



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

**HMP Swaleside**

for reporting Year  
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*Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody*

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## 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 also to the prison's records.

## 2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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As previously, the Board's report concentrates on major elements of concern or required improvement, with a focus on the treatment of prisoners under the headings of Fair and Humane treatment and on Preparation for Release.

The changes instituted by the previous Governor and his Senior Management Team have been instrumental in improving the appearance and regime of the prison. During the latter part of the reporting year responsibility for the prison has been taken on by an Acting Governor, the previous Deputy, and the Board have been pleased that his team have continued to follow the route map outlined earlier in the year. The Board are also pleased that at the time of writing the Acting Governor has been appointed as Governor.

Senior staff have put a huge effort into making changes to rectify and validate all of the 51 Issues identified in the 2016 HMIP report. As a consequence of this, many improvements have been made.

Our greatest concern, also expressed last year, is the violence in the prison and the assaults on both staff and prisoners. Although a reduction in violence has been noted from time to time during the year, and the figures show improvement, this problem remains unacceptable. It is, perhaps, unfortunate that the efforts put into reducing violence by the staff have not yielded consistent results. Attempts to prevent ingress of weapons and drugs have had a great deal of success and have yielded remarkable results. Nevertheless, the problem remains and continues to occupy much Senior Management Team time. The benefits of a new dedicated search team have started to produce impressive results. (*Section 4: Safety*).

Since becoming part of the long term and high security estate (LTHSE) over a year ago, the prison is notionally fully staffed. However, many of the new staff are young and inexperienced and, although they are rapidly becoming valuable members of the team, the inexperience has sometimes manifested itself in causing issues, particularly relating to control and discipline of prisoners. This is being overcome by further training and an improved 'buddy' system. (*Section 12: Staffing*).

It is disappointing that some prisoners choose to stay behind their doors, although this number has been dramatically reduced during the year. A recently introduced protocol will improve the treatment of those prisoners by ensuring that their situation is more regularly, and more formally, reviewed and that they receive humane treatment in allowing showers, exercise and the opportunity to make their telephone calls. (*Section 4: Safety*).

The appalling condition of the showers on most of the wings has been noted previously and continues to be of concern to the Board. The Board has specifically raised this concern on many occasions during the year and it is only assurances relating to planned work (which have subsequently failed to produce results) that have prevented the Board contacting the Minister directly to make him aware of this failure to treat prisoners with respect and dignity. The previously noted shortcomings of Carillion played a large part in this failure over several years but is not, of itself the current cause of lack of action. At the time of writing this situation is being improved by taking local action. (*Section 7: Accommodation*).

The change from Carillion to GFSL (Government Facility Services Limited) has undoubtedly improved the delivery of everyday repairs and improvements around the premises. However, this improvement needs to be maintained to ensure that appropriate conditions for prisoners and staff are provided.

The kitchen is continuing to produce good quality meals in number far exceeding its original planned capacity. The Board deem it essential that the requirement to support Standford Hill prisoners is removed from Swaleside. *(Section 7.1 Accommodation)*.

The Healthcare contract remains with IC24 but the Board continue to receive complaints regarding the treatments offered and the waiting times for services. The Board does try to help prisoners understand that, in many cases, similar problems arise in the outside world. Nevertheless, it seems to the Board, that IC24 have been unduly slow to implement many of the improvements that were part of the agreement in the contract started in 2018. Examples include the 'hatches' required to service wings and to obviate the necessity for central dispensing of medication. At the time of writing two hatches have been put into place. *(Section 10 Healthcare)*

As with many other facilities within the prison, workshop size was designed to cater for around half of the current operational capacity. This fact together with the lack of current work in some shops means that too many prisoners are unemployed and therefore remain unoccupied and inadequately prepared for release. The SMT are working hard to remedy this situation but it is essential that more purposeful work is found and that work available to the current workshops is increased. More opportunities for NVQs and similar qualifications must be found for the prisoners and this, in itself, requires the availability of more qualified instructors. *(Section 9: Work, Vocational Training and Employment)*

It is of concern that, despite the notional unemployment around the prison population, there is an almost daily failure to meet the required allocation to workshops and education. It does seem to the Board that there is a failure to apply the discipline necessary to ensure that prisoners are required to engage in employment or education for their own benefit. *(Section 8: Education and other Activities: Section 9: Work, Vocational Training and Employment)*.

The prison became totally smoke-free on 1 September 2017 and the Board commends the process employed to ensure that implementation was almost entirely trouble free. It is inevitable that this has caused a dramatic increase in contraband tobacco. The price of tobacco, as with drugs, has exacerbated the 'debt' problem for prisoners which is one of the causes of the increase in violence and the number of prisoners choosing to stay in their cells. *(Section 4: Safety)*.

The Board very much supports and commends the Community Hub and its prisoner workers who are available to assist prisoners with their issues. *(Section 5: Equality & Fairness)*. Similarly, the establishment of 'Emotional Well-being' mentors and prisoners trained as mediators is a very positive step forward. *(Section 4: Safety)*. Contrary to this, the Board has been disturbed that Samaritans phones were not available on many of the wings for several weeks and this must not be allowed to occur again. *(Section 4: Safety)*.

The Board fully supports the moves towards 'dedicated' wings which also allows the staff themselves to develop enhanced skills to support the service provided. *(Section 3: Description of the Prison)*

During the year the Care and Separation Unit (CSU) was retitled Care, Separation and Reintegration Unit (CSRU) to focus attention on the aim of reducing that population by rehabilitating difficult or refractory prisoners to allow them to live on the wings. This had a marked success and the average number of prisoners in CSRU reduced from 22 to 15 for a good part of the year. This was partly achieved by a real concentration of effort by a single

member of the Senior Management Team and it is essential that this continues. (*Section 6: Segregation*).

The Board continues to be disappointed that prisoners reaching the end of their sentence are not always transferred to their local prisons and receive inadequate resettlement help and advice when compared to those who reach their local establishment. (*Section 11 Resettlement Preparation*).

Overall, the Board is pleased with the progress which is being made on many fronts and do see the indications, not only of a safe and secure prison, but that an improved caring environment is being put in place for the prisoners.

## **Main judgements**

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### **Are prisoners treated fairly and humanely?**

The 'full' staffing of the prison, despite the shortcomings of inexperienced staff described in *Section 2. Executive Summary, Section 12. Staffing*, together with the introduction of OMiC, (Offender Management in Custody) which essentially provides a 'personal officer' availability for all prisoners, has led to a major improvement of this aspect of the prison regime.

Further improvements to the prison complaints system have helped ensure that reported problems are responded to in accordance with the guidelines. (*Section 5. Equality & Fairness.*) The introduction of in-cell telephones will allow enhanced family contact and is a good step towards rehabilitation and therefore applauded and supported.

Negative aspects which work against the fair and humane treatment of prisoners include:

- the appalling current state of prisoner showers, which is detrimental to the common decency required for prisoners (*Section 7.2 Showers: Section 2 Executive Summary*)
- the unexpected closure of wings, segregation and IPD, which disrupt the prisoners' normal regime and cause frustration.
- the lack of meaningful and rewarding work (*Section 9. Work, Vocational Training and Employment*).
- the apparent easy acquisition of drugs, phones and weapons by prisoners which not only increase violence and cause problems for other prisoners but multiply debt problems, cause suicide attempts and are the root cause of prisoners electing to stay behind their doors. (*Section 4: Safety*).

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

The answer in respect of those prisoners nearing the end of their sentences is simply 'No'. Swaleside is not regarded as a resettlement prison. (*Section 11: Resettlement*). The Community Hub, PACT and MSAP (Medway and Swale Advocacy Partnership) do help in dealing with basic requirements but this approach is not consistent or reliable. Importantly, prisoners are not generally able to be transferred to their local resettlement prison within about 12 weeks of their release date as intended.

However, although limited, the education (including e.g. cookery courses) and work available does greatly assist in preparing for release. Ideally, work to NVQ or similar level should be available to all prisoners although this is not yet the case. (*Section 11: Resettlement Preparation*).

## **Main Areas for Development**

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### **TO THE MINISTER**

In our report last year, we mentioned that it is essential that prisoners are provided with Resettlement Services, preferably in a prison nearer to their home as they reach the end of their sentences. This service is not provided from Swaleside, even though 77 prisoners were released from the prison last year. *(Section 3: Description of Establishment; Section 11: Resettlement Preparation)*

The use of POELTs (Prison Officer Entry Level Training) in their early months seems to have revealed a lack of training in “prisoner facing matters” and it is recommended that a “Buddy” system is given consideration.  
*(Section 12: Staffing)*

The kitchen at Swaleside was designed to cater for about 800 prisoners, but nevertheless does a good job in catering for the whole prison population. A problem arises in having to cater additionally for prisoners at Stanford Hill meaning some 3000 meals a day are produced. This work for Stanford Hill must be removed from Swaleside. *(Section 7: Accommodation)*.

### **TO THE PRISON SERVICE**

The prison is currently profiled to provide 6 escorts per day for prisoners to be taken to hospital. This is inadequate and needs to be increased. *(Section 10: Healthcare)*

The state of Swaleside showers has been mentioned in several previous reports. Recently they were inspected by the LTHSE senior Health and Safety Manager who described them as ‘the worst seen in any prison in the country’. Our understanding is that work and budget have now been agreed to remedy this situation. It is essential that this is ring-fenced and that the work is completed this year. *(Section 7.2: Accommodation)*

The previous report outlined the necessity for staffed hatches to dispense medication to prisoners on their wings to prevent illegal trading. Although two hatches have been opened, serving 4 wings, the requirement still exists for the remaining wings. *(Section 10: Healthcare)*.

Workshops at Swaleside were originally designed to support a prison with 4 wings. Swaleside now has 8 wings with certified occupancy of 1112. This results in an unacceptably high level of unemployment and this should be remedied by creating more meaningful work for prisoners. *(Section 9: Work, Vocational Training and Employment)*

The work of the Chaplaincy department is inhibited by the existing vacancies for Chaplains. Alternative methods of filling the vacancies should be examined.  
*(Section 5: Equality and Fairness)*

### **TO THE GOVERNOR**

The efforts to improve the appearance of the prison and cleanliness have been considerable, but some of the results have been disappointing. Efforts must continue to remedy this issue. *(Section 7: Accommodation)*.

The efforts to prevent the ingress of weapons, phones and drugs are appreciated and must continue unabated to improve this issue. *(Section 4: Safety)*

The lack of availability of Samaritan phones for several weeks is unacceptable in view of the continuous need for these. This must not be allowed to recur. *(Section 4: Safety)*

The use of POELTs (Prison Officer Entry Level Training) in their early months seems to have revealed a lack of training in “prisoner facing matters” and it is recommended that a “Buddy” system is given consideration.  
*(Section 12: Staffing)*

Attendance at both Workshops and Education regularly falls short of expectations. This needs to receive more attention. *(Section 10: Work, Vocational Training and Employment)*

The use of the ‘Bungalow’ as the recycling hub should be re-examined in the light of its current state. *(Section 10: Work, Vocational Training and Employment)*

The disproportionate effect of the frequent closure of CSRU during afternoons and weekends merits re-examination of the necessity for this happening.  
*(Section 6: Care Separation and Integration Unit)*

## **Improvements**

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- Transition to Smoke Free Prison
- Facilities operated by Community Hub
- Monitoring of Complaints system
- Introduction of “Self-Seclusion Protocol”
- Prison workers in Kitchen attaining NVQ Level 2 Food and Hygiene
- Kitchen attained Hygiene Rating 5
- The Multi-Disciplinary Team were awarded a national 2017 Patient Safety Award for their Emotional Well-Being work.
- Mediation training for prisoners
- The Dedicated Search Team actions

### 3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

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The prison was opened in August 1988 and was part of a group with HMPs Stanford Hill and Elmley. However, from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 it became part of the HMPPS Long Term and High Security Estate.

Resettlement services are not directly provided by Swaleside, as Swaleside should not be releasing prisoners from custody, but use is made of these services from outside the prison.

The establishment is primarily a Category B Lifer Main Centre training prison which accepts first and second stage lifers, section two automatics and IPP (Indeterminate Public Protection) prisoners. At the time of writing there are 914 B category and 127 C category prisoners (plus 11 category D prisoners who have returned from open conditions) in the overall population. Between 1<sup>st</sup> May 2017 and 30<sup>th</sup> April 2018, 77 prisoners were released from Swaleside. At the end of April, there were no foreign national prisoners who had completed their sentence awaiting deportation.

The certified normal accommodation is 1112 in single cells over eight wings.

The wings are being developed to a situation where they specialise, allowing staff to receive and utilise specialist training.

- Induction
- Education (OU Academy),
- Mental well-being
- Drug Addiction treatment
- Personality Disorder (being treated by a specialist team)
- Lifer Unit – providing Enhanced facilities
- Vulnerable Prisoners Unit - newly-established which is currently being populated.

Prisoners should normally be sent to establishments nearer to their homes between three and six months before their release date.

Contractors delivering services are:

- Healthcare provided by Integrated Care 24 (IC24).
- Inreach (Mental Health) provided by Oxleas
- Education by NOVUS
- Maintenance services since the collapse of Carillion are provided by GFSL.
- Spurgeons provide support for families at visits
- Forward Trust (Formerly RaPT) treatment for drug addiction

All figures recorded in this report are as of 30<sup>th</sup> April 2018 unless otherwise stated.

### 4 SAFETY

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In our report last year, the Board commented on the unacceptable level of violence in the prison. It is perhaps a strange anomaly that the prison feels safer on an everyday basis than last year and yet the figures show that violent assaults remain unacceptably high. The finds of weapons, phones and drugs continue unabated although improvements to the search regime continue to be made. A dedicated search team has been established which does improve the situation and there have been two weapons amnesties, one of which was very successful. The new Governor received unfavourable public attention for a letter sent to every prisoner asking them to cooperate and reduce drugs and weapons for their own benefit. The Board supported this unique initiative which did result in commendations from several prisoners as well as staff.

During the year the establishment has taken great care to identify and record all assaults. This means that there is a high level of confidence in the figures but also means that the figures are much higher than hitherto since even 'barges' and 'pushes' are defined as assaults. In addition, the improvement to the regime has increased overall association time for prisoners which in itself increases the scope for the occurrence of incidents. These changes mean that the total figures for assaults are difficult to compare to the previous year: there were 220 prisoner on prisoner assaults (161 Last year) and 133 prisoner on staff assaults (79 Last year). The trend of these figures after the end of the reporting year and to date of writing is steeply downwards which is very encouraging.

The use of spice and other drugs by prisoners undoubtedly fuels much of the violence and the debt it causes remains a major reason for prisoners to try to get themselves to CSRU or remain self-secluded behind their cell door. Becoming a smoke free prison in September 2017 was managed extremely well and was successful but caused the creation of another illicit substance. The price of tobacco within the prison is now extremely high.

The number of prisoners choosing to self-seclude has dropped (six at the time of writing) perhaps due to the introduction by the SMT of a protocol to better track these prisoners, to offer assistance and to ensure that all receive regular exercise, showers and telephone calls.

The establishment of prisoner Emotional Well-Being Monitors (EWB) has also been very successful as part of the help available to prisoners suffering a personality disorder. These prisoners have been trained by Oxleas staff who form part of the Inreach team.

Listeners (prisoners trained by Samaritans) continue to offer valuable and beneficial support to those prisoners in crisis at any time. To supplement and enhance the Listener service a telephone is provided on each wing, CSRU and IPD, to be available to prisoners needing to speak confidentially to the Samaritan service especially during the night. However, the Board were very concerned to discover that almost all telephones were out of use for several weeks during the year which is obviously not satisfactory. The telephones are based on 'portable' technology which means that some cells at the end of spurs cannot receive a service. There appears little to be done in this respect but to await the introduction of in-cell technology which will remedy the situation. In-cell technology implementation starts on 9 July 2018.

During the reporting year there have been seven deaths in custody, five of which are thought to be from natural causes. The Board is impressed by the care taken during the DiC procedure and the manner in which the governors, Chaplaincy and FLO ensure that the next of kin are approached, informed and supported.

There are three transgender prisoners currently at Swaleside.

During the year 476 new ACCTs were opened.

## **5 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS**

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The Chaplaincy team have continued to minister to the spiritual needs of prisoners. There have been no changes to the personnel during the year. There have been no applications to fill the vacancies advertised, therefore the vacancies remain, causing much additional work for the existing chaplains.

In addition to the three major faith traditions of Church of England, Roman Catholic and Islam (Muslim) other faiths are present and the department has visits from Pagan, Christian Science, Mormon, Jehovah's Witness, Buddhist, Sikh, Jewish, Hindu, Salvation Army and Free Church chaplains as well as facilitating visits from the home ministry of less represented faith traditions. The Prisoners' Faith Council continues to meet on a regular basis.

New prisoners are seen by one of the chaplains within 24 hours of their initial reception into the establishment. During the last year the Chaplaincy department has liaised with prisoners' families where there has been serious illness (26) and bereavement (19). Chaplains made 10 pastoral visits to prisoners in outside hospitals whose condition was deemed serious. No marriage ceremonies have been performed this year.

It continues to be difficult to minister to those on the sex offender wing due to the lack of facilities and chaplaincy staff. The establishment of the Vulnerable Prisoners' Wing has caused similar issues.

The Board are impressed with the work done by the Community Hub. This is run by a team of prisoners as a resource for prisoners. The Hub assists with both internal and external issues guiding prisoners to the correct people or department and providing information. The Community Reps attend the monthly Prisoner Consultative Meeting where issues raised by wings and prisoners are discussed and often potential solutions found.

The prison complaints system has received a great deal of attention during the year and is now supervised very closely at SMT level with daily reports at the morning meeting. At each meeting, the number of new complaints is reported broken down by area and issued. The overdue complaints are specifically brought to the attention of the manager concerned. The Board is pleased with the operation of the complaints system and regularly monitors the situation and 'samples' the replies being sent. Justified complaints to the Board about the Complaints system itself are infrequent.

## **6 SEGREGATION/SEPARATION, CARE AND REINTEGRATION UNIT**

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During the year a change of focus, identified by the name change to Care Separation and Reintegration Unit, brought about major change in emphasis and staff attitude to reduce the number of prisoners being segregated and to attempt to move existing segregated prisoners back to live on the wings. As a result, the automatic assumption that a prisoner would be

segregated at the first hint of trouble was challenged as was each segregated prisoner's assumption that he could not live on any wing. This challenge resulted in a dramatic reduction in the number of segregated prisoners: whereas the unit was regularly full, at 22 cells occupied, the cells regularly occupied reduced to 15. The conditions in the unit were improved with redecoration and a start has been made in replacing furniture with the newer metal units.

The Board continue to check that prisoners in CSRU have access to showers, telephone calls and exercise. However, the Board are concerned that the frequent 'closure' of the unit during afternoons and weekends makes the provision of basic requirements difficult for the staff to manage due to time constraints. These closures cause disproportionate problems as compared to the wings and should be re-examined.

Staff follow the requirement to obtain authority for prisoners to remain in CSRU beyond 42 days. Often lengthy spells in CSRU for prisoners result from an inability to transfer out to other prisons although membership of LTHSE has improved the ability to transfer out the long-stayers in the unit. The Board remains concerned at the impact long spells in CSRU have on any prisoner but are pleased that the various initiatives to reintegrate have reduced this possibility. Many residents in the unit have been there because of debt problems caused by drug addiction and the establishment of the specialist wings is beginning to make a real difference to this situation.

The Special Accommodation has been used 45 times justifiably (last year 60 times). The Board have visited all prisoners whilst they are in special accommodation.

Use of force documentation has further improved as the result of several directives from the SMT. A regular monthly Use of Force meeting takes place which randomly examines documentation and video recordings relating to incidents. A member of the IMB regularly attends these meetings.

The Board regularly visit all prisoners in the Care and Segregation Unit.

The Board attended 441 Good Order or Discipline (GOoD) Reviews conducted by governors and also attended by Chaplaincy. A representative from Healthcare was not always in attendance as mandated.

## **7 ACCOMMODATION**

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Considerable effort has been made during the year to improve the appearance of all areas of the prison and the cleanliness. This has made a considerable difference and some areas, e.g. H wing, are a very good example of what is required. However, other areas leave a lot to be desired and continue to occupy considerable staff time in trying to maintain cleanliness. The SMT continue to make this matter a high priority.

### **7.1 Kitchen**

The kitchen at Swaleside continues to produce a total of around 3000 meals, daily (lunch and dinner), for the two sites of Swaleside and Standford Hill, for whom it additionally supplies about 60 packed lunches for the outworkers - plans for Standford Hill to produce their own meals have not yet come to fruition. The kitchen also has to cope with special catering for Family Days, Religious Festivals, Fast Days and specific dietary requirements.

Should the production of Standford Hill meals not migrate to that prison, there is some doubt as to whether Swaleside could continue to cope with the total level of expected production, given that the kitchen has not had a major upgrade since it was designed to cater for 650 prisoners. There is still a possibility that a self-cook payment could be made to those prisoners who use

that facility in order to alleviate the overall kitchen pressure somewhat, but that may be a 'sticking plaster' solution.

The staff, both professional and prisoner, are to be congratulated on meeting their targets particularly during times when there have been equipment failures.

The new Kitchen Manager seems to have a handle on things and has some innovative ideas, though there are still some concerns that pay scales are lower than elsewhere in the prison and workers are being lost to those areas.

The Board is extremely pleased to note that all prisoners working in the Kitchen have now gained Level 2 NVQ in Food & Hygiene, and that the Kitchen now has a Hygiene rating of 5, as opposed to 2 when the new Manager took over.

Currently 4 agency staff are employed.

Delays in the repair, or installation, of equipment have meant that staff have had to be creative with work-arounds on several occasions, though there have been fewer issues this year and at the time of writing there is only one equipment problem where a brand-new oven is out of action. With GFSL taking over from Carillion, the major delays in replacing/repairing equipment may be a thing of the past.

## **7.2 Showers**

The Board has reported on the appalling condition of the showers on the wings and Gym at the prison for several years. Whilst it is fair to say that Governors have attempted to remedy the situation, they have generally been stymied in their attempts by lack of funds. Attempts have been made to utilise skilled prisoners in conjunction with tradesmen which is successful but slow. The Board have had many assurances that the work would be undertaken which is the only reason that the matter has not been raised earlier with the Minister. The Board recently wrote to the Governor expressing concern and this has helped bring about action.

Recently, an inspection of the showers by the LTHSE senior Health and Safety Manager responsible resulted in him saying that Swaleside showers are the 'worst seen in any prison in the Country!' The Board are pleased to learn that budget has now been allocated to remedy this situation in the current financial year and will be following this development very closely.

## **8 EDUCATION AND OTHER ACTIVITIES**

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The level of education is assessed by Ofsted as Level 3: that is 'requires improvement'. The main causes of this are poor attendance, low pass rates and some internal staff issues. The Open Academy, which promotes distance learning up to degree level, has been disappointing this year mainly due to there being so many days when it is not open due to issues on the wing where it is located. There are however some positive indications towards the end of the year that it is moving forward again.

There were four 'Celebrations of Success' when certificates were awarded to between thirty to forty prisoners. One prisoner was awarded a degree from distance learning.

Fourteen prisoners graduated following mediation training by "Crying Sons". The training consists of 6 weeks (2 days per week) and gives participants listening, problem solving and mediation skills which can help stop disagreements between prisoners before they get out of

hand. This training was funded by the education budget. This pilot has been so well received that Crying Sons will run a second programme at Swaleside soon.

There were also a number of events staged in the Education Centre which included Kent Opera and Finding Rhythms.

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

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The attendance of prisoners at their allocated workshops has been remarkably disappointing when no reason for absence is obvious. For example, the unacceptable absences for the year amounted to nearly 10% of the total hours available for the workshops and education. The Board are concerned that this has been allowed to continue without apparent consequences.

### **INDUSTRIES**

A new Head of Reducing Re-Offending was appointed towards the end of the reporting period. As purposeful activity underpins so many of the prison's and prisoners' aspirations and given the new manager's successful track record in this area, it is hoped that greater focus will be directed to this aspect of prison life.

A major target is to restructure industries to move the workshops away from the more mundane tasks to provide greater opportunity to develop prisoners' skills.

### **Areas for concern:**

- There are only enough workshop spaces for about 25% of the prisoner population. Many of these are not considered 'vocational' and do not provide any transferrable skills or portable qualifications. They are also not operating at full capacity.
- Vocational workshops suffer from a lack of instructors. This results in low levels of prisoner workers.
- The length of time taken to get the second engineering workshop up and running. It was approved over a year ago and the budget was agreed in August 2017 but electrics are still not installed. There is some fear that this budget could be lost as it lies with PSPI and not Swaleside.
- The continued failure to adequately supply the required quantity of prisoner workers for the DHL workshop. The numbers have fluctuated considerably during the reporting period, for several reasons: lack of enthusiasm among G Wing prisoners to carry out this type of work, exacerbated by unfulfilled promises by the prison regarding certain 'perks'; restrictive qualification criteria (not enough lifers available); sacking of workers due to thefts etc. (and returning them to G Wing - where they then reduce the pool of qualified workers).
- The woodwork shop no longer has any orders to manufacture fire doors from PSPI. This is understood to be a cost issue. Efforts are being made to buy in blanks and fit them out, as a cheaper alternative but there have been teething troubles. This workshop has also suffered from a lack of staff having been one instructor short for 5 years. Of the current two staff, one is already 65 and the other will be due for retirement in three years. There is also an undercurrent of concern regarding pay scales in this workshop.
- During March/April the plastic pipe assembly shop showed only 55% attendance with approximately 18 prisoners not showing up. The main offenders have now been removed from the shop.
- Plans for a Recycling Hub within the prison have stalled with the refurbishment of the building known as the 'bungalow' delayed, due to issues with the original contractors who had to be removed from the site. The toilets and the toilet areas, both staff and prisoner are filthy. One toilet has no seat. They cannot be flushed as the water supply has been disconnected since January 2017. There is no running water. Toilets have to be flushed using a bucket, which is filled from the outside tap, which is also used for drinking water, though there is no indication as to whether it is potable or non-potable. There are no washing facilities or showers, even though the men are handling materials that are probably contaminated by rodent droppings.

The appearance of this area, and the facilities provided, are a disgrace to the prison, and from a health and safety viewpoint its future should be re-examined.

- Prisoner pay is hitting budget ceilings.

#### **Notable achievements:**

- The engineering workshop now offers NVQ Level 2 but only two prisoners have completed this. Eventually there will be places for 44 prisoner workers over the two shops. One new instructor coming from Warren Hill is due to start shortly.
- The MOD camouflage net workshop continues to impress. Before Christmas output reached 30-40 nets per week, with weekend working and bonuses, and the workforce was operating at capacity. Unfortunately, issues with allocation of the MOD contract has meant that this workshop, despite glowing reports, is now only producing 8 nets per week. We understand that this is partly due to raw material supply problems, quality of basic product and odd reasons, such as lorries too big for entry to the prison having to be turned away. The workshop roof still leaks.
- Despite having issues, the Woodwork Shop has 8 out of a current 15 prisoners on the Woodwise course.
- Industrial Cleaning has trained 6 prisoners to BICS standard this year. It will soon be offering a City & Guilds qualification. Prisoners are also being used for specific cleaning around the prison and will be trained to NVQ Level 2 in Cleaning, and Bio Hazard cleaning.
- The Marley workshop continues to be a flagship workshop because of high production and outstanding quality.
- Gardens: now offering NVQ Level 1 in Horticulture. Four have signed up for this and there are spaces for another four.

#### **Potential:**

- Palette Truck training and training for trainers is to be offered.
- Electrical Lighting Repair is due to commence in the old Retrocloth area. It will ultimately employ 20 prisoners and will carry a qualification.
- Potential for the engineering shop to train prisoners to achieve their 'coding', which is a registration of transferrable skills i.e. proof of competency to take from one employment to another.
- 3 forklift trucks have been purchased and it may be possible to offer courses for driving these at a future date.

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

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Primary care is provided by Integrated Care 24 (IC24), with Minster Medical Practice providing GP Services, Pen Optical for optical services and mental health (InReach) provided by Oxleas. A new contract was negotiated with IC24 which started on 1 April 2018 and regular governance meetings are scheduled to take place between the partnership board and prison managers and governors to monitor performance.

A dental service provides up to 8 sessions per week (two of which are for dentures). The waiting list for dental care has increased this year with many prisoners waiting 9 weeks or more for first treatment. At the end of the reporting year the number of prisoners awaiting treatment was 203, which is continuing the upward trend seen last year.

There is adequate provision of optical and podiatry care for prisoners. Whilst the system for podiatry care seems well organised in the main, one case brought to our attention during the year evidenced a prisoner waiting so long for an appointment that he could no longer attend work. The waiting time for an appointment with the optician is approximately 6 weeks. At the end of April there were 49 prisoners on the waiting list.

The actual number of prisoners waiting for dental and optical care is higher than these figures indicate as once a prisoner has been allocated an appointment they are taken off the waiting list although their appointment could be some weeks later.

Support for social care cases, in conjunction with KCC, continues to provide for those with physical or mental capacity disabilities.

Recently some of the long-awaited staffed hatches on residential wings were installed. The second of these was opened for use on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2018. It is hoped these hatches will help to prevent the illegal use of tradeable medications. Whilst it is agreed that additional hatches would be desirable, these are currently restricted due to lack of Healthcare funding.

Prison staffing is profiled to allow for six accompanied visits to outside hospitals per day. The demand is much greater than this, resulting in many cancelled appointments. Cancer patients are prioritised but the consequences often mean other prisoners having to be put back on to a hospital waiting list, a recent example being a cancelled appointment to a dermatology clinic where the prisoner received a new appointment 6 months in the future. Over the last three months over 25% of outside NHS appointments have been cancelled (18% have been cancelled due to staff shortages).

The Board continue to find it difficult to get regular information regarding complaints from IC24.

Mental health services (Inreach) continue to be provided by Oxleas. The service is located on the wing established as the Emotional Well-Being Support Centre which continues to have significantly positive results in improving care for prisoners needing support. The multi-disciplinary team were awarded a national 2017 Patient Safety Award for their emotional well-being work.

## **11 RESETTLEMENT PREPARATION**

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As has been stated over many reports, the Board is concerned at so many prisoners being released from Swaleside (77 this year) since this is not a resettlement prison and has no means of supplying resettlement services for prisoners. Despite assurances of improvement following last year's report nothing seems to have changed. OMU report that local prisons remain free to reject appropriate requests for transfer due to a prisoner's conduct record. In addition, places in London prisons remain scarce. This lack of action is unacceptable given the stated agreement to transfer a prisoner to a prison in his home locality within 3-6 months of his release date. OMU staff and the community hub with PACT and MSAP are to be commended for instituting a 'home-grown' resettlement service which attempts to assist the prisoner with bank account, GP service and essential services but this is no substitute for the full service which must be provided.

## **12. STAFFING**

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Following changes in Government policy, the Board is very pleased that the staffing levels have gradually been increased to that required in LTHSE and that this has allowed the release of most detached duty staff. However, the current downside of this situation is the inexperience of these new prison officers. The training has been successful but is now being extended to ensure that those being trained are more familiar with the requirements arising from facing prisoners on the wings, CSRU and IPD. More use will be made of a 'buddy' system to help prevent any difficulties which may arise, especially in control and discipline of prisoners.

## Section C- Work of Board

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Apart from the main duties of the Board, members have areas of special interest which are reported to the Board at its monthly meeting.

A member of the Board attends Senior Management Team meetings and the Chair attends area meetings and quarterly meetings with the Director.

### Membership

At the end of the reporting year the Board comprised 10 members, including one JP. One member remains on sabbatical. Two members were in training during the year. Only one member lives on the Isle of Sheppey.

### Recruitment

During the year we have recruited 6 potential members only three of whom are still with us and are still in training.

### Visits to the Prison

Members of the Board made 530 visits to the prison in the reporting year. Apart from Board meetings, one member was usually in the prison most weekdays. Owing to inadequate board numbers, compromises continue to be made as to which areas of the prison are monitored, though Members attempted to visit their areas of special interest as well as the Care, Segregation and Reintegration Unit, Healthcare and the Kitchen on their Rota visits.

### Training

The Annual Team Performance Review Questionnaire was completed and areas for improvement were identified and actions implemented.

### Confidential Access

The Board received 47 confidential access applications (16 last year). Only 34 were worthy of the Confidential Access procedure, the rest appearing to be an attempt to bypass the normal system. These applications were returned to the sender with an appropriate message.

<b>BOARD STATISTICS</b>	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	19
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	11
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	10
Total number of visits to the Establishment	530
Total number of segregation reviews attended	441

## Section D- Applications

<b>Code</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Current reporting year</b>	<b>Previous reporting year</b>
A	Accommodation including laundry, clothing, ablutions	26	13
B	Discipline including adjudications, IEP, sanctions	24	10
C	Equality	17	10
D	Purposeful Activity including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	26	23
E 1	Letters, visits, phones, public protection restrictions	45	26
E 2	Finance including pay, private monies, spends	10	26
F	Food and kitchens	21	15
G	Health including physical, mental, social care	130	78
H 1	Property within this establishment	117	88
H 2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	81	67
H 3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	25	19
I	Sentence management including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-categorisation	75	65
J	Staff/prisoner concerns including bullying	107	75
K	Transfers	64	44
L	Miscellaneous	118	121
	<b>Total number of IMB applications</b>	<b>886</b>	<b>680</b>