Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Birmingham for reporting Year (1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018) Published (November 2018)
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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 to the prison’s records.
2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the observations and opinions of the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) at HMP Birmingham for the period July 2017 to June 2018. Events detailed below occurred prior to and after the reporting window and are noted as they are considered relevant.

This annual report has been informed by observations made by members during frequent visits to the prison and through contact with prisoners, prison officers, and staff at all levels in all areas. We have sought evidence through a review of daily reports and monthly feedback from the Senior Management Team (SMT) at Board meetings.

It has been a difficult and challenging year and the Board found it necessary to write and advise the Prisons Minister of serious deficiencies at the prison. Alongside this, HMPPS also served two notices to improve to the prison over four serious failings. The timing of both events coincided with a drive by G4S to tackle the many challenges. In the final three months of the reporting year there were some early signs of improvement in staffing levels and morale.

The letter to the Prisons Minister detailed a number of deeply worrying issues, including specific examples of men being placed in uninhabitable cells and management failing to move them to satisfactory conditions. The issues were:

- six deaths in custody in a seven-week period
- levels of violence, assaults, and self-harm that, whilst having stabilised, had created an unsafe environment, and given cause for concern.
- the widespread availability of prohibited drugs, even in the segregation unit.
- occasions when the treatment of prisoners had fallen below acceptable levels of decency and humanity
- overcrowded and unfit living conditions

In the letter, the Board highlighted the issue of staff relinquishing authority to prisoners. G4S knew of the problems and took very little action to remedy them.

The Board has plenty of examples of how difficult and frustrating the G4S response has been to simple issues, such as IT access, ID cards, informing the board of new entrants to the Care and Separation Unit (CSU), or obtaining certain data. This inability to address relatively simple concerns is symptomatic of a significant cause of frustration that prisoners experience over their complaints being answered fairly and reasonably.

Just after the end of the reporting period:

- HMIP carried out an unannounced inspection and issued an Urgent Notification to the Secretary of State
- HMPPS released a redacted copy of the Investigation Report into the riot of December 2016

Both documents noted the many failings and concerns already raised by the Board in monthly meetings with the Director and referred to in the letter the Board sent to the Minister for Prisons in May 2018. This annual report reflects the changes occurring in the prison environment over twelve months, and so observes both improvements and deteriorations in outcomes for prisoners.
Main judgements

Are prisoners treated humanely?
Issues of cleanliness and decency on the Victorian side of the prison are now being challenged, although unacceptable conditions persist in many cells. One wing has been closed for refurbishment and not reopened. This was as a result of concerns raised by HMPPS on the stability of the prison. HMPPS met with G4S at that time and agreed an Action Plan in December to improve stability, decency and attendance at purposeful activity. Subsequently, in March 2018 due to insufficient improvement, HMPPS contractual remedies, in the form of Improvement Notices, were issued to G4S in relation to the three areas of concern. Also, one landing, consistently criticised by the Board for having cells unfit for habitation, was taken out of service.

Recruitment and retention of staff has improved, with a full staff complement by June 30th 2018. An additional thirty-one key workers have been funded by HMPPS and should be recruited by G4S prior to implementation of the new process during the forthcoming year. There is, however, a lack of leadership on some wings. This, along with a lack of staff and management visibility and control, leads to undue prisoner influence.

Violence has stabilised in recent months, and data analysis is being used to address violence hot-spots. However, a lack of consistency in imposing sanctions on perpetrators of violence is a concern.

There were ten deaths in custody in the year, three of which caused particular concern to the Board. The PPO has been notified of those concerns.

Throughout the year it was a regular occurrence to find examples of:
- men held in a cell for up to twenty hours a day
- two men to a cell with unscreened toilets, eating meals whilst seated on a bed
- men in cells with faulty cell bells
- men in cells with no water, or no hot water
- men in cells with exposed electrical sockets

Prison managers’ aim to provide decent, humane, safe accommodation, in which prisoners feel respected, is difficult to achieve, particularly on the Victorian wings, when faced with a squalid, vermin-infested, poorly heated and ventilated environment.

In September 2017, the Director at that time, wrote: “The conditions that prisoners are living in and the levels of violence they are exposed to, alongside the absolutely unacceptable behaviours that staff are being subjected to, are not defensible and must change . . . we are failing to deliver a clean and decent environment”. He went on to refer to “squalid and indecent accommodation”.

The Board is concerned about the mix of vulnerable and sex offender prisoners on one wing, as the mix creates tensions and is viewed by staff as volatile. This large group of prisoners also
has to be kept apart from all other prisoners, which results in the challenge of having two separate populations within one prison.

During the year, the Board observed many examples of incomplete ACCT and CSU documents. In the last four months, following a Notice to Improve from HMPPS, there has been a focus on correct completion of ACCT and CSU paperwork. The Board considers that progress has been made.

**Are prisoners treated fairly?**

In general prisoners are treated fairly. Security activity is now robust and productive and is starting to improve safety for all who live and work in the prison. However, the inability to recompense prisoners, in a timely and fair manner, for property stolen from cells is unacceptable.

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

Resettlement courses and opportunities are provided but take-up is very poor. There is a drive to ensure more men attend education or purposeful activity. However, attendance has been considerably below target.

In summary, Birmingham Prison still has much to do to secure satisfactory improvement. Much remains to be done across many areas though there are some early signs of improvement.

**Main Areas for Development**

**TO THE MINISTER**

Does the Minister accept that the discharge grant, set at £46 in 1995 and unchanged since then, is an unreasonable amount for a released prisoner to live on while waiting for state benefits, if he is eligible?

Does the Minister accept that DWP delays in awarding benefits, even when the prison has completed the necessary preliminary application before the prisoner’s release, may be a causal factor in early reoffending?

**TO THE PRISON SERVICE**

What guarantee can HMPPS provide that the promise made by Michael Spurr to commence replacement of the windows by the summer of 2018 will be carried out?

**TO THE DIRECTOR**

How will the Director prevent conflict between vulnerable prisoners and sex offenders held on the same wing and ensure that sex offenders have parity of access to healthcare?
How will the Director ensure that men are always placed in clean cells, with working toilets, working cell bells and clean kit?

Will the Director ensure that all phone calls received from outside the prison are answered and dealt with appropriately?

Will the Director ensure a system is put in place to ensure legitimate prisoner compensation claims are paid in a reasonable time frame?

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

Is the Healthcare provider satisfied that cancelled external hospital appointments have not resulted in unnecessary increased risk to the health of prisoners?

**Improvements**

There has been a reduction in the diversion of staff away from residential duties which has improved attendance at the library, reduced the back log of OASys completion, and enabled security to be much more proactive.

The designation of “red band status” to enhanced prisoners, allowing them to access certain **areas to work on cleaning and improving the environment, is a positive step.**
3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

HMP Birmingham is a local category B prison for adult men, run by G4S. It has a potential operational capacity of 1,450 but currently runs at a capacity of 1,340, with one wing being temporarily closed.

HMP Birmingham is a Victorian prison with additional, modern accommodation including a healthcare centre, a gymnasium, an education centre and workshops. The prison has a total of twelve residential wings. These wings include a wing for the elderly, a healthcare wing, a detoxification wing, two wings for sex offenders and vulnerable prisoners, a First Night Centre and a Care and Separation Unit.

The prison holds men, both convicted and on remand, including those who are serving life sentences and indeterminate public protection (IPP) sentences. During the year there have been over 20,000 prisoner movements into and out of the establishment and nearly 5,000 new prisoner admissions.

Since a serious disturbance in December 2016, the prison has been under the leadership and management of three successive Directors, each with a different leadership and management style. The role of Head of Residence has been held by four different managers over the twelve months.
4 SAFETY

Data indicates that the number of assaults in the last three months, April to June, stabilised around 120 assaults per month. However, levels of violence within the prison are still such that safety for all cannot be guaranteed. This may partly have been accounted for by the disproportionate number of category B prisoners in Birmingham, when compared to other prisons, up until March 2018. Thereafter the Cat B population was reduced, and violence reduced accordingly.

Total Number of Assaults (both prisoner on prisoner and on staff): 1421 July 2017-June 2018

Bullying, debt, drugs and gang-related issues continue to be the main causes of violence in the prison. Often prisoners self-isolate because of threats to their safety from other prisoners.

Despite repeated requests, the Board has been unable to obtain data about cell bell timings. Prisoners frequently complain that cell bells are not answered promptly, especially during lunchtimes. This issue carries a potential risk to the safety of prisoners, given that there is a clear statistical link between unanswered cell bells and self-harm, or in the worst cases, self-inflicted death.

The opening and closing of ACCT documents sometimes give cause for concern and has elicited criticism from the Coroner in one case of a death in custody. There have been instances of incomplete information and timings are not always correct. One concern is evidenced by a PPO report into a Death in Custody, where paperwork requested could not be supplied.

The Board have observed that prisoners have an undue influence on many wings. Staffing levels in these areas have been, sometimes, minimal. Prisoners have been aware of this and consequently this has undermined staff confidence in dealing with large numbers on a wing. However, by the end of the reporting period, wings were, usually, fully staffed and diversion of staff away from residential duties was less than earlier in the year. Thus, an OMU backlog
of OASys reports fell from over 100 in February 2018 to under 50 in June 2018, and library attendance increased.

Until recently there were few trained Listeners in the prison and an apparent lack of awareness of the scheme amongst prisoners. A low call out rate demotivated Listeners who felt the role was not properly recognised. There are recurrent, but unsubstantiated, claims that prisoners are not given access to Listeners when they request this support. Support meetings for Listeners are sometimes cancelled for operational reasons or because of a shortage of escorts to bring Listeners to the meetings.

In recent months security activity has increased significantly. Dynamic leadership of security has driven the department and produced improved outcomes. Mobile phone finds in the first six months of 2018 exceeded the whole of 2017, and sniffer dogs more than doubled finds in the same period.

Based on a night visit, the Board is concerned that the number of staff qualified to intervene in the event of an incident is insufficient. This carries the risk that, should any unforeseen event occur, (additional unplanned bed-watches or an emergency requiring hospital treatment), and there was an incident in the cells, there would be a significant delay in being able to respond.

In September 2017 there was a serious incident. The Board considers that this was directly related to a lack of experienced staff managing the wing, at a time of high levels of staff sickness and staff vacancies. This had resulted in a limited regime, with late unlocks, no access to exercise over a weekend, and a lack of kit on the wing. The incident lasted from 5.00pm until around 10.00pm and involved eighty prisoners refusing to return to cells. The National Team was called in to restore order.

There is still no way of accessing Healthcare or the gymnasium without passing under the windows of a particular wing, which could pose a risk to prisoners and staff in the case of indiscipline in that area.

The Board believes that the prison is currently not a safe environment for many, despite the skill, dedication and efforts of most prison officers, staff and management.
HMP Birmingham has a diverse ethnic population. Prisoners, generally, say that the prison is fair in terms of racial equality.

### RACE AND NATIONALITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Banding</th>
<th>No. of Prisoners</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian or Asian British</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black or Black British</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese or Other Ethnic Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>White British</td>
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<td>58.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Irish or White Other</td>
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<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Stated</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1292</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Grouping</th>
<th>No. of Prisoners</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black &amp; Minority Ethnic Group</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White British</td>
<td>756</td>
<td>58.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Stated</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1292</td>
<td>100%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

It is not acceptable that wheelchair users have been unable to access the dentist because a lift has been broken for an unreasonably long period of time. There are certain wings where wheelchair users cannot access the exercise yard, library, and some purposeful activities. They are reliant on staff and other prisoners to fetch and deliver their meals.

The external gulleys are regularly strewn with litter and have frequently been observed to be filthy. Rats and cockroaches are in evidence in many areas of the prison. There are daily concerted efforts to clean and tidy, but the size of the problem is such that the prison never fully overcomes it.

Cell clearances are often not completed when moving a prisoner, especially to the CSU, and failure to record a cell clearance on body worn video means that property is frequently lost, resulting in unnecessary prisoner frustration.

Post has repeatedly been collected or delivered late, with an unacceptable delay. This includes legal mail and internal health appointments, which have sometimes been missed as a result. The failure to deliver post to the wings was discussed at Board meetings with the Director on five occasions. Although this was largely resolved by the end of the reporting period, some mail is not collected in a timely manner. The Board acknowledges that there has been an improvement.

Workers, and those attending education or purposeful activity, usually return to the wings after the start of meal times, and the Board has observed that they may receive smaller portions as a result. Likewise, they were not able to attend gym sessions or exercise, as these clashed with their activity. The Board is pleased that new strategies are now being implemented to address this issue. Likewise, there are new initiatives to monitor and increase attendance at education and purposeful activity.
The Board is concerned that telephone calls from outside the prison are not always answered. In one instance the father of a prisoner was unable, for two days, to get a message via the phone line informing the prisoner of his mother’s death. In another case, calls were made about concerns for the safety of a vulnerable prisoner, who was subsequently seriously assaulted. Correspondence from solicitors frequently claim that phone calls are not answered.
During the year the CSU has operated at, or near to, full capacity every day and has managed some very challenged and challenging men.

The use of segregation has increased significantly since the last reporting period, which reflects not only high levels of violence, but also a change of culture by management.

During the year there have been three men held in the unit for more than 84 days, with two men held more than 120 days. There have been two constant watches in the unit, with one lasting for nearly 82 days. The Board understood the reasons why the CSU was the safest place to hold these men.

Paperwork required for men on entry to the unit has frequently been poor or incomplete, Daily log sheets have minimal information recorded. The timing of entries in ACCT books has continued to be predictable, and entries often add little of benefit.

At GOOD reviews, exit plans are discussed with the prisoner, but are often rushed, due to pressure to create space for new entrants. On too many occasions CSU staff and the chair of the reviews have struggled to locate men back onto wings, due to a lack of input from security staff and residential managers.

Supervision of men, whilst out of cell, is thorough, with few incidents occurring.

Cell clearances, when removing a prisoner to the CSU, are often not recorded on body worn video and cell clearance certificates are often not completed. This has resulted in the loss of property and personal effects. The Board does not consider this to be fair or just treatment.

There are very limited opportunities for purposeful activity in the CSU, other than a few library books. Wind-up radios are available to those who adhere to the regime.

CSU staff have, on occasion, refused to place a man in a cell on a wing, as it was deemed not habitable.

The Board agrees that special accommodation in the CSU has twice been used appropriately, on each occasion with good reason, and for less than twenty-four hours. All paperwork was completed correctly and within time limits.

During the year administrative support was increased and this has had a positive impact on the way the CSU operates.

Communication with the IMB, regarding prisoners’ entry to the CSU and Good Order or Discipline (GOOD) reviews, remains haphazard. The prison has a legal obligation to notify the Board of prisoners segregated, not only in the CSU, but also those who self-isolate on the wings. Despite repeated requests from the Board, the prison has not been able to comply with this requirement.
The Board has often observed instances of men being placed in cells that are not fit for purpose. For example:

- two men were moved from the FNC mid-morning to a cell with no mattress, no television, and no furniture. They were still in the cell six hours later.
- a man, placed in a cell without a working toilet, had to arrange for a person outside the prison to phone the Duty Director to get this resolved.
- a man damaged his cell and was subsequently without water for over two weeks. He had to collect water in a bucket to flush the toilet, at times when other prisoners were behind their doors, for his own safety.
- a man returned to his cell, in which his cell mate had been assaulted, and had used the other man’s bedding to stem the flow of blood. Blood was spilt on the floor and door of the cell. The man was provided with a mop and bucket to clear the blood and was given replacement bedding which was soiled.

There is a failure of management to communicate with the FNC about spaces available on the wings, so that men either remain on the FNC without any acceptable regime, or are late to be moved, often into poor quality accommodation.

It is an ongoing concern that a commitment made in February 2018, by HMPPS to replace windows on the Victorian side of the prison “in the summer” still shows no sign of being realised. The Board is of the opinion that HMPPS lacks any sense of urgency about the need to carry out this work. In September 2017 the CEO of HMPPS visited the prison and stated that windows would be replaced as a matter of urgency.

The Social Care wing is a very well run and successful section of the establishment, with excellent relationships between staff and prisoners. The prisoners are out of cell for reasonable periods of time with the garden to maintain and relax in. When staffing levels drop to only one officer on the wing a full regime is maintained. This is a credit to the relationship and trust the staff have with the prisoners. There have been numerous complaints with regard to the limited TV stations accessible, compared to the rest of the establishment, along with no phone points in the main dormitory, sleeping up to six men. This has been ongoing since it opened.

Members of the board have observed cases of men smoking in cells and on landings, despite being a non-smoking prison. This is not challenged as robustly as might be expected.
Data indicates a decrease, since the last annual report, in waiting times to see the dentist or GP. However, the Board is concerned that not all wings have the same waiting period. The prison has appointed a technician, a hygienist and a second dentist. Prisoners are complimentary about the treatment provided.

The number of prisoners who did not attend appointments (DNAs) has also decreased in this reporting period. A recurring problem is that of prisoners attending purposeful activity or education at a time that clashes with their medical appointment. The Board is optimistic about new measures to address this.

The Board finds it unacceptable that hospital appointments are sometimes cancelled when other unplanned priorities arise. One prisoner, the recipient of a kidney transplant, needing ongoing care, had nine consultant appointments cancelled. This was due to his appointments coinciding with the staff lunch hour. These cancellations continued in June, after a senior manager had advised that they would no longer occur.

Conversely the Board notes a great deal of care and preparation in the plans made with Social Services and others to support elderly vulnerable men being released back to the community.

Two lifts have been out of order, one of which gives access to the dentist, the other being in Healthcare. One wheelchair user, who saw a dentist in March 2017, had to be seen in his cell for follow-up appointments because he could not gain access to the surgery via the lift. Recently, in Healthcare, a physically disabled prisoner had to be carried up two flights of stairs as the lift was inoperable. Moreover, when that lift is not working, prison officers have to carry the hot meals upstairs for two wards.

In conversation with staff, it is clear that there is appropriate care for mental health patients. The staff manage some very disruptive and challenging prisoners.

The Coroner criticised Healthcare in respect of the care and treatment of two prisoners who died in custody. An action plan was put in place to rectify the acknowledged shortcomings. An audit of prisoners with long term or chronic illness has since been undertaken. All nursing staff are now trained in the use of a portable ECG machine and a protocol for its use has been agreed. All new prisoners are offered a general health assessment, with staff following up and recording reasons for any non-attendance.

The abuse of psychoactive substances continues to challenge safety and stability in the prison, but data shows that there have been fewer incidents in the last two months of the reporting period, compared with the same time in the previous year. Conversely, staff report an increase in the use of cannabis.

Ten prisoners have recently trained to become Healthwatch volunteers. This initiative is to run in conjunction with the work of the Inside Recovery healthcare representatives. Data produced from consultation feedback, should provide a more accurate assessment of prisoners’ expectations and requirements, regarding healthcare.
Waiting times vary from one wing to another.

DNAs are inflated by staff being unable to locate prisoners when the escort calls for them. Figures for April, May and June 2018 were not provided for graphs above.
9 EDUCATION AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

Following an “inadequate” rating in the 2017 Ofsted inspection, poor attendance has continued to be an issue. In response to this, the department is working to address the issue of poor attendance. Strategies include:

- the secondment of a member of staff to be an “attendance champion”, to lead on the drive to raise attendance
- visiting wings to ascertain reasons for non-attendance, aiming to speak to every absentee
- improved liaison to ensure men who fail to attend education do not gain access to the gym instead
- bonus payments for prisoners who attend all nine sessions a week
- bonus payments for every certificate achieved
- quarterly award presentation events, plus an extra visit with friends and family
- loss of pay for non-attendance
- an IEP warning for non-attendance
- no association for the unemployed during the day

The impact of these strategies is yet to be evaluated.

Recruitment has been a focus for improvement, and Milton Keynes College staff have visited the wings to recruit and raise awareness of courses. Unit qualifications have also been delivered to prisoners on the wings.

The Board approves of the prisoner consultation in the education department. Feedback has identified the clash of timing with visits as a big disincentive to attend. A prison-wide survey has gathered prisoners' views on learning and skills and the findings have been considered by the Prison Council.
PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY

It remains a concern that there are not enough purposeful activity placements for all prisoners. Some five hundred men are not allocated to any work, employment or purposeful activity placement. Of the placements that do exist, attendance is unacceptably low.

The library is a welcoming and attractive environment and is very well stocked with the regular purchase of new books of interest to the users. The Board considers it a well-run resource. Measures have been taken to improve and increase library access. The deployment of two officers to work with the library has had a positive impact on library attendance, since they have rarely been deployed to other duties in the prison. Attendance rates are higher than in previous years but are not consistent week to week. Two evening book groups or reading groups are a positive intervention and the education department is making good use of the library.

There are other out-of-cell activities available in the chaplaincy, gym and support sessions such as NPS (New Psychoactive Substances) Awareness, Alcoholics Anonymous, and Introduction to Recovery. The gym continues to be well attended, providing a modern, clean environment. Different events are promoted to encourage health and fitness. A sponsored outdoor run took place, and the Board observed excellent prisoner engagement.

In recent months the Board has welcomed the introduction of events likely to raise self-esteem, including the charity fund-raising run, the re-invigoration of “Beating Time”, the prison choir, a successful “healthy lives” fair, a new constitution for the Prison Council and much improved library access. There is a sense of renewed momentum in the prison, in this respect, but there are insufficient places in purposeful activity to meet the needs of all prisoners. This results in many men being out on the wing without education, work or purposeful activity.
The Director and SMT carried out a full review of purposeful activity and produced an action plan to address concerns and to help develop effective learning, skills and work provision for all prisoners.

A new reporting tool provides detailed, quantitative data every day for the Director and SMT to identify areas of concern. They prioritise prisoner attendance at allocated activities. Nicotine Replacement Treatment (NRT) clinics are carried out in workshops so that prisoners may receive NRT, while still undertaking work.

Attendance in the workshops varies but is generally poor. For example, in April 2018 the workshop for sex offenders and vulnerable prisoners was full but the textiles workshop had a 29% attendance. The average attendance in April for all workshops was 46% which falls well below acceptable attendance rates. Many prisoners routinely fail to attend their allocated activity. As with education, there are a range of strategies to address issues of non-attendance. Talking with prisoners, the Board has heard how popular these interventions are, and that they do encourage some people to attend.

The Board have observed prisoners working well and there is good supervision. The workshops are modern, clean and well-equipped. Most of the Board’s concerns involved the cancellation of workshops run by Milton Keynes College, owing to the following reasons:

- the need to recruit new instructors
- tutors and instructors absent through sickness
- awaiting appointment or clearance of new tutor and instructors

It is regrettable that four workshops have been closed due to Milton Keynes College not being able to provide instructors for Valeting, Industrial Cleaning, Plumbing and Electrical training.

The Activity Allocation team provides a quick turnaround of clearances and allocations into activities. Remand prisoners are not required to work but are encouraged to do so. There are not enough placements to accommodate all prisoners and attendance needs to improve.
The resettlement team consists of nine caseworkers, and at one time four were absent from work for health reasons. In April 2018 they carried out 368 basic custody screenings (BCSs) for newly arrived prisoners. This equates to 61 screenings per caseworker in that month.

The CRC reported that 95% of prisoners leaving HMP Birmingham go into accommodation, 5% more than in 2016 - 2017. A supervising officer ensures a home visit where considered necessary, thereby ensuring the accommodation has been assessed. The Board acknowledges that this is a good achievement.

Employment on release has been analysed by the CRC for the period between January 2017 and May 2018 as:

- 42% of prisoners categorised as ‘sick’ i.e. claiming Employment Support Allowance (ESA).
- 30% of prisoners categorised as unemployed. This represents an 8% improvement compared with 2016-2017
- 15% of prisoners categorised as employed. This is a 2% improvement on the previous reporting period
- 17% of prisoners categorised as pensioners.
- 11% of prisoners not registered as either claiming benefits or gaining employment.

There is an unsatisfactory attendance rate of 30% at pre-release courses. The resettlement team, along with outside specialists, ran ten such courses in the reporting period. Of the 82 prisoners referred to these courses, only 25 attended. It is also concerning that from all the prisoners released in the year, only 82 were referred to pre-release courses. Referrals came exclusively from the resettlement team, national careers service (now closed) or Jobcentre Plus work coaches. The prison staff do not make referrals. The Board consider the number of referrals to be totally inadequate, relative to the number of men released.

The Board believes that this low attendance at resettlement courses is of serious concern. Attendance has also been poor at the three resettlement fairs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Invited</th>
<th>Attended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 2017</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2017</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2018</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Release on Temporary Licence is under-used with only one prisoner being released to ROTL in the last six months.

Opportunities exist, and systems are in place, to enable prisoners to participate in pre-release training, to improve their skills and to prepare for the world of work. It is disappointing that these opportunities are being wasted through low engagement and an acceptance of courses running with many empty places. Data shows that most prisoners, when released, go on to claim benefits and are not in employment.
Section – Work of Board

The Board conducts several weekly rota visits and attends all segregation reviews. All prisoner applications to the Board receive an appropriate and timely response. Members attend monthly board meetings with briefings from the Director and the HMPPS Controller. They attend other meetings as observers and meet individually with key members of staff. An Annual Team Performance Review reflects on findings and identifies foci for the year ahead. The Board has visited another local cat B prison, hosted by their IMB and has received IMB visitors to HMP Birmingham. They have visited the National Tactical Response Group training centre. Representatives have joined national IMB events and training and the chair attends the area meetings. Finally, members have areas of special interest in the prison and they lead on contributing to the comments on that area in the Annual Report which is a collaboratively produced document.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOARD STATISTICS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recommended Complement of Board Members</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of visits to the Establishment</td>
<td>414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of segregation reviews attended</td>
<td>323</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Section - Applications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Current reporting year</th>
<th>Previous reporting year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Accommodation including laundry, clothing, ablutions</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Discipline including adjudications, IEP, sanctions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Equality</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Purposeful Activity including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E 1</td>
<td>Letters, visits, phones, public protection restrictions</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E 2</td>
<td>Finance including pay, private monies, spends</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Food and kitchens</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Health including physical, mental, social care</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H 1</td>
<td>Property within this establishment</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H 2</td>
<td>Property during transfer or in another establishment or location</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H 3</td>
<td>Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Sentence management including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-categorisation</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Staff/prisoner concerns including bullying</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Transfers</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total number of IMB applications</strong></td>
<td><strong>228</strong></td>
<td><strong>225</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>+ 64 confidential access</strong></td>
<td><strong>+ 82 confidential access</strong></td>
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