Annual Report
of the
Independent Monitoring Board
at

HM YOI Cookham Wood

1 August 2017 to 31 July 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.

2. Executive summary

2.1 Introduction

This report presents the findings of the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) at HM Young Offenders’ Institution (YOI) Cookham Wood for the period 1st August 2017 to 31st July 2018. In this period IMB members made 321 visits to Cookham Wood. IMB evidence comes from observations made on visits, scrutiny of records and data, informal contact with boys and staff, and applications by boys to speak to the IMB.

2.2 Main judgements

Throughout the first half of this year, the boys suffered very frequent regime restrictions (see section 5.5). They spent far too much time in their cells and far too little time in purposeful activity. Their progress in education suffered badly (9.3). Their activity and association time in the evenings and at weekends was very limited.

These restrictions were the result of a serious shortage of uniformed staff (3.3). From April 2018, as staff numbers increased, there was a steady improvement both in “core day” activity and in evening and weekend time out of cell.

The level of violence at Cookham Wood increased by 17% this year (4.2), but staff remained committed, compassionate and optimistic.

Cookham Wood’s response to its difficult circumstances has been bold. The management team has implemented a series of innovative policies (see “improvements” at the end of this executive summary), focussing on:

- Preparation for release
- Incentivising engagement and positive behaviour
- Close, supportive management of boys who present a risk to themselves and others.

The IMB commends and strongly supports these new policies. It thinks they have the potential to greatly improve the boys’ lives.
2.3 Are prisoners treated fairly?

- Staff are fair and their relations with the boys are generally good.
- But regular and unpredictable regime changes in the first half of this year (5.5) felt unfair and inequitable to the boys.
- Increased opportunity to gain enhanced status (4.6) has increased the boys’ confidence that they will be treated fairly. So has the increase in peer mentoring and support (9.1)
- Consultation with the Youth Council is good (4.6)

2.4 Are prisoners treated humanely?

- Staff are caring, with a sympathetic understanding of the boys’ needs. There is no deliberately inhumane treatment.
- But, until April 2018, shortage of officers led to boys spending unacceptably long periods of time locked in their cells resulting in an inevitably inhumane regime during this period (3.3, 5.5)
- Although healthcare is good, shortage of officers also led to boys missing check-ups and appointments (8.6)
- Visits and family days are well-organised and welcoming (5.7)
- The facilities in the Phoenix segregation unit are very poor (7.2). Unlike all the other boys at Cookham Wood, boys segregated in this unit do not have in-cell telephone or shower: they have to use a shared telephone in the corridor for private conversations and await being taken to the one shower on the block.

5. Are prisoners prepared well for their release?

- The quality and range of education at Cookham Wood is very good, and education outcomes are good (9.1), but the year has been marred by poor attendances due to prison officer shortages (9.3). Education is popular with the boys.
- The range of work and employment opportunities was increased this year (10.1), but only a limited number of boys can access these opportunities (10.2)
- Case-workers are liked and trusted by the boys and readily accessible to them. The new Asset Plus IT system has improved inter-agency sentence planning (11.1)
- The new Cedar Resettlement Unit, for enhanced boys approaching their release date, is truly excellent (11.2)
- Leaving the arrangement of accommodation for boys leaving Cookham Wood until the last minute distresses, disorientates and demotivates them (11.1)
- Very little resettlement preparation or support can be provided to Foreign National boys who are approaching 18 and facing deportation on release (5.8). This is a great shame.
Main Areas for Development

Development is required in 5 areas:

TO THE MINISTER

☐ Accommodation for boys leaving Cookham Wood is often not arranged by responsible Local Authorities until the last minute – mere days before their release (section 11.1). This is distressing and disorientating for the boys and is a long-standing problem, highlighted this year both by Cookham Wood and by the Childrens’ Commissioner. What steps can be taken to ensure that accommodation is arranged in good time for boys leaving YOIs (at least a month before their release)?

☐ What assurances can be given that prisons will not suffer again with such poor staffing ratios as was experienced for much of last year and the first half of this reporting year – resulting in the inhumane periods of time locked in cells for the boys at Cookham Wood?

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

☐ By July 2018, Cookham Wood’s officer numbers finally came close to its agreed 2017 target (section 3.3). This was after a year of serious staff shortages. Can the IMB be assured that officer number will continue to increase steadily, to meet its new (February 2018) target of 142 Band 3 Officers?

TO THE GOVERNOR

☐ There is a small “static” population of boys on the B1 Progression Landing who, although not fully segregated, are still not actively engaged throughout the day (section 6.3). What will be done to record and monitor development plans for these boys?

☐ The Phoenix segregation unit is old and has inadequate facilities (sections 6.2, 7.2). What will be done to improve these facilities, or relocate the unit? In particular, boys in the Phoenix Unit (unlike all the other boys at Cookham Wood) do not have in-cell telephones to speak with their families. Will in-cell telephones be provided in Phoenix, and if not, why not?

Improvements

☐ More timely building repairs and improvements since the demise of the Carillion contract (3.3, 7.5)

☐ Improved transport: far fewer boys arrive late at Reception (4.1)

☐ Pragmatic Bullying Reduction processes, with Support Plans for perpetrators and victims (4.5)

☐ Incentives and Earned Privileges scheme re-written to incentivise positive behaviour: makes it explicit that enhanced status is a legitimate expectation for any boy prepared to make a positive contribution (4.6)
Many more peer mentoring and peer support opportunities, with accredited learning for volunteers (9.1, 4.7, 8.5)

Asset Plus I.T case-work system has improved joint working with Youth Offending teams and information sharing between agencies at Cookham Wood. By streamlining case management, it has encouraged joined-up multi-agency sentence planning and allowed case workers more time with the boys (11.1)

A new, ground-breaking Resettlement Unit has been opened in Cedar House, for enhanced boys approaching their release date. Boys have blossomed under a regime based on trust and respect (11.2)

3. Description of HM YOI Cookham Wood

3.1 Population
Cookham Wood is one of five juvenile Young Offenders’ Institutions (YOI’s) in England and Wales. It accommodates boys aged 15 – 18 years.

It has certified accommodation for up to 196 boys. Its actual population, between January and June 2018, was between 170 and 175. As there are often several cells out of commission, it is on occasions working at capacity.

It has a wide catchment area, serving courts in London, the South East, the South West, Central South and East Anglia.

Its population consists of both remand and convicted prisoners. The normal length of stay for remand prisoners is 4 – 12 weeks. The normal length of stay for convicted prisoners is 1 – 6 months, although some have sentences of 1 or 2 years, and there are an increasing number who have significantly longer sentences.

3.2 Accommodation and facilities
Cookham Wood was originally built in the 1970s, but new residential accommodation and an education block were opened in 2014.

The new accommodation block has 179 single cells, each with its own telephone and shower, spread over 6 landings.

Two specialist units are housed in the old 1970s accommodation: the Phoenix care and separation (segregation) unit (7 single cells); and the Cedar unit for boys who have proved themselves to be of good behaviour and are due for release in the near future (17 single cells).

One of the residential landings, B1, was dedicated to running a progression programme for boys who are persistently disruptive and violent. (During the preparation of this report B1 has been renamed ‘The Bridge’)

3.3 Uniform Staff
In August 2017, Cookham Wood’s target number of Band 3 Prison Officers (the number considered necessary to ensure a full, settled regime for the boys) was 122. Its actual number was 98. This serious shortage of officers persisted until Spring 2018.
Newly recruited Prison Officers began to arrive in batches from January and, by July 2018, there were 116 Band 3 Officers in post, plus 7 detached duty officers from other YOIs.

3.4 Agency support
Primary Healthcare nursing services are delivered by Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust.

Mental Health Services (Health & Wellbeing) are delivered by the Central and North West London Foundation Trust.

Open Road provide Cookham Wood’s substance misuse service.

The education provider is Novus.

Youth work is provided by Kinetic Youth Work Services.

The Resettlement Team for the early part of the year included caseworkers from the Medway Youth Offending Team (YOT) as well as prison staff; it has latterly become a totally in-house provision.

A Social Work Team provides child protection oversight and Looked After Children (LAC) support.

Barnardo’s provide independent advocacy support to the young people and also, from this year, a proactive children’s rights service, educating boys in their rights and championing the most vulnerable.

The maintenance and repair work was originally part of a national Carillion contract. The service the prison received under this contract was very poor – subject to very long delays before repairs or maintenance was carried out; and with some issues never being addressed. After the demise of Carillion, the management of the contract was brought under the direction of the Governor; the IMB has since seen a significant improvement in works with repairs being initiated swiftly and new projects being commissioned smoothly.

4. SAFETY

4.1 Safety and risk assessment on arrival
Boys are anxious and vulnerable when they first arrive at Cookham Wood. It is the job of the Reception staff to reassure them, make an initial assessment of their vulnerabilities and risk, and settle them safely. They generally do this well.

From August to March boys arrived sometimes without E Asset documents (Youth Offender Team (YOT) reports). The lack of documentation was potentially dangerous because it denied staff information needed for an early assessment of vulnerability and risk. From April 2018, the new Asset Plus shared (YOT and Prison Service) information system gave Reception staff (as well as Casework) immediate electronic access to the YOT reports, largely removing the problem.

Late arrivals and returns (after 8.30pm) were common until December 2017. There were 139 in the 3 months October – December alone. Cookham Wood collected and analysed data to understand the delays, and lodged repeated complaints; its analysis covered not just time
spent in transit but also (and very tellingly) waiting time in court cells. As a direct result of this painstaking and determined work, transport provision was increased and, from January 2018, there was a dramatic decrease in late arrivals and returns.

IMB members were pleased to see an increase in the number of peer mentors on A1 induction landing (from 1 to 3 by July). These enhanced-level boys live on the landing, support and advise the new arrivals and the intention is to meet them in Reception. The A1 landing staff consider them a “real boon”, and, having talked to the mentors and the new boys, the IMB strongly agrees.

4.2 Level and nature of violence
In the course of this year, there were 369 boy-on-boy assaults at Cookham Wood (18% up on the previous year) and 103 fights. 8 of the boys assaulted were seriously injured and needed hospital treatment.

There were also 113 assaults on staff (17% up). 9 staff members were seriously injured and needed hospital treatment.

Most boys at Cookham Wood do not involve themselves in violent incidents (there is a repeatedly violent minority). But most have experience of violence before coming here: they are therefore vulnerable to threats and involvement. The IMB is concerned that, since early 2018, there has been a trend towards gang-like violence, which seeks to intimidate and involve these boys. There has been a significant increase in “multi-perpetrator” fights, and group assaults on individuals. Boys have been incited to attack others with the threat of being attacked themselves if they do not comply.

Since January, there were important strategic initiatives to address this threat – new B1 Landing Policy, Incentives and Earned Privileges (IEP) policy and anti-bullying strategy, increased use of conflict resolution and the development of peer mentoring. The full impact of these initiatives has not been felt yet.

4.3 Staff use of force
IMB members have been unfailingly impressed by the speed and professionalism of officers’ response to violent incidents. Without their immediate intervention to protect the boys, there would be far more serious injuries.

“Use of Force” means physically restraining a boy to protect him or others from immediate harm. It can range from a “low end” guiding hand to a full “high end” restraint, with 3 officers using approved restraint holds and techniques.

There are about 10 “high end” restraints each week. IMB members are given unrestricted access to video recordings of them and attend “Restraint Minimisation” reviews. They have found that, in each case they have examined, the officers’ use of force has been necessary, proportionate and controlled. Whenever possible, force has only been used after de-escalation has been attempted.

No boys have required hospital treatment following restraint; some, who have struggled, have suffered bruising and abrasions.
4.4 Care for vulnerable and complex needs boys
There were 59 self-harm incidents this year (55 in 2016-17). The IMB routinely checked ACCT care plans (Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork case management files for boys at risk of suicide or self harm) and found they were opened whenever a boy showed any risk at all of self-harming, and were well-maintained, with good records of “quality conversations”.

The IMB was disappointed in November when the Cedar House enhanced support unit for boys with complex needs was closed. Its boys were rehoused apart from each other on the main residential landings and members feared they would be isolated and unsupported there. These fears proved unfounded. The boys complained bitterly at first, and several threatened self-harm. But, within a month Health and Wellbeing, the Safeguarding social workers and the boys themselves all agreed that the residential wing staff had “stepped up” to welcome and support them.

However, there is still a need to provide special support for boys who are fearful and unable to mix. Increasingly, this gap is being filled by the B1 Progression landing (see Chapter 6).

4.5 Reducing bullying
Bullying, which ranges from abuse through threats to violence, is common at Cookham Wood and causes great unhappiness. It is essential that low-level bullying be addressed quickly, before it escalates. However, this is difficult because most bullying takes place when staff are not present, and victims are fearful of exposing themselves as “snitches”.

Cookham Wood’s bullying reduction strategy, issued February 2018, now confronts this problem squarely. All staff are urged to report suspicions of bullying to the Safeguarding team, who, with Residential managers, speak to the boys and raise “Bullying Reduction Support Plan” documents, both for suspected bullies (“perpetrators”) and their victims (“targets”).

Residential managers drive the anti-bullying plans and organise weekly multi-agency reviews of each plan.

“Perpetrator” plans have 3 levels:

**Level 1 suspicion of bullying**: boy told of the suspicion and that his behaviour will be monitored and recorded daily.

**Level 2 evidence of continued abuse/threats**: boy downgraded to basic regime; offered intervention support.

**Level 3 intelligence shows risk of violence**: boy transferred to B1 Progression programme.

The new system has won the confidence of Residential officers. At the end of July, there were 10 “live” plans (6 perpetrators and 4 targets). The reaction of “perpetrator” boys has been to deny bullying (of course) but also to say that they will prove by their behaviour that they are not bullies.

The IMB is hopeful about the effectiveness of these plans. It thinks that “fronting up” bullies early is crucial, and believes that most “perpetrators” will respond positively to Level 1 and 2 monitoring and interventions.
4.6 Rewarding positive behaviour
There are 3 “privilege levels” for boys at Cookham Wood, according to the pattern of their behaviour. Boys who behave in an acceptable manner receive Standard privileges. Boys who show a pattern of disruptive and anti-social behaviour can be down-graded (for a time) to Basic privileges. Boys whose behaviour is consistently positive and constructive should be upgraded to Enhanced privilege level. The rules governing movements between the levels are set out in Cookham’s IEP policy.

In 2016-17, the IMB found that, whilst boys accepted the justice of down-grades to Basic, they felt that the road to achieving enhanced status was difficult, slow and unpredictable. Many thought there was no prospect of them becoming Enhanced, and instead remained apathetic and disengaged.

In February 2018, after extensive consultation (including with the Youth Council), a revised IEP policy was published which explicitly stated that Enhanced status should not be regarded as exceptional but, instead, could and should be the expectation of every boy prepared to make a positive contribution.

This was a major shift in emphasis. The new policy created two Enhanced landings, in addition to the new Cedar Resettlement Unit, and clarified and streamlined the process for achieving Enhanced status. The policy also established the principle that, subject to positive behaviour, boys would be granted Enhanced status direct from the induction landing – it would be theirs to lose.

By the first week in July, 45% of boys had enhanced status.

The IMB very strongly supports this new policy. In terms of building a healthy and supportive community, it is a game-changer. Enhanced boys are becoming a powerful resource, particularly as peer mentors. There is on-going and productive consultation with Youth Council members, who meet with the Senior Management Team monthly. There has been a marked increase in the number of Standard level boys seeking conflict resolution to clear the way to becoming Enhanced. B1 boys talked of setting their sights on becoming Enhanced when they leave the landing.

4.7 Conflict Resolution
The IMB has been very impressed by the hard work and fresh thinking of the Conflict Resolution team. The team was key to helping B1 and Basic boys resolve their disputes and move forward. But their contribution to changing the culture goes far beyond that.

For the first half of this reporting year, the team was sadly under-staffed, but from Spring 2018 there were 4 practitioners (all Supervisory Officer rank), supported and advised by a Forensic Psychologist treatment manager.

The practitioners have a caseload of 10 boys each. They begin by meeting the boys individually, and continue these meetings, daily if necessary, until the boys understand the reasons for their conflicts and are genuinely committed to resolving them. Only then do they mediate a meeting between boys to effect a resolution.

What is impressive is that the team do not leave matters there, but seek the continued engagement of boys after their conflicts have been resolved. In May they began focus groups of boys who had been involved in successful conflict resolution, and in June, with the help of
the PE department and boys from the Enhanced landings, they began “restorative play” events to spread the word.

In short, they are using their successful clients as advisers, and as mentors and role models for other boys. IMB members think this is excellent.

5. Equality and Fairness

5.1 Population information
The population of Cookham Wood is very diverse including, during the last quarter, 27 foreign national boys from 21 countries across Europe, Africa, the Middle East and south east Asia.

Overall the boys differ in age, ethnicity, nationality, faith, ability and needs. During the reporting year up to 20% of the prison population had identified disabilities including medical or mental health problems and learning difficulties.

5.2 Equalities Meetings
The Equalities meetings, due to take place quarterly, were frequently cancelled or rearranged at short notice. The IMB were concerned about this and also the fact that, during the last quarter of the year, the governor responsible for Equalities and Safety left. A replacement was not identified before the end of the year. In addition to this the Equalities officer and the highly experienced team administrator left.

A monthly focus group is held in the prison, the equalities representatives attend this, which is an excellent forum for communicating concerns to the management team and disseminating information to boys.

5.3 DIRFS
The process for managing Discriminatory Incident Referral Forms (DIRFs) was refined during the early part of the reporting year, the logging, response and quality assurance of this improved. This addressed previous confusion between complaints and DIRFs.

The IMB expressed concerns that the impact of staffing levels on the regime affected the opportunity for boys to submit DIRFs via the IT system (known as kiosks). As in previous years the majority of DIRFS were submitted by staff, although these reduced during the first quarter of the year; this may have been a result of the large number of new staff joining the establishment who were unfamiliar with the system.

During the year 2017/18 14 DIRFs were submitted by boys and 25 by staff. The majority of reports related to racist language. The IMB do not believe that the lack of submissions hide discriminatory behaviour by staff, IMB members do not receive reports from boys and observe sensitive and caring attitudes.

5.4 Discriminatory Behaviour
Boys are sometimes observed exhibiting discriminatory behaviours, generally name calling. Staff responses to this are not always consistent. However the Conflict Resolution team have worked hard and successfully with individuals and groups of boys to resolve problems and change attitudes.
5.5 Time out of cell
The amount of time boys spend out of their rooms is strongly affected by officer numbers. To deliver a settled, full regime, Cookham Wood needs to be at or about its target staffing level.

From August – December 2017 there were very regular but unpredictable curtailments to the regime. In December, there were 54 ad hoc shutdowns.

In late January 2018, the officer shift system was realigned, to maximise staff numbers and regime delivery during the “core day” (9-5, Monday to Friday). This made the core day regime more predictable (which the boys appreciated), but at the expense of time out of room in the evenings and at the weekend.

Core day activity remained very low in February and March (less than 3 hours per boy per day, on average). However, there was a steady improvement not just in core day activity but also in total time out of room, from April.

By June, average time out of room per boy was 7 hours on weekdays and 3.5 hours at weekends. Subject to GOoD segregation, “Basic” IEP sanctions and “Keep Aparts”, boys had the opportunity to dine out daily, evening association at least every other day, and association and gym (total half a day) on Saturdays and Sundays. This was a big improvement, but it was still not close to the 10 hours per day for all recommended by HM Inspectorate of prisons.

Average figures masked discrepancies between boys with different status. The regime for boys on the 2 enhanced landings did aim to provide 10 hours per day time out of room. But boys on Standard landings received less. Boys on the Progression landing, who were no longer GOoD segregated but not yet in mainstream education, received much less.

5.6 Religion
The chaplaincy team is active in their support to boys, particularly those in crisis or experiencing a bereavement; providing pastoral and emotional care. A member of the team regularly attended the GOoD reviews held in the segregation unit and on B1. Most boys (about 75%) profess a religious faith, the prison respects this and facilitates attendance at services despite regime restrictions.

5.7 Families, carers and visits
All boys are permitted a weekly visit. Boys on remand are entitled to three visits per week. The sessions are always busy and cheerful, despite a number of episodes of violence during the year. IMB members visit and talk to families and friends who are generally positive about the staff, and their experience.

During the reporting year Kinetics (Youth service) have taken over the delivery of the popular family days. Boys with standard and enhanced status can apply to attend these. The prison is planning to hold a family day in Cedar, the enhanced facility within the prison. The IMB is very supportive of this innovation.

5.8 Casework
The casework team maintains close contact between boys, their families and carers, inviting them to sentence planning meetings. However this is not always possible for foreign national boys, particularly those who will be 18 on release and who are awaiting deportation. Resettlement planning, community liaison, and arrangements for these boys is extremely difficult.
5.9 Complaints and IMB applications
An electronic ‘kiosk system’ for the management of applications to the prison and the IMB was introduced during the year. While this innovation improved the processing and feedback of IMB applications and complaints, staff shortages resulted in regime restrictions and meant that the opportunities for boys to submit requests was restricted. Also typically boys crowded round the terminals while waiting to use them. The IMB raised concerns about boys having limited access to the terminals and the paper system was reintroduced, with both systems in operation to date.

During the period April-June 2018 the Equality Representatives raised concerns on behalf of some boys regarding a delay in response to applications to healthcare. A survey was distributed to the boys, the results of this were presented to the heads of healthcare and residential, with recommendations for improvements in the process.

6. Segregation, Care and Separation

6.1 Segregation and reviews
Boys who are so violent that they present a real and immediate threat are separated from others for a period (known as “GOoD”, Good Order or Discipline, segregation) under Rule 49, Young Offender Institution Rules.

This period must be as short as possible and used productively, working with the boys to reduce their risk.

Cookham Wood has a segregation unit, called the Phoenix Unit, which houses up to 7 boys.

It also has a “Separation” landing, B1, holding around 20 boys who do not require complete segregation, but whose regime is restricted because of the risk their disruptive behaviour would present to themselves and others if they were allowed unrestricted association. These boys had a “Progression Programme”, designed to reintegrate them in a step-by-step, managed way: it gradually increased their association with other boys until they were ready to return to a normal landing and full regime. Some boys, from the Phoenix unit, joined B1 on full GOoD segregation, but they quickly moved onto the Progression Programme.

GOoD segregation reviews for both Phoenix and B1 were held weekly. An IMB member attended, and several of the prison agencies were usually represented on the Review Board. The boys were usually present. The reviews were very well conducted: the IMB finds them to be careful, helpful, imaginative and child-friendly.

6.2 Phoenix
The number of boys in Phoenix varied but there was generally low use of the facility this year. Partly because of the full use of B1. Most boys stayed in Phoenix for one or two weeks, before moving to the Progression Landing or elsewhere. A few boys stayed in Phoenix for many weeks. The IMB’s view is that the very poor physical environment and limited facilities in Phoenix (see chapter 7) make anything more than a short-term stay there harmful to boys’ welfare.

6.3 B1 Progression Landing
Since 2016, The B1 landing of the residential building has housed persistently disruptive boys who present a risk to themselves and others. It was conceived as a bridge between
GOoD segregation and a normal landing regime. Its Progression Programme moved boys through assessment, intervention support and outreach education to exercise and association with the main landings and re-joining mainstream education. Its aim was to return boys to a normal landing and full regime within 4 weeks.

In the past year, the Progression Programme became more flexible, and better tailored to boys’ individual needs.

Full segregation was minimised by the early identification of small groups of boys (sometimes no more than 3) who could safely associate with each other. This small group working, which is strongly encouraged by the landing staff, has proved very valuable in building friendships, trust, self-esteem and mutual respect.

B1 has been staffed by 4 or 5 officers throughout the day, allowing them more one-to-one time with the boys and providing better access for agency staff. The Progression education programme has been enriched and, since they work in small groups, the boys have more education time. There is a full time Kinetic youth worker. Recording and monitoring of boys’ daily activities and time out of room was greatly improved.

Wherever possible, boys were fast-tracked through B1 and returned to the main landings within 2 or 3 weeks. However, this left a large group of boys (up to 12 at any time) whose disruptive behaviour was linked to their complex needs. These boys were both disruptive and fearful. Until they received therapeutic help, they were unlikely to be able to mix safely with large groups.

It became clear, therefore, that there was a “static” population of B1 boys who need to stay there for longer than 4 weeks. The IMB accepted this, but is anxious that “static” B1 boys should receive a full regime, with active engagement throughout the day. They did not receive this.

Boys who were mixing regularly with 2 others were deemed to be out of GOoD segregation. At this point, their weekly GOoD reviews stopped and further support and reintegration, though well-intentioned, appeared ad hoc. What is needed is formal individual care and development plans, reviewed with the boys weekly along the lines of GOoD reviews or, formerly, Cedar reviews.

The delivery of such plans will require a much greater injection of agency (specifically Health and Wellbeing) support into B1. The earliest possible adoption of the Youth Custody Service CUSP (Custody Support Plan) and SECURE STAIRS (Health Service integrated care framework for the children’s estate) initiatives on B1 would be a very good start.

6.4 Adjudications

Boys who commit violent and disruptive behaviour will have adjudications where hearings of disciplinary charges against them are dealt with by a governor. Data shows that for the period April to June 2018, 872 adjudications (counting remanded hearings separately) were carried out. Roughly 10 a day. The most common cause is violence (assaults and fights) and abusive behaviour. The IMB did not find that the adjudication process was used disproportionately towards any group. Serious events are passed to the police and during this three month period 11 charges were proceeded with. The IMB strongly supports the involvement of the police.

The IMB does not routinely attend adjudication hearings.
7. Accommodation

7.1 Residential and Educational accommodation
The modern (2014) Residential and Education blocks generally provide good accommodation. The boys’ cells each have a shower unit and telephone, and the wide landings and association areas are light and airy. The classrooms and workshops in the Education block are spacious and well equipped. However the education block toilets have given concern throughout the year – suffering damage, graffiti, and have no soap, no hand drying and no toilet roll.

But other parts of the prison – in particular the Phoenix segregation unit and the gymnasium and sports facilities – are old and tired.

7.2 Phoenix segregation unit
The Phoenix segregation unit is old and has inadequate facilities. The fabric is worn and despite good efforts by contractors, staff and boys to improve matters with basic refurbishment e.g. paint, the unit conditions are poor. The unit has only one shower, and a single telephone in the corridor for use by all. Telephones in each cell could be relatively easily be provided but this has not happened.

The tiny exercise yard presents a brutal environment and although an exercise machine was present for a short while, this was removed when a boy climbed onto it and refused to get down.

The IMB strongly believes that boys in the Phoenix Unit should have in-cell telephones as of right, so that they can talk privately to family whenever they wish. Clearly, this would be reassuring and beneficial to them during their segregation. Since all the other boys at Cookham Wood have in-cell telephones, the lack of them in the Phoenix Unit is discriminatory.

7.3 Kitchen and meals
The kitchen is well managed and staff provide good meals on a meagre budget. The floor does continue to ‘pond’ water at times which is a concern for Health and Safety and Food Hygiene Standards.

7.4 Gym and exercise facilities
The gym (multi gym area) is small and intensively used when occupied. The sports hall had some refurbishment during the year and the 5-a-side football pitch plywood boarding was replaced.

7.5 Building repairs
With the demise of the works contractor Carillion, repairs have been taken in house. This resulted in staff being seen routinely carrying out repairs promptly and an overall much more caring approach to the buildings.

7.6 Health and safety
Previously the IMB has raised considerable concern about fire safety. Improvements have been made within the residential block e.g. coat storage and procedures are in place when the fire alarm is triggered. The alarm panel is now monitored and works staff attend to
resolve issues. Boys deliberately tamper with cell fire sensors and on occasions carry out ‘fire setting’. Consequently the IMB has continued to diligently monitor matters.

Fire drills have occurred during the year for some buildings but currently four buildings have not had a fire drill within the statutory period; these are the gym, mezzanine, security offices and B1 Portakabin. This is of concern.

Health and Safety meetings do occasionally take place. Accidents are recorded and presented to these meetings. The meetings also provide a forum for staff and agencies to raise matters of their concern. Health and safety matters are of paramount importance; prison management should ensure that the meetings are an effective forum for monitoring the safety of the establishment.

8. Healthcare

8.1 Healthcare and Mental Health
There are two healthcare providers in Cookham Wood. One deals with primary healthcare and dentistry, and the other with Health and Wellbeing (Mental Health). In addition to this a substance misuse service is delivered to boys requiring support.

8.2 Primary Healthcare
Primary healthcare is delivered by Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust. The service is delivered between 07.00-21.00. No special out of hours service is available, if needed, and boys must use the standard provision for the local community. During the reporting year there were some shortages of permanent staff, experienced locum staff supported the team. In the final quarter of the year the team was almost fully staffed, insufficient clinical rooms meant that the appointment of an additional staff member was delayed.

100% CHAT (Comprehensive Health Assessment Tool) assessments were completed on arrival in the prison.

Hearing and eyesight screening was completed on all boys, onward referral to specialist services is made when a need is identified. During the year two boys experienced unacceptable delays in the provision of replacement spectacles, this was the responsibility of their external optician.

8.3 Dental Services
The dental waiting list and times were a concern early in the reporting year but by the final quarter this was reduced to 22 boys, all of whom were awaiting a routine check-up. The dental nurse was responsible for triaging boys, this had a significant impact on waiting times as appropriate appointments were offered. There were no outstanding urgent appointments. However there have been dental service cancellations during staff holidays or during sickness – as a locum service does not appear to be a part of the dental contract to cover for such eventualities. This exacerbated delays experienced by the boys waiting for dental treatment.

The latter part of the year saw a breakdown of the X-ray equipment which meant that boys who needed an X-ray were referred to external services. New equipment has been ordered.

8.4 Health and Wellbeing services
Health and wellbeing services are delivered by Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust. The team continued to provide a wide range of interventions to boys in the prison. All referrals to the service are discussed at the weekly team meeting. Here interventions are prioritised according to clinical need.

The consultant Child Forensic Psychiatrist left in the early part of the year, a replacement appointment was confirmed in July 2018. Among the consultations and interventions offered are psychiatry, psychotherapy, psychology, speech and language therapy, art therapy and sexualised behaviour therapy.

Plans for the introduction of the Secure Stairs programme in the prison are awaiting confirmation of contract details. Secure Stairs is a new, more integrated, way of creating change for young people. The fundamental principle of the Secure Stairs framework is that the setting and the relationships within it between all staff (officers, education, Health and wellbeing) and young people are the primary agents of change for young people (rather than change being created by specialist individual therapy). Training for the delivery of the programme has started on the Cedar unit.

An increasing number of boys are remanded or sentenced following violent crimes which will incur lengthy sentences. These boys are discussed in the weekly meetings, and where appropriate, interventions are started before sentence. The exception is boys who have been charged with a crime of a sexual nature, they are not seen until after sentencing. The team are currently exploring with the prison the possibility of a therapeutic group for these boys.

8.5 Substance Misuse Services
Substance misuse services are delivered by Open Road. The team, which has been fully staffed for most of the reporting year, has met all the targets set by NHS Commissioners. A new group, employed in February, delivers 2 induction sessions a week and 3 joint sessions with education staff. There are 2 peer support workers, supported by a team member. This has been a positive addition to the work with boys.

8.6 Missed appointments
Data supplied by the health providers show that boys missed appointments for a variety of reasons. Prison staff shortages caused delays and cancellation of escort duties and complete lock downs also had an impact. These all conspired to make attendance at health appointments difficult. This was regrettable and wasteful of the health resource available to the boys.

9. Education
9.1 Education provision
The education provision is very good; possibly even improved from its position during the last Ofsted/HMIP inspection with an improved curriculum offer.

Education is generally popular with the boys, some of whom have not experienced formal education for some years prior to entering prison.

Behaviour in class is generally good; although there were a number of violent incidents in education – particularly after long periods where boys had been locked in their cells.

All education pathways had timetabled access to visit the library every week. Boys on Cedar, Phoenix and B1 are offered books via a simplified catalogue and book requests. Mini
libraries are being set up in these locations. Approximately 400 library books per month were issued to the boys on average over each of April to July. Negotiations are taking place with Medway Council – the library service provider - about implementing evening and weekend provision.

Peer Mentors have been established and an accredited Peer Mentoring pathway started in April 2018.

A large number of entries were made to The Koestler Trust Exhibition; 21 were Commended, 9 Highly Commended, and 7 Special Awards. The Koestler Trust are using one painting ‘Lucy’ as a lead image for the exhibition at the South Bank Centre this year, with the image being used on the Koestler Exhibition poster, emails, and printed exhibition leaflets.

A Fitness pathway has been established in partnership with the gym. A successful and very popular Three Pillars rugby project was piloted. The prison has recruited and increased its number of PEIs.

The Quality Improvement Group (QIG) continues to drive improvement across the establishment. Meetings are generally well attended. Particular successes include:

- establishing Peer Mentoring across the whole establishment with accredited learning for the boys involved;
- monitoring and improving boys’ punctuality to lessons;
- working together with the Head of Catering to develop and implement a traineeship for boys in the industrial kitchen;
- developing a Reading Strategy, and working together with the Manager for Medway Council’s Library Services, to improve access to books for boys that are in “harder to reach” areas – such as B1.

9.2 Highlighting the excellent education achievements
In order to demonstrate just how good education can be and the impact education makes, the following case study is presented:

A boy, who was first time in custody and had made threats to self-harm. He was allocated to his chosen Art pathway and given additional learning support as he was struggling with his speech. He progressed well and went to Multiskills pathway and gained City and Guilds Award in Painting & Decorating at level 1. He then achieved his ROTL and went onto a work experience at ‘The Barn’ workshop where he was helping to restore the barn with his newly achieved painting and decorating skills. His confidence developed further gaining experience working in the shop and developing his customer service skills serving the general public.

Working in conjunction with his local youth offending officer an opportunity arose for him to work with other young people in a peer mentoring role. He went on to secure employment with a fencing contractor and continues with peer mentoring in his spare time.

9.3 Effects of prison staff shortages
However for most boys education has suffered very badly over the year due to prison staffing shortages. The boys have suffered lockdowns – with days when there was no education offered as there were insufficient staff to cover movements or patrol the education landings.

**Education hours cancelled**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Allocated Teaching Hours</th>
<th>Prison Cancellations %</th>
<th>Education Provider Cancellations %</th>
<th>Total Cancellations Loss of Education for Boys %</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 17</td>
<td>13293</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 17</td>
<td>14029</td>
<td>43.6</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 17</td>
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<td>33.9</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>34.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 17</td>
<td>15330</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>32.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 17</td>
<td>14192</td>
<td>69.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>69.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 18</td>
<td>15087</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>18.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 18</td>
<td>14312</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>45.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 18</td>
<td>16753</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 18</td>
<td>16019</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>19.2</td>
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<td>May 18</td>
<td>15893</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun 18</td>
<td>16886</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jul 18</td>
<td>16567</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total for Year</td>
<td>182211</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>30.1</td>
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</table>
In addition and partly because of prison staff shortages, movements to and from the education block took too long with significant amounts of the boys’ education therefore being lost. A daily recording and monitoring system was instigated from the start of June; however prison staff failed to complete the details needed (or simply copied the previous day’s data) so a strategic view of the timings and reasons for delays was difficult for the senior team to address initially. By the end of the reporting year movements to education were typically taking about half an hour.

9.4 Education for segregated boys
Boys who were segregated again received significantly less education than the rest of the prison community. This was the case for the boys on Phoenix and many of those on B1 – some only being offered a short session on a one-to-one basis. However latterly more efforts were made to ensure that boys on B1 had access to significantly more education than they had been previously offered including small group sessions being arranged. Library data showed a low number of books issued on B1 and Phoenix.

9.5 Education and sport
Opportunities for learners to achieve qualifications through PE accreditation and external competitive sport in gym require further development.

10. Work and Employment

10.1 Opportunities
A Progression Route has been developed from the Catering pathway to a traineeship in the Kitchens.

A pilot Painting and Decorating working party was set up in October 2017 with a first task to paint Cedar cells and get them ready for re-roll in line with industry standards; feedback about the quality of work and professionalism of the boys was excellent. This has since been established as a permanent working party.
The Engagement and Resettlement team ran a very successful Entry to Employment event in partnership with local and national businesses with 133 boys taking part. It has been agreed to run this as an annual event.

A range of charities and businesses have supported boys, providing Release on Temporary License (ROTL) opportunities in 2017/18. There have been 769 episodes that involved 36 different boys being on a workplace or family ties ROTL, including:

- The Kerb – Market Food trading - self-employed (franchise)
- Construct a Future – Building and Construction – Charity work “First foot on the Ladder”,
- The Friars – Kitchen & Restaurant operation – cooking, cleaning serving customers
- Catch 22 Further Education – Foundation - Construction, Bricklaying & Plumbing
- MXCP – Vehicle Mechanics – Foundation – Mechanics
- Mainstream – Warehousing & Storage – apprenticeships
- Trinity Fencing CIC – Fencing and Construction – Apprenticeships

10.2 Participation
Despite these positive opportunities, in reality work and employment was generally not good for the vast majority of boys in the prison. Too few opportunities were provided for boys to experience work.

A Barista training café has been promised, but has been plagued with delays and is as yet still not available to the boys.

The few boys who went out on ROTL seemed to enjoy their experiences; however the quality of those experiences has not been evaluated by the Education QIG.

11. Resettlement Preparation

11.1 Casework
Cookham Wood has 10 caseworkers, all directly employed by the Prison Service. Three are prison officers (Supervisory Officer rank) and seven are experienced youth workers. They are each responsible for supporting 17-19 boys.

Caseworkers are the boys’ links with their Youth Offending Team (YOT) workers, who supported them before their sentence/remand and will manage their on-going training and rehabilitation in the community when they leave. The aim is that YOT assessments of boys’ needs, Cookham Wood’s sentence/remand plans, and YOT rehabilitation plans on release should join up and support each other.

Each boy has a personal caseworker, who prepares his Cookham Wood sentence/remand (i.e. training and development) plan and agrees it with him within 2 weeks of his arrival. The boy and his caseworker meet frequently (and always when there is a change in his circumstances) to revisit, update and develop the plan. There are regular (generally monthly) review meetings between the boy, his caseworker, his YOT worker and his parents or carers. The last, “resettlement” review is 4 weeks before his release.

Caseworkers drive the boys’ sentence and remand plans, and make sure they are delivered. They also have very important roles mentoring and advising the boys, helping them overcome difficulties, and keeping their families fully informed and involved. They do all these jobs in partnership with the boys’ YOT workers.
Caseworkers are liked and trusted by the boys, and are readily accessible to them. Boys can email their caseworkers direct (using the IT system known as ‘kiosks’ in each residential area) to arrange a meeting or raise a concern, and caseworkers can phone the boys in their cells as well as going to see them.

2017/18 was an unsettling year for the Casework team. For a long time, it had been made up of managers and caseworkers seconded from Medway YOT, but the contract for this secondment expired in January 2018 and Medway Council decided not to renew it. A new team had to be recruited and appointed. Inevitably, there was an impact on service to the boys in the autumn, as current team members left before new members could be appointed. Caseloads rose to 23 boys per caseworker, which was too high and markedly reduced daily one to one contact with the boys.

However, the change of team was also an opportunity to streamline casework administration and clarify priorities. Since January, the top priorities have been:

- to make sure boys’ sentence and remand plans are tailored to their individual needs (rather than being bland and generic). There are now tight quality checks by managers (including, in all cases, by the Head of Safeguarding)
- to keep planning updated as boys’ circumstances change
- to ensure that planning is taken into account when decisions are made about boys’ activities and support (e.g. GOoD reviews, Safer Regime meetings, education allocation)
- to free up caseworkers’ time for regular one-to-one contact with the boys.

Achieving these objectives would not be possible without the new “Asset Plus” computerised information sharing system, which went live in Cookham Wood in April. This juvenile specific case-management system is accessible to both YOT workers and YOI caseworkers. Information input by either is immediately flagged to the other.

Asset Plus is, at last, a system which is user friendly and fit for purpose (the previous Asset system was old, cumbersome and very time-consuming). It saves a great deal of time and is particularly valuable at Cookham Wood, which, because of its very wide catchment area, works with 41 different YOTs.

The IMB believes that, because Asset Plus holds each boy’s YOT assessment, his sentence/remand plan and a detailed record of his progress and risk, all managers and key staff should be given access to it. Reception officers are already trained in its use (to access YOT risk assessments and input their own) and agency managers (Health and Wellbeing, Education) are also keen to gain access. Asset Plus should become a central point of reference for everyone making decisions about the boys, and will be a significant information source for the “SECURE STAIRS” working model.

The IMB is impressed by the determination of the casework team. It considers Asset Plus a boon. It finds that relations between the casework team and their YOT partners are good.

It remains a concern that, although final plans for boys’ release are agreed in good time, at their resettlement reviews, it is often not possible to arrange their accommodation until the very last moment. This is understandable, given the difficulties Local Authorities have finding accommodation in the South East, but it is unacceptable. Cookham Wood has been working directly with the Children’s Commissioner’s Office to highlight this serious and on-going
problem. During the reporting year one young person over 18 was released homeless, he was met at the prison gate by his probation worker and taken direct to the local authority housing department.

11.2 Cedar Resettlement Unit
In late November 2017, an entirely new Resettlement Unit was opened in Cedar House. It accommodates up to 17 enhanced-level boys who are within 4 months of Early Release or eligible for Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL). It aims to give them the best possible start in the world outside, by building their confidence and self-esteem and developing their life skills.

Boys joining the unit are amazed at the trust shown them, and their freedom to do things for themselves. Their cells are unlocked for 10 hours on weekdays and 8 hours at weekends, and they are able to move freely around the Unit, chatting to each other and to officers. They wear (and wash) their own clothes and use the kitchen. They have a rota for cleaning.

They have ROTL opportunities and are able to continue their mainstream education. They also have a dedicated teacher who coaches them in personal and social development, applying for jobs, and budgeting for everyday living. There is a dedicated Cedar caseworker.

All IMB members have been deeply impressed by the way boys have blossomed in this Unit, and by their eagerness to give back by taking mentoring roles and supporting conflict resolution and family day events.

The IMB considers this Resettlement Unit initiative to be “simply stunning”. It also thinks the unit is pioneering approaches which, with suitable safeguards, can be adopted more widely at Cookham and indeed across the wider YOI estate.

12. The Work of the IMB

12.1 Rota Visits and Segregation Reviews
In total, the IMB made 321 visits to Cookham Wood in this reporting year.

Board members generally made 2 rota visits to Cookham Wood each week; the days and times of visits varied. The first visit followed the standard IMB schedule, but the second was more flexible: its purpose was to follow up issues raised by the first visit, to dig deeper into priority areas, and to talk informally with the boys.

Weekly rota reports were circulated to the Governor, Deputy Governor, and Head of Safeguarding. IMB Board Meetings were held monthly, to review progress and concerns with the Governor, and identify priorities for monitoring in the next month.

Board members also attended weekly GOoD segregation reviews. It was not always possible to attend the first (72 hour) review, but all segregated boys were seen within 72 hours. Members attended 449 GOoD reviews in this reporting year.

Each IMB member has Areas of Responsibility (broadly corresponding to the headings in sections 4 – 11 of this Report), on which s/he leads for the Board. In addition to making rota visits and attending GOoD reviews, members visited Cookham Wood regularly to carry out research and attend meetings relating to their Areas of Responsibility.
12.2 Recruitment and Training
The number of IMB members increased from 6 in August 2017 to 7 (including 2 new members) in July 2018. The recommended complement of IMB members at Cookham Wood is 10.

2 more new members will be appointed to the Board in September 2018.

In addition to national IMB training, there is a local IMB training programme, with briefings preceding monthly Board meetings. Members also attend Cookham Wood staff training sessions – for instance on child protection. There is an open invitation to IMB members to attend any staff training they wish.

12.3 Board Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended Complement of Board Members</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total number of visits to the Establishment</td>
<td>321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of segregation reviews attended</td>
<td>449</td>
</tr>
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</table>

12.5 Applications to the IMB

Boys at Cookham Wood have the right to speak privately to a member of the IMB about anything which is worrying them. They arrange a meeting by sending an application to the IMB, electronically (using the IT Kiosks on the residential landings) or by paper slips.

However, the boys make few applications to speak privately to the IMB. There were only 16 applications in this reporting year – 10 of them relating to regime restrictions in the first half of the year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Subject</th>
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<th>Previous reporting year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Accommodation including laundry, clothing, ablutions</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Discipline including adjudications, IEP, sanctions</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>Equality</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Purposeful Activity including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<td>E2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
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<td>Letters, visits, phones, public protection restrictions</td>
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<td>Property during transfer or in another establishment or location</td>
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<td>Sentence management including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-categorisation</td>
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<td><strong>Total number of IMB applications</strong></td>
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<td><strong>53</strong></td>
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