



Annual Report
of the
Independent Monitoring Board

at

HMP Wymott

for reporting Year
June 2017 to May 2018

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Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody

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1 STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB

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

The Board is specifically charged to:

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

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

Introduction to the report

This report presents the findings of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Wymott for the period 01 June 2017 – 31 May 2018. IMB evidence comes from observations made on visits, scrutiny of prison records and of data, informal contact with prisoners and staff, surveys and prisoner applications.

Main judgements

Are prisoners treated fairly?

Overall prisoners receive fair treatment at HMP Wymott. The prison has a well-developed equality ethos that underpins its interactions with its diverse population. However, there is a shortage of useful and appropriate work to enable mainstream Category C prisoners to develop their employability skills (see 10.4). Social care for the increasing number of older prisoners has fallen below required standards (see 8.2.10). The Board feels that the prison could do more to safeguard prisoners' property within Wymott and to ensure that prisoners receive their property when transferred in from other prisons (see 7.6).

Are prisoners treated humanely?

The prison's focus on decent and humane treatment is illustrated through the decency agenda introduced by the Safer Living Department, including a Room Ready programme and ensuring that all new prisoners receive a decency pack. However, in Healthcare prisoners receive a standard of provision that regularly falls well below that which could be expected in the community (see 8.2). Prisoners have been left without prescribed medication for several days due to failings in prescription and delivery of essential medicines (see 8.2.2, 8.2.6, 8.3). The continuing failings in this service have been raised by the IMB at local, regional and national level.

Are prisoners prepared well for their release?

Prisoners are encouraged to develop their employability skills through a very good education provision, and through employment and training in a range of workshops. HMP Wymott is not a resettlement prison though, and it does not receive funding to adequately prepare prisoners for release, yet it released approximately 300 prisoners over the reporting year (see 11.1). For a variety of reasons the prison has found it increasingly difficult to transfer prisoners to resettlement prisons nearer their homes, such as lack of places, unwillingness of other prisons to accept them and unwillingness of prisoners to move (see 11.4, 11.5, 11.6).

Main Areas for Development

TO THE MINISTER

- The Board would again draw the Minister's attention to the exceedingly poor state of healthcare provision within the prison (see Section 8). Can the Minister give assurances that significant improvements will be made?
- Given the increasing pressures on both the prison and the wider community resulting from the use of psychoactive substances (PS), what strategies are being considered to tackle this national problem (see Section 4)?
- In the reconfiguration of prisons, will the Minister consider the fact that, although Wymott is not a resettlement prison and does not have the resources to support prisoners prior to release, around 300 prisoners were in fact released from Wymott during the reporting period (see Section 11)?

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

- Given the extent of the problems caused by the use of psychoactive substances – violence, disruption to the regime, ambulance call-outs etc. (see 4.3, 4.4, 4.9), what plans are there to allocate extra resources to support prison governors in tackling this major issue?
- Wymott is not a resettlement prison, yet it released around 300 prisoners over the reporting period (see 11.1, 11.6). What plans are there to allocate resources to this issue?
- The Board receives a large number of applications about loss of prisoners' property (see 7.6). Can the prison service develop a system of handling prisoners' property in order to reduce these unacceptable losses and to minimise the numbers of compensation claims?
- The Board considers that the prison kitchen is unfit for purpose (see 7.4). It was designed for 800 prisoners and now services a population of around 1150. When will an upgrade take place?

TO THE GOVERNOR

- What plans does the prison have to provide more meaningful work for the mainstream Category C population (see 10.1, 10.4)?
- Can the prison develop a more efficient approach to handling prisoners' property, both within the prison and on transfer (see 7.7)?
- Are there any further plans to deal with the persistent problem of pests (see 7.3)?
- Given the additional Security workload resulting from banned items entering the prison (see 4.9), are there any plans to allocate further resources to this department?
- The Board has consistently expressed concern regarding the siting of the two constant watch cells (see 4.2, 6.3). Can they be relocated?

TO THE PROVIDER (of Healthcare/Education/Maintenance etc)

Bridgewater Community NHS Trust

- The Board is greatly concerned about the inadequate provision of GP services to the prison, which has led to long waiting lists for appointments and unsigned

prescriptions. Lapses in GP visits to the CSU are unacceptable, and the requirements of PSO 1700 are not being met (see 8.2.1).

- The Board is very concerned that due to lack of carers, social care plans are not being adhered to (see 8.2.10, 8.4).
- Insufficient and unreliable nursing staff has led to late/non-dispensing of medication. This has on occasion left prisoners without essential medication, and has had a detrimental effect on the prison's regime (see 8.2.2, 8.2.6)

Amey

- The Board is concerned at the length of time taken for even routine repair and maintenance work to be completed (see 7.1, 7.5)

Improvements

- The Board would like to commend the prison on the improvements made to the outside environment, reflected in the award of the Windlesham Trophy early in the reporting period. Litter, which was a substantial problem, is now much improved.
- The decency agenda has included the development of a Room Ready programme, redecoration of wings and the introduction of plants and artwork.
- The prison continues to encourage prisoner participation in various fora, such as the Older Prisoners' Group, Prison Council and Healthcare Forum.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

- 3.1 HMP Wymott is an adult male Category C Training Prison with an Operating Capacity of 1175 prisoners and a Certified Normal Accommodation (CNA) of 1105 prisoners. It normally holds around 1140 prisoners. It houses both mainstream Category C offenders and vulnerable prisoner, mostly men convicted of a sexual offence (MCoSO). The majority of the prisoners have 4 or more years to serve.
- 3.2 Healthcare in the prison is provided by Bridgewater Community NHS Trust and Greater Manchester Mental Health Trust, and services include GP surgeries, dentistry, specialist clinics and mental health services.
- 3.3 Education is provided by NOVUS and a full education programme is on offer from pre-entry level up to degree level, with particular focus on developing literacy and numeracy skills.
- 3.4 The prison workshops offer a range of employments, many of which can lead to nationally-accredited qualifications. Some of these workshops are operated on a commercial basis providing quality services to external clients and effectively constitute a 'working prison'.
- 3.5 General maintenance within the prison is provided by Amey.
- 3.6 An active Chaplaincy supports a range of faiths and the full-time chaplains are assisted by sessional ministers and volunteers.
- 3.7 The accommodation comprises a number of specialist wings including a Care and Re-ablement wing (supported by an older prisoners activities centre {CAMEO} delivered by the Salvation Army), a drug Therapeutic Community wing, a psychologically informed planned environment (PIPE) unit (to support a drug-free return to the community), an integrated drug treatment wing (managing prisoners on a controlled methadone programme), 4 wings for men convicted of sexual offences and 3 other wings. Over the reporting period, approximately 120 prisoners have been doubled up in cells designed for single occupancy.
- 3.8 Other facilities include a PE department consisting of a large sports hall, a well-equipped gym, and a full size outdoor sports field.
- 3.9 As Wymott is a training prison, the resources for preparing prisoners for release are limited. However, Achieve North-West provides some help and support with accommodation and finances and CAMEO provides support for older prisoners.
- 3.10 Since 31st October 2017 Wymott has been a smoke-free prison.

B Evidence sections 4 – 11

4 SAFETY

4.1 On arrival at Wymott, prisoners' needs and risks are assessed in Reception, which can sometimes take several hours. However, prisoner orderlies tell the IMB that the first night and induction experience has improved, particularly on the VP side.

4.2 Prisoners can access Listeners and other forms of peer support, for example the prison has recently introduced Prisoner Safety Reps on the wings. They can also access a Samaritans phone, although some of these have been out of action for significant periods. For prisoners who are particularly vulnerable, the prison has two 'gated' cells where the prisoner can be constantly observed. However, the Board has repeatedly reported that the location of these cells is unsatisfactory as one is very isolated and the other can be subject to night-time noise.

4.3 In place of the annual Prisoners' Safety Survey, in February 2018 the prison held a World Café Event, attended by around 100 prisoners and a Board member. Prisoners were asked what they thought the main causes of violence were, and what the impact was on themselves and those close to them. Analysis of the responses highlighted drugs, weapons, and the bullying and debt associated with them, as the main threats to physical safety and emotional well-being, and this is a prime concern of the Board.

4.4 Increased bullying and debt have been seen to lead to violence. Bullying is addressed via the incentives and earned privileges (IEP) process, whereby perpetrators are challenged and sanctioned. Victims are offered support via the tackling anti-bullying (TAB) system, but a small number choose to keep themselves safe by self-isolating in their cells. Maintaining a decent regime for these prisoners has been inconsistent, but it has improved recently.

4.6 Over the reporting period Safer Living reports show there were 120 reported incidents of violence – gradually increasing from 5 in June 2017 to 14 in March 2018, but beginning to fall recently. Injuries to prisoners are increasingly linked to the use of PS, and this is of great concern to the Board. PS use has also resulted in a high number of ambulance call-outs. However, the prison is to be commended for developing more consistent and robust strategies for recording and dealing with incidents, with fewer ambulance call-outs over the last 2 months.

4.7 During the year there have been 335 documented acts of self harm, although many of these are due to repeated self-harmers. The Board is naturally concerned about these, although out of around 1150 prisoners at Wymott, 929 never self-harmed during this period.

4.8 Force has been used to restrain prisoners on 246 occasions, with a general downward trend over the year due to improved de-escalation strategies. All incidents of the use of force are documented and in hub data Wymott continues to compare favourably with other similar prisons in relation to its levels of violence and use of force. The Board notes that the completion rate for Use of Force reports has improved, but by May 2018 still only two thirds of reports were submitted on time.

4.9 Security measures are both pro-active and intelligence-led, but the department has struggled over this reporting period to respond in a timely manner to an increasing workload linked to drugs and other banned items entering the prison. Delays in processing incident reports have on occasion resulted in adjudications being adjourned, punishments being untimely and remedies being less effective.

4.10 There have been 429 assessment, care in custody and treatment (ACCT) documents opened over the year (many repeats), an average of 35.75 per month, and this has remained stable. The Board finds that safeguarding of vulnerable prisoners subject to ACCT procedures is good, and prisoners mostly engage with the process. Recommended schedules for observations and case reviews are followed and the timing of post-closure reviews has improved over the year. However, the Board has observed that the associated care plans are not always completed.

4.11 During the reporting year Wymott has had 9 deaths in custody, and the Board commends the caring and professional way in which these have been handled. Four of the deaths have been confirmed to be due to natural causes, whilst the other five are awaiting the outcome of coroners' inquests that follow all deaths in custody.

4.12 The Board commends the Violence Reduction team on its strategies to keep prisoners safe in the face of increasing challenges, and notes that several prisoners have taken the time to write to the Head of Safer Living to say how the care they have received at Wymott has helped them to turn their lives around.

5 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS

5.1 The diversity and equalities action team (DEAT) invites prisoner representatives from the wings to bring any concerns that are being voiced by prisoners to its meetings. However, at present the 3 main Category C wings have no representative and this is of concern to the Board. In the 2016 / 17 Annual Report the Board reported that the prison was developing a training programme for prisoner representatives to increase their understanding of the role but this has not yet happened.

5.2 The Board is satisfied that the prison meets the requirements of PSI 32/2011 in relation to investigating potential discrimination in respect of the protected characteristics through the discrimination incident reporting (DIRF) system. The most frequent complaints concern race, religion or sexual orientation. An IMB member has sampled a cross section of DIRFs, and responses were found to be fair and timely.

5.3 At the time of writing, the prison has 29 foreign national prisoners (FNPs) and the UK Borders Agency continues to visit the prison. FNPs who cannot receive visits can have a free 5-minute phone call each month.

5.4 The prison has made some effort to work with prisoners who identify as gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GTR), and currently 1 prisoner representative has been identified. However, the Board is still concerned about the unwillingness of prisoners to identify themselves as GTR.

5.5 The prison is to be commended for its work with the growing population of older prisoners. A recently published HMPPS Model for Operational Delivery for Older Prisoners included two case studies of good practice at Wymott: the CAMEO Unit and the Older Prisoners Forum, both of which are well attended by the VP prisoners. In the last few months efforts have been made to extend these services to older prisoners on the mainstream side of the prison.

5.6 The Board is aware that the prison is currently reviewing its incentives and earned privileges (IEP) policy to ensure that it does not disadvantage prisoners under the protected characteristics.

5.7 The Board is concerned that some prisoners are sent to Wymott from outside of the north-west to do courses relating to their sentence, and this causes great difficulties for their families to take advantage of visits and maintain family ties.

5.8 Prisoners continue to report that the Chaplaincy provides invaluable pastoral support. Active participation in services is encouraged. Support is offered to families following a death in custody, and also to other prisoners who may be affected.

5.9 The presence of increasing numbers of officers from ethnically diverse groups is to be welcomed, and this is appreciated by the prisoners. The Board itself has struggled to recruit members from diverse groups, but continues to maintain an inclusive approach to recruitment.

5.10 The prison currently holds a small number of transgender prisoners, whose needs often challenge the experience of some officers. However, the Board considers that the compact agreements provided for these prisoners are in compliance with the relevant Prison Instructions.

6 SEGREGATION/CARE AND SEPARATION UNIT

6.1 Prison figures for 2016/17 and 2017/18 show that the average number of prisoners held in CSU throughout the year have remained constant, and the average length of stay has reduced as a result of shifts in policy. On the rare occasion when a prisoner remains in the CSU for more than 42 days, the Board is sent a copy of the authorisation document.

6.2 The Board is generally satisfied with the accommodation, security, regime, facilities and conditions on the unit. There has been an ongoing programme of improvements to flooring and furniture in the cells, and an additional shower room has been introduced to ease pressure on the regime.

6.3 The unit also houses a constant watch cell for the accommodation of any prisoner needing continual observation for his own safety. The Board has never considered this satisfactory as the area can be very noisy and disruptive at times and is not conducive to the welfare of any prisoner suffering with extreme mental distress.

6.4 The Board commends the staff for their professionalism in a challenging environment. Prisoners frequently comment that they are well treated and generally cared for on the unit and mostly have a good rapport with officers.

6.5 The Board has usually been informed promptly of new arrivals to the unit and of the holding of Rule 45 reviews. Healthcare algorithms were completed as soon as a prisoner was located on CSU and reviews were attended by a member of the mental health team. Prisoners mostly attended and participated in their reviews, at which plans for their reintegration on mainstream location were discussed. However, the documenting of these Reintegration Plans has not been consistent. On the very few occasions when the IMB member in attendance felt that the process was incorrect, the member highlighted this to staff and / or refused to sign off the paperwork.

6.6 All prisoners have been visited daily by a Duty Governor and a chaplain. However, the Board has noted elsewhere that there have been lapses in the regularity of visits from Healthcare / GP. Each prisoner was also visited weekly by an IMB member and any issues taken up on their behalf. In the main CSU officers are very responsive in meeting prisoner needs.

6.7 Documents relating to a prisoner's stay in the CSU were mostly properly completed and up to date. The Safer Living Department has been proactive in adapting documents to ease recording and provide a comprehensive record of each prisoner's progress in the CSU. The Board have monitored these documents regularly and added comments where appropriate.

6.8 The Board monitors the adjudication process and is aware that, although prisoners are not always told that they have a right to appeal, the appropriate form is part of the information all prisoners receive prior to their hearing.

6.9 Following adjudication, a prisoner may receive a period of cellular confinement under Rule 55, and this is always served in the CSU. Prisoners on R55 are offered the same regime as those on R45. If the prisoner subsequently transfers to Rule 45, the Board is not always informed and confusion has arisen regarding 72 hour and successive reviews.

6.10 There have been six occasions over the reporting period where the special accommodation cell has been used. The average stay is less than two hours. The board is usually informed of both the prisoner's entry and exit, and visits within 24 hours. On one

occasion, with the agreement of Regional Office, a prisoner remained in special accommodation overnight.

6.11 Where there have been dirty protests prisoners have been served a meal at their door. When the protest ends the prisoner is placed in a clean environment and the dirty cell carefully cleaned by trained prisoners. Screens are now available for use where prisoners are on dirty protest or where the observation panel glass has been broken. This reduces risk to prisoners and staff of being spat at or having urine or faeces thrown at them.

6.12 Prisoners on normal location are rarely confined 'behind doors' for disciplinary reasons, and then only for short periods.

7 ACCOMMODATION AND COMMUNICATION

7.1 The Board continues to be concerned about the infrastructure of the older buildings, particularly A and B wings. The electrical supply is frequently overloaded, resulting in loss of power. The shower areas are in a poor state of repair, with approximately half of the facilities out of use or inadequate, offering very little privacy. This has an impact on the prisoner's wellbeing. However, the prison has finally been successful in obtaining funding to refurbish the wings. The Board will monitor progress with this project.

7.2 There are an increasing number of prisoners with significant mobility issues or wheelchair users. Many are located on I wing (Care and Re-ablement Unit). This has been a concern for the Board for many years. It is a two storey building with a stair lift. This is frequently out of action, impacting on the accessibility of the dining area and medication hatch for some prisoners. At the time of writing, one spur is being modified to allow access for wheelchair users.

7.3 The prison continues to have problems with birds (mainly pigeons) and rats, which can have health and safety implications. Walkways and wing windows are regularly covered in bird droppings. F wing has roof vents, which when open, allow the droppings to enter the communal areas. The Board commends the prison for introducing a weekly power wash of the walkways, however some prisoners continue to feed the birds and indirectly the rats.

7.4 As reported in previous years, the kitchen is in need of a total refurbishment. The kitchen was designed to cater for a much smaller number of prisoners than are currently accommodated. The electrical system has difficulty coping with the demand placed on it, resulting in the constant tripping of the system. There are regular failures of ovens, boilers and fridges. For a long period of time the pot washer was broken and all equipment had to be washed by hand. The kitchen is suffering from lower numbers of prisoners willing to work there. There are no prison officers actively monitoring the serving of meals in the work's dining area. This had led to complaints from some prisoners about unfair practices at meal times, such as bullying and unfair food portions. There has been an increase in the number of IMB applications received regarding food quality and portions.

7.5 The board has observed a significant rise in the number of maintenance issues reported to Amey, which are taking many weeks to be resolved. The lights on H wing exercise yard were reported as not working in January, but were not fixed until the middle of May. This meant that exercise time had to be curtailed during the winter months. J wing (a prefabricated building) has outside rendering missing, allowing water to seep in. This was reported 18 months ago. Showers that have been upgraded still need to have the surrounding areas finished off. One shower tray was cracked during installation and has not been repaired, leading to water seepage.

7.6 Excluding healthcare, loss of property was responsible for the highest number of IMB applications. Most of these occurred on transfer when bags of property were not transported on the same vehicle as the prisoner. Private prisons do not always use the same courier services that have been cleared by the crown prisons; on one occasion this led to a parcel not being accepted by Wymott, and the property went missing.

7.7 The Board is also concerned that cell clearances are often not carried out promptly when a prisoner moves location within the prison, leading to loss of property.

8 HEALTHCARE (including mental health and social care)

8.1 Yet again the lack of fair and decent healthcare provision remains of the utmost concern to the IMB. The Board considers that this provision continues to fall woefully short of the statutory duty to provide a service of equivalent standard to that outside the prison estate. Whilst there have been marginal improvements at some points and in some areas during the reporting year, overall the service remains inadequate and unsatisfactory.

8.2 Lack of appropriate numbers of staff at all levels is an on-going problem, leading to the following consequences for prisoners:

8.2.1 Although waiting lists are no longer published, prisoners regularly report excessive delays in getting to see a GP. GP sessions have been cancelled on numerous occasions. The frequency of GP visits to the CSU has again failed to comply with PSO 1700 on several occasions.

8.2.2 Over a recent Bank Holiday weekend there were only 2 nurses and 1 health care assistant (HCA) on duty, and there were 22 emergency calls. This impacted upon the distribution of medication to the extent that one prisoner was unable to eat as he had not received his insulin.

8.2.3 Clinics have frequently been cancelled, with no information being given to the prisoners, who may then remain in uncomfortable waiting areas for several hours. These appointments are often not rebooked.

8.2.4 Waiting times for the dentist and other ancillary services are excessive.

8.2.5 A number of prisoners have reported that they were not seen by Healthcare on entry to the prison.

8.2.6 As previously reported, lack of staff has resulted in late distribution of medication. This has caused great anxiety for some prisoners on controlled drugs who are aware that they may well not receive their evening medication as there are not two nurses available to dispense it at night. On occasion medication has been dispensed by managers due to nurse shortages.

8.2.7 Prisoners' complaints are often not answered promptly. Indeed at various points during the reporting period it has been unclear who, if anybody, was responsible for this task.

8.2.8 Prisoners continue to report that they receive their appointment slips after the appointment times, leading to inflated 'did not attend' (DNA) figures and even longer waits for prisoners who may be relegated to the end of the list.

8.2.9 Over reliance on agency nurses unfamiliar with the prison layout and procedures has led to situations where the prisoners have not been dealt with in an appropriate manner.

8.2.10 There has been inconsistency in provision of carers for older prisoners and again an over reliance on agency staff who often fail to attend and who on occasion have proved to be inappropriate. This has led to some prisoners not being seen on a daily basis although this is stipulated in their care plans.

8.3 Although there has been some improvement in the supply of in-possession medication, there are still problems of continuity of supply of items such as insulin, epi-pens and colostomy bags.

8.4 The misuse of medication remains a matter of concern to the Board. One major factor influencing this is the lack of adequate supervision of the queues at the dispensing hatches. Apart from the health implications of this misuse, it has knock-on effects in terms of bullying and violence on the wings.

8.5 Two Prisons and Probation Ombudsman's reports on deaths in custody noted that, during treatment, care plans provided by the hospital were not always being followed on the prisoner's return to the prison.

8.6 Communication has been a problem on a number of levels, for example prisoners and staff reported a lack of information during an influenza outbreak; one prisoner was given the wrong information about test results and the IMB itself has been given incorrect information by healthcare staff. Outside hospital appointments have been cancelled and / or prisoners were taken on the wrong day with the attendant waste of resources.

8.7 On a more positive note, the Healthcare Forum continues to be a model of good practice, and Bridgewater have been fully supportive of this. However, it is to be noted that there has rarely been representation from the Category C side of the prison.

9 EDUCATION AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

9.1 A range of nationally recognised qualifications is on offer at the prison, endorsed by The Manchester College and delivered through NOVUS. Wymott engages with a total of 293 learning bodies and offers a range of qualifications, of which approximately one third are functional skills, one third are vocational and one third are personal development. There are 50 mainstream and 55 vulnerable prisoner places available per session in classroom-based education, and 16 mainstream and 34 vulnerable prisoner places available on vocational courses.

9.2 Wymott estimates that between 30% and 40% of prisoners have not achieved Level 1 in functional skills and plans to mandate these qualifications from early June 2018 are in place. There has been some disquiet amongst the prisoners regarding potential penalties for not completing these basic skills courses. The Student Council is currently working with the education and learning, skills and activity teams to promote 'Turning Pages', a peer-mentored scheme for those prisoners who are struggling to read and is also planning to design a similar peer-led functional numeracy programme. The Board will monitor these developments.

9.3 An issue that regularly arises in Wymott's performance discussions is the discrepancy between the classroom attendance key performance targets (KPTs) and actual attendance. The KPT was set at 80% while monthly classroom attendance ranged between 75% and 80%, with an average of 77.3%. To date there has been a lack of incentives for prisoners to attend classes and there are times when other activities (e.g. well man sessions) are scheduled at the same time. The education department is concerned about this performance gap and constantly seeks ways to close it. It is clear from speaking to prisoners that those who engage with education value it highly, while for others it holds little attraction.

9.4 Discrepancies in pay are considered by some prisoners to be a factor in their reluctance to engage in education. Although pay rates are on a par with those of Band 2 normal rate prisoners elsewhere, they are lower than for prisoners on longer working hours or for those on Band 3 or above. Also, additional gym sessions that are available to many prisoners are not available to those engaged in education and this, again, is something of a disincentive.

9.5 One particular challenge for Wymott is the provision of meaningful activity for older prisoners. The CAMEO centre, run by the Salvation Army, provides a valuable service and is well attended. More recently the PE department has offered a range of physical activities suitable for older prisoners, but sadly, attendance has not been particularly good. The department is currently looking at ways of increasing the engagement of older prisoners.

9.6 Many older and longer term prisoners will have had little opportunity to engage with information technology (IT). The Board welcomes plans to introduce an IT package for such prisoners to help them to function more effectively on release.

9.7 The Education Department has developed a systematic and integrated approach to learner engagement, 'Learner Voice', designed to encourage prisoners to engage fully in the education process. This innovative strategy includes a peer mentor scheme and an active and well attended Student Council that supports all prisoners who either take part, or wish to take part in education. As well as promoting education amongst the prison population, and contributing to strategy development the council has organised a range of activities, including a Holocaust Memorial Day, a range of sponsored events in aid of a local charity and an annual Festival of Learning. It also carries out an annual Learner Voice survey which it presents to key personnel within the prison (data not yet available). The Board commends the excellent work that is carried out by both staff and prisoners within the education department.

10 WORK, VOCATIONAL TRAINING and EMPLOYMENT

10.1 Activity Hub data shows that Wymott currently offers 498 occupational/activity places for Cat C prisoners and 677 for VP prisoners (total 1175, which exceeds the current occupancy of the prison). There are more than twice as many industry/workshop places for VPs than for mainstream prisoners (340:154 at full capacity), while the prison population is approximately 677 vulnerable prisoners and 498 mainstream prisoners.

10.2 A total of 19 qualifications are delivered in the workshops, most of which are at Level 2, with three at Level 3. In addition, vocational training courses in 8 areas are offered through the Education Department. Prisoners appreciate the opportunity to gain skills and qualifications and understand that these increase their employability.

10.3 Feedback from prisoners is generally positive, expressing high levels of satisfaction with the staff and the work that is on offer. They particularly appreciate the opportunity to be fully occupied in a workplace environment where they are treated well by staff. Relationships between workshop supervisors, officers and prisoners are generally perceived as good.

10.4 Some concerns have been expressed about a lack of useful and appropriate work for Category C prisoners, as the DHL and construction workshops have been changed from mainstream to VP employment, and a review of current industries is currently being carried out in partnership with the local Chamber of Commerce.

10.5 Management data indicate that Wymott regularly exceeds its target for hours worked in industry, with only 2 exceptions in the past year and an overall figure well in excess of the annual KPT. However, the Board has frequently expressed concerns regarding the number of prisoners remaining on the wing during the working day. In one typical week, 462 sessions were missed in total, of which 39% were due to refusal to attend work and 41% were due to the prisoners being 'not required'. A range of measures are being introduced to address this issue:

- A Refusers Board, in which 6 persistent refusers per week are visited by members of the reducing reoffending team. As a result of this initiative approximately 60% of prisoners seen have started to engage. The Board commends this development.
- There have been a number of issues regarding prisoners being 'not required' for work, with no clear system in place for monitoring this and ensuring clear communication between wing staff and workplace staff. A new system has recently been introduced that creates a clear paper trail; in theory, this should reduce the number of prisoners being classified as 'not required', although the Board is yet to see clear evidence that the system is being applied consistently.
- 12% of the prisoners not in work were delayed due to problems with lateness of medication dispensation on the wings. Wing staff report that this has been a frequent occurrence over the past year and the Board has raised a number of concerns regarding the impact of healthcare provision on the regime.

10.6 A self-report survey conducted in August 2017 indicated that over 70% of respondents would seek employment on release, while only 55% were in employment before they were sentenced. Unfortunately only just over 100 prisoners responded to the survey so the results are not particularly reliable.

10.7 Wymott has recently introduced an innovative Robust Recovery Regime for those prisoners who are willing to work to eliminate their psychoactive substance use. This 2-week programme recently attracted 9 participants and, although too early to evaluate its

effectiveness, it is a welcome addition to a range of initiatives to address an increasingly problematic area of prison life.

10.8 The Board reported in 2016-17 on the poor condition of some of the work areas, with leaking roofs and inadequate heating. DHL moved out of the prison for a period during this reporting year while a temporary fix was put in place; however a more extensive and thorough repair is necessary and this is planned for the coming months. The Board will monitor the impact on prisoners of the closure of these workplaces.

11 RESETTLEMENT PREPARATION

11.1 Although Wymott is not a resettlement prison, approximately 300 men were released from the prison over the last 12 months. The Board feels this is unacceptable as there may be no outside support for a prisoner released away from his 'home' area, and Wymott has limited resources for arranging accommodation, finances etc. in their local area.

11.2 Some prisoners tell the IMB that they are unaware of what is in their sentence plan, or that they are unable to access courses to enable them to progress. A significant number of prisoners still arrive at Wymott with no sentence plan, or with only a basic custody screening, which delays their progression onto appropriate programmes. The prison has recently begun to monitor this at induction and the Board is optimistic that, with the recent introduction of additional staff in the offender management unit (OMU), the backlog can be reduced over the next reporting period.

11.3 The Board has received complaints from prisoners who arrive at the prison from out of region to do offending behaviour programmes that are not offered at Wymott, or that they are subsequently assessed as not suitable for. They then find it difficult to progress or to obtain a transfer to an establishment nearer their home, which impacts on their ability to have family visits. The Board feels this is not consistent with claims that maintaining family relationships is key to reducing reoffending.

11.4 Vulnerable prisoners can find it difficult to progress to open conditions after obtaining their Category D status, due to the lack of provision in the north-west for prisoners convicted of a sexual offence. In 2017, several prisoners waited for up to 7 months after gaining their Cat D before they could progress.

11.5 In May 2018 Wymott was holding 136 indeterminate sentence for public protection (IPP) prisoners and 148 'lifers'. These men can also find it difficult to be accepted for open conditions after obtaining their Category D status.

11.6 The Board accepts that some older prisoners do not want to go to resettlement prisons, and feels that it would be inhumane to expect elderly, often infirm, men to be moved in the last months of their sentence. The CAMEO unit has developed a schedule to help these men identify their needs post-release, in preparation for interviews with support services, and a representative of the Department for Work and Pensions comes in to help with arranging pension payments.

11.7 The prison encourages family contact through visits and family days, and responsibility for the Visitors' Centre has recently passed to Phoenix Futures. The Board finds that the holding rooms for prisoners awaiting visits are often overcrowded; processing of prisoners and visitors is inconsistent. The visits halls can get very hot and the gate to the children's play area in one hall has been awaiting repair for months.

C Section – Work of Board

- During the reporting period the Board completed the training of three new members. Two experienced members and one probationer left the Board. The Board has just completed a recruitment campaign, resulting in two recommendations for appointment.
- The Board has been able to meet its commitment to monitoring duties even though below a fully active membership, and has been able to efficiently report on issues of concern and good practice identified at each of those visits. Prior to each Board meeting the Chair presents these issues to the Governor. The Governor continues to be active in promptly addressing the issues raised and reporting back to the Board. The Board is appreciative of this and other information about the activities and operation of the prison provided by the Governor at each meeting. Important issues raised during the Board meeting are noted and followed up by members during their rota visits.
- Board meetings have been generally well attended and a full coverage of duties continues, reflecting the level of commitment of members. The Governor or, on occasions his deputy, always attends the meetings to update members on current issues and developments and provide feedback on issues raised by the Board.
- Board members deal with applications from individual prisoners on a rota basis. Issues are investigated and responses, usually verbal and written, have been provided promptly.
- For annual reporting purposes each member of the Board (except those members in their probationary year) is allocated to at least one specialist monitoring area. This improves the Board's overall knowledge and depth of monitoring. In addition, Board development is supported by regular pre-Board meetings at which either aspects of the Board's work are discussed or talks provided by members of prison staff on their area of work. These meetings are also used to discuss other Board issues of concern.
- The Board makes every effort to attend all Rule 45 reviews. There is an agreement with the prison that, where possible, Rule 45 reviews, other than the initial 72- hour review, occur on Wednesday afternoons allowing the Board to attend reviews as part of a normal rota visit. The Board maintains its own record of individual reviews and is thus able to have a continuous overview of each prisoner held under Rule 45. The Board also attends a sample of internal and independent adjudications and has attended several incidents as observers.
- During the year the Board has also attended, as observers, a range of prison meetings to extend its depth of monitoring and to inform itself of events and changes. A Board representative has also been present at a number of other prison events over the reporting year.

BOARD STATISTICS

Recommended Complement of Board Members	16
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	9
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	6
Total number of visits to the Establishment	510
Total number of segregation reviews attended	302

D Section - Applications

Code	Subject	Current reporting year	Previous reporting year
A	Accommodation including laundry, clothing, ablutions	11	13
B	Discipline including adjudications, IEP, sanctions	16	4
C	Equality	9	0
D	Purposeful Activity including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	28	18
E 1	Letters, visits, phones, public protection restrictions	33	19
E 2	Finance including pay, private monies, spends	21	14
F	Food and kitchens	11	3
G	Health including physical, mental, social care	48	19
H 1	Property within this establishment	22	see below
H 2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	20	48 (H1 + H2)
H 3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	0	
I	Sentence management including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-categorisation	19	8
J	Staff/prisoner concerns including bullying	13	10
K	Transfers	10	19
	Other	13	
	Total number of IMB applications	274	195