



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

for reporting Year  
(1 June 2017 – 31 May 2018)

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*Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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### Introductory Sections

<b>Section</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Statutory Role</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Description of Establishment</b>	<b>8</b>

### Evidence Sections

<b>4</b>	<b>Safety</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Equality and Fairness</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Segregation/Care and Separation Unit</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Accommodation (including communication)</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Healthcare (including mental health and social care)</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Education and Other Purposeful Activity</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Work, Vocational Training and Employment</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Resettlement Preparation</b>	<b>27</b>

	<b>The Work of the IMB</b>	<b>28</b>
	<b>Applications to the IMB</b>	<b>29</b>

## 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:

- S1 (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.
- S2 (2) inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom he has delegated authority as it judges appropriate, any concern it has.
- S3 (3) **report annually to the Secretary of State on how well the prison has met the standards and requirements placed on it and what impact these have on those in its custody.**

To enable the Board to carry out these duties effectively, its members have right of access to every prisoner and every part of the prison and also to the prison's records.

## **2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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Throughout the year IMB members had free and unconstrained access to all areas of the prison. The co-operation and support provided by the Governing Governor, Senior Management Team (SMT), uniformed and administrative staff have been greatly appreciated.

### **Overall Judgement**

The SMT was depleted during the year by long-term sickness absences and vacancies. Nevertheless the senior management continued to work tirelessly to try to maintain stability, deliver a decent and safe regime and maintain performance. The challenges faced in the last reporting period intensified and were unrelenting. The end of the reporting period saw the first indications of better staffing numbers and some improvements to the regime. However, regime delivery remained critically sensitive to pressures such as court escorts and bed watches. The number of staff with less than 12 months in service reached 41%

The Board deeply regrets that our serious concerns over staff shortages and restricted regimes, highlighted in the reports of 2014 and 2015, worsened in 2016/17, continued and deepened during this reporting year. All grades of staff and all areas of the prison were affected. Staff shortages, the continued deployment of a significant number of staff on detached duty, in addition to rising numbers of new staff having less than 12 months in service are overriding features of this reporting period. These problems affected the delivery of services in every part of a prisoner's life in custody. The consequences were chronic and resulted in severe regime restrictions, difficulties developing ownership on units, inconsistent delivery of services and variable interpretation of rules.

The prison again functioned for the entire reporting period with restricted regimes in place. The Board maintains its belief that the inability to deliver a full regime to all prisoners for this, and the previous three-years' reports, is an unacceptable erosion of standards. The subsequent boredom and isolation increases the chances of disorder, reduces the opportunities for rehabilitation and can only increase the rate of reoffending.

The prison also had to contend with the total failure of the Works contract before and after Carillion went into administration. This impacted directly on the living and working conditions for prisoners and staff. It also led to significant difficulties locating prisoners safely, decently and appropriately.

The Board wrote to the Minister on November 1<sup>st</sup> 2017 about these issues, having written twice in February 2017 during the preceding reporting period.

For over 18 months the prison has been subject to an unprecedented period of uncertainty around its future role. This prevented clear strategies and plans being put in place. It is demoralising for staff and significantly unsettling for prisoners. It is an appalling waste of valuable resource and an expensive waste of time working on plans that never materialise.

The impact of building work undertaken throughout the reporting period to open a Separation Centre and upgrade all fire safety systems across the whole establishment had additional long lasting negative effects on staffing levels. All contractors had to be escorted at all times.

New staff are entering the prison service, but retention rates of experienced staff remained poor. During the last quarter of the reporting period POELTS (prison officers under training) replaced many detached duty staff. The number of inexperienced staff was regularly between 60 and 90% per unit. This puts a strain on experienced staff cross-deployed from other areas to support them. As highlighted in last year's report, there was a huge staffing skills gap with far too many staff having to 'act up' into more senior positions. This remains a great concern.

Staff shortages impacted negatively on the attendance at meetings and the delivery of training within the prison.

Work to engage with staff and develop ownership through consultation continued, but progress, particularly in the early part of the year, was undermined by staff shortages. The ethos of the SMT was reflected in the many positive interactions staff had with the men in their care. However the aspirations and ambition for consistent delivery and excellence of services were constantly undermined by circumstances outside the control of the SMT. It is a tragedy that the woeful state of the staffing levels combined with additional pressures overshadowed local achievements, the number of lives saved, and the dedication and hard work of so many staff.

With the closure of one and a half regular accommodation units there was less scope for the relocation of men to manage security and risk. The number of Cat A prisoners represented a greater percentage of the population. ISPP prisoners made up nearly 10% of the population. Overcrowding throughout the wider estate increased pressure locally, particularly when managing high-risk cell share prisoners. This, coupled with a very high percentage of very inexperienced staff and restricted regimes, represented significant security, safety and stability risks.

The levels of assaults, violence and use of force remained too high despite improvements in management and oversight.

## **Improvements**

The Board supported the introduction of body worn cameras in June 2017.

The Board is delighted that HMP Woodhill will be one of the next 10 prisons to have in cell pin-phones fitted across all units. Work will start in 2018/19. The cost of calls will be reduced by 45%.

The implementation of 'smoke free' prison in early September 2017 was well managed.

Significant improvements were made to the management and oversight of segregation.

In recent months improvements have been made to the complaints process resulting in a significant reduction in complaints to the IMB.

The Board welcomes the collaboration and intelligence sharing between police and other establishments to tackle the supply of illicit substances.

There were no self-inflicted deaths in custody from December 12<sup>th</sup> 2016 - May 10<sup>th</sup> 2018.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons conducted a thematic inspection of the CSC system in December 2017. The report found that tangible progress had been made in all their healthy prison tests since their last report in 2015.

## **Main Areas for Development**

### **To the Minister**

The Board again repeats the request to ensure staffing levels are maintained at a sufficient level to provide a full regime.

The Board again repeats the request to ensure there is sufficient capacity in the estate to allow for the progressive transfer of prisoners, including VP and ISPP prisoners, to work through their sentence plans.

The Board again repeats the request to develop a national policy to address the needs of older prisoners.

The Board urges the Minister to improve the process of assessment and transfer of men from CSC units to high secure mental health hospitals

### **To the Prison and Probation Service**

To provide clarity about the role of HMP Woodhill.

To further develop specialist training, interventions and strategies for the management and reintegration of long term segregated prisoners.

To ensure that all outside contracts are robustly monitored to ensure the effective delivery of services.

To ensure that prisoner transport contracts include the transport of and responsibility for all prisoners' property.

To develop a meaningful rehabilitation strategy and ensure outside contractors deliver equality of service.

The Board again repeats its request that the Service should work more closely with healthcare providers to improve the assessment and expedition of all transfers to secure hospitals.

### **To the Governing Governor**

To ensure work, education and activity places are filled.

To develop staff training to ensure consistency of application of rules and policies across all House Units.

To ensure Induction is delivered within the expected time frame.

To develop an effective relationship with the holders of the works and maintenance contract to ensure work is carried out to acceptable standards and within reasonable time scales.

To continue to ensure the adequate provision, care and management of kit and furniture across all House Units.

To standardise the adherence to rules about furniture and fittings on all House Units.

To improve and ensure consistency in the standard of cleaning across all House Units.

To maintain the effective control of vermin across all Units.

To implement an effective system of maintaining prisoner information cell cards on all House Units.

To deliver training and develop strategies to better manage long-term prisoners and prisoners on ACCTs in segregation back to normal location.

To deliver effective staff training to ensure the quality of ACCT and PCR documents

To continue to improve the quality of responses given to prisoners under the request/complaints procedures.

### 3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ESTABLISHMENT

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1. HMP Woodhill is located in Milton Keynes and is part of the Prison Service's Long Term and High Security Estate. It is a complex and important prison with multiple functions. Designated a core local Category A prison, it is one of only three in the country. It is mainly a local and resettlement prison holding adult male remands and those sentenced to less than 12 months from the South East Midlands (Thames Valley, Northants, Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire). Woodhill also receives Cat B or Cat C offenders for their last period of custody for resettlement purposes, for release to their local area. The prison holds starved-up and restricted status young adults (18 – 21), and potential Category A prisoners from across the Midlands. The Cat A requirements add significantly to the security and control requirements placed on the establishment. In addition Woodhill provides a very small facility for protected witnesses, which is managed under the National Protected Witness Programme. There are two Close Supervision Centre (CSC)/Rule 46 units and a Managing Challenging Behaviour Strategy (MCBS) unit, which are administered and managed under a national strategy through the Security Directorate. A Separation Centre is nearing completion but the planned opening date of June 2018 was delayed.

HM Prison and Probation Service plan to change Woodhill's role to that of a Category B training prison with a Category A function. In last year's report the Board stated that the anticipated April 2018 date for the change appeared unrealistic. As foreseen, it did not happen and a proposed date for the court work to be taken on by other establishments is now March 2019.

2. The prison's Certified Normal Accommodation (CNA) has remained below the Operational Capacity (OC) due to one and a half units remaining closed for the entire reporting period.

Baseline CNA: 539  
OC: 637

3. Over the period of this report, the population has comprised 70-75% sentenced prisoners, and 25-30% remand prisoners. The age range is predominantly 30-39 years and prisoners are predominantly white.

4. During the reporting period, the main prisoner accommodation was made up of 4 individual House Units, a Healthcare Inpatient facility and a Segregation Unit.

- House Units 1-4 are each divided into two wings, A and B. Each wing was designed to hold 60 prisoners in single cells. Some of these cells have been converted into doubles, so that each Unit can now hold 180.
- House unit 1 has the First Night facility and Induction unit on 1B, with a mix of remand and convicted prisoners on 1A.
- House Unit 2 has the dedicated drug stabilisation unit on 2A, with a mix of remand and convicted prisoners on 2B

- House Unit 3, 3A accommodates a mix of remand and convicted prisoners; 3B is closed for refurbishment.
- House Unit 4A holds a mix of remand and convicted prisoners.
- House Unit 4B is the Vulnerable Prisoner (VP) Unit.
- House Unit 5 with 90 spaces has remained unoccupied throughout this and the previous reporting period.
- House Unit 6 has 5 discrete wings; two are occupied by CSC prisoners, one by MCBS prisoners and one by protected witnesses.

## **B Evidence sections 4 – 11**

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### **4. SAFETY**

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Whilst there were self-inflicted deaths in 2016 there were none in 2017 and the first four months of 2018.

The Coroner has worked closely with HMP Woodhill's Safer Custody Team. Shared learning and strategies developed in Woodhill are being used in the wider community to address rising levels of self-harm and suicide.

The Coroner visited the prison to personally congratulate staff on the work that has been done to reduce deaths in custody over the last 18 months.

The 'First Days in Custody Team' won the Team of the Year at the Prison Service Awards.

The EDiC (Early Days In Custody) booklet developed at Woodhill has been rolled out across the wider estate.

As of 25.5.18 a dedicated Samaritans phone number was automatically added to all prisoner PINs. The prisoners' identity will be confidential.

Multi-disciplinary monthly complex case meetings were introduced to track individual prisoners of concern. They are generally very well attended and demonstrate how much effort the prison is making to ensure the sharing of knowledge and the management of challenging men as individuals.

A Listener was given temporary release (ROTL) to attend a joint HMPPS and Samaritans conference at Newbold Revell in October 2017. It was a real achievement for the Offender Management Unit.

In November 2017 there were only 7 prisoner Listeners in the establishment, which was a concern leading up to Christmas. There was no selection course planned. The previous course had 20 applicants but only 2 were successful.

The proportion of prisoners on ACCTs (the reduction of self-harm procedure) remained high. In June 2017 66 ACCTs were opened, an increase of 3 on the same period in 2016. There were 61 incidents of self-harm in June 2017, an increase of 21 compared to June 2016. Whilst acknowledging the many achievements and innovative work done in developing Safer Custody strategies the management of ACCTs is too inconsistent. Weaknesses are identified through management checks, but weaknesses in staffing result in little improvement.

Throughout the reporting period there were difficulties completing ACCT post closure reviews (PCRs) on time. On 30.10.17 there were 20 overdue PCRs, an indication that managers were struggling with their workloads.

During January 2018, 57 ACCTS were open, slightly fewer than over the same period in 2017. However incidences of violence increased.

## **Violence Reduction**

There were 16 violent incidents in June 2017, 6 of which were serious and have been reported to the police.

In December 2017 incidents of violence increased to 41 from 19. Assaults on staff increased from 11 to 25.

In April 2018 assaults against staff increased to 18 with 3 recorded as serious, compared to 8 in March 2018 with 2 recorded as serious.

In May 2018 serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults remained the same whilst overall prisoner-on-prisoner assaults reduced by 50%.

Towards the end of 2017 the Board had concerns about the management of men on Violence Reduction (VR) Strategy level 3, the highest level of monitoring. Although the VR team were identifying bullies and placing them on VR3, the lack of vacant spaces in the prison made it nearly impossible to break up gangs and effectively disperse their members. Staff shortages and regime curtailment led to VR3 prisoners not being correctly managed in accordance with their plans, and some had to be removed early from VR or the Risk Management Programme.

There was a rise in the use of illicit substances following the transition to “smoke free”. However the change was well managed by both prison and healthcare services. The use of ‘spice’ has been controlled with front end and targeted searching but still remains a disruptive force when accessed by prisoners.

In November 2017 the stability rating of the prison was reduced because of increases in violence.

Difficulties around the issuing of canteen caused concern throughout the reporting period. Inaccurate fulfilment of orders and staff shortages locally contributed to lack of confidence in the system.

Estate-wide population pressures coupled with high numbers of high-risk cell share prisoners are of concern, making local management of the population problematic. It was particularly difficult in June/July 2017. There were fewer accommodation options available to disperse gangs and manage bullying.

For almost the entire reporting period two regimes were run on the First Night and Induction Unit as there are insufficient places for Vulnerable Prisoners separated under Rule 45. This combined with a reduced regime led to delays in induction and men spending too long locked up.

Population pressures across the wider estate are reflected locally. In February 2018 there were:

144 Cat B prisoners - 23% of total population.

66 young offender prisoners - 10% of total population.

43% of prisoners were convicted of violent robbery - 9% above the prison national average.

8% prisoners were on Basic - 1.5% above the prison national average.

The Board believes restricted regimes and closures resulting in high levels of boredom and frustration are contributory factors to rising levels of violence and self-harm.

The Safer Custody team looked at the data for violent incidents in December 2017. There were 23 incidents, 19 of which took place on days when there were no education classes and activities were reduced.

More recently the VR strategy has been further developed and there are improvements in both monitoring and management.

	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>Jan 1 - May 31 2018</b>
<b>Use of Force</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>287</b>
<b>Self - harm incidents</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>663</b>	<b>299</b>
<b>ACCTs opened</b>	<b>911</b>	<b>856</b>	<b>320</b>
<b>Assaults: prisoner on prisoner</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Assaults: prisoner on staff</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>Violent incidents</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>158</b>
<b>Deaths in Custody, including by natural causes</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Near misses</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

<b>Date</b>	<b>No of ACCTs</b>	<b>Prisoners subject to Violence Reduction 1 monitoring</b>	<b>Prisoners subject to Violence Reduction 2 monitoring</b>	<b>Prisoners managed under Violence Reduction 3</b>
<b>7.6.17</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>7.7.17</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>7.8.17</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>7.9.17</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>15</b>

<b>7.10.17</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>7.11.17</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>7.12.17</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>7.1.18</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>7.2.18</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>7.3.18</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>7.4.18</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>7.5.18</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>17</b>

## 5. EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS

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HMP Woodhill IMB received 23 applications on equality issues from June 2017 to May 2018 (3% of the total number received).

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

- **Staffing and communication**

There is a local Equality Action Plan for 2017- 2018 in place and an Equality Newsletter distributed to each wing each month.

The target for Prisoner Equality Reps. for each wing is 2 for House Units 1 - 4. In May 2018 all posts were filled, bar one. It was observed in meetings that Prisoner Equality Reps could be more aware of the scope of equalities to enhance their impact.

There are 3 areas without Prisoner Equality Reps: Care and Separation (Segregation), House Unit 6 (Protected Witness, CSC, MCBS) and CAU (In-Patient Healthcare).

There are two Equalities Officers, neither full time and on average 32 hours per month are allocated for all equality tasks. The breadth of the role and cross-deployment restricts the time spent with prisoners.

Given the available staff time, the number of equalities meetings may not be sustainable as demonstrated by the number of cancelled meetings. Regime changes resulted in Disability and Older Persons (DOPLO) monthly meetings being cancelled from mid-2017 to February 2018 and again in May 2018.

Healthcare staff attendance at DOPLO meetings was limited, inhibiting health-related equalities problem solving.

The quarterly Equality Committee Meetings for management and department heads were poorly attended, e.g. at the meeting on 11.04.18, 5 managers/heads were in attendance and 15 sent apologies.

Monthly Prisoner Equality Reps. meetings were frequently cancelled due to staff shortages. Many issues raised by prisoners relate to general complaints, which if resolved elsewhere, would enable time in equality meetings to be more appropriately focussed.

- **Disability & Age**

In May 2018 there were 74 prisoners over age 50; and 64 with disabilities.

HMP Woodhill is not designed for prisoners with physical disabilities, however 3-4 wheelchair users, including paraplegics were resident at one time.

The Care Act 2014 places a joint responsibility on local authorities and prisons to provide social care. A Buddy system to support prisoners with disabilities commenced in September 2017 and pay was approved in November 2017. Delays of approximately 5 months can arise in appointing Buddies. In May 2018 there were 18 prisoners requiring social care and 3 Buddies appointed. Prisoners with disabilities are placed on wings before Buddies are agreed, which restricts access to personal care provision.

Prisoners with disabilities require an occupational health assessment for local authority care, which can be delayed for many weeks.

The limited types of jobs available to prisoners with a disability restrict their income in comparison to able-bodied prisoners.

At Reception prisoners are asked about medical needs, but it may be over a week before related dietary needs are met in breakfast packs, which contain high sugar content cereals unsuitable for some groups.

Deaf prisoners cannot see subtitles on TV, as screen adjustment is misaligned.

- **Race & Foreign Nationals**

There is a prisoner perception that transfers may be race-related.

The prison does not have access to statistics on wing transfers, job selection and adjudications by race, which impedes evidence-based equality analysis.

There is considerable potential for foreign national prisoners whose English is not good to be disadvantaged, especially when newly arrived because of their restricted ability to communicate their needs and gain an understanding of the prison regime. Although the Big Word service exists for translation wing staff may not routinely offer it to newly arrived individuals with limited English.

- **Religion & Belief**

Restricted prison regimes restrict access to Sunday religious services. If no prison officer is available for a religious activity no CAT A prisoners can attend religious services.

If wing regimes are constrained, faith prisoners are restricted from attending religious celebration days.

- **Sexual Orientation**

Equality Reps ask new arrivals to state their sexual orientation with many opting to prefer not to say. This impedes recognition of different groups and potentially masks equality issues.

The catalogue for ordering goods is male-orientated restricting the access of transgender prisoners to clothing and personal items suitable for their needs.

Activities, educational courses and TV channels do not fully cater for transgender prisoners.

## **6. SEGREGATION, CLOSE SUPERVISION AND DISCREET UNITS**

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### **SEGREGATION**

The Board wrote to the Minister twice in February 2017 as a matter of great urgency. The numbers and mix of men segregated, combined with the total failure of the works contract to repair damaged cells, resulted in appalling living and working conditions and the inappropriate use of overflow accommodation. The Board is pleased to report that there have been very significant improvements made during this reporting period.

From July 2017, Governors were detailed every Thursday specifically to chair reviews of continued segregation.

HOPES training, designed to progress long stay self-segregating prisoners back to normal accommodation, is being rolled out to establishments. It was developed in conjunction with Ashworth Hospital and has been very successful in Rampton and Broadmoor Hospitals.

The first – for over 12 months – Segregation Management and Review Group meeting was held on July 18<sup>th</sup> 2017. In September 2017 an improvement plan was written and initiated for the Segregation Unit.

In the quarter from October – December 2017 all segregation health and safety screening charts and GOOD Boards (continued segregation reviews) were completed on time.

Details of all prisoners staying in segregation for over 14 days were sent to the Deputy Director of Custody. There were some delays in receiving approval for continued segregation over 42 days, as required by law.

The average number of men in segregation on an open ACCT was 22%. The average time spent in segregation was 8.1 days.

The Board remained concerned with the lack of ‘ownership’ in managing long-stay segregated prisoners and the inexcusably protracted decision-making process. The Board accepts that there is now a positive dialogue around the better use of small units in the Long Term & High Security Estate, but population pressures frustrate almost all initiatives to reduce the segregation population.

### **Adjudication Standards**

Adjudication standards meetings are now taking place. The Board was impressed with the plans to tackle the number of outstanding adjudication cases. The Deputy Governor introduced monthly quality assurance checks using a random sample of 5%.

There were 711 adjudications in the quarter July to September 2017, up from 617 the previous quarter. 33% were police referrals, an increase associated with an increase in the number of young

offenders in the establishment. There were increases in fights, disobeying a lawful order and also threatening and abusive language. The latter would be better dealt with through the Incentive and Earned Privileges system, but the Board believes that lack of experience/confidence of staff leads them to refer cases for formal adjudication instead.

## **Use of Force**

The use of force meetings are now taking place, chaired by the Deputy Governor.

The completion of paperwork on time after incidents involving use of force improved but was not satisfactory. Returns hovered around 80% but have fallen in some months to below 50%. The prison's performance target requires paperwork to be completed within 72 hours.

In July 2017 there were 38 incidents where force was used, involving 33 prisoners, a slight reduction on the same period last year. However there has been a rise in the use of force to enforce a lawful order and use of force was on an upward trend. Assaults against staff spiked in October 2017 but reduced afterwards.

All complaints about use of force now go to the decision log under the control of the Deputy Governor.

## **Close Supervision Centre (CSC), Managing Challenging Behaviour Strategy (MCBS), Protected Witness Unit (PWU)**

The two CSC Units hold some of the most challenging men in the prison system, requiring intensive efforts to achieve progress in rehabilitation. MCBS prisoners are less challenging but need to be housed in a very high security environment. The prisoners in the PWU are housed there for their own protection.

These Units are located in House Unit 6, although the PWU was located in another part of the prison temporarily towards the end of the reporting year.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons conducted a thematic inspection of the CSC system in December 2017. The report found that tangible progress had been made in all their healthy prison tests since their last report in 2015. It was positive that far more men than previously had progressed out of the CSC and central MCBS systems, often to less restrictive special units and sometimes to mainstream prison wings. Staff-prisoner relationships remained a key strength. Given the severity of CSC custody, they were impressed by staff's focus on giving men hope, working with them as individuals, and their determination to help some men who were un-amenable to interventions.

They commented that regimes had improved at most of the units, although staffing shortages hampered efforts, particularly at Woodhill and cleanliness at Woodhill required improvement. Staffing shortages were undermining the effectiveness of regimes because they could not always be delivered as advertised. Men subject to a 'single unlock' on Woodhill 'A' wing had very limited time out of cell and access to a reasonable regime. Staff shortages had an impact on Woodhill in particular, where only 27 out of 44 CSC officer posts on A and B wings were filled.

The reporting year has seen considerable uncertainty, changes of plans and disruption to the operation of the units. There were plans in place at the beginning of 2017 for a Separation Centre (SC) to be in operation by September 2017 and consequential relocation of MCBS and PWU. The Separation Centre is intended to house prisoners who need to be separated from others to stop radicalisation. An existing unit was to be refurbished especially for the special requirements of the SC. There are two other SCs in the country, which have opened.

To make room for the SC, the MCBS Unit and the PWU were both to be moved to other prisons. At the same time, major upgrading of the fire alarm system would be undertaken across all of House Unit 6.

Completion of the refurbishment for the SC was delayed so long that it was completed only in April 2018. Nevertheless the Unit has still not opened because there were insufficient prisoners selected to justify opening the SC at Woodhill. It is now unlikely to open until at least Christmas 2018.

The MCBS Unit and its prisoners could not be moved before the end of the reporting year because the receiving prison had no room or staff available. The move of the PWU was cancelled because of the high cost of refurbishment works at the receiving prison.

The fire alarm upgrading work was started in February 2018. This required moving the PWU to another part of the prison temporarily and decanting the CSC into other Units to make room for the work to take place. The disruption to the routines of House Unit 6 had a severe impact on the operation of the units, the welfare of the prisoners and the morale of the staff.

Throughout the year the CSC units operated under severe staff shortages with staff working at maximum capacity in order to provide the prisoners with the facilities they need. One of the units housed 10 prisoners from January to April 2018, one more than its normal maximum capacity and this placed considerable strain on prisoners and staff. The overcrowding was caused because the CSC system nationally was overfull. Staff shortages meant that the routines of the units had to be curtailed on occasions. Healthcare staff shortages meant there were delays in dispensing medication on the CSC and MCBS units causing frustration and anger among prisoners who tend to be volatile anyway.

Men from CSC can only be located in one of three high secure mental health hospitals. Again this year, the length of time taken for mentally ill prisoners to be transferred to secure hospitals was far too long. In one case it took over a year for the process to be completed. Six months is common. The mental health of the men who need to go to secure hospitals deteriorates with continued incarceration if they do not get appropriate treatment.

The Board reiterates its comment in last year's report that that greater priority should be given to the needs of CSC and MCBS men so that they can be more effectively managed and progressed.

The maintenance of the fabric of House Unit 6 was a constant problem until Carillion ceased being responsible in January 2018. Minor repairs to the building and repairs of electrical equipment were difficult and time consuming to get completed and almost always delayed significantly.

At the end of the reporting year the Separation Centre had still not opened, some of the MCBS prisoners had been moved but others were to remain at Woodhill and the PWU was to remain at Woodhill but temporarily housed elsewhere. Uncertainty about the future remained.

Despite staff shortages, all the upheaval and the uncertainty, staff have continued to provide the prisoners with the best possible regime and facilities. They are to be commended for dealing with some of the most difficult of prisoners in the system with patience and courtesy.

## 7. ACCOMMODATION, INCLUDING COMMUNICATION

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Throughout the reporting period the prison struggled with both ordinary location and specialist cells being out of action. The Board took the unprecedented step of writing twice to the Minister during the previous year and once during this reporting period highlighting the woeful delivery of the maintenance contract by Carillion. In November 2017 the Board reported that 50% of perimeter lights did not work, despite being reported weekly. A number of main lights within the prison, including those on the outside walls of two main accommodation units, also did not work.

Date	Cells out of use	Spaces unavailable
June 18 <sup>th</sup> 2017	8	10
July 18 <sup>th</sup> 2017	7	8
August 18 <sup>th</sup> 2017	7	8
September 18 <sup>th</sup> 2017	10	13

The situation worsened significantly and by October 2017 the decision was made to inform the national Population Management Unit on a daily basis of the numbers of spaces unavailable due to cells not being maintained or repaired.

The Board is deeply disappointed that following the collapse of Carillion there was negligible improvement in the delivery of the maintenance and works contract.

Specialist cells are not included in the operational capacity but have a significant effect on the management of prisoners.

Date	Ordinary location cells out of use	Spaces unavailable	Specialist cells out of use
October 18 <sup>th</sup> 2017	12	16	3
November 18 <sup>th</sup> 2017	18	26	5
December 18 <sup>th</sup> 2017	18	26	5
January 18 <sup>th</sup> 2018	19	23	8
February 18 <sup>th</sup> 2018	7	8	8

March 18 <sup>th</sup> 2018	12	16	5
April 18 <sup>th</sup> 2018	13	23	6
May 18 <sup>th</sup> 2018	11	16	7

At the Insiders meeting on 4.7.17 lack of and shortages of kit and bedding, showers and phones not working, dilapidated cell fittings, poor mattresses, shortages of furniture and regime slippage were all cited as on-going problems. This situation remained fairly constant throughout 2017.

The Board is pleased to report that by February 2018 significant improvements were made to the provision of cell furniture. The showers were to be upgraded but the work has been very slow to complete resulting in insufficient numbers of showers available for the men to use.

Vermin were still a problem in all areas of the prison despite the use of professional pest control services.

In July/August 2017 the Board received a significant increase in the number of applications, particularly those relating to property. Due to staff shortages in the main jail, reception staff were often deployed elsewhere at weekends. This is the time that applications were normally dealt with and prisoners brought down to collect property. As a result there was a growing backlog, with a 7/10-day delay in applications being dealt with. Prisoners frustrated with the lack of response submitted a second and sometimes third application, and then a complaint. Complaints must be dealt with first and so the delay in dealing with applications was extended. The frequent poor standards of responses to complaints added to prisoner dissatisfaction.

Improvements to the complaints process have resulted in a reduction of 70% of complaints about property received within the second half of the reporting year. Issues remain with getting prisoners to reception to collect belongs.

Prisoners are also limited on what they can bring with them when transferred. This is caused by smaller vehicles being used, which can be driven on a car licence. The drivers therefore do not require regular medicals, have to take an additional driving test and do 35 hours periodic training every five years to continue driving vehicles over 3.5 tonnes.

Obtaining compensation is still problematic for prisoners whose effects have been lost.

The Board is pleased to report that since February 2018 there has been a significant fall in the number of applications received. Oversight and management of property improved in the later months of the reporting year.

The Board is pleased to report the in-cell TV channels for communication and education (Way Out TV) were fully functioning.

## **8. HEALTHCARE, MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**

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The problems of staffing have continued from last year. Successful interviewees wait for longer to get security clearance and many accept other jobs outside the prison. Primary care vacancies are ongoing and agency and the prison bank cover most shortages. Nursing staff vacancies are approximately 35%. Attendance at clinical appointments has not improved and can be up to 50%; low prison officer staff numbers may have contributed to poorer management of movement from wings to Healthcare. Much staff time has been taken up by inquests, which have now come to an end. A robust management system for smoking cessation has worked well and prisoners not complying are taken off the programme; the prison became non-smoking on 4/9/17.

Nurses triage doctors' appointments to ensure they are required. Doctors had an electronic link for test results until a year ago, which they would like restored as the process has slowed down.

Healthcare ran a full range of clinics to which access and waiting lists are the same or better than that in the community. Referral to both general and medium secure hospital is well managed and waiting time is short. However, some hospital appointments have had to be cancelled due to shortage of escort staff. Complaints are responded to appropriately and mostly within the correct time. There is good access to wing based nurses who deal successfully with minor issues and prisoners can self refer for appointments. Nurses now have access to the healthcare computer system on the wings. Wing based medication is well controlled but sometimes poorly supervised by prison officers which compromises confidentiality and there is a risk of bullying or diversion. Drug administration at the optimum time for best therapeutic effect is not always happening and has been reported before. Infection prevention control checks are done monthly and appropriate audits take place regularly. Good palliative and end of life care are provided.

A recent inspection action was: "the trust should develop the overall quality of care plans so they fully reflect the level of staff interventions undertaken with patients".

Dental clinics are provided by Buckinghamshire Dental Services who provide a full range of treatment. Clinics run three days a week and have many failed appointments, and longer courses of treatment are frequently not completed due to many prisoners' short stay at the prison. Waiting time is short. The dental service is responsible for servicing equipment contracts.

Mental health: The service identifies immediate needs at Reception and appropriate referrals are made. There was an improvement in the timeliness of transfer to secure hospital in some cases but not all. The department had a shortage of staff at the beginning of the reporting year and this had an impact on the services that could be offered. Since then the department has been rebuilt and, although still short of some staff, is able to offer a fuller service; this includes drop in clinics, one to one support, facilitated self- help, art psychotherapy and group therapy. All new prisoners are reviewed on the day after arrival and associate practitioners deal with low level needs; complex needs are also well managed. Staff attend rule 45 reviews as appropriate and attend ACCT reviews as required. The psychiatrist's time has reduced from five days a week to two.

Pharmacy has provided a good service at the expense of its staff, which is 40% short (3.8 full time employees); there is a potential compromise to safety of the service and staff do not get the necessary breaks. There is no capacity to cover sickness. Recruitment is proving challenging.

In-patients (CAU) has been mostly successful in ensuring only medical/mental health patients are present. The complexity of individual care and the number of regimes has frequently impacted on the time out of cell for other prisoners; ventilation in the association area is poor and there is no therapeutic regime. A nurse is present during the day and prison officers administer the unit. More continuity of staff and a reliable radio signal would be tangible improvements.

Westminster Drug Project: WDP provide clinical and psychosocial substance misuse services. Joint working with healthcare and mental health is good. There are a variety of courses available to prisoners, and many are engaged in one-to-one or recovery-focused group work modules. Care planning and risk management for patients who use the service is well developed. Care co-ordination has improved with a joint WDP/CNWL dual diagnosis pathway and policy with weekly review meetings. Planning for return to the community is good with strong links to community services.

CNWL achieved savings of 6% in the last financial year and closed on a deficit of £7.4M. The Trust still has to save £20.9M to achieve its planned position. The contract for Woodhill healthcare is out to tender now.

Healthcare services have performed well against challenging staffing problems. Access to healthcare is the same or better than in the community.

## 9. EDUCATION AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

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The Education Department at HMP Woodhill was fully staffed and offered a wide range of courses but during the reporting year the number of classes was severely curtailed due to prison staff shortages. As a result the Education building was frequently closed.

For example, Education was closed for 70% of sessions in December 2017 and 38% in January 2018. The workshops were closed for 80% of sessions in December 2017 and 68% in January 2018.

All prisoners receiving education were affected, particularly the vulnerable prisoners (VPs) who only had one dedicated session in the building each week. They lost their education time and the chance to use the computer in the library.

Prisoners were required to reach a minimum level of literacy and numeracy skills before they could apply for a job, and many found this difficult to achieve, particularly if education sessions were cancelled. The closures in education resulted in men not reaching the required educational standard in order to be allocated jobs. For example on 26.1.18: 40 men were waiting to be allocated education classes, 41 were allocated English but were not been able to attend. As a result 81 men could not be allocated activity places.

In response to the closures education staff provided outreach services on the wings to reach prisoners who had started courses. There was a steady rise in the number of peripatetic education sessions. Between April and July 2017 a dedicated member of education staff visited wings to engage with men who could not access main education. 311 men were seen, 44% engaged and 30% enrolled on courses. A dedicated tutor is now in post for the VPs wing. Over 700 contacts were made in January 2018. However not all wings had a suitable room for this and teaching through the cell door is not satisfactory. Prisoners who have low levels of literacy and numeracy need teacher support and a classroom environment in order to learn.

Numbers had fallen in some of the practical courses and educational workshops because of closures and increased security measures. In addition, due to wing closures, the roll was much lower than it used to be and the classes were not full.

The Library, very well stocked, suffered the same closures resulting in prisoners unable to access it. Staff tried to take books to the wings if prisoners put in an application, but this had limited success. Legal and reference books cannot be left on the wing.

A peer mentoring system operated well with a dedicated tutor and mentors on every wing. A maths version of the Shannon Trust reading programme is planned for prisoners with poor numeracy skills who find it difficult to engage in formal education

Of 21 CSC prisoners, 16 are engaged in some sort of education. There is a dedicated tutor for House Unit 6. Distance learning, Open University courses, English and maths were all being delivered.

Open University engagement was so successful there was a waiting list. Over 50 men were taking part; the learning is transferable between establishments.

Ofsted rated education at HMP Woodhill as inadequate, not because of the quality of the teaching, which was praised, but because of staff shortages and closures.

Month	Education and workshop training sessions available	<b>Education sessions closed</b>	<b>Educational workshop training closed</b>	Resettlement closed
JUNE 2017	44	5	3	
JULY 2017	42	3	8	
AUGUST 2017	46	2	1	
SEPTEMBER 2017	42	4	6	
OCTOBER 2017	44	14	18	3
NOVEMBER 2017	44	19	20	6
DECEMBER 2017	32	27	29	7
JANUARY 2018	41	28	28	4
FEBRUARY 2018	40	11	7	7
MARCH 2018	43	11	10	2
APRIL 2018	40	18	19	4
MAY 2018	44	11	15	1
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>503</b>	<b>153 = 30.42%</b>	<b>164 = 32.6%</b>	<b>34</b>

## **10. WORK, VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT**

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The range of accredited vocational training increased over the year. The men engaged in vocational training and industries developed good practical work skills. However individual learning plans were not utilised effectively resulting in prisoners' work skills not always being recorded. Prisoners who were able to engage in purposeful activities engaged well and showed respect to other prisoners, prison staff and other staff.

Uncertainty around the prison's change of role was unhelpful. Plans were made to increase the range and type of work available for long-term prisoners, including extending opportunities for vulnerable prisoners. However no real progress can be made until there is some clarity as to the future of the prison.

The prison offers full and part-time activity places for most of the population. Staff shortages and closures had a very significant effect on all aspects of work and education. Frequent cancellations of Induction modules 1 and 2 delayed allocating to education and progression to activities. Closures in education result in men not reaching the required educational standard in order to be allocated jobs. For example on 26.1.18: 40 men were waiting to be allocated Education classes, 41 were allocated English but have not been able to attend. As a result - 81 men cannot be allocated Activity places.

Activities, which were running, were rarely full. There were occasions when only one-third of prisoners attended activities at any one time. The regular closures and cancellations resulted in prisoners becoming demotivated and struggling to maintain a positive work ethic. There are limited opportunities for disabled, vulnerable or older prisoners.

Activity staff cite deep concern with the number of men who are refusing to go to work and are not being challenged. The perception is of uniformed staff lacking experience, not having enough time to effectively manage moves and staff not knowing prisoners.

Attendance at activities remains woefully poor despite this being an area of Governor-led focus. In May 2018 rates of around 54% attendance were recorded against a KPT of 80%.

## **11. RESETTLEMENT PREPARATION**

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The demands for resettlement services continued to be high, with about 120 prisoners released each month.

Resettlement services at HMP Woodhill are provided by 2 Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs), Thames Valley MTC NOVO and BeNCH. Both CRCs offer a wide range of help with housing and financial problems but reliable data is not available to measure releases into accommodation.

When the contract was awarded in May 2015 the anticipated division of workload was estimated at 70% Thames Valley (TV) and 30% BeNCH. The current level is 55% TV and 45% BeNCH. Both teams reported full staffing levels over the reporting period; TV employed 5.8 full time staff and BeNCH 2.5 full time staff. However the BeNCH team are in need of more staffing to enable them to deliver an optimum level of service equivalent to that of TV.

Both providers reported good links with the local courts. The biggest barrier to housing on release is the lack of suitable accommodation available.

Frustration arises when, due to prison staffing levels, it is not possible to move men to Resettlement for their appointments. The Resettlement Department set up a bi-monthly clinic on the Vulnerable Prisoner wing to facilitate better contact with these men. This initiative worked well.

Offender Categorisation and Allocation (OCA) worked effectively but overcrowding and shortages of spaces, particularly within the Cat B estate, frustrated progressive moves.

There continued to be negligible management or provision made for an increasing number (10% of the population) of Indeterminate Sentence prisoners held at Woodhill.

Long-term Cat B prisoners moved into the establishment were generally unhappy. The facilities list at Woodhill meant that many items allowed in possession in other establishments were put in stored property. The courses men needed for sentence plans were generally not available and education is geared towards low level and short courses.

The MITIE Foundation delivered a Business Challenge Day for VPs, which was the first time these men had been the focus of such an event.

The Offender Management Unit set out a plan at the beginning of the year to review all licence recall prisoners ensuring that all who were eligible for HDC were processed as soon as possible.

The Chaplaincy introduced a new programme called Enneagram, to help men reduce their re-offending.

## **THE WORK OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD**

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1. The Board members at Woodhill again worked exceptionally hard this year. The small numbers of fully trained members have undertaken all duties whilst providing mentoring for new members in addition to dealing with a large number of applications.

2. All Board members use the secure webmail service ([www.cjsm.net](http://www.cjsm.net)) to disseminate information as instructed by the IMB Secretariat and the IMB National Council. The Board welcomes the improvements made to the system.

### **Training**

During the reporting year the Board had presentations from senior managers, heads of department and attended modules of the IMB training programme.

<b>BOARD STATISTICS</b>	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	16
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period (incl. three members in their Probationary year)	8
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period (incl. four members in their probationary year)	12
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	8
Number of members leaving within reporting period	5
Total number of Board meetings during reporting period	12
Average number of attendances at Board meetings during reporting period	7
Total number of visits to the prison	571
Percentage of segregation reviews attended	88%

Total number of applications received (General and Confidential)	597
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## APPLICATIONS

Operational capacity	819	819	819	819	819	637
Subject	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Accommodation	8	15	22	9	15	27
Adjudications	8	14	8	18	5	13
Equality & Diversity (including religion)	2	8	8	14	14	23
Education/employment/training inc IEP	28	52	51	47	31	24
Family/visits inc mail & phone	42	63	66	78	52	90
Finance & Pay	10	20	29	20	13	11
Closed Visits	0	0	7	9	0	4
Food/kitchen related	10	7	12	7	15	12
Health related	52	70	60	60	60	43
Property (within current establishment)	54	47	42	41	43	60
Property (during transfer/in another establishment)	20	27	42	57	57	44
Canteen, facilities, Catalogue shopping, Argos	8	14	15	10	8	17
Sentence related (inc. HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-cat, etc.	72	92	79	62	43	46
Staff/prisoner/detainee concerns inc. bullying	52	37	67	81	70	68
Transfers	17	30	24	20	11	19
Miscellaneous	104	54	67	34	54	67
Returned/unclassified			92	47	22	29
Total number of IMB applications	487	550	694	614	524	597

Confidential Applications June 2017 – May 2018 90

Certified Normal Accommodation was reduced in 2016/17 due to the closure of a Wing. The Operational Capacity was reduced to 637, which shows the very significant percentage increase in applications to the IMB