 The housing caseload is now shared by two Case Managers, one for Thames Valley and one for out-of-area requests. Housing needs are particularly difficult to meet, with monthly releases averaging more than 100. About a third of prisoners are unhoused on release. Homelessness is a major issue in Oxford in particular, so the proportion of prisoners who are unhoused on release is not within the prison's control.

11.11 The proportion of mandatory secondary screening processes (BCST2) completed within the required five days after admission was over 99% in the 2016-2017 financial year. The important face-to-face interview with the prisoner cannot always be held, for example when a prisoner refuses to cooperate. Nevertheless, the proportion interviewed stood at over 90% in May 2017 compared with about 75% a year earlier.

11.12 Owing to an increase in resources during the reporting year, the CRC can now open bank accounts and initiate credit checks for prisoners.

11.13 Although some pathway needs can be addressed initially in-house, for example adult learning (provided in the prison by Milton Keynes College), outside agencies make an important contribution, not least in fostering employability. Reducing from the present two-thirds the proportion of prisoners who are unemployed on release presents a major challenge.

11.14 The charity Aspire offers a pathway to furnish prisoners with employable skills and credible work experience on release. Another company, Ixion, complements the work of the TVCRC; it focuses on 'hard to reach' prisoners including prisoners in the SSCU, those with a low IQ and those from outside the TVCRC area. Each participant has a dedicated case manager to help him engage with other services in custody and in the community. Ixion also runs a Level 2 self-employment course for vulnerable prisoners.

11.15 The 'Change Plan' strand of the 'Getting it Right' course (GIR), available to sentenced prisoners from the Thames Valley and London in the last twelve weeks of their stay, helps them to reflect on how they may become more responsible citizens. Attendance at GIR has improved over the reporting year.

11.16 Weekly wing clinics have been set up and an orderly/peer mentor recruited for each spur to prepare prisoners for meetings and encourage attendance on courses. Peer mentors are expected to take the GIR as well as an introduction to mentoring.

11.17 The Employment Strategy group established in March provides a useful forum for senior practitioners to share best practice and updates on employer relationships and opportunities.

## C Section – Work of Board

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<b>BOARD STATISTICS</b>		
Recommended Complement of Board Members:	16	
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period:	12	
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period:	14	
Total number of visits to the Establishment:	478	
Total number of segregation reviews attended:	224	

## D Section - Applications

Subject of application*	August 2015 – July 2016	August 2016 – June 2017**
Confidential access	10	4
Transfer	35	40
Post/phone/newspaper	43	50
Property	191	165
Complaints	61	65
Medical/dental	112	127
Visits	17	11
Monies	27	32
Adjudications/MDT	19	8
Regime	12	7
Education/library/gym/obp	5	9
Employment	21	25
Categorization/OEP	17	19
Food/diet	18	12
HDC/Parole/release/ROTL	45	30
Deportation/F National	13	10
CARATS/Rapt	0	1
Canteen/Argos/M&M	20	31
Resettle/Sentence plan/Probation	23	22
Withdrawn	0	1
Police Liaison/Legal/security	25	8
Recall	3	2
Wing/cell move	2	8
Heating/showers	2	4
No reason given	1	2
Other	69	66
Total	805	759

\*This table uses old style categories for the subjects of applications because the new categories were not introduced until the middle of our reporting year.

\*\*Only 11 months due to change in reporting year