



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

**HMP Stafford**

**for reporting Year**  
**(1 May 2017 to 30 April 2018)**

**Published**  
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*Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody*

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### 1 STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB

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The Prison Act 1952 requires every prison to be monitored by an independent Board appointed by the Secretary of State from members of the community in which the prison or centre is situated.

The Board is specifically charged to:

- (1) satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody within its prison and the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release.
- (2) inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom he has delegated authority as it judges appropriate, any concern it has.
- (3) **report annually to the Secretary of State on how well the prison has met the standards and requirements placed on it and what impact these have on those in its custody.**

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

## 2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

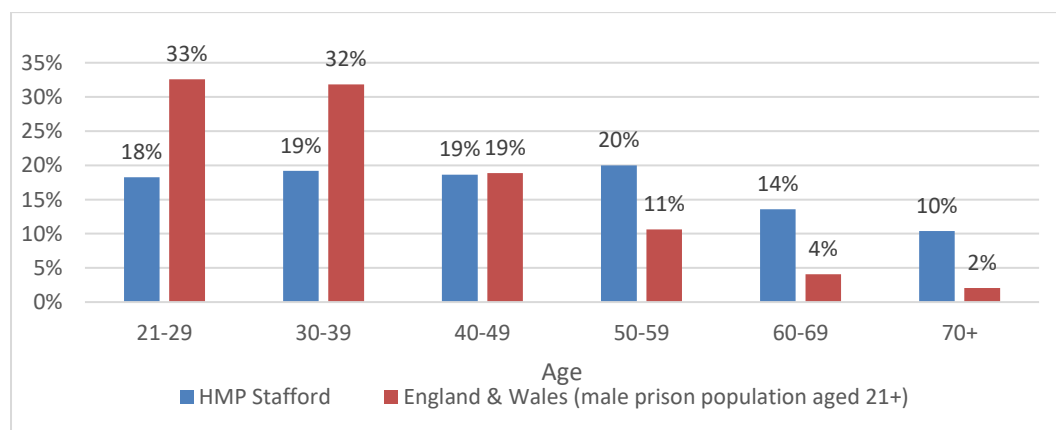
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### Introduction to the Report

This report presents the findings of the IMB at HMP Stafford for the period 1<sup>st</sup> May 2017 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2018. IMB evidence came from observations made on visits, scrutiny of records and of data, informal contact with prisoners and staff, attendance at meetings, prisoner applications and other duties, such as Board presence at adjudications and Rule 45 reviews.

### Main Judgements

- Overall prisoners receive fair and decent treatment in this establishment and feel safe. (see page 7)
- The prison's positive emphasis on humane treatment was well recognised. The Board would wish to acknowledge the exceptional care shown by staff and prisoner carers towards very frail, elderly and terminally ill prisoners. (see page 11)
- The issue of an ageing population has been mentioned numerous times in this report. The graph below compares the ages of the prison population at HMP Stafford versus the male prison population across England and Wales. This chart evidences some of the judgements made in this report.



**Age profile of HMP Stafford population on 21 Sep 2017 and England & Wales male prison population. (Source: Offender Management Statistics, Table 1.3), extracted from NHS (NORTH MIDLANDS), HMP STAFFORD, SUBSTANCE MISUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT – with their permission)**

- Preparation for release continued to be a positive aspect of this prison despite the establishment not being labelled or resourced as a resettlement prison. (see page 23)

- A high level of the prison population was engaged in some form of work or education. (see pages 19, 21)
- The Board had a positive working relationship with the Governor and his staff, enabling the Board to monitor effectively the work of the prison and address issues appropriately.
- During the reporting period, the transfer of responsibility from one Governing Governor to another was, in the opinion of the Board, seamless. Reassuringly, prisoners were basically unaffected by a significant number of changes in the staff who make up the Senior Management Team (SMT) at the establishment.

## **Main Areas for Development**

### ***To The Minister***

Will the Minister review:

- the strategy for frail, vulnerable and elderly prisoners to ensure that it avoids them being held in inappropriate locations and ensures that their dignity is protected. Alongside this report, evidence can be found in recent PPO (Prisons and Probation Ombudsman) reports, following deaths in custody, that question the suitability of HMP Stafford for end of life care. (see page 8, 9)
- the provision of Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) for sex offenders to assist in their resettlement on release. (see page 25)
- the failure of Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service to address the ongoing issue of prisoner property losses during transfer between establishments, which remains a huge frustration and will undoubtedly cost a substantial amount in compensation. (see page 7, 15)

### ***To Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service***

Will HMPPS review:

- the provision of 24/7 healthcare beds and the criteria that are set for acceptance/admission to such a facility. (see page 8, 18)
- the failure of the prison model designed to relocate prisoners, in this case, specifically sex offenders, to a resettlement prison close to their home prior to release. (see page 23)
- the process for granting compassionate release for prisoners that requires a consultant to confirm that a prisoner is both at the end of their life and will not reoffend. (see page 18)

- the budget available to the Governor for prisoner pay and ensure that it recognises that HMP Stafford achieves a high level of employment/education attendance amongst its population yet often cannot match the pay rates offered in private prisons. There is little flexibility in the pay budget to look at improved rates due to this high capacity in employment. (see page 22)

### ***To the Governor***

Will the Governor address:

- the ongoing inequality and lack of clarity in prisoner pay. (see page 22)
- safeguarding as a key priority, particularly in view of the number of frail, elderly and terminally ill prisoners. Staff training is still awaited, as is a safeguarding policy review. (see page 8)
- a review of how the Incentives and Earned Privileges (IEP) system could be used as a better measure of prisoner behaviour. This was reported last year, with no action apparent to the Board. (see page 11)
- an increased focus on improving employment opportunities for prisoners on release. (see page 23)

### **Improvements from the 2017 – 2018 IMB Annual Report**

- Due to a larger number of establishments going smoke free, the issues around failure to notify transferring prisoners that HMP Stafford was smoke free declined.
- The workshop experience had improved for some prisoners through the Maths and English mentoring programme that was being successfully run; this also gave an opportunity for prisoners to train as mentors. (see page 19, 21)
- Governor local autonomy meant resettlement resources were funded by the establishment to ensure that prisoners had better pre- and post-release experiences. (see page 23)
- Continued focus on Active Citizenship for prisoners provided a further range of responsible roles which improved their resettlement opportunities and gave them pride in their own prison setting. (see page 7, 22)
- Waiting lists in healthcare were better managed, with additional sessions being arranged when lists became lengthy. (see page 17)

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

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HMP Stafford is a category C, adult male, sex offender national resource with a certified normal accommodation of 751. On 30 April 2018, 741 prisoners convicted of sex offences were held in Stafford. Located near Stafford town centre, it is one of the oldest prisons in the country and includes many Grade II listed buildings.

The prison includes 7 residential wings, one of which is used for induction and accommodates the Healthcare Centre, with the Segregation Unit located below. Each wing has in-cell sanitation and a shower block. Most cells accommodate two prisoners.

Reception for prisoners' visitors is located on the ground floor of a house opposite the prison's main gates. During the reporting period, the house became a shared resource with Regional HMPPS staff.

A portacabin for older prisoners, called Brookside Cabin, is now in full use, providing activities for older prisoners, as well as facilities for relaxation and socialising. A garden, seating and space for outdoor activities is adjacent to Brookside Cabin. Older and infirm prisoners are supported by the installation of a chair lift in the Chapel and wheelchair access lifts in D wing, Healthcare and the Oral Hearing room, also various access ramps throughout the prison.

On 30 April 2018 the number of full time or equivalent staff was 287, including uniformed and non-uniformed staff, 14 more than the previous year.

Healthcare facilities are provided by Care UK, education services by Milton Keynes and Stoke-on-Trent Colleges, with library services provided by Staffordshire County Council. Transport for prisoners is provided by GeoAmey and canteen by DHL.

There are many voluntary organisations supporting the prisoners including Samaritans (support and training for Listeners), Barnardos (visitors' centre), Lincolnshire Action Trust (Resettlement), Shannon Trust Reading Plan "Turning Pages", official prison visitors, chaplaincy volunteers and refreshment provision in the visitors' centre by Friends of Stafford Prison.

## B Evidence sections 4 – 11

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### 4. SAFETY

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- The Board judged that prisoners benefited from a calm, safe environment evidenced by comparing 2016/17 to 2017/18:
  - the reduction in assaults on staff from 38 to 19
  - the assaults by prisoners on prisoners remained the same at 32
  - incidents of use of force reduced from 64 to 54
  - fewer serious incidents at the establishment in the reporting period
- Comments from prisoners demonstrated they were surprised and pleased at the positive welcome on arrival from Reception staff and other prisoners. They were given tea and then supported by Listeners and an Insider who accompanied them to the reception wing, which helped them to settle.
- The Board monitored the induction process and followed this up with discussions with prisoners about how they had settled and their perception of the induction weeks. Comments were mainly positive.
- The only persistent negative response related to loss of property before or during transfer. This issue was seldom resolved by the sending prison and often resulted in a referral to the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman for compensation. This annoyed prisoners who had lost possessions.
- The prison remained a safe prison since it was reported so in 2016 by HMIP. There were 80 incidents of self-harm in the reporting year, a reduction from the previous year and a significantly lower number per 100 prisoners than the national average or that of similar prisons. This relatively low incidence of self-harm can be partially attributed to the support given by the Safer Custody team and the Board commends them for their work.
- 139 ACCT documents were opened during the year, again a low number compared to the national average. At some points in the reporting year, there were no open ACCTs. This could be partly attributed to the vigilance and support by officers and the constant availability and commitment of the Listeners, who numbered an average of 28 across the establishment at any time.
- Two prisoners were appointed as Intervention Representatives, whose main responsibility was to act as a point of contact for anyone who felt under threat. Their work was to be commended. The Board felt that this was a further example of the positivity around the Active Citizenship programme in the establishment, which provided opportunities for prisoners to hold responsible roles.
- During the reporting year, the number of isolated prisoners had reduced from 6 to 0 partly because of the positive intervention of the Safer Custody team and Listeners, who identified these prisoners and assisted them to



integrate into the prison community. The Board recognised the problems that isolation can cause to both physical and mental wellbeing and was pleased that the numbers had reduced.

- Incidents of positive Mandatory Drug Tests (MDTs) rose by 50% from the previous year, but were so low (4 had risen to 6) as to be insignificant. The Board saw this data as reflecting the safety of the establishment as previously reported.
- The Board was concerned that the Safeguarding Policy had not been updated, and no safeguarding training was forthcoming in the reporting period. Staff, when questioned, were unfamiliar with the policy contents or its purpose or were confused about the term 'safeguarding'. Considering the ageing and frail nature of the population, the Board would have expected this to be very high on the list of priorities for the Governor and his team, thereby ensuring the safety and appropriate care of the most vulnerable.
- The ageing population frequently required escort to hospital for emergencies, as well as for planned routine appointments. The need for emergency escorts often involved staff being taken from other duties and resulted in short lock-downs of one or more wings on a rota basis during either lunchtime or evening association. This led to frustration amongst prisoners who were deprived of their exercise or association. Whilst any lock-downs are regrettable, the Board acknowledges that these were short periods, not across the whole establishment and, during the latter part of the reporting period, the situation had improved with the provision of extra escort staff.
- There were 8 deaths in custody during the reporting year, an increase of 6. This was not surprising given the high proportion of prisoners who were elderly or in poor health. At the time of this report, only half of the inquests had taken place, but all were likely to be due to natural causes.
- Considering the number of deaths in custody, the prison was seeking to increase the number of Family Liaison Officers (FLOs) available to give support to the prisoner and family in their final weeks of life. With the very regrettable exception of one case, where extenuating circumstances were present, relatives were notified of their relative's death in a timely and appropriate way. In one case the FLO for a prisoner travelled a significant distance around the country to personally notify the next-of-kin.
- The Board observed the great work done by FLOs during the reporting period; their support for prisoners and families should be commended.
- HMP Stafford endeavoured to build on good relationships with the local hospital and hospice to enable appropriate care to be given to prisoners at the end of their life. Whilst the Board were pleased to note that two prisoners were able to spend their final days of life in a hospice, the establishment was unable to regularly secure 24/7 nursing care for prisoners, as reported in two recent PPO reports.

- The Board was sympathetic towards the establishment in this matter, as it appeared the criteria for admission was set very high. In the opinion of the Board, this resulted in prisoners being cared for in an inappropriate environment with the establishment having nowhere more suitable to send them.

## 5. EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS

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- HMP Stafford continued to demonstrate a clear, co-ordinated approach to eliminating discrimination and fostering good relations both inside and outside the prison.
- The Equality Action Group met monthly. The Board was invited in an observer capacity. All residential wings were represented, as were many of the protected characteristics. Prisoners fed back that they were confident with data provided at the meeting and had ample opportunity to ask questions.
- The Discrimination Incident Report Form (DIRF) system was widely advertised on prison wings. Equality complaints in the reporting period reduced from 79 to 41, of which 17 were proven. Most were answered within the time frame and responses quality checked by the Deputy Governor. The Board randomly checked DIRFs and was satisfied that the process worked for prisoners.
- The decrease in DIRFs was mainly due to more robust filtering on receipt. Those that did not meet the criteria of the Equalities Act 2010 were referred to the general complaints system. The Equality Reps on residential wings were also trained in the DIRF system and tried to speak to any of their peers who were considering completing a DIRF, to ensure that this method was the most appropriate for them. The Board were pleased that this responsibility was taken on by prisoners as it helped develop skills that may be useful for their resettlement.
- Race complaints, 13 in total, continued to be highest, though this was a substantial reduction from the previous year's total of 41. The majority were found to be multiple submissions by a few individuals which the Board believed did not represent the perception of the black and minority ethnic (BME) population. The prison undertook work with the BME population during the reporting period, inviting an external facilitator to meet with prisoners to ascertain any concerns. This gave an extra voice to prisoners in this category.
- Data for the end of the reporting period showed foreign national prisoners totalled 49 from 30 different countries. Border agency staff were invited into the establishment to assist foreign nationals with any questions they may have had regarding their status etc. Prisoners took advantage of this opportunity.
- The establishment took an inclusive approach to protected characteristics evidenced by cultural awareness events being held throughout the year, for example Black History Month and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller events. Feedback from prisoners showed that events were well received and appreciated. All prisoners had an opportunity to attend these events.

- The Board continued to monitor closely the needs of older prisoners. 50% of the population were aged 50+, of whom 10% were aged over 70.
- This ageing population placed additional demands on staff and healthcare resources in terms of social care and age appropriate activity. The Board hopes that the establishment will continue to recognise the challenge that this group provides and ensure that staff have relevant training to protect safety, dignity and care for some of the most vulnerable prisoners.
- The Senior Support Group (SSG) facility housed in Brookside Cabin continued to operate at full capacity with a variety of activities offered. The Board welcomed the establishment of an elected forum to discuss issues pertinent to that age range.
- Although the Recoop Good Practice Guide for Working with Older Prisoners was adopted nationally, the lack of support, specifically resources, to care for the older, frail offender was disappointing as the demography of the prison population had changed, not only at HMP Stafford. The Board would welcome action on this issue by the Minister.
- The Board continued to believe that the Incentives and Earned Privileges (IEP) system could be used as a better measure of prisoner behaviour. Data showed similar figures to the last reporting period, with 55.98% of prisoners on enhanced status, 43.08% on standard status and just 0.94% on basic status. The 2016 – 17 data showed 53.14%, 45.66% and 1.07%. Some prisoners may lack the impetus to improve themselves as downgrading was rarely evident.
- The Board found no evidence of any equalities bias in IEP awards.
- Six days of family visits were arranged during school holidays. IPP/Lifers family days were organised too. The Board believes that thought was needed to enrich the visits experience, especially as many visitors travelled a great distance. In speaking to prisoners and visitors in the Visits Hall, the most frequent request was for hot food to be provided and improved children's play space.
- As a result of Lord Farmer's report on prisoner/family ties, HMP Stafford produced a Families and Significant Others Strategy 2018-2021. A multi-function action plan was published at the end of the reporting period and one of its many ambitions was to create a more favourable visits experience. Considering the previous comment, the Board welcomed this focus and will monitor the progress with interest.
- The Board received positively the news that the lack of a tally system for arriving visitors was working well and that a biometric system would be introduced to help speed up the process further. Investment in any aspect of the visitor process would clearly have a positive impact on many of the prisoners.

- The Board wishes to acknowledge the valuable contribution of the Halow Trust over many years in caring for visitors and children to the establishment. Barnardo's were appointed in Autumn 2017 to replace the Halow Trust.
- The Board also welcomed clarification of the system of prisoners being allowed to give books to visitors, which for a time had not been possible. This had been facilitated following repeated requests by the Board.

## 6. SEGREGATION/CARE AND SEPARATION UNIT

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- The Segregation Unit (Seg) had 8 functioning cells, access to an exercise yard and a well-stocked library shelf. As part of the Active Citizenship Programme, the shower facilities in the Seg were painted and decorated by the prisoner painting party, providing a clean and humane facility for prisoners held there.
- Rota visits evidenced that the Seg area was well-kept and very clean. A prisoner was allocated the role of Seg cleaner and could often be found assisting with meals, cleaning the floor, tidying books and carrying out tasks given by the Seg staff.
- An experienced, capable team of 6 officers engaged effectively with prisoners to support their speedy return to the residential wings. They helped minimise damaging periods of isolation, especially when prisoners appeared happy to remain in the Seg rather than relocate to a residential wing.
- Throughout the year the Board was always notified of arrivals in the unit. A log was kept of Board member visits to individuals in the Seg; these took place at least twice each week. Prisoners entering the Seg were always visited by the IMB within the statutory time frame.
- The Seg was used less frequently: 112 instances in this reporting period compared to 154 in the previous year. There were periods of time when the Seg was empty, and staff were reallocated on these occasions. These empty periods (and the reduction in use) evidenced the stability and safety of the establishment.
- Where possible, Rule 45 hearings were timetabled to enable a Board member to attend and ensure a fair process was carried out. It was noticeable that fewer R45 reviews in 2017-18 took place than in 2016-17. Despite being available, Board members often found that no R45 was planned. The Board believed that this was further evidence of the stability and safety within the establishment.
- The Board logged comments from prisoners in the Seg on the rota visits form. These comments indicated a very high level of satisfaction with the treatment and care offered by the SEG officers. Evidence showed that prisoners held in the Seg, when asked whether they had questions for the Board, often replied that they were “OK”, “fine” or “everything’s good”. The Board was always able to conduct these conversations privately, often through the door without the presence of staff.
- The Board monitored adjudications at least fortnightly, and prisoners were afforded the opportunity to speak to a Board member before, during and after the process. During the reporting period, the Board reviewed its role in adjudications to strengthen its independence.
- Adjudicating governors invariably listened carefully to concerns of prisoners and explained clearly their actions. The Board judged that all adjudications observed were well conducted and fair.

<b>AREA</b>	<b>2017 - 2018</b>	<b>2016 - 2017</b>
Use of force	54	64
Adjudications	451	475
Dirty protests	0	0
Special accommodation	0	0

- Segregation documentation was always readily available, and monitored to establish that daily visits from Governor, Chaplaincy and Healthcare took place.
- The Board concluded that during the reporting year, the Seg was very well managed and conformed to applicable regulations.

## **7. ACCOMMODATION (INCLUDING COMMUNICATION)**

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- The Board was pleased to see that catering continued to be well-regarded within the establishment. In February 2018, following a health and safety inspection, the kitchens achieved a green award in all ten areas, and the staff and prisoner workers were rewarded by the Governor for the achievement. This evidenced that prisoner food was prepared and served in a safe, healthy way and is generally well-regarded by the prisoners.
- Evidenced by rota visits, overall the food served within the establishment was plentiful and distributed in a timely manner. All catering staff were suitably attired and hygienic standards were maintained throughout the meal service. The Board was pleased to report that they received only one complaint about food during the reporting period. Comments made to the Board by new arrivals supported this positivity around food and food service.
- The laundry within the establishment was very busy and did the washing and drying for the establishment's prisoners. This was carried out in an effective, timely manner. In the past, the Board had received numerous complaints regarding lost laundry; this appeared to have been solved by more secure laundry bags and no complaints were received regarding losses in the last 12 months. The laundry provided a service to HMP Stoke Heath and fulfilled other contracts too.
- As reported in the last IMB report, the issue of prisoners' property transferring with them was still a concern. There had been several complaints submitted to the Board regarding property that did not arrive with the prisoner on transfer. During the final three months of this reporting period (January to March 2018), out of 22 applications received, 10 related to property that was missing. As previously mentioned, this was an unacceptable situation which caused distress and anger to prisoners.
- The accommodation for prisoners was reported through the year as being of a good standard; the wings were cleaned to a high standard with litter kept to a minimum. The walkways and surrounds were reported as being tidy, with the gardens cultivated to a high standard.
- The prisoner painting party worked its way around the wings, painting cells, railings, staircases and showers. Whilst this Active Citizenship role gave work to prisoners, the impact of a clean, tidy and attractively painted surrounding cannot be understated, as evidenced by prisoners' comments on the residential wings.
- All wings housed a Prisoner Information Desk (PID), hosted by a Prisoner Information Desk Rep. These desks were a valuable source of information for prisoners, displaying a range of information leaflets and brochures. It was apparent that those prisoners who had responsibility for the PID on their wing, took great pride in ensuring that it was a good source of information for their peers. The Board was pleased that prisoners had ready access to information or advice from their PID Representative.



- Notice boards on wings were regularly monitored and they were usually found to be informative and up to date. Prisoners used the notice boards to recruit players for wing competitions which were often held on Bank Holidays, and some of those with protected characteristics had a dedicated notice board.
- The Board had a notice board on each residential wing which helped to explain the Board role, something that was important as the Board often found new arrivals had little, if any, knowledge of the IMB. Noticeboards also contained the results of an IMB survey of prisoners' views, and actions that would be taken.
- The Prisoner Council met each month, under the chairmanship of one of the prisoners. Minutes of the meetings were displayed on all wings and attendance by Wing Representatives was good. The meetings proved to be valuable as prisoners were allowed a pre-meeting to discuss matters to be brought to the full meeting. This ensured that the topics discussed were appropriate and focused. During the reporting year, the Board welcomed the Prisoner Council Chair and Vice-Chair to the Board meeting as they were keen to ensure that their role was fully understood.
- The Board, as part of the applications duty, spoke to newly arrived prisoners regarding the role of the IMB and answered questions that they had. The Board hoped that this involvement from their early days in HMP Stafford would help them to understand some of the support that was available for them. The Board were always positively received when undertaking this duty.
- During the reporting period, a local charity, Katherine House Hospice, opened a retail shop within the prison. The shop called Clothes at Stafford Prison (CASP) enabled prisoners to purchase clothing, DVDs, jigsaws, games etc. The shop also provided employment opportunities for prisoners. A total of £13,975 was recently sent to the charity, a great result for a facility that was accessible to all prisoners and welcomed by many of them.
- A voicemail system for prisoners to retrieve messages from friends and family was introduced and publicised, encouraging better family contact.

## **8. HEALTHCARE (INCLUDING MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE)**

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- The healthcare service in HMP Stafford was provided by Care UK. In general, this was working well as evidenced by the details below.
- There were reductions in waiting times in most areas. Average waiting time for the optician reduced from 72 to 42 days, for the doctor from 16 to 8 days, podiatry from 75 to 22 days, and the dentist from 25 to 7 days. However, physiotherapy waiting times increased from 19 to 26 days. The Board felt that the wait times for prisoners were comparable to the community and, in some cases, better than the community.
- Clinics for mental health, x-ray or scans cannot be reported in this way because those with serious mental health issues were seen within a day or so, and x-ray and other scans were carried out in the prison as needed by bringing in the resource. There was some evidence that lower risk mental health issues were not dealt with as promptly as reported by HMP Stafford Substance Misuse and Mental Health Needs Assessment, January 2018. This was clearly a concern for the Board and will be monitored closely.
- The Care UK Manager monitored waiting lists carefully and, if a list became too long, extra sessions were bought in. For example, when the in-house dental surgery was closed for re-equipping, sessions were bought in from an outside dentist. While the waiting list grew at that time, it was shorter than would otherwise have been the case with a closed facility.
- This report has commented repeatedly on the ageing population. In terms of healthcare, this meant that prisoners required more than average hospital visits (including stays in hospital of several weeks). The effect of this high number of hospital escorts was felt across the prison, with wings being locked down on rotation during the day due to lack of available staff. Clearly the impact of these closures was felt adversely by sections of the prison population.
- Furthermore, the cost of long stays in hospital was immense - the cost for escorts and bed-watches for one prisoner alone in the last reporting year was £126,000 [this was not a medical cost – it was just the cost of the prison officers accompanying the patient]. A total of 15,779 hours was needed by prison staff for bed-watches and 1,246 escorts were provided for out-patient appointments.
- Another aspect of the ageing population was the need for social care rather than medical care. For most of the reporting year, Care UK's contract was for medical care only. Social care was the responsibility of Staffordshire County Council who provided social care visits by external carers to several prisoners following assessment of their needs by social workers.

- Whilst the Board welcomed these interventions, between these visits prison staff and prisoner carers were providing the basic social care that was permissible. These individuals are clearly not trained to provide such care and in the opinion of the Board, some of the social care cases, if in the community, would have been supported in a care home where the care was 24/7. This clearly was detrimental to the care of some prisoners.
- The Board acknowledged that staff and prisoner carers did their very best in these difficult and challenging situations.
- One of the issues with external social carers was the time allowed for them to do their work, given that the time from arriving at the gate to being with the prisoner could take ten minutes. This reduced the time the carer had to spend with the prisoner to only ten minutes. Clearly the prisoner was not well served by this arrangement.
- Visits by external social care workers had to take place between 08:00 and 19:00 which meant there was no specialist social care available between 19:00 and 08:00 the next day. For a bed-ridden, incontinent patient, a real time example, this was unacceptable. The Board was very concerned that compassionate release for sex offenders was a lengthy and complex process requiring a consultant to confirm that someone was at end of life and was not likely to reoffend. This prevented or, at best delayed, such cases from being transferred to a care home or hospice where 24-hour care could be provided.
- The Board noted that Care UK had been awarded the social care contract towards the end of the reporting period. The Board hoped that this would provide further support for the most vulnerable prisoners at HMP Stafford.
- The Board was disappointed that the on-site palliative care suite did not materialise as the cost/payback analysis showed a twenty-year payback time. This decision brought the provision of 24/7 care beds into greater focus and the Board was disappointed to learn that on occasion prisoners from HMP Stafford had been refused a place in these facilities as they were deemed not to have met the criteria. This in turn, placed pressure on residential wing staff and healthcare staff, which had a knock-on effect on other prisoners who in some cases could be disturbed by the behaviour, linked to their dementia, of some prisoners receiving care.
- The Board commends the help provided for less able prisoners by prisoner carers who gave assistance as wheelchair pushers, by collecting meals, making cups of tea and providing social interaction. It was the opinion of the Board that, without the support of prisoner carers, frail, elderly and infirm prisoners would have been less well cared for simply due to the lack of available staff time.

## 9. EDUCATION AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

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- The Board was pleased to note that vocational training and other learning opportunities had continued to improve. Barbering, horticulture and yoga, plus Art and ICT at level 1 for senior prisoners were embedded within the current structure with a good degree of uptake within the prison population.
- An area that came to the attention of the Board was that prisoners were requesting to extend their skills, such as Level 2 in painting and decorating and the similar upward challenge in brickwork. The prison was unable to improve this provision due to the cost of establishing further workshop space. The Board were pleased that prisoners wished to improve their skills to aid their resettlement but regret that there was insufficient funding to support this.
- The Success for Training, Education Progression and Support (STEPS) was superseded by the Progression Learning Plan (PLP), a new system of recording prisoners' individual progress which was more accessible to all who were teachers and instructors. The Board hoped that this would have benefits to the prisoners and will monitor the new system.
- Initial literacy and numeracy education assessment and data related to all prisoners accessing education through the workshop mentoring scheme were available for inspection by the Board. This enabled the Board to address positively queries from prisoners when required.
- Many prisoners accessed basic literacy and numeracy in the workshops instead of in education classes. This success impacted on the prisoner feelings of worth as well as providing a springboard for prisoners to move towards more formal qualifications.
- The Quality Improvement Group reported that the much-improved Virtual Campus had a very positive response from the prisoners. Prisoners had greater access to distance learning and the total staff access to the prisoners' records impacted on staff knowledge regarding prisoner progress.
- The Virtual Campus was also life-long so that prisoners, on release, could continue their studies which led to more potentially successful resettlement. The Board welcomed this as a benefit to prisoners.
- The Board was pleased to note and observe average attendance in education at +90%. Prisoners' engagement and interest in lessons was observed and evidenced by Board members in discussion with the prisoners during visits around the establishment.
- It had been reported that laptops had been purchased for the use of prisoners within their cells to support their learning. This gave them greater scope for lifelong learning. The Board was pleased by the level of trust that was placed in prisoners using this equipment. The Board acknowledged that all prisoners were risk assessed for this support, and that access to programmes on the laptop was restricted.

- The initiative to support learning by library trolleys on each wing continued to develop. The books were moved around the wings regularly to provide stimulation for the prisoners. The Board had observed that this facility was widely used by prisoners.
- The Board was pleased to note that there was now a more consistent opening of the library on two evenings per week and weekends. The library had reported that there was a large uptake by the prisoners to access the library facility during these times, a positive step forward for prisoners.
- Work commenced on setting up the welcome addition of a Bistro within the prison; whilst this was not operational during this reporting period, it enabled instructors to establish NVQ1 in food preparation and NVQ2 in kitchen skills, providing direct help in the resettlement process.
- A further initiative, reported to the Board, was a social enterprise model for window cleaning. Window cleaning materials were purchased and awaited the next stage of introduction to the prisoners. The Board were informed that prisoners would undertake qualifications in high level window cleaning and generating quotations and invoices. Another example of a potential route to employment and, specifically self-employment.

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

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- The Board again acknowledged the continued success of the prison workshops. During the reporting year there was provision for 278 prisoners to be employed for 9 sessions a week in 8 fully staffed workshops.
- Employment opportunities for a further 16 prisoners in the reclamation/recycling area were available, and an average of 16 prisoners worked in the gardening party.
- This was a total of 310 purposeful activity places, 41.8% of the total prison roll with an average attendance rate of 96.8%, an increase of 2.8% over the previous year. This allowed prisoners to develop and maintain the work habit, providing social contact and some stimulation, which could positively aid their future resettlement.
- Turnover generated from external customer contracts increased again in the year by 3%. The presence of regular external customer contracts allowed prisoners to experience the feeling of working for an individual employer and being part of a team, a further aid to an individual prisoner's resettlement.
- The success of the workshops, both in the volume of work passing through and the income being generated, led to them being held up as an example of what could be achieved in other establishments in the prison estate. The surplus income earned over the annual target was available for reinvestment in the establishment, a benefit to prisoners, the Board hoped.
- The success of the reclamation/recycling area, where 100% of prison waste was either recycled or sent to "energy from waste", should also be noted. It contributed considerably to the establishment's low carbon footprint. With the emphasis in the community on recycling and the "green" focus, this approach would assist prisoners seeking work in this field.
- During the reporting year, the gardening party made a superb effort in preparing the prison gardens for entry in the "freshers" stage of the Windlesham Prisons Gardens Competition, achieving 1st place. The Board would wish to congratulate all prisoners and staff involved in this effort: the prison looked positively blooming.
- Learning had become a key aspect within purposeful activities, whilst continuing to maintain the focus on earnings. The functional skills programme introduced in the previous reporting year gained strength and was now compulsory for all prisoners within the workshops to undertake. Under the supervision of the workshop instructor who developed it, the programme continued with 8 prisoner mentors.

- The success of this programme was recognised in the award of Prisoner Learning Alliance Officer of the Year to the workshop instructor. The aim remained the improvement in the standard of English and Maths for those prisoners assigned to purposeful activities, either to aid their movement into education or aid them on release. During the year, 280 prisoners completed the programme. The Board would wish to commend the efforts of everyone involved in this programme.
- Apart from the reclamation area, where 8 prisoners obtained NVQ Level 2 in Recycling/Reclamation and a few prisoners in workshop 5 who completed a Stoke on Trent College Performing Manufacturing Operations course lasting 4 weeks, there were no other opportunities for prisoners to study for external qualifications in the workshops. The tasks being undertaken were routine and repetitive assembly work of a simple nature. This continued to concern the Board, though they acknowledged that, for some prisoners, the workshop experience met their needs and prisoners appeared not to share the Board's concerns.
- The Board remained concerned about the apparent unfairness of prisoner pay rates based on comments made by newly arrived prisoners from other establishments and in workshops generally. The Board acknowledged that these comments, in the main, came from prisoners transferring from private prisons.
- Given that HMIP, in their 2016 report, believed that there was some unfairness and inequality in prisoner pay rates, the Board would have hoped that some progress could have been made in the reporting year.
- The Board remained happy with the 5 Vocational Training areas, namely Bricklaying, Plastering, Painting and Decorating, Carpentry and Industrial Cleaning under the supervision of Education. These were full time courses of varying lengths for a maximum of 50 prisoners assisted by 9 orderlies, and provided comprehensive training leading to a City and Guilds award at either Level 1 or 2 for successful completion. The Board believed that completion of this training would have a positive impact on the success of prisoner resettlement, especially in self-employment.
- The Board was very encouraged by the number of responsible roles available for prisoners. A total of 139 roles were currently filled by prisoners undertaking responsibilities as, for example, Health Champions, Care Assistants, Prisoner Council Reps, Listeners, Insiders and Rehabilitation Champions. The Board hoped that these roles would continue to be developed as clearly the skills obtained would assist with rehabilitation and resettlement, whilst also giving support to other prisoners. The Board commended the efforts of staff in supporting and developing these roles.

## **11. RESETTLEMENT PREPARATION (Includes IPP)**

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- The Board was concerned that, for the third year running, HMP Stafford was not resourced as a resettlement prison, yet, during the reporting period, 183 prisoners were released directly from the establishment.
- Often release was from the establishment because space in resettlement establishments could not be found for sex offenders. Given that discharged prisoners would be on the Sex Offender Register, resettlement opportunities were already a greater problem at Stafford and, in the eyes of the Board, required more support, not less.
- The Board was particularly concerned that, of those prisoners who had either completed their sentence or were being paroled, 73% were discharged directly from HMP Stafford and only 27% were discharged from designated resettlement prisons. In the Board's opinion, this evidenced that the prison model for resettlement was not workable.
- It was pleasing to note that, despite a lack of resettlement resources, all except one of those prisoners released, had accommodation on the day of release. This was an exceptional result, as without an address resettlement for a prisoner was even harder.
- Of the 183 prisoners released from HMP Stafford:
  - 5% indicated they wished to continue with education;
  - 15% claimed they were retired and not looking for work or education;
  - 3% claimed they were disabled and not looking for work or education;
  - 10% were released with employment
  - 67% were looking for work or education
- The Board was concerned that the majority who were released from HMP Stafford had no work or education on release. The absence of employment or education for many of the sex offenders released made successful resettlement more difficult. The Board accepted the establishment worked with a limited resource and had done what it could.
- During the last months of the reporting period, a new initiative around "myth busting" sessions commenced at the establishment for prisoners in the last 6 months of their sentence. The first of these was by MAPPA and had been facilitated by two representatives from Staffordshire Police. 35 prisoners attended and actively participated. The Board was pleased to note that 26 prisoners had given feedback, of whom 23 had stated that the event was helpful and better prepared them for release.



- Prisoners continued to benefit from being seen on arrival and at the six and three months' point prior to release to ascertain their needs in relation to accommodation, finance and debt, employment and training and for setting up bank accounts. This provided basic resettlement preparation for prisoners.
- All prisoners about to be discharged from HMP Stafford were assessed for their suitability to attend enrichment sessions which had been introduced during the reporting period. Clearly these sessions would prove invaluable for some prisoners. The sessions included:
  - "Life without Bars" – focussed on home economics, cooking, ironing, life skills, interviewing skills, financial skills, dealing with organisations, people skills and shopping
  - Job Club – prisoners met a representative from Job Centre Plus and looked at interview techniques, CV writing and job searching
  - Money advice
  - Disclosure (the most popular session)
- An Employment and Resettlement Fair had been held in the second quarter of the reporting period. It was a very successful event with 19 different agencies being involved. A total of 144 prisoners had attended and, of the 88 who had completed a feedback form, 90% had found the event helpful.
- Since the Sex Offender Treatment Programme (SOTP) had ceased, the Horizon and Kaizen programmes had been introduced. One of the advantages of the new courses was that up to two prisoners who were maintaining their innocence could be accommodated on each course. The Horizon programme had been successful, and, during the reporting period, 79 group members had completed the programme. However, Kaizen was a more difficult programme and only 11 prisoners had completed the programme to date. Additionally, 14 group members completed the Healthy Sex Programme (HSP) programme. These achievements were commended by the Board, as clearly this success contributed positively to the completion of sentence plans.
- The Board continued to be frustrated that prisoners held under IPP sentences has been noted as a concern in their Annual Report since 2011. Detention post tariff could only increase tension and resentment in this group. In the last reporting period, 6.7% of the population in custody at HMP Stafford were IPP prisoners; of which 88% were post tariff.
- At the very end of the reporting period, counselling resources were made available for IPP prisoners who were 'stuck' in the group mentioned above. This resource helped prisoners who were having difficulties before, during and/or after risk reduction work, to enable them to move forward with their sentence. The Board will report further on this in their 2018/19 report.

- The Board continued to be disappointed that ROTL could not be granted for prisoners convicted of sex offences held in closed prisons like HMP Stafford. The Board believes that ROTL would assist their reintegration into society on release, strengthen important family ties and would also assist the establishment in supporting prisoners with employment.
- The impact of ROTL on prisoners would be an opportunity to prepare better for their successful release and support the prison's focus on them as returning citizens to the community.

## C Section – Work of the Board at HMP Stafford

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- The Board appreciated the co-operation freely given by the Governor, management and staff during its work. Each week Board members attended the prison to monitor Rule 45 reviews, adjudication hearings and to observe meetings. The Board responded to prisoner applications on a weekly basis and rota visits were undertaken fortnightly.
- The Board regularly attended induction for new prisoners and explained the role of the IMB. Additionally, the Board met fortnightly with prisoners' post induction, to monitor and report on whether their initial experience had continued positively.
- The Board held a monthly meeting, which the Governing Governor or Deputy Governor attended, to brief members on prison matters and to discuss issues arising from monitoring.
- The IMB Clerk was always present at Board meetings and was very efficient. Her support was much appreciated and as she was due to retire after lengthy service in HMPPS, the Board would wish this report to include their sincere thanks for her help.
- The Chair and Vice-Chair attended the quarterly area IMB Chairs' meetings. Both Chair and Vice-Chair also regularly attended Senior Management Team meetings, as did other interested Board members.
- HMP Stafford was represented on the IMB Sex Offender Working Group (SOWG). It gave the Board a chance to understand the national picture for sex offenders and to pool knowledge. The Board hoped that the SOWG would be given greater input into any HMPPS national forums on the sex-offender estates. The knowledge that IMB members built up from the duties they performed would be invaluable to such forums.
- All members took part in a programme of training provided by visitors who attended the monthly Board Meetings; topics had included programmes, healthcare, hostage negotiations and Offender Management in Custody (OMiC). The Board was grateful that prison staff made themselves available to deliver these training sessions. The Board benefited from their expertise in these areas.
- The prison offered the Board places on relevant internal training courses though staff places were always prioritised. The Board welcomed these opportunities.
- The Board found the responses from members of staff to any question to be prompt, helpful and clear; this aided the monitoring process greatly.
- During the reporting period, the Board supported the IMB colleagues at YOI Werrington, with 3 members dual boarding.

- Finally, this report reflects the positivity of monitoring a well-run establishment where most prisoners and staff are engaged with the shared aims. This achievement was a challenge for the Board as it was difficult to make a real difference for prisoners through our monitoring. Therefore, members welcomed the focus from the new National Chair of the IMB on thematic monitoring. The Board hoped that this would be introduced soon to allow more in-depth monitoring of areas which were sometimes only superficially reviewed.

<b>BOARD STATISTICS</b>	
Recommended complement of Board members	16
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	12
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	12
Number of Board members dual boarding during the reporting period	3
Total number of visits to the establishment	492
Total number of segregation reviews attended	57

## D Section - Applications

Code	Subject	Current reporting year 2017/18	Previous reporting year 2016/17
A	Accommodation (incl. laundry, clothing, ablutions)	7	11
B	Discipline (incl. adjudications, IEP sanctions)	11	29
C	Equality	1	12
D	Purposeful Activity (incl. education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell)	12	6
E1	Letters, visits, phones, public protection restrictions	9	6
E2	Finance (incl. pay, private monies, spends)	11	13
F	Food and kitchens	0	0
G	Health (incl. physical, mental, social care)	15	22
H1	Property within the establishment	20	17
H2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	17	11
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	6	2
I	Sentence management (incl. Home Detention Curfew, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-categorisation)	10	6
J	Staff/prisoner concerns (incl. bullying)	8	17
K	Transfers	9	2
L	Miscellaneous	8	1
	<b>Total number of IMB applications</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>155</b>