



Annual Report
of the
Independent Monitoring Board
at

HMP FEATHERSTONE

for reporting Year
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Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section A - Introductory Sections

	Topic	Page
1	Statutory Role	3
2	Executive Summary	4
3	Description of the Establishment	10

Section B - Evidence Sections

4	Safety	12
5	Equality and Fairness	14
6	Segregation/Care and Separation Unit	18
7	Accommodation (including communication)	21
8	Healthcare (including mental health and social care)	22
9	Education and Other Activities	24
10	Work, Vocational Training and Employment	26
11	Resettlement Preparation	27

Section C	The Work of the IMB	29
Section D	Applications to the IMB	32

Section A – Introductory Sections (1-3)

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 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.

This report presents the findings of the IMB (Independent Monitoring Board) at HMP Featherstone for the period 01/11/2017-31/10/2018. IMB evidence comes from observations made on visits, scrutiny of records and data, attendance at a variety of prison meetings, informal contact with prisoners' and staff, surveys and prisoner's applications.

In our previous annual report (2016-2017), the Board expressed its concerns on safety, the poor state of repair of the prison, the shortage of staff, substance misuse, the ingress of drugs, mobile phones, sim cards and tobacco as well as the numbers of prisoners who were self-harming and also self-isolating.

The Board is very pleased to report that the Governing Governor and his SMT (senior management team) have heeded our concerns and focused on making considerable improvements to the establishment ensuring HMP Featherstone is a much safer and decent place for both prisoners and staff to live and work in. The atmosphere within the prison has improved and the relationships between prisoners and staff are significantly better. A culture of mutual respect is positively encouraged for the benefit of everyone.

Focus for the future continues to be on reducing levels of violence, reducing the availability of drugs and other illicit items and bringing down the numbers of prisoners who self-harm. It is hoped that the introduction this year, of the Rehabilitative Culture and OMic (Offender Management in custody) models, as well as extra staffing, will ensure that those held in custody are better supported through key workers and as a consequence, make prisons places of safety and reform. The excellent work done by prisoner peer representatives around the establishment should be applauded. The Prison Council includes a group of elected prisoners, who represent the wider prison community and whose goal is to make prison life better for everyone. This is an ideal opportunity for prisoners to contribute to the way they are treated by working closely with prison staff to create a better environment for all.

Main Judgments

Are prisoners treated fairly?

Overall, we believe that prisoners are treated fairly at HMP Featherstone. A number of actions have been implemented this year, which we believe have made a notable difference.

- A new core day was implemented in April by the Governing Governor which meant that prisoners now have over ten hours a day out of cell. This maximises the amount of time prisoners can be engaged in purposeful activities.
- Some showers have been refurbished across residential units. Additional financial investment has been approved and it is hoped that all showers will have been refurbished by the end of March 2019.
- Essential items have been made available including bedding, clothing, towels and suitable washing materials.
- Cell equipment has been maintained and replaced ensuring that living conditions have improved.
- Washing machines and dryers have been provided to accommodate the demand for the introduction of the own clothes policy.
- HMP Featherstone, as part of its rehabilitative culture ethos has encouraged positive prisoner/staff relationships which have been supported by the FMI (five minute

intervention) and key worker training. This has led to a more open discussion and greater understanding of what is important to prisoners.

- Small prisoner work parties have been formed to improve the aesthetics of the prison environment. This has been very successful and they clearly take a pride in the work they do. Taking ownership and responsibility for helping to improve their surroundings is very important in the Boards' opinion.

The benefits have made a difference to the quality of prisoners' lives. It has, in some cases, given them more confidence and empowerment as well as opportunities to learn and develop new skills which they may be able to use on release from prison.

Are prisoners treated humanely?

Overall, we believe that prisoners are treated humanely at HMP Featherstone.

In the last twelve months there has been a marked increase in the number of prison officers. HMP Featherstone has a target staffing figure of 136 prison officers and the current SIP (staff in post) figure is 125. This is a considerable improvement on last year. Additional funding for the equivalent of twenty two officers under the OMIC (Offender Management in custody) model is included. HMP Featherstone continues to recruit new prison officers.

The number of prisoners who choose to self-isolate has been steadily falling. Currently 14 (as at 31/10/18) but only 8 (as at 22/11/18) compared to 12 the previous year and 36 the year before that.

The prison continues to maximise use of peer support workers to ensure that each prisoner is fully supported and feedback/data is channeled through regular peer support meetings and specific prison meetings.

All relevant policies relating to violence reduction strategy, drug supply and demand strategy, IEP (Incentive and earned privilege) strategy and resettlement have been reviewed to ensure that the prison is managing the risk in line with the national policies and local issues.

The overall atmosphere around the prison has noticeably improved and there now appears a culture of mutual respect between prisoners and staff.

However, although great strides have been made in improving the prison environment, the Board must express its concerns about the poor conditions that still exist around parts of the prison. Work started in September 2018 on replacing cell windows, some showers have been refurbished and a large part of House 2 is currently being refurbished. However, Houses 1-4 are still in need of significant investment in order to promote decency and improve overall living conditions and physical security.

Last year we reported on the amount of rubbish deposited by prisoners outside cell windows which not only looked unsightly but attracted vermin. Following regular pest control visits and the fitting of screens to cell windows this problem has been largely eradicated although occasionally it does re-occur. Prisoners and staff on individual House units are encouraged to take ownership and responsibility for keeping their particular House unit both clean, tidy and vermin free.

Are prisoners prepared well for their release?

As a Board, we consider that prisoners leaving HMP Featherstone are generally well prepared for release. There are good opportunities for purposeful activity during the core working day. Qualifications can be gained which are recognised by outside employers. The provision of learning and activity skills continues to offer education and qualifications suitable for employment on release. There is still a lack of offending behaviour programmes which prohibit prisoners' progression. Although there has been a big improvement this year, more work is needed to bring prisoners' OASys up to date, as the number of prisoners transferred from other establishments do not always appear to have OASys.

Main Areas for Development

TO THE MINISTER

The Board has expressed its concern in previous annual reports concerning the general poor state of the buildings and fabric at HMP Featherstone. Whilst some refurbishment is taking place and planned, the core of the matter is that the prison still requires major capital investment. Many of the buildings, including prisoner accommodation, are run down and particularly the kitchen and the segregation unit. There is a limit to how long you can get away with patching things up and the Board feels that point has been reached as we had previously commented about the same issue in our 2016 report.

The Board continues to express its concerns on the performance of Amey, who appear to struggle to deliver the maintenance and repair contract in an acceptable time scale. The introduction of prisoner work parties by the Governing Governor to do small repairs and maintenance has proved beneficial and is something the Minister should consider rolling out throughout other prison establishments.

This year, HMP Featherstone has warmly welcomed the increase in number of new prison officers. However, could the Minister consider what steps can be taken to improve retention rates? Currently 48% of prison officers have less than two years' service and 29% have been in post for only one year. With some older and more experienced officers leaving on retirement/health grounds there could be a shortfall of support and mentors for new prison officers. A major issue continues to be the national vetting and clearing process. This continues to hamper in the recruitment and retention of staff across all areas. Can the Minister investigate and find ways of improving and speeding up this process?

References - Page 4 Main Judgements, 2nd and 7th points, Page 5, Page 10, Page 17 5.10, Page 18 5.11, Page 20 6.5, Page 22 7.10 and 7.17, Page 26, 9.24.

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

Loss of prisoners' property on transfer between prison establishments seems to occur on a far too regular basis. This leads to disputes between the prisoner and the establishment over what has been lost and its value and frequently results in costly compensation claims. Could the Prison Service consider using an electronic system, which is widely used in many industries, to accurately check and track property, which should overcome these problems?

References - Page 22 7.14, Page 33 2nd and 3rd paragraphs.

TO CARE UK

The national shortage of nurses does not help in the recruitment of new staff for Healthcare. However, the Board finds it strange that Care UK can justify paying higher rates for agency staff rather than address the issue by arranging competitive remuneration for permanent staff.

References - Page 22 8.3.

TO THE GOVERNOR

The Board recognises the considerable efforts that have been made this year in making improvements to the refurbishment and aesthetic appearance of the prison as well as introducing and implementing the OMIC and Rehabilitative Culture models which are designed to make prisons safer places and change the lives of those held in custody. Increased staffing is helping to bring this about but ongoing training and retention of staff is essential for it to succeed.

The SMT (Senior Management Team) and staff in general have worked tirelessly and been fully committed in supporting the changes required to make HMP Featherstone a safer and more hospitable environment in which to live and work. It is essential that this excellent work continues and the focus to improve is maintained.

The Board have concerns that not all new prison officers appear to have sufficient knowledge and understanding of important documentation such as ACCT documentation. Perhaps additional training and/or support might be necessary.

The Board raises concern relating to the number of cancelled external hospital appointments due to lack of escorts. The total number of escorts booked was 864; however, approximately 33% were cancelled due to lack of escorts and the high demand for hospital appointments in general. The Board appreciates that due to staffing levels priorities have to be reviewed. However, the Board believes that with the benefit of additional staffing the level of lost escorts could be reduced in the coming year. The health and well-being of prisoners is as important as anyone else in the wider community and should be prioritised.

The success of prisoners gaining qualifications this year is encouraging, ensuring that prisoners on their release have the possibility of gaining employment. However, the Board would like to see for the future an increase in the achievement of English and Maths to at least Level 1 and proposes that before entry to all future courses prisoners must have the basics of Maths and English before proceeding.

There appear to be issues with regard to prisoners' property not always following them when they move locations around the establishment. Sometimes it is missing or stolen. The Board

would like to see more robust procedures in place to prevent this from happening as often as it appears to. We believe that wing staff should be more responsible and accountable for securing cells when prisoners are moved around the establishment. It creates totally unnecessary anguish for prisoners and leaves the prison wide open to compensation claims.

The Board is concerned and very disappointed that very little work has yet been done regarding the outside play area at the Visitor Centre. This has been reported both in our rota reports and in our previous annual report. It is extremely tired and neglected and would benefit from a complete refurbishment. We believe it is long overdue and in our opinion, it is important that work is started to improve it, as soon as possible. Also, the under-floor heating system does not always work as it should. This problem has been ongoing for years and we would ask you to take a close look at its repair or replacement. Also, the carpet in the Visits Hall is badly marked in parts and requires replacement. We understand a bid has been submitted and hopefully this problem will be resolved.

We are not confident that the prison is as disabled friendly as it should be. We would urge you to re-examine in detail what is lacking within the prison, to ensure that those prisoners, staff and visitors who live, work and visit the prison are not disadvantaged by their various disabilities. In particular, we would like to see proper provision of lifts in key areas ensuring that everyone can access all areas of the prison without difficulty. It is believed that funding and approval for this work has been agreed and should be carried out in 2019.

Despite very significant work done this year, drugs and other illicit items are still available within the prison and this is a concern for the safety, health and well being of prisoners, staff and visitors. The use of these prohibited items often results in assaults, debt and bullying as well as incalculable time dealing with the direct consequences of their use. The Board would welcome any further additional measures to cut down the ingress and use of such items to include more random and robust searches of prisoners, staff and visitors at Featherstone. We also welcome the intelligence lead joint operations across all three local prisons which have been very successful previously.

The Chair of the Board would like to express his thanks to the Governing Governor for inviting the IMB to attend the Senior Management Team meeting. This has enabled the Chair and the rest of the Board to have a greater understanding of the day to day running of the establishment.

References – Page 13 4.7, Page 14 4.14, Page 16 5.7, Page 17 5.10, Page 18 5.11, Page 20 6.7, Page 22 7.15, Page 23 8.7, and Page 33 4th paragraph.

IMPROVEMENTS.

It has been very heartening to see many improvements taking place at HMP Featherstone since our last annual report. There is a greater sense of purpose and direction. There is still some way to go but the prison is in a much better place than it was last year. This can be evidenced by the following:-

- The Board reported last year on the generally poor state of buildings and fabric at HMP Featherstone. Since then, we have seen the refurbishment of showers on most house blocks, some cell windows replaced, screens fitted to cell windows (to prevent ingress of drugs by drones and prevention of litter being discarded by prisoners, which resulted last year in an

infestation of vermin which was eventually eradicated). There has recently been evidence of a re-occurrence of vermin which is being closely monitored.

- Reception has become a much more welcoming environment. It has been softened up by the addition of a hotel style reception desk, fish tanks, plants, motivational messages, information posters, redecoration etc.
- Staffing has increased which is very welcome. Many of the new prison officers are inexperienced but they are developing and we wish them well in their new careers. Just over half of the prison officers at Featherstone have less than 2 years experience. It can be a harsh and challenging working environment but they are well supported by the more experienced staff. New officers are gaining confidence and are encouraged to challenge unacceptable behaviour. Staff/prisoner relationships have improved and a culture of mutual respect is evident around the establishment. Clearly, prisoners and staff alike are taking more pride in the prison and can see positive improvements happening through refurbishment, replacement equipment etc. Long may this continue!
- Considerable painting has been carried out around the prison and this has significantly improved the environment for both prisoners and staff alike. It is noticeably cleaner and fresher and we believe that this has made a huge impact on the day to day wellbeing of all living and working at the establishment. It also engaged prisoners in doing purposeful work to enhance their living conditions and give them a sense of pride and achievement. The atmosphere around the prison is calmer, more relaxed and relationships between prisoners and staff have improved and a culture of mutual respect is positively encouraged. Updated, eye-catching information posters about all aspects of prison life, as well as motivational messages and artwork cover the corridor walls around the prison. This is exactly what the Board asked for, in last year's annual report. We have also seen the introduction of flower planters and hanging baskets in certain areas, which have all contributed to improving the prisons' general appearance.
- It is very early days but since the introduction of the OMIC (offender management in custody) model there are initial signs that it is making a positive impact. The intention is to make prisons safer places and change the lives of those held in custody. It will develop more rehabilitative prisons to deliver a supportive environment for all. The first building block in its implementation is the training of key workers (all residential officers to support around six prisoners each). The first key worker training at HMP Featherstone took place on 28/3/18. It is expected that all prisons will have the full model in place by the end of 2019.
- The perimeter lighting project was completed in August.
- The replacement of hot plates, washing machines and dishwashers.
- The Governing Governor re-profiled the prison at the beginning of April and a new core day was introduced which enabled prisoners to benefit from over 10 hours out of cell. Additionally, there are now more senior officers and custodial managers in place.
- CCTV coverage around the prison has improved significantly, although there are still some areas that need better coverage.
- Significant strides are being taken with regard to the horticulture department and it is good to see progress which will ultimately benefit prisoners in terms of training/qualifications as well as the produce enhancing the diet of prisoners generally. The gardens are better maintained and enhance the look and feel of a welcoming prison.
- The introduction of the DOJO which has provided an excellent hub for control and restraint training but can also be used for general staff training/meetings. Some improvements are still needed before it is complete.
- The introduction of the Rapiscan machine in the post room which can scan mail and detect letters laced with PS (psychoactive substances).
- MDT (Mandatory drug testing) is going well and very close to hitting its target (17.8% in September against a target of 21.8%).
- Successes and achievements by prisoners are celebrated and their families are encouraged to support them. Strengthening and improving family/friends' ties is essential in supporting

prisoners not to re-offend, following their release from prison. Good work is being undertaken to identify those prisoners who do not receive visitors and promoting the Visitor scheme.

- Additional gates were installed quite some time ago to improve the security around the administration block but unfortunately the work has not yet been completed. A biometrics system is in the process of being introduced. This system will be used as a means of accurately identifying prisoners for visits, discharge to court, transfer to other establishments and for final release. It will also be used with the visits booking process and the identification of visitors. At the end of the reporting period, prisoners were about to be registered using a simple fingerprint system and hopefully the biometrics system will shortly be fully operational.
- The Sports Hall floor was repaired at the end of October/early November 2018.
- The relationship between the prison management and POA (Prison Officers Association) has improved.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ESTABLISHMENT

Main Role - HMP Featherstone is an adult, male training prison with a resettlement function, where prisoners are expected to work, train and be prepared for release in the final part of their sentence. The prison was re-categorised in 2015 and serves the Warwickshire and West Mercia area as far as resettlement is concerned. The prison, which opened in 1976, is located approximately 8 miles north of Wolverhampton in the West Midlands and is close to the joining of the M6 and M54 Motorways. It was built on land originally owned by the Ministry of Defence and occupies part of the same land complex as HMP Oakwood and HMP Brinsford.

Since re-categorisation, the prison has faced many challenges and has had to adapt accordingly. The type of prisoner population changed and management had to focus and react accordingly in providing those prisoners in their care with work skills (employability) and activities, for instance interventions, education and access to CRC (Community Rehabilitation Company). Since re-categorisation, HMP Featherstone has had to deal with many difficult prisoners who have no interest in work or education and their challenging and often aggressive behavior causes many problems for those front line staff who have to deal with the consequences on a daily basis.

Category – HMP Featherstone is a category C prison (category C prisoners are those who are assessed to have neither the intention nor the resources to escape). Categorisation of prisoners is not, of itself, dependent on the prisoner's offence.

Prison Performance Rating. – HMP Featherstone is a level 3 prison (meeting the majority of targets). This covers rating for the period between 1/4/17 and 31/3/18. Performance in the CPT (Custodial Performance Tool) has been assessed against three main outcome areas that reflect priorities for 2017/18 as set by the Ministry of Justice.

- Public Protection;
- Safety and Order;
- Offender Reform.

Of the 118 prisons across England and Wales (both public sector and privately-managed prisons), 50 prisons were in Category 3, representing 42% of all prisons.

Capacity – It has an OC (Operational capacity) of 687/637(reduced by 50 whilst refurbishment taking place) under PPI (priority prisons improvement) and a CNA (Certified normal accommodation) of 672/622 as at 31/10/18).

The operational capacity of a prison is the total number of prisoners that an establishment can hold taking into account control, security and the proper operation of the planned regime. It is determined by the DDC (Deputy Director of Custody), based on operational judgment and experience.

The certified normal accommodation is the agreed number of prisoners who can be accommodated in a prison (without using single cells for more than one person or double cells with multiple prisoners).

As at 31/10/18 –

- 0% of the population was unsentenced.
- 1 prisoner (0.16%) is serving less than 12 months.
- 98 prisoners (16.12%) serving between 12 months and 4 years.
- 450 prisoners (74.01%) serving longer than 4 years.
- 35 prisoners (5.76%) are lifer prisoners (non IPP).
- 24 prisoners (3.95%) are IPP (imprisonment (or detention) for public protection).

Main providers for Healthcare, Education, CRC (Resettlement), Maintenance etc.

Healthcare – Care UK (since 1/4/16).

Escort Contractor – GeoAmey.

Catering services – Bidvest.

Education – Milton Keynes College.

CRC – Warwickshire and West Mercia Community Rehabilitation Company.

Medication – Lloyds Pharmacy Services.

Library service – Staffordshire Library Service.

Ordering and delivering of canteen items – DHL.

Maintenance – Amey.

In addition, there are numerous voluntary organisations that provide invaluable services within the prison.

Accommodation and facilities –

The prison has the following accommodation units.

House 1. (Currently the induction unit). A two- storey block. As at 31/10/18 it held 121 prisoners including 2 self- isolators.

House 2. A two-storey block. As at 31/10/18 it held 58 prisoners including no self- isolators. This unit is currently undergoing refurbishment which would account for its reduced population.

House 3. A two-storey block. As at 31/10/18 it held 113 prisoners including 5 self isolators.

House 4. A two-storey block. As at 31/10/18 it held 120 prisoners including 2 self-isolators.

House 5. (Currently the resettlement unit). A three-storey block. As at 31/10/18 it held 79 prisoners including 5 self-isolators.

House 6. A two-storey block. As at 31/10/18 it held 35 prisoners including no self-isolators.

House 7 A two-storey block. As at 31/10/18 it held 76 prisoners including no self-isolators.

Additionally, there is the **Segregation Unit**. As at 31/10/18 it held 5 prisoners. There are 10 standard cells and a special cell. (For much of the reporting year, many of the cells were out of use due to prisoner vandalism and the time it took to get them back in use following repairs).

There is a Gymnasium, Healthcare department, Kitchen, Education department, Library, Chaplaincy, Reception, Visits Hall and Workshops. Many other departments are located either in the main administration block or elsewhere around the prison. The Visitor Centre is located separately at the front of the main prison.

Section B – Evidence Sections (4-11)

4. SAFETY

4.1. During the reporting year, safer custody of prisoners has received a high priority in the management and operation of the prison, prompted by the action plan ensuing from a poor HMIP inspection at the end of 2016. A recent prison survey, whilst limited in its coverage, indicated that only 26% of prisoners felt unsafe. Information on safer custody was collected via Rota reports, IMB attendance at a variety of prison meetings, interviews with governors, senior officers, administration staff, violence reduction representatives, prisoners and observations. It is recognised that whilst methodologically there are limitations, it does give some quantitative and qualitative insight into the prison setting.

4.2. Over the year there has been a considerable change in the way in which safer custody has been handled. There have been three changes of governors with responsibility for this area due to a transfer to another prison and maternity job share. As an important portfolio area this has not been ideal and there have been a number of occasions on which the regular programme of meetings has not taken place. However, the responsible governor has been well supported by a strong and stable team of two Band 5s and two Band 4 officers and guidance from other senior governor level staff.

4.3. The format of the safer custody meetings has also undergone change during the year which appears to be creating a manageable and proactive two-tier approach: one where strategy is discussed and the other on a more operational level where more immediate actions are progressed. All of these meetings are well attended and given excellent support through the Hub manager.

4.4. The efforts of the team in collecting evidence and data should be recognised. They have a sound grasp of what is happening throughout the prison in relation to safer custody areas of concern and discuss and examine trends in an open and constructive way. Information is shared through a variety of focused meetings such as use of force, security and population management. The knowledge of individual prisoners and their history and concerns is impressive. As throughout the general prison estate, there clearly remain concerns over levels of drugs and violence associated with debt, but they have been actively pursuing approaches, sharing information and strategies to improve the situation.

4.5. Representatives of the prison population have played an important part in raising awareness of current issues on a monthly basis. It has been difficult over the year to recruit violence reduction representatives (currently 6). Those in post report that in the latter half of the year there appears to have been an improvement in the atmosphere around the prison and whilst there is some gang related activity, many issues are around petty disputes that

escalate. Currently, there are 71 prisoners who are identified as members of OCGs (Organised Crime Groups) within HMP Featherstone. The recent prison survey indicated that 71% of respondents thought there was a staff member they could approach to help them with difficulties and the VR reps thought that a more mindful approach by staff would help. The safer custody team has been concentrating on trying to improve case management and create a more community feel on the house units in line with the safer prisons project. The VR reps have assisted in discussing current issues such as debt management.

4.6. The Samaritans and Listeners (prisoners trained by Samaritans) continue to offer valuable and beneficial support to those prisoners in crisis at any time. There are currently 15 Listener reps (12 last year) and whilst the numbers have fluctuated they have been able to recruit and train consistently. They have attended 88 calls and the crisis suite has been opened on 13 occasions. There are strong links with the Samaritans and the prison has hosted visits in order to assist in the understanding of prisoners' particular issues.

4.7. Staffing levels over the current reporting year have increased to 125. Just over half of that number have less than two years service. Many of the staff are inexperienced and are not always completely aware of how to deal with difficult and varied scenarios. However, staff are encouraged to work with the CSIP (Challenge, support, intervention plan) framework.

4.8. Assaults in general have increased. There were 170 assaults (prisoner on prisoner) - 153 last year - and 42 assaults (prisoner on staff) - 30 last year. As 72% of the current population is incarcerated for violence related offences these figures are understandable. However, all serious incidents are referred to the police who are prepared to actively pursue assaults on staff.

4.9. 291 ACCT (Assessment, care in custody teamwork) documents were opened during the reporting year (compared to 319 last year) and where possible IMB members sampled the contents which all considered to be completed properly. The safer custody team themselves have undertaken quality assurance checks and highlighted where there was scant information or undecipherable signatures. There is a positive and proactive approach which has fed into further training of staff. All staff have had the opportunity to undertake SASH (Suicide and self-harm) training.

4.10. There were 310 cases of deliberate self-harm, (260 last year) reported in detail, many of these attributable to a small number of prisoners. For example, during October 2018, 53 recorded incidents were by three prisoners. All new prisoner receptions are checked for their history of self-harm so that early interventions can be made.

4.11. Sadly, there were 3 deaths in custody during the reporting period which are discussed elsewhere in this report. The IMB were promptly informed in each case and observed that due process was carried out. The Board is satisfied that the families of the prisoners concerned were afforded compassion and support by the Prison Service and also that those staff/cell mates affected were offered counseling and due diligence was paid to their needs.

4.12. The Board attended four serious incidents where the command suite was opened in the reporting year (30/4/18, 8/5/18, 11/7/18 and 25/9/18). Observations were duly recorded and we attended the hot debriefs following the incidents. We were satisfied that the prison handled the incidents in a professional manner. Each incident was handled according to the appropriate protocol and members of the IMB were able to ascertain information and observe treatment of offenders and the general population. The use of improved CCTV in the command suite was very helpful in monitoring the progress and outcome of each incident.

4.13. The self-isolator strategy appears to have worked well: there were 8 self-isolators recorded as at 22/11/18, (12 last year and 36 the year before that). However, there have been a considerable number of prisoners who have been segregated on GOOD (Good order or discipline) and then have been reluctant to return to their normal location. The practice of transferring prisoners elsewhere highlights problems of returning them safely to the wider population.

4.14. PS (Psychoactive substance) use continues to be of major concern but fluctuates from month to month. Security information appears to be robust and well managed and there is detailed discussion and information shared at all levels in an attempt to reduce drug availability and usage. Improvement to the fenestration of the House units and the introduction of new technology to scan mail has reduced some of the entry of drugs; however, the security checks on staff and visitors remain of concern. There is still a smell of drugs on some of the House unit spurs. Since the introduction of the no smoking policy, the prison value of tobacco (now an illegal commodity) has increased substantially.

4.15. The handling of reception and induction to the prison has been reviewed. The reception area has had a facelift, provides waiting areas and generally has a clean and welcoming appearance. Induction is generally well managed and additional healthcare screening has been introduced. Those prisoners with known issues are aimed to be identified on arrival and the introduction of the CSIP provides a further tool. 86% of prisoners reported that they felt well treated on arrival and 92% said they had received induction. 60% felt safe on their first night in the prison, so some work is needed in this area.

5. EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS

5.1. The Equality Act 2010 lists the protected characteristics; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Under this act the prison has three duties:-

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

It is the role of the IMB to monitor the application of the Act in respect of how it applies to prisoners.

5.2. The Equalities Committee normally meets bi-monthly and is chaired by the Governing Governor. It is usually well attended by the SMT (senior management team), protected characteristic leads and prisoner representatives for the various strands. Comprehensive data generated from the equalities monitoring tool is used to identify and analyse any identifiable areas of inequality and then steps are taken to redress any imbalances. The IMB attends the meetings of the committee whenever possible.

5.3. DIRFS (Discrimination Incident Report Forms) are carefully monitored and investigated within the given target time. During the reporting period 27 DIRFs were submitted and investigated of which none were upheld and six are still awaiting judgement. The breakdown of DIRFs by category was disability (3), sexual orientation/gender (1), race (17), marriage and civil partnership (0), transgender (0) and religion and belief (4). The total number of DIRFs for the previous reporting year was 21. Tripartite scrutiny panel meetings take place periodically at HMP Featherstone, HMP Oakwood and HMP Brinsford to check the quality of DIRF investigations is thorough and appropriate.

5.4. PEEPs (Personal, Emergency and Evacuation Plans) are continuously reviewed. As at 31/10/18 there were 11 live PEEPs across the establishment with those located as follows: - House 1(4), House 2 (2), House 3 (2), House 4 (1), House 5 (0), House 6 (0), House 7 (2) and Segregation Unit (0). During the course of the year a “Work Area Assessment” was devised that record arrangements in place for the prisoner whilst in that area. These arrangements also cover staff.

5.5. Age.

The age profile of prisoners at HMP Featherstone (as at 24/10/18) was:-

AGE RANGE	NUMBER	% OF PRISON POPULATION
21-24	63	10.21%
25-29	151	24.47%
30-39	213	34.52%
40-49	126	20.42%
50-59	50	8.10%
60-69	12	1.94%
70+	2	0.32%

The table shows that there are 64 prisoners over 50 years old at HMP Featherstone. This compares to 61 the previous year and 52 the year before that. Nationally, people aged 60 and over are the fastest growing age group in the prison estate and this increase is being replicated at HMP Featherstone. The Board is hoping to conduct a survey of the over 50s prison community in the near future, to ascertain if their needs and concerns are being adequately addressed and we intend to feed back our findings to the Governing Governor and SMT for their information and possible action.

Older prisoners reside on all house units, with 37.5% living on House 7, which provides a more stable and quieter environment and is better equipped for the older prisoner as it facilitates showers and toilets within the cells. They integrate well with the other age groups and their maturity helps to create the behaviour House 7 represents and expects. Employment continues until pensionable age and sometimes beyond at the prisoner’s request. HMP Featherstone encourages employment for pensioners, as it creates interactivity and keeps the individual actively and mentally fit.

The over 50’s population are offered various activities tailored to their needs, i.e. outdoor walks, bowls, gym sessions (providing a broad range of activities for all abilities), book club and socialisation evenings. This group is represented by peer representatives who meet in the chapel on a monthly basis to discuss/report on group related matters. They attend various prison meetings to represent their particular group.

This is an area that should constantly be under review and steps taken to ensure that prisoners receive appropriate care, as they would do, if they were in the outside community.

5.6. Ethnicity.

The breakdown of prisoner population by ethnicity as at 24/10/18 is as follows:-

ETHNICITY	NUMBER OF PRISONERS	% OF PRISON POPULATION
Asian British (A)	93	15.3%
Black/Black British (B)	101	16.6%
Mixed (M)	33	5.4%
African (N)	4	0.6%
Other ethnic group (O)	9	1.4%
White (W)	368	60.5%

Distribution of ethnic groups across the house units is regularly monitored and is relatively uniform.

Black history month was celebrated with events in October.

5.7. Disability.

There are currently 195 prisoners who have self-declared varying levels of disability, with these being well managed on residential units. Some have declared more than one disability. The breakdown of disabilities is as follows:-

Mental illness - 71	Visual impairment (inc blind) - 16
Other disability - 54	Hearing impairment (not deaf) - 6
Learning difficulties - 49	Learning disability (inc autism) - 7
Reduced mobility - 32	Progressive condition - 6
Reduced physical capacity - 23	Speech impediment - 4
Dyslexia - 26	Severe disfigurement - 2
Other mental impairment - 2	Deaf (sign language) - 1

Although the prison is not currently well adapted for those with physical disabilities, few issues are raised with the IMB through applications.

Some prisoners with disabilities might need extra help. The Care Act 2015 provides for this. If a prisoner thinks he has social care needs he can ask for an assessment. The local council, where the prisoner is situated, will consider the case and then decide whether they can give the care and support asked for. This might be help with daily living, such as help using the shower or getting dressed. The Council might agree a care and support plan which will say what help is needed and who will provide this.

There is in the Board's opinion inadequate support for disabled prisoners. New lifts should be provided to ensure that prisoners, staff and visitors can access all parts of the prison. They should not be disadvantaged in any way because of their disability.

5.8. Religion and belief.

The Chaplaincy team comprises two full-time ministers and approximately ten sessional staff representing different faiths. There are 23 registered religions (several of which are Christian denominations) and about half that number is actively supported. Holy days for all faiths are observed, numerous festivals celebrated and adequate provision is made for various group meetings, prayers and study sessions. There are about 80-85 volunteers working in the Chaplaincy. Bereavement support is also offered by the Chaplaincy, which also provides support when prisoners have seriously ill relatives or friends. Groups/initiatives are run, which support prisoners: such as prison visitors, the prisoners' pen friend scheme, the Samaritans, the Listeners scheme, Alcoholics Anonymous, yellow ribbon and counselling sessions.

The Chaplaincy also provides support for foreign nationals. There are currently 74 foreign nationals at HMP Featherstone (80 the previous year) living across all house units. Foreign nationals (non-UK passport holders) currently make up 11% of the general prison population in England and Wales (House of Commons). Immigration surgeries are held every 6 weeks and Home Office staff are happy to see them on a 1:1 basis. Support for foreign nationals is provided by, amongst others, the Chaplaincy, OMU (Offender Management Unit), Refugee Migrant Support and Community Helpline (legal). There are drop-in surgeries for all foreign nationals on Thursday mornings and there are monthly Foreign National Management Committee meetings. There appear to be few problems with language difficulties. Support can be found from "The Big Word" translation service and peer prisoners who speak different languages. There is a foreign language database which records prisoners who speak more than one language.

The GRT (Gypsy, Roma, Traveller) group meets regularly although numbers attending meetings fluctuate. Their community was celebrated in June.

The support observed by the IMB which is given by the Chaplaincy to prisoners appears to be of a very high standard.

5.9. Sexual orientation/Gender.

There is at present little representation for the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender) group as there are only seven prisoners within the establishment who have self-reported in this characteristic. There may be reluctance by some prisoners to reveal their sexuality. Monitoring occurs through the Equalities Committee.

There are no reported transgender prisoners within HMP Featherstone. There are policies in place regarding sexual orientation and the management of transgender prisoners. Staff awareness training has been conducted in this area.

Visits

5.10. The Visits Hall provides a clean, warm and welcoming environment in which prisoners can meet with family, friends and their legal representatives. There is an adequate snack bar where a variety of food and drinks can be purchased. Facilities are generally good – toilets, nappy changing etc. We believe family engagement is positively encouraged through both normal visits and the twelve family days each year including Christmas. The family visits days involved a total of 248 children and 145 adults making visits to 250 prisoners (NB all may have been involved more than once). Normally food is provided for these visits and Barnardo's provides a healthy options menu. At Christmas, Father Christmas pays a visit and

presents are distributed to prisoners' children. The Christmas event was observed by the IMB. Both prison staff and Barnardo's are to be commended for this excellent event, which was extremely popular with all of the prisoners and families who were involved.

The Board reported last year that the carpeting was stained in parts and should be replaced. We understand a bid has been submitted and we hope that the carpet can be replaced in the near future.

5.11. The Visitor Centre, which opened in 1997, is located separately in front of the main prison. It is now run by Barnardo's who took over as the provider from October 2016. It is run by a dedicated team comprising full time staff, sessional workers and volunteers. It provides a pleasant environment for visitors to wait before going across to the main prison. There are refreshments, toilets, lockers, a prayer area and indoor and outdoor play areas for the children. Wall posters and leaflets provide extensive information on all manner of subjects, including transport services.

The Board is very disappointed that only minimal cosmetic work has been done to the outside children's play area. It looks very tired and neglected and would ideally benefit from a total refurbishment. This was reported on in last year's annual report and has also featured in our Rota reports this year.

There are still issues with the under-floor heating system which should be attended to as soon as possible. The introduction and implementation of biometrics to improve security has been stalled for some time but it is hoped this will be up and running in the near future.

Veterans.

5.12. There are currently 9 veterans in custody (ex-armed forces) within HMP Featherstone.

6. SEGREGATION/CARE AND SEPARATION UNIT

6.1 The Segregation Unit occupies two floors and comprises:- 10 standard cells, a special cell, administration office, adjudications room, showers, kitchen, kit room, storeroom, prisoners' toilets, staff toilets, exercise yard and holding/waiting room. An adequate supply of books is provided by the library for reading material and is replenished when necessary. Various information leaflets are displayed on an information board for the benefit and interest of prisoners who are held in the Segregation Unit. Prisoners can be supplied with distraction packs such as colouring by numbers etc on request, if they either do not read or struggle with reading. Indeed, one talented segregation prisoner this year produced some fantastic origami figures which certainly occupied his time creatively.

6.2 Board members visit the Segregation Unit every week as part of their Rota visit to ensure that the unit is clean, there is suitable bedding and the residents have access to exercise, showers, canteen and the telephone on a daily basis. Members of the Board speak to all prisoners giving them the opportunity to communicate with us freely and openly. We enquire if they have any issues they wish to raise and then pursue any queries they have brought to our attention. It has to be said that most prisoners compliment the Segregation staff on how well they are being treated.

Members of the Board complete all segregation history paperwork and make appropriate comments in any open ACCT documents. Additionally, members of the Board sit in as

observers at prisoners' segregation review boards which normally take place at 2pm on Tuesdays and Fridays. Occasionally, we sit in on ACCT reviews. We are generally notified of prisoners taken down to the Segregation Unit and those who have been put in the special cell as well as those carrying out dirty protests. However, there are some inconsistencies and perhaps there is a need for additional training to ensure due process is followed correctly.

On some occasions, we have been frustrated that the reviews do not always take place on time and IMB members and healthcare staff are left in limbo for up to an hour or longer, waiting for a governor to arrive. Clearly, this is not acceptable and disrespectful to all concerned including the prisoner/s being reviewed. We sincerely hope that steps are taken to eradicate this happening in future.

Whenever possible, we attend adjudications which are held daily and chaired by the Duty Governor. On occasions, we also sit in on adjudications carried out by the District Judge who comes in twice a month to adjudicate on cases referred to him/her.

6.3 During the reporting year 150 prisoners, (174 last year) were taken down to the Segregation Unit. Board members attended 137 segregation reviews (183 in the previous year). The special cell was used on 14 occasions and there were 9 dirty protests. Prisoners on dirty protests are offered regular opportunities to terminate their protest and have a shower, a cell clean and replacement clothing. 6 prisoners were held in the Segregation Unit for more than 42 days. The breakdown of the number of prisoners being brought down to the Segregation Unit is as follows:-

NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT
8	8	19	10	11	8	16	12	14	14	10	20

The breakdown by number of the prison rule those prisoners are held under, were as follows:
 - Rule 53/4 (62), CC (27), Rule 45 GOOD (59) and Rule 45 Own Protection (5).

With regard to C& R (control and restraint) training – 7 Segregation Unit staff all C& R trained and in date.

There were 2,576 adjudications carried out in the reporting year (2,784 last year). The Board is still concerned that at times the appropriate paperwork is not always completed quickly or in a timely manner. The consequences of this are that some cases are thrown out or dismissed. The breakdown of adjudications, month by month follows:-

NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT
197	179	188	252	332	199	175	206	261	189	169	229

Of the total, the District Judge carried out 771 Adjudications and the Duty Governor carried out 1,805 adjudications.

As at 31/10/18, there were 607 prisoners within the prison: 52 prisoners (8.57%) on Basic status, 253 prisoners (41.68%) on Standard and 302 (49.75%) on Enhanced status. It is good to see that proportionally there are fewer prisoners on Basic than last year.

6.4 Over the course of the reporting year a number of additional segregation staff were taken on after being interviewed and trained. They have done extremely well and settled in very nicely. Working in the Segregation Unit can be very challenging at times and members of staff have to show great tolerance and patience in working with sometimes very difficult and often

violent prisoners. They work very hard to foster improved relationships with all the prisoners in their care despite great provocation at times. The importance of prisoners having meaningful conversations with a range of staff every day cannot be underestimated, including the opportunity to speak in confidence with a governor, a healthcare professional, a member of the chaplaincy team or indeed a member of the IMB. Segregation staff should be commended for the excellent work they do.

Some prisoners have quite serious mental health problems and it is very noticeable how caring and understanding segregation staff are with this very vulnerable group.

Clearly there has been a big effort to improve the look of the Segregation Unit and also to ensure that the information boards are up to date and there is sufficient and relevant information recorded on them. This is indeed very welcome and long overdue.

On occasions, segregation reviews have had to be held in the main administration office instead of the adjudication room for a variety of reasons. This is far from ideal as there are constant distractions with phones ringing and people coming and going. Prisoners should be reviewed in a private and quiet setting well away from any intrusions or distractions.

6.5 Due to the nature of the prisoners held in the Segregation Unit, there is often significant damage done to cells through vandalism and this results in cells being out of action and unusable for far too long. This has certainly been the case this year with perhaps 40-50% of cells being unusable. It is still taking far too long to get cells back in use.

In the opinion of the Board, the Segregation Unit should at best be totally refurbished or ideally rebuilt. It has, for over 40 years, taken a steady hammering from prisoners which is not sustainable and we believe this is the ideal time to make the unit fit for the twenty first century.

Certain areas of the Segregation Unit are not sufficiently covered by CCTV. The Board is concerned about this and recommends that additional CCTV be added to improve safety and security.

6.6 Some prisoners believe that getting themselves into the Segregation Unit through bad behavior provides a possible pathway for them getting a transfer out to another prison establishment. This is positively discouraged and prisoners are encouraged to return to their normal location as soon as possible. Bad behaviour cannot be seen to be rewarded. For some prisoners, the only possible course will be to transfer them to other establishments for various reasons.

6.7 The Board has concerns about prisoners' property during transfer from their cells on normal location to the Segregation Unit. Property goes missing at times. We question whether procedures are being adhered to by staff as far as making their cell on normal location secure and bagging and tagging. We believe more work needs to be done in this area to avoid complaints from prisoners and compensation claims which are already too high.

The Board has received some complaints from segregated prisoners regarding healthcare issues and in particular medication concerns. They did not appear to know how to complain and healthcare complaint forms were not readily available. This should be looked into.

6.8 There are currently 14 prisoners (as at 31/10/18) who choose to self isolate at HMP Featherstone and they are positively and actively encouraged to reintegrate into the normal prison regime as soon as possible. Their distribution around the prison is as follows:- House 1 (2), House 2 (0), House 3 (5), House 4 (2), House 5 (5), House 6 (0) and House 7 (0). They are all seen by the Deputy Governor (two per day), are offered in-cell education, are seen by the activities orderlies (peer supporters) and are actively encouraged to engage with the regime.

6.9 SMARG (Segregation, Monitoring and Review Group) meets quarterly to review and monitor the use of segregation under PSO 1700. The adjudication standards meetings follows on from the SMARG meeting and analysis of adjudications is undertaken to identify any particular trends and whether any particular group appears to be disadvantaged.

7. ACCOMODATION (including communication)

7.1. HMP Featherstone has a total capacity of 703 prisoners who can be accommodated across 7 house units. Houses 1-4 can accommodate 123 prisoners each, House 5 houses 100 prisoners, House 6 houses 35 prisoners and House 7 houses 76 prisoners. Currently, House 1 is the Induction unit, House 5 is the Resettlement unit and House 7 is the Healthy Lifestyle unit.

7.2. Single cell occupancy is the norm, with the exception of House 5 where there are two prisoners to each cell. There are also a small number of double cells on Houses 1, 4 and 7. Most cells have integral sanitation, power points and a light switch.

7.3. There are no integral facilities on House 6 which means that prisoners are left unlocked at night to enable them to access facilities on their spur.

7.4. Considerable progress has been made in improving the state of the prison throughout the year. Many of the showers have been refurbished this year. Work on the others is ongoing with completion of all showers due by the end of the financial year.

7.5. Vermin problems do exist within the prison, which has been exacerbated by prisoners throwing food out of the windows. However, particularly with replacement windows being fitted, the issue of rubbish has been much reduced across the site. All remaining windows needing replacement will be changed before the end of the financial year.

7.6. Maintenance response appears to have improved during the year with fewer issues being highlighted in our weekly Rota reports.

7.7. Meal service appears timely and taste testing by members of the IMB has confirmed edibility but on occasions this is very variable. The quality of the food is not always consistent. There are issues relating to the quantity of food supplied. Portion size is very dependent on meal choice and close supervision is required to ensure food distribution is fair.

7.8. Analysis of applications made by prisoners to the Board shows that only 2.43% are food/kitchen related, which together with analysis of complaints to the prison confirms that food is not a major cause of complaint for prisoners.

7.9. In general, kitchen staff were properly attired although several Rota reports mention prisoners at house serveries were not always wearing the correct clothing. We believe that

this is both down to a lack of proper supervision by wing staff and sometimes laundry issues. Some tightening up is necessary to enforce basic hygiene principles.

7.10. The general appearance of the prison has improved markedly with a considerable amount of painting being undertaken. The recent collaboration of prisoners working alongside Amey staff on painting projects appears to have been very successful.

7.11. Staff/prisoner relations have improved and staff appear to have a better knowledge and understanding of individual prisoners.

7.12. Prisoner access to telephones appears to be good. There are two Samaritan phones in the prison although they are not currently in working order. This needs to be resolved urgently.

7.14. There are serious issues with regard to prisoners' property during transfer between prisons. Property sometimes goes missing in transit or does not follow the prisoner in a timely manner. This was the category we received more complaints about this reporting year than any other. It continues to be a national issue and very little appears to have been done to resolve it.

7.15. There are also issues surrounding prisoners' property when prisoners are moved from one location to another around the establishment. This is often raised in applications and gives rise to considerable frustration by prisoners. More diligence is needed by wing staff to ensure that prisoners' property is bagged and tagged and securely moved to their new location in a timely manner.

7.16. Conversations with prisoners indicate that from their perspective arrangements for canteen and mail order catalogues generally work well. This is backed up by analysis of IMB applications where only 1.62% related to Category H3 -Canteen, facility list, and catalogue.

7.17. Both the Kitchen and the Segregation Unit are old and tired and would benefit from replacement or major refurbishment.

8. HEALTHCARE (including mental health and social care)

8.1. HMP Featherstone continues to operate and deliver good healthcare provisions to all prisoners through Care UK, which is the provider. A full complement of services is available which include: - GP (General Practitioner), dentist, pharmacist, podiatrist, optician, mental health, physiotherapy and clinical substance misuse.

8.2. The former deputy manager of Healthcare was promoted to manager in August and he has settled very well into the role. He and his team are proactive and provide a good level of service to prisoners.

8.3. Healthcare currently has a vacancy for a nurse. Throughout the reporting period, Healthcare has struggled to recruit and retain new staff. This obviously is a national problem experienced across the wider healthcare community. The Board finds it strange that Care UK can justify paying agency nurses a higher rate of pay, rather than offering new nurses a better salary package.

8.4. Approximately, 6,178 appointments were booked in the reporting year. There were approximately 3,184 appointments made with the GP and 2,108 with the dentist. The remainder were for other services. With regard to the GP appointments, approximately 525 (16.49%) were DNAs (did not attend). Similarly, with regard to dentist appointments, approximately 300 (14.23%) were DNAs. The introduction of a healthcare porter has made a big difference in ensuring prisoners attendance at appointments.

8.5. All waiting times for various services are at acceptable levels (GP-3 weeks, dentist-6 weeks and optician-7 weeks). In the reporting year, no prisoner exceeded the NHS two week waiting time.

8.6. All prisoners receive a full healthcare assessment on arrival to the establishment at reception and are monitored through the VIPER (Violence in Prison Estimator) tool, which allows the safer custody team to highlight whether a prisoner needs any areas of support whilst in HMP Featherstone.

8.7. The Board has concerns about the number of broken external hospital appointments due to lack of escorts. The total number of escorts planned was 189, of which approximately 33% were cancelled due to either lack of escorts along with approximately 2.6% being cancelled by the prisoner.

8.8. Sadly, there were three deaths in custody in the reporting period (Mr SM 5/6/18, Mr M S-M 15/6/18 and Mr. SD 4/7/18).

8.9. Reported levels of self-harm have fallen since last year's report, with two prolific self-harmers contributing to the majority of self-harm data. These prisoners are discussed on a weekly basis at the SIM (Safety Intervention Meeting) to identify suitable support strategies.

8.10. The introduction of the OMIC programme and working with the OMIC lead led to prisoners with the most complex needs being allocated a key worker.

8.11. Five more listeners have been trained to support the safer custody team and those who require it.

8.12. The total number of code blues and reds was recorded at 393 of which 332 (85%) were for illicit substance/under the influence of illicit substances.

8.13. Of the total population at HMP Featherstone, 17% are in for specifically violent offences, 23% are in for drug related offences, and 36% are in for robbery, burglary and theft. In total, some 76% of the population is in for either violent, anti-social or drug related offences. At the end of the reporting period there were not enough probation staff in post to handle the higher risk group of prisoners.

8.14. In February, the mental health team was relocated downstairs to free up space for more clinic rooms in Healthcare.

8.15. There has been a tightening up of medication distribution.

9. EDUCATION AND OTHER PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY

Learning and Skills

9.1. A comprehensive list of educational and training programmes is issued to all prisoners on arrival to the establishment. These programmes are both academic and vocational and are regularly tailored to suit the individual needs of the students. They are delivered at all levels to equip the prisoners with the best chances of gaining further training, education or employment on release from the establishment.

9.2. The department is mindful of the latest trends in learning and skills which enables it to incorporate these into its curriculum, which is updated every year.

9.3. The education department is staffed with well qualified and experienced teachers and trainers and at the time of compiling this report there is a vacancy for a deputy education manager.

9.4. Milton Keynes College continues to be the main education provider with Dudley College and North Warwickshire College sharing responsibilities for providing additional courses and qualifications.

9.5. Numeracy, literacy and IT continue to be the core educational subjects which are offered at level 1 and 2. There are a total of 22 vocational and non-vocational courses offered to the prisoners. On average there are 141 prisoners on the educational daily roll with an 85% attendance rate, but punctuality is sometimes poor.

9.6. During the past two years five prisoners have successfully been awarded degrees through the Open University.

9.7. Because there is a percentage of self-isolators (prisoners who refuse to vacate their cells) there are non-accredited training packs available for these prisoners to complete in their cells.

9.8. Railtrack continue their support with practical training to suitable prisoners on track laying and track maintenance, which gives prisoners the opportunity of employment on release. Railtrack have employed 32 prisoners over the past 2 years. Timpson Ltd is also providing employment skills training and it is envisaged that another major national company will shortly be adding their expertise in training prisoners. These companies have pledged employment to prisoners on their release.

9.9. Staffordshire Libraries continue to support prisoners with their reading and one to one math's skills. The Library is well stocked with modern literature and is run by professional and dedicated staff. Every house unit has weekly access to the Library. Prisoners are permitted to have six books at any one time for a two-week loan. There are many initiatives, amongst them: - Storybook Dads, Xmas stories, driving theory, studying for Open University, induction, craft workshops, visits from authors, and the six book challenge. Various displays throughout the year celebrate such events as Mothers' Day, Remembrance Sunday etc.

9.10. The modern industrial workshops continue to offer realistic working environments which assist in preparing the prisoners for life after prison. However, we have noticed on occasions that some prisoners were not sufficiently busy, work was not sufficiently purposeful and accordingly prisoners did not develop the necessary skills and attitudes to enable them to secure suitable employment upon release.

9.11. Courses offer good accreditation and work skills which are recognised by future employers. By providing these skills it is envisaged that this will lead to a decrease in the re-offending rate.

9.12. The Board continues to recognise the challenging work together with the professionalism of both the workshop and educational staff in these times of continued austerity.

9.13. The Chaplaincy successfully appointed a Roman Catholic chaplain in July of 2018. However, there have been ongoing difficulties in appointing a Church of England minister. This is very disappointing as we believe all faiths should receive support and guidance from the faith of their choice.

9.14. There are currently 74 foreign nationals at HMP Featherstone (80 last year), from 27 different nations and this equates to 12.17% of the current prison population. The term “foreign national prisoner” encompasses many different people. They may have come to the UK as children with parents, or be second generation immigrants; they may be asylum seekers or been given indefinite leave to remain as a refugee; they could be European nationals; those who have entered the UK illegally or were in the UK as students, visitors or workers who have got involved in the criminal justice system.

Gymnasium and Sports facilities

9.16. This area of the establishment is one of the most heavily utilised and is extremely popular with the prisoners. It has been proven that prisoners who take part in sports and other physical activities tend to take out their aggression in this area rather than each other or staff members. It also releases the boredom of prison life and adds to their continual health and wellbeing. During the year, the numbers attending the gymnasium have increased on previous years. On average, 100 prisoners attend gym sessions during the day. In addition, there are wing based gym rooms on most House units.

9.17. The gymnasium staff always have a pro-active approach to the activities and courses they offer during the year.

9.18. During the past year there has been a new cohort of physical training instructors (PTI's), one of whom is just completing his final qualifications and the total complement will be 6.

9.19. The following is a comprehensive list of new courses which are due to commence in the next few weeks/months.

- First aid at work for both staff and prisoners and manual handling. These are certified by NUCO.
- A 12 week course on weight watching. This includes both dietary advice and circuit training.
- Exercise on prescription – this is advised by the doctor.
- Sessions on substance misuse.
- YMCA on a gym instructor course.

9.20. To engender increased prisoner/staff relationships, the Governing Governor is keen to commence staff versus prisoners football matches: to be arranged.

9.21. On the 29th November the national prison service volleyball team is to hold a match against the prisoners at Featherstone.

9.22. The prison continues to have links with the surrounding community with the soccer and basketball teams playing in local leagues.

9.23. The members of the Board are always impressed with the enthusiasm, professionalism and diligence shown by the gym staff. Their attitude and good humour with the prisoners adds to the relaxed atmosphere in the department.

9.24. The Sports Hall floor was replaced at the end of October/early November 2018. Improvements to the ladies changing/shower rooms is still work in progress and ongoing.

10. WORK, VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

10.1. 2017-2018 has seen HMP Featherstone continue to support all prisoners, which provides them with a wide range of working activities, which can hopefully lead to qualifications and work opportunities on release from prison. The core day has been increased to ten hours (out of cell), enabling more prisoners to spend time in activities. Prisoners' attendance at activities is positive and this is managed daily to encourage and optimise attendance in workshops and education.

10.2. There is a wide range of vocational courses and these are aligned with employment opportunities that exist on the outside i.e. Timpson's, Railtrack, engineering and catering as examples. A potential new working partnership is currently being discussed with Bridgestone Tyres and it is hoped to set up the first academy in HMP Featherstone, working on commercial tyres, which will lead to employment for the prisoners on release. A range of vocational courses are also provided in key skills such as painting and decorating, carpentry, tiling and motor mechanics. Numeracy and literacy skills are highly prioritised.

10.3. The engineering and enterprises facilities at Featherstone have continued to be busy throughout the reporting year and it is expected to show that the levels of work are some 50% higher than last year. This increase in the workload has mainly come from the products manufactured for the PSPI (public sector prison industries). The reason HMP Featherstone has been successful is due to it being focused on being able to:-

- 1 - demonstrate the ability to do the work on time.
- 2 - respond to volumes and increases in demand.
- 3 - offer the appropriate quality at the right cost.

Outside contracts from private companies still continue to support the engineering and enterprises facilities. Textiles have continued to produce up to 40,000 T-shirts (for the prison service) per quarter along with sweat shirts and donkey jackets.

10.4. 2017 saw the introduction of the horticulture department. This first year has been a learning curve with mainly polytunnels being built and allotment areas, wormeries and compost areas created. However, some products have been produced and supplied to the Kitchen. Plans are in place to purchase seed for winter growing.

10.5. A new graphic design area has been created to replace the previous printing facilities. This offers prisoners the opportunity to obtain a qualification in graphic design along with producing actual products. Again, there is a lot of interest and support being given from PSPI

for the internal market of producing print work for the prison service and also for outside sources such as the MOD (Ministry of Defence).

10.6. HMP Featherstone produced a total of 2,328 certificates throughout 2017/2018, a 45% increase on the previous year, these having all being fulfilled in both morning and afternoon sessions. 398 of these certificates relate to awards for motor vehicle, performance manufacturing, graphic design, painting, decorating, tiling and construction, all of which relate to core skills needed for outside employment once prisoners are released. As in previous years, Milton Keynes College has been the OLAS supplier of Maths, English and IT from entry level up to level 2. HMP Featherstone has seen four prisoners being awarded degrees in business studies and science. It is encouraging to find that a further ten prisoners are currently in the process of working towards a degree qualification. With the success being achieved, Learning Skills is actively involved with local recruitment companies and employers to help secure work for prisoners on their release.

11. RESETTLEMENT PREPARATION

11.1. The reducing re-offending and resettlement needs of all offenders are identified upon induction and referrals to relevant agencies are made. The resettlement needs of all offenders are addressed under the following seven pathways:-

- Accommodation (Appropriate and accessible accommodation is the foundation of successful rehabilitation and management of risk and harm to others).
- Education, training and employment (Better literacy and numeracy skills are key to both improving the employment prospects of offenders and to their engagement with a range of services).
- Mental and physical health (Mental health problems can undermine the successful rehabilitation as they can exasperate significantly the difficulty many offenders find in coping with the demands that leaving prison places upon them)
- Drugs and Alcohol (The drug and alcohol delivery service will deliver a fully integrated treatment model with the focus on achieving and maintaining meaningful recovery outcomes).
- Finance, benefit and debt (Ensuring that offenders and ex-offenders have sufficient money to live and budget on, as a pre-requisite to their rehabilitation).
- Children and families (Maintaining family relationships can help to prevent ex-offenders reoffending and assist them to resettle successfully into the community).
- Attitudes, thinking and behaviour (Research has demonstrated that many offenders have not developed the ability to think through their actions properly. It is important to recognise that any improvements made in custody are quickly lost if there is insufficient aftercare for offenders in the community).

11.2. The resettlement preparation is a collaborative partnership involving the National Probation Service, the CRC and OMU as well as other contributing organisations such as the National Careers Service and Job Centre Plus. Most of the services are triggered in the last twelve weeks of the prisoner's conditional release date. National Probation Service is responsible for high risk prisoners and the CRC for medium/low risk prisoners. The PACT (Prison Advice and Care Trust) delivery team are based at HMP Featherstone to support prisoners with multiple and complex needs around the seven pathways agenda. This is to reduce re-offending, by targeting those needs and by working through a pathway programme, on a one to one basis, during the six months to end of sentence.

11.3. The OMU department has a rehabilitative function which is to equip prisoners for life after release and to ensure that they are well supported by trained staff. The Board is of the opinion that offender management is adequate but still requiring improvement. Following criticism in the 2016 HMIP report, OMU have made strenuous efforts to reduce the backlog of outstanding OASys, although there are about 20% still outstanding and requiring update. Naturally this hinders prisoners' progression. The CRC and OMU work much more closely with one another and have a joint meeting regularly. The key workers continually work with the "hard to reach" prisoners.

11.4. The Board feels that the offending behaviour programmes are helpful to prisoners although there are low participation levels. To some degree, prisoners are hindered from reducing their risk and progressing due to the lack of these programmes. The number of accredited programmes is presently limited with only REACH and RESOLVE available. The prison accommodates transfers to other establishments if individuals require specific skills which are not available at the current establishment. Most prisoners who were approved for Cat D were able to progress to open establishments.

11.5. The Board considers sentence planning generally timely and of adequate quality. Relationships have been built with other prisons but there is always room for further improvement. Sentence plans should be reviewed regularly and tailored to the individual prisoner.

11.6. Pathways to Reduce Re-offending are addressed reasonably well. Previously, the drugs and alcohol pathway was struggling, but effective measures to co-locate the mental health and substance misuse teams together has seen an improvement to referrals and individual cases.

11.7. The Board considers that the cooperation in MAPPA (Multi-agency public protection arrangements) is effective and satisfactory.

11.8. The Board considers that the advice and assistance available to prisoners prior to release is sufficient, although some prisoners might disagree with this assessment.

11.9. The cooperation between the Probation Service and the CRC has seen improvements from previous years with better communication established. The Board would welcome firm evidence that the work of CRCs has been positive in ensuring better outcomes for prisoners when released, in terms of housing and employment.

11.10. HDCs (home detention curfews) – (a system used by prisoners serving sentences of between 3 months and 4 years to be considered for early release) and Cat D reviews are going well. ROTL (Release on temporary license) is rare, due to eligibility.

11.11. Featherstone has a positive approach with regard to the encouragement of family links between prisoners and their family/friends. Family visits take place on the last Friday of each month. Additional family visits for lifers/IPP prisoners and peer mentors are also held. Milton Keynes College runs a family relationship course three to four times a year for Featherstone prisoners. The Visitor Centre provides a very warm, welcoming environment for visitors and is now operated by Barnardo's, which provides a dedicated engagement worker. Education provides a popular two-week parent craft course and the prison produced more Story Book Dad recordings than at any other establishment. Prisoners have good access to telephones, although on occasions they can be out of order.

11.12. The Board does not consider that there is sufficient progression for deportees.

11.13. The CRC runs pre-release sessions for prisoners fortnightly. Lots of information is made available, from what happens on the day of release, to looking at license conditions, firearm restrictions and disclosure of offences. The CRC runs a couple of interventions that are designed to be genuinely “Through the Gate” and these are:-

- Meet and Mentor. This involves a specially trained volunteer mentor coming into prison to meet eligible prisoners, then meeting them at the prison gate on the day of their release and supporting them in their location for the first 8-10 weeks after leaving custody. As well as this support, there is also access to an out of hours call service. This service will provide information, advice and guidance when the offices are closed.
- The self-awareness and relationship management course. This involves sessions in custody, then sessions in the community post release and so is started in the last 12 weeks of someone’s sentence. The course involves group sessions and 1:1 sessions with a trained counsellor to ensure that prisoners are emotionally ready for release and have a familiar face and input during that crucial first month at home.

11.14. House 5 was designated the Resettlement Unit this year. We feel more work is needed to establish it as a unit for this particular purpose.

Section C – The Work of the IMB

At the end of the reporting period the Board had a composition of eight members. Sadly, we lost six members during the year for a variety of reasons, including ill health. We would like to thank them all, for their selfless and dedicated work, in some cases over many years, which was very much appreciated. Following a disappointing recruitment campaign which started at the end of April, one newly appointed member joined us in October. A further recruitment campaign was started on the 29th October in the hope of attracting more members.

Our Board’s composition of members this year is not quite as diverse as it was last year. We would hope to attract some younger members and from different ethnic groups. Board members come from a variety of backgrounds and bring a wide range of skills and life experiences to the table.

The Board is a dedicated group of volunteers from within the local community, within which the establishment is located. They are appointed by the Secretary of State and are specifically charged with satisfying themselves as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody in the prison and the range and adequacy of programmes preparing them for release.

- Rota visits are carried out weekly to different areas of the prison. A written report is produced by a specific member on duty that week and that is circulated to all other members of the Board for their information and a copy is sent to the Governing Governor.
- Board members attend GOOD (Good order or discipline) reviews in the Segregation unit, usually twice a week, to ensure that prisoners are treated fairly and processes are adhered to. They complete the appropriate paperwork following the reviews.
- Board members attend adjudications of prisoners whenever possible, either before the Duty Governor or the Independent Adjudicator.
- Whenever possible, we sit in on ACCT (Assessment, care in custody teamwork) reviews.
- Applications by prisoners to the Board are dealt with in a timely and appropriate manner.
- There were twelve monthly Board meetings in the reporting year. As part of our ongoing training and personal development, we warmly welcome presentations at those meetings

from different groups from within the prison community, to further enhance our knowledge and understanding. This year, we had talks from newly trained prison officers, the service delivery manager of Amey, the governor responsible for the OMic (Offender Management in custody) model, the manager responsible for horticulture and the gardens and a representative of the gym team. We had a talk and demonstration by a dog handler. Additionally, we had a training session on the death in custody protocol. Members of the Board also attended training sessions on SASH (Suicide and self harm) and ASPECTS (Awareness for Staff, Prevent Extremism and Counter Terrorism Strategy). All board members benefitted from agreeing unilaterally to participate in e-learning through modules which are specific to our monitoring duties and responsibilities.

- Board members agreed to abide by the Information Assurance Statement.
- To assist us in our monitoring role, members attended an extensive range of prison meetings as observers, (These included – SMT (Senior Management Team), Security, Safer Custody, Visitor Centre Forum, Health and Safety, Business Development, SMARG (Segregation, Monitoring and Review Group), Prison Council, Healthcare, Rehabilitative and positive culture, Use of Force, Sustainable Development and full staff briefings). These greatly enhanced our understanding of what the problems were and how the prison proposed to address them. Members of our Board also accompanied the Service delivery manager of Amey around the prison on a number of occasions to monitor what progress was being made in refurbishment and repairs of certain areas as this was a major concern and highlighted in last year's Annual report.
- The Chair/Vice chair attended the West Midlands Area Chairs' Meetings held at HMP Dovegate, HMP Hewell and HMP Brinsford. They were invited to and attended the Strategic Management Planning Event which was held over two days, in June, at the National Sports Centre at Lilleshall, near Newport.
- The Chair/Vice Chair was invited and attended the Senior Management Team monthly meetings throughout the reporting year.
- The Chair/Vice chair gave several presentations to newly recruited prison officers on the work of the IMB as part of their induction.
- The Chair and a member of the Board conducted interviews for candidates who had applied to become members of the Board. Other members contributed by conducting tours of the prison for those potential candidates who might be interested in joining the Board.
- The Board held an election in August/September to elect new Board Officers for 2019.
- Board members attended Serious Incidents whenever the Command suite was opened.
- The current Chair attended the Board leaders' course held in Birmingham.
- Some Board members attended various events including family visits, achievement/recognition/graduation days, the introduction of the choir and the Xmas carol concert.
- Some members of the Board visited HMP Drake Hall in March.
- Full year reviews were carried out on those new members who had completed their probationary year.
- Board members attended, when possible, inquests on prisoners who had sadly died in custody.
- The Board carried out its Annual team performance review in September/October. The purpose being to review its working practices and ascertain what it could do better in its monitoring role of HMP Featherstone.
- The Chair met with the lead inspector of the HMIP team who inspected the prison in October. The Chair and Vice chair were invited to the meeting of the Deputy Chief Inspector of Prisons and the Senior Management Team to give his general overview following the inspection of the prison.
- The Board very much appreciates the good working relationship it has with the Governing Governor, his senior management team, all the prison staff and prisoners. Their cooperation

and willingness to assist us in our monitoring role makes our task of monitoring that much easier.

- The Board also wishes to thank Jenny Forsyth, our IMB clerk during the reporting period, for all her hard work behind the scenes, supporting our important monitoring role within the prison.
- Finally, I would like to thank my colleagues for all their considerable support and assistance in the preparation of this report. Their enthusiasm and dedication in monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody is to be applauded. They give up their valuable time freely and voluntarily.

John Credland
IMB Chair 2018
HMP Featherstone.
November 2018.

BOARD STATISTICS	2017/2018	2016/17
<i>Recommended complement of Board members</i>	16	16
<i>Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period.</i>	13	10
<i>Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period.</i>	8	13
<i>Total number of visits to the Establishment.</i>	375	392
<i>Total number of Segregation reviews attended.</i>	137	183

The total number of Segregation reviews we attended has fallen from 183 last year to 137 this year.

This may be partly due to the fact that fewer prisoners (150) were brought down to the Segregation unit this year compared to 174 the previous year.

Section D – Applications to the IMB

Code	Subject	Current reporting year	Previous reporting year
A	Accommodation including laundry, clothing, ablutions	2	7
B	Discipline including adjudications, IEP, sanctions	8	7
C	Equality	6	1
D	Purposeful Activity including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	8	9
E1	Letters, visits, phones, public protection restrictions	11	4
E2	Finance including pay, private monies, spends	14	6
F	Food and kitchens	6	4

G	Health including physical, mental, social care	19	26
H1	Property within this establishment	21	12
H2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	58	16
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	4	1
I	Sentence management including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-categorisation	35	6
J	Staff/prisoner concerns including bullying	16	16
K	Transfers	15	15
L	Miscellaneous	24	24
	Total number of IMB Applications	247	154

Compared to last year, we have seen a significant rise in the number of applications from prisoners that we have dealt with (up 62%). Admittedly, some of those applications have come from a select group of prisoners who make multiple applications to the IMB, but that happens every year. We do not know why it has gone up so much, but we suspect that some prisoners believe that we may possibly be able to try and resolve their queries more quickly than them going down the normal route, through the prison complaints system. If this is the case, the prison needs to re-examine the speed and efficiency of their applications/complaints system.

There has been a huge increase in the H2 category (Property during transfer or in another establishment or location). Clearly, this is of serious concern and is a common problem both locally and nationally. Prisoner's property often gets lost between establishments and this problem is a big worry and very frustrating for prisoners. It takes up far too much of the prison staffs' time, as well as that of the IMB, and can cost huge sums in compensation for lost property.

The Prison service needs to get an urgent grip on this issue particularly as it has been going on for many years. With modern technology there is absolutely no reason why a prisoner's property cannot be electronically tracked.

Category H1 (Property within this establishment) has also seen a rise. Prisoners' property occasionally gets lost or stolen and we feel more robust systems should be in place to prevent this from happening. Some prison officers may be neglectful when carrying out cell clearances but in our opinion they should be held to account if they are at fault. After all, they do have a duty of care.

Pleasingly, the number of Healthcare applications has fallen. This was the category we had most Applications about, the previous year.

We are concerned also about Category I (Sentence management including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates and re-categorization). This has gone up quite dramatically. Clearly, it is of major concern to prisoners and steps should be taken to improve systems and provide clarity and guidance to prisoners in a timely manner.

MATRIX OF AREAS VISITED BY THE IMB BETWEEN 1/11/2017 AND 31/10/2018.

<u>Area visited</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>De</u>	<u>Ja</u>	<u>Fe</u>	<u>Ma</u>	<u>Ap</u>	<u>Ma</u>	<u>Ju</u>	<u>Jul</u>	<u>Au</u>	<u>Se</u>	<u>Oc</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Segregation</u>	4	4	5	4	4	5	4	4	5	4	4	5	52
<u>Healthcare</u>	4	4	5	4	4	5	4	4	5	4	4	5	52
<u>Kitchen</u>	4	4	5	4	4	5	4	4	5	4	4	5	52
<u>House 1</u>	0	2	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	10
<u>House 2</u>	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	9
<u>House 3</u>	1	1	1	3	1	1	2	0	1	1	1	1	14
<u>House 4</u>	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	9
<u>House 5</u>	0	1	1	0	1	2	1	1	1	1	0	2	11
<u>House 6</u>	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	8
<u>House 7</u>	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	2	8
<u>Reception</u>	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	7
<u>Workshops/Textiles</u>	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3
<u>Gymnasium</u>	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	8
<u>Library</u>	0	1	2	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	9
<u>Resettlement</u>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>Visits Hall</u>	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	4
<u>Visitor Centre</u>	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	3
<u>Education</u>	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	4
<u>Chaplaincy</u>	1	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	2	2	0	1	9
<u>Probation/Psychology</u>	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
<u>Clothing Exchange Store</u>	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
<u>Offender Management Unit</u>	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
<u>Control Room</u>	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	4
<u>Industry Stores</u>	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
<u>Security</u>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
<u>Administration</u>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

<u>Health and Safety</u>	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
<u>Risk Reduction</u>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>Motor Vehicle Workshop</u>	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
<u>Print shop/Design Hub</u>	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
<u>Workshop Stores</u>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>Gardens</u>	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
<u>Dog Handler/Searches</u>	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
<u>Substance Misuse</u>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>292</u>