



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

**HMP Kirkham**

for reporting Year  
January to December 2018

Published  
May 2019



*Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody*

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

---

### **Introductory Sections**

<b>Section</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Statutory Role</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Description of Establishment</b>	<b>8</b>

### **Evidence Sections**

<b>4</b>	<b>Safety</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Equality and Fairness</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Segregation/Care and Separation Unit</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Accommodation (including communication)</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Healthcare (including mental health and social care)</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Education and Other Purposeful Activity</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Work, Vocational Training and Employment</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Resettlement Preparation</b>	<b>19</b>

	<b>The Work of the IMB</b>	<b>21</b>
	<b>Applications to the IMB</b>	<b>22</b>

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

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

## 2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

---

### Main judgements

---

2.1 This report presents the findings of the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) at HMP Kirkham for the period 01/01/2018 – 31/12/2018. IMB evidence comes from observations and discussions on visits, scrutiny of available data, attendance at various meetings within the establishment and regular contact with both staff and prisoners.

2.2 It is the belief of the Board that prisoners at HMP Kirkham are treated both fairly and humanely. Living conditions are good but there were still problems with the heating and hot water supply to some of the billets over the reporting period. Response times on turning around issues with water and heating by Amey have improved over this year. A full programme of maintenance would help discover problems before they become an issue but the lack of a full-time site manager has meant that Amey staff are firefighting rather than being proactive in their maintenance. That situation should be rectified during the next reporting period so the Board will be monitoring progress. When all the infrastructure is working as designed, living accommodation is of a good standard. Most prisoners are in single billets and doubling up only happens occasionally on arrival at HMP Kirkham or if the establishment is operating at maximum capacity which has happened over this year.

2.3 For all of this reporting period a temporary governor has been in place. He was appointed as Governor to Thorn Cross but seconded back to Kirkham until a new governor was appointed. This has now happened with a new governor taking over in February 2019. A larger proportion of the Senior Management Team [SMT] over the period has comprised of staff who are in 'Acting' positions. There have been many changes at SMT level due to staff changes, demands from other prisons and long-term sickness. These changes have left the Board at times feeling that there was a lack of leadership in some areas of the establishment and that things were just 'ticking over'. Prisoners were also aware of this particularly because there was little or no visibility of senior management in the estate.

2.4 HMIP conducted an inspection along with Ofsted and CQC. Although their report showed that HMP Kirkham was delivering outcomes that were reasonably good or better across all 4 of HMIP's healthy prison tests the report highlighted issues in some areas of staff/prisoner relationships. The Board have also been reporting to the Governor areas where they felt there were relationship issues. The Board feels some of this may be down to the changes and uncertainty at SMT level as well as resentment from some staff when a colleague has been put into an 'acting' role. [5.1]

2.5 There has been a small decrease in absconds, the summer period was once again the peak time with seven absconds during July and August, the same period in 2017 had 10. The overall total for 2018 was 18, as opposed to 21 in 2017. During the reporting year the population rose quite quickly and steeply. The lowest population was 551 in March rising to 649 in November. A number of those who arrived at Kirkham were deemed to be unsuitable for life in a category D establishment, and over the 12 month reporting period 243 prisoners were transferred back to closed establishments, which is a small decrease on the previous 12 month period. [2.11, 4.6 & 4.7]

2.6 There are still some issues with the fire alarm system. There are still areas [mainly non-residential] where occasionally either the alarm sounds but does not register on the central control panel or shows on the control panel but is not registering in the work area.

## **Main Areas for Development**

---

### **TO THE MINISTER**

2.7 As a Board we understand the pressures on the Prison Service population but despite assurances last year from the Prisons Minister that categorisation of prisoners was being correctly completed, there are still prisoners who are unsuitable for transfer to a Category D establishment being sent to Kirkham. A number of absconds have occurred due to unsuitability for an open prison as well as drug debt problems and a further 21 prisoners presented themselves to staff as abscond risks so had they purely absconded then the figures would be a lot higher. Robust multi-disciplinary risk management meetings are held almost daily on prisoners who appear to be having issues coping with life in an open prison. Most of these meetings result in a plan of action to try and keep that prisoner at Kirkham but sadly it is recognised that a number need to be transferred back to closed conditions. [6.3]

2.8 As highlighted by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) and the Board the availability and use of drugs has escalated within the establishment. It is essential that more detection of drugs and disablement systems for the associated mobile phones are made available. As an open establishment where prisoners are working out, either supervised or not, or going on Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) it is easy for drugs to be brought back into the prison. Random searches are done when prisoners return but there is neither the staff nor the equipment to search every prisoner on their return from work or ROTL. An investment in staff and detection equipment would start to make inroads into this problem, and would help send out the message that drugs are not tolerated in prisons.

### **TO THE PRISON SERVICE**

2.9 The facilities management is provided by Amey and this has proved to be problematic, especially in getting minor day-to-day maintenance work done. As a Board, members have been making checks especially on the residential billets, where there are still regular problems with showers, toilets, heating and water. The Board still feels that

a number of short term fixes are being done rather than stepping back and looking at the bigger picture. While it may be cheaper to do the short term quick fix it can potentially cost more in the long run, with a larger piece of work being required.

2.10 The Board are extremely disappointed that the planned demolition and refurbishment of the old hangars on the site has been put on hold due to financial constraints, especially as notification of the funding was received over 12 months ago. The Board's concern is for health and safety reasons because the hangars need to be closed in windy conditions as debris could blow off the hangars and cause injury. Additionally there is asbestos in some of the old hangars which needs to be correctly removed for disposal.

2.11 The apparent easy access to contraband, mainly drugs, continues to be of concern to the Board and has been highlighted by HMIP. Prisoners are using original drugs of choice like cannabis and heroin but the Board are concerned that there now appears to be a rise in the use of cocaine. Although drug testing continues at the same rate the number of either positive or suspicious results has risen over the reporting period. It is important that the Prison Service tackles more robustly the drug culture within prisons. During the reporting period 35% of the prisoners who were returned to closed conditions admitted to being involved in either the use or procurement/supply of drugs. [section 4]

## **TO THE GOVERNOR**

2.12 The HMIP report has highlighted issues with some staff in their dealings with prisoners, some of these issues have also been reported by the Board. It is essential that the staff involved receive the training and mentoring required to ensure their future dealings with prisoners are consistent and appropriate to an open establishment.

2.13 Onsite at Kirkham is the North West Search Dog team, why is this team not being used more proactively to search for drugs on the site or to assist in the searching of prisoners when they return from work or day/weekend release?

2.14 There are a large number of the CCTV cameras on site, some of which are either not functioning correctly or have been vandalised. On a site where there is easy access to main roads a number of drops are either attempted or made, the CCTV system needs to be working to full capacity to assist with detection.

2.15 The Board were extremely pleased that the establishment was able to participate in a month-long exhibition of diverse and personal artwork in Blackpool. This exhibition was sponsored by Fylde Arts and hosted art from local mental health groups and support groups within the local community as well as from the prison. The items exhibited were of a high standard and well received by those who visited the exhibition.

2.16 The majority of absconds have been by prisoners who have recently arrived at Kirkham. The reception billet is close to the main gates with direct access to the main road. Would it be possible to change the reception billet to a different billet within the main area of the establishment? [6.4]

## **Improvements**

---

2.17 The Board is pleased that the Kirkham Voice initiative has got back on track following changes in staffing within the Safer Custody area. This is an important forum for prisoners as well as staff to discuss issues in a non-confrontational atmosphere.

### 3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

---

3.1 HMP Kirkham, a Category D Open Prison holding adult male convicted prisoners, is situated in North West England, seven miles west of Preston and 12 miles east of Blackpool; it occupies the site of a former RAF technical training centre. The site was taken over by the Home Office in the early 1960s and has been in use as a prison since 1962. With few exceptions the infrastructure and services are World War II vintage, although prisoner accommodation is now looking quite tired, having been redeveloped over the period 1990-1999, some recent refurbishment has been carried out. An additional billet, refurbished in 2014, to provide adapted accommodation (suitable for but not exclusively for the disabled and elderly) has increased capacity to 657.

3.2 There are 26 billets, which provide in the main single occupancy basic living accommodation. Billet C2, brought into use in early 2015, does have some capacity for double occupancy although that is assessed based on medical needs. There is also an 80 bed Admissions Unit (double occupancy rooms), which has been adapted for all new arrivals. Once prisoners have completed the induction process, and been assigned to a workplace or education, they are moved onto the billets in the main area of the establishment, assuming that there are vacancies.

3.3 A number of old aircraft hangars have been in use as workshops. Some of these have become unsafe and need to be demolished. Unfortunately a bid for funding had been successful but has been put on hold due to other government funding pressures.

3.4 There are a number of workshops on site run by outside agencies [Recycling Lives, Calpac, Hairforce Barbers,] as well as in-house – e.g. timbers, bicycle repairs, farms & gardens. Education provision is by NOVUS, part of Manchester College. Courses run include literacy and numeracy as well as life style courses.

3.5 Healthcare is provided by Spectrum who also run the substance misuse team. Substance misuse is a very busy area and have recently suffered through staff shortages.

## Evidence sections 4 – 11

---

### 4 SAFETY

---

4.1 Overall HMP Kirkham is a safe place for both prisoners and staff. However, there have been a number of incidents of violence over the reporting period. Most of the violent incidents have been down to bullying, drugs – including bullying to traffic drugs and debt issues, threats to both prisoners and staff and a number of assaults.

4.2 Early in the year there were two separate incidents where prisoners held in the Secure Holding Review and Reassessment Building (SHRAB) threatened or attempted self-harm. There have been two incidents of prisoners attempting to use ligatures and one incident when a prisoner had applied a ligature but was found in time and cut down by an officer. Following these ligature attempts power sockets and TV aerial's in SHRAB have been removed. Any prisoner transferring to Kirkham with a self-harm history will be immediately seen by the Safer Custody team and made aware of the support available at Kirkham. On New Year's Eve one prisoner self-harmed very badly by cutting his arms, one cut was so severe it was down close to the bone. Four officers were assaulted during this incident while attempting to keep him safe from further self-harm.

4.3 The Command Suite had to be opened on one occasion when a prisoner had barricaded himself in his room. A relationship had broken down and the prisoner was demanding the return of the engagement ring. The room doors in the billets open inwards so a surrender plan had to take into account the safety of all involved if the prisoner used the door as a weapon. Intelligence found that he was using a mobile phone to harass his former partner while barricaded in his room. His surrender was negotiated through appropriate procedures with support from local prisons.

4.4 There is a team of 18 Listeners in place, trained by The Samaritans. This is a 25% reduction on the previous reporting period, there appear to be fewer prisoners volunteering for this role. They have reported an average of 30 contacts per month but no concerning issues raised.

4.5 In the reporting period a total of 20 ACCTs [Assessment Care and Custody Teamwork] have been raised, which is a small increase on the number in 2017 when 18 were opened. Kirkham also has a support document which is used for prisoners who are having problems settling into an open environment and need some support and encouragement to settle in. 36 of those were raised this year, a reduction from 2017 when 60 were raised.

4.6 There does appear to be an increase in bullying and verbal threats, which are mainly attributed to drug debt and intimidation. Risk management meetings are called to discuss the perpetrators and, if it is felt that the risk imposed cannot be managed at

Kirkham, arrangements are made to transfer the prisoner(s) involved back to closed conditions. During the reporting period 243 prisoners were transferred back to closed conditions for various reasons including bullying, mobile phones, drugs, alcohol and non-compliance with the regime. Of that total 8.5% requested a transfer back as they didn't want to remain in open conditions and 35% were down to drug issues.

4.7 The number of absconds has decreased slightly from the previous year. The Board feel this is still attributable to the high turnover of unsuitable prisoners being sent to Kirkham and this has an unsettling impact on the stability of the prison population. The main reasons for absconding were as follows :-

- Moved away from home area/transfer to a closer establishment refused/maintaining family ties
- Drugs debt
- Not getting RDR/ROTL immediately

4.8 There is a widely held perception that prisoners are 'shipped out' for the slightest misdemeanour. We believe this is not the case but is a widely held belief at Kirkham. Also there have been large numbers of younger prisoners who are perceived as more confrontational than the existing cohort. They tend to want to assert themselves, are noisy, challenging and argumentative which leads to confrontation and aggression.

4.9 The chaplaincy team are a very busy group who tend to see prisoners throughout the day, many of whom are unhappy at decisions taken regarding day or overnight releases and news received from home. They have the difficult job of delivering bad news relating to illness or death of a family member. The team also organise Family Days during school holidays for prisoners who are not yet able to access home leave, these are very successful especially in helping to maintain family ties. Other groups run by the chaplaincy team are :-

- Lifer Group - this group focuses on long term prisoners who are close to release, helping them with financial challenges, modern technology and other issues they may be facing on release.
- Isolated Prisoners – these are prisoners who are not receiving visits, the chaplaincy have a team of volunteer visitors who ensure they are seen every two months minimum.

## 5 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS

---

5.1 There are regular Diversity & Equality meetings chaired by the Head of Safety & Equalities or a nominated deputy. The quality of staff/prisoner relationship is poor in some areas of the establishment, with a number of prisoners reporting feelings of victimisation. This was also borne out by HMIP. During 2019 the Governor will be introducing a Rehabilitative Culture strategy to address staff learning and development, the Board will be closely monitoring progress and will report further in the 2019 report.

5.2 In the reporting period the number of Discrimination Reports (DIRFs) raised reduced to nine in 2018 against 16 in 2017. They were categorised as follows:

- two disability
- one sexual orientation (raised by a member of staff)
- six ethnicity

5.3 There are a small number of prisoners at Kirkham who have mobility issues and use either a wheelchair or a walker. Many doorways on the site are too small for a wheelchair or have lips which make navigation difficult. The Board have repeatedly asked for an accessibility audit to be completed but the establishment did not have the means to complete this. It is anticipated that this audit will be conducted in the next reporting period so the Board will monitor the outcomes.

5.4 There is no formal carer scheme for prisoners with disabilities and able-bodied prisoners are providing support for those with disabilities. This has led to a culture of entitlement in billet C2 [known locally as the 'Disabled Block'] with some prisoners manipulating and bullying those who are more vulnerable. Once identified, measures were taken to remove/disperse the individuals causing trouble.

5.5 Approximately 17% of the population is over 50, a small percentage of whom are 65+. Prisoners who have health or mobility issues are supported well by staff and other prisoners who regularly act in the role of unofficial carer. The over 50 prisoners have set up an 'Over 50's' group and regularly meet for coffee and a chat, they also hold quiz events.

5.6 There is still a widely held perception that prisoners cannot complain without there being reprisals. They also feel that applications are not being responded to fairly. A complaints review panel has been set up to look at a snapshot of prisoner applications and their responses, the Board has been invited to be part of that panel.

5.7 The 'Connect Grow Thrive' initiative which was introduced in 2017 has been embedded and is producing excellent results. There are three coloured lanyards which reflect where prisoners are in their journey to release. Yellow = Connect, Orange = Grow and Green = Thrive. During 2018 there were fortnightly graduation events where

prisoners received a certificate to mark their achievement. The percentages of prisoners in each group are

- Connect 43%
- Grow 19%
- Thrive 38%

5.8 The prison bid for and received four mobility scooters in April 2017. At the end of 2018 only one of those is being used and that would not have happened without the Board repeatedly bringing this to the attention of governors.

## 6 SEGREGATION/CARE AND SEPARATION UNIT

---

6.1 Kirkham does not have a segregation unit, instead there is a building designated as a Secure Holding Building (SHRAB) where prisoners are held awaiting transfer to closed establishments. Where possible, prisoners are only held there for up to 4 hours before transfer but occasionally it is necessary to hold a prisoner overnight for operational or safety reasons. The IMB is informed each time a prisoner is placed in SHRAB.

6.2 During 2017 the SHRAB received a makeover. Originally there were four traditional cells, now only two remain. The other two were converted to informal holding cells which were carpeted, held soft furnishings, bookshelves (with a supply of books) and a wall mounted television. This was meant to provide a more humane experience for prisoners traumatised by the prospect of removal. The drawback is that there are no toilets in these new cells and officers are constantly having to unlock them to let prisoners out to use the toilet. Also the soft furnishings have failed to meet the revised fire and safety regulations following Grenfell and therefore been removed and replaced with a basic stand chair. The cost of staffing the SHRAB is an issue and the prison are looking to find an alternative location for holding prisoners securely.

6.3 During 2018 there has been a 'revolving door' of prisoners at Kirkham and this is mainly due to the fact that more prisoners are being decanted there, from closed conditions on a daily basis. (In June the decision to reduce the operational capacity at Liverpool and decant prisoners played into this.) Many of them are deemed not suitable or not yet ready for open conditions. This means that prisoners are accepted into reception on a daily basis, placed on the Receptions Wing, inducted before being placed with other prisoners in the billets. This is a huge amount of work if they then do not meet the demands expected of them.

6.4 The location of the Admissions Wing which is near to the entrance to the prison and the main road appears to have contributed to the number of absconds from the prison. New prisoners arriving from closed conditions are easily tempted to take their chances and there is little there to stop them. The intention moving forward is to place established prisoners who are working out into this wing and to integrate new receptions into billets in the main body of the estate on arrival. The Board is aware that these proposals cannot happen without incurring some cost and will be monitoring any changes over the next reporting period.

## 7 ACCOMMODATION AND COMMUNICATION

---

7.1 Accommodation in the prison is mainly in 26 cell accommodation blocks which were built during the Second World War. There is one large building which is made up of recycled prefabricated oil rig buildings. There is also a newer building which is used to accommodate older and infirm prisoners and a reception wing which is also relatively new.

7.2 During the reporting year there have been ongoing refurbishments in the billets when population numbers allow. One billet will get decanted so that it can be painted and refurbished, this is especially important in the shower and toilet areas where there have been instances of mould and damage to fittings. Progress on this work has slowed down as the population has increased. There are currently two wet rooms in two different billets, with the intention of opening up a third in the near future.

7.3 The food at Kirkham is excellent. Some prisoners working in high energy jobs complain about the lunch menu, but apart from that the kitchens deliver hot, varied and nutritious food. There are always at least four choices on the menu. Since the dining room was refurbished last year more prisoners now choose to eat at tables to catch up and chat. At weekends there is a Saturday brunch and on Sunday the option of a roast chicken dinner. To serve over 600 prisoners in 20 minutes every day is a mammoth achievement.

7.4 A few times out-of-date bread was on offer in the dining room. The IMB has asked that if food is going out of date it is offered on the last use-by date with a warning. Prisoners aren't date savvy and can store things on their window sills without realising that the sun and heat deteriorate the product. Warnings are issued in the dining room and in billets to advise prisoners not to keep or reheat food after two hours.

7.5 Staff and prisoners in the library produce a monthly booklet – 'The Kirkham Chronicle'. This communication is going strong and it now contains photos of staff so that they can be recognised and prisoners can understand their duties on the wider team.

7.6 Stores, which is staffed by Amey, were experiencing problems with stock management. The management of the stock was taken back in house to keep a more stringent control on what is happening in that area. The Board is still receiving complaints on availability of stock and the attitude of the Amey staff who control access to the commodities required by prisoners for billet cleaning and for those who require special clothing depending on their area of work. This is an area which we are continuing to monitor.

## **8 HEALTHCARE (including mental health and social care)**

---

8.1 Spectrum provide healthcare for the prison and have recently been successful in winning the contract for dental services which they sub-contract to Smart Dental. Over the last year, waiting lists for dental treatment have reduced significantly from an average of 18 weeks down to four weeks. Extra dental sessions and fewer cancellations have driven this improvement. This is mainly down to the decision to purchase a dental chair and the provision of extra sessions over the last year.

8.2 The Spectrum Mobile Health Unit is now housed at HMP Kirkham. It can be used by the prison when it is not out in the community providing services (which is not often). It has been used to provide:

- Health promotion days for both staff and prisoners
- Wellbeing sessions
- Health and wellbeing 1-2-1 medical checks

There is now a calendar of events in place for the forthcoming year.

8.3 A pharmacy team is now in place which provides more flexible and consistent support. The restructured team now has a nurse prescriber in place five days a week, working with the Drug Recovery programme. There is a business case in place for a local pharmacist one day a week. The team hold regular clinics with prisoners to look at their healthcare needs in a more holistic way.

8.4 Triage arrangements have been changed to provide more support at times when it is needed. There is now an urgent triage session between 08:00 and 08:30 in the morning, nurse appointments at 11:00 and 17:00 Monday to Friday. There are also 'drop in' sessions at weekends at 9:30 – 11:00. Restructuring the services has meant that more support at all levels of expertise is available and it also helps to free up GP time to allow them to concentrate of the cases which most need their attention.

8.5 All medical staff run support clinics ranging from elderly care to sexual health.

8.6 The unit has been selected by Lancaster and Manchester universities to mentor medical students in their last year of training. That is testament to their commitment to providing excellence in healthcare. It also helps to showcase and promote interest in prison healthcare, an area of which medical students might not be aware.

## 9 EDUCATION AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

---

9.1 Many prisoners arriving at Kirkham believe that they have completed the relevant training courses and do not need to do them again. The level 2 qualifications in maths and English are mandatory requirements and must be met where possible by all prisoners. Also it is the expectation of most employers that prospective employees can demonstrate basic skills in their CV and at interview. Prisoners have the opportunity to demonstrate that they have met that level by producing GCE/GCSE certificates, degree certificates, etc. If they are unable to do this they will undergo assessment to provide evidence of their attainment. Prisoners do not have to take all the courses, but only the ones where they have a low score. Often prisoners fully understand the course content but they are not skilled in interpreting the questions. They are given tuition to help them with this.

9.2 There are some prisoners who simply cannot achieve the level 2 requirements (because of mental health issues, learning difficulties or because they are taking medication) and trainers are realistic about what is expected of them. They are encouraged and given one-to-one help to achieve their potential. It needs to be remembered that a lot of prisoners have spent their lives avoiding education and it is a difficult concept when it is compulsory in later life.

9.3 Some of the newer and most successful and innovative vocational training opportunities at Kirkham are:

Barbering - This is an intensive course run over 16 weeks. However there is no process or timeline of activities for prisoners starting the course. This very often means that although there are placements in the community for prisoners completing the course they are not ROTL ready and if they don't consolidate their training, they very quickly lose the skills.

Chef training - Prisoners trained in the staff kitchens are now working in local pubs and restaurants with the number of placements likely to increase this year.

Bikes - Prisoners are trained to repair, strip and rebuild all types of bike to a highly professional standard. Biking is a lifestyle choice for many people and these services are in high demand. Halfords have worked with the prison to offer prisoners work placements with a view to a firm job offer on release.

Front of House and Barista training - This course should have started last year but the business contact failed to deliver. The course will be starting in 2019 providing restaurant hosting, waiting training and barista skills.

9.4 The gym facilities are impressive, spotlessly clean and very well used. Some of the less athletic prisoners on site have expressed a desire to take part in some more 'fun' activity such as Zumba, Yoga and Body Pump to get them started and where everyone is on a level playing field. There are links with the local community where work is done on stroke rehabilitation for those local residents who are referred to use this service.

9.5 The library is a hub of activity, always looking for new interests to involve prisoners and to promote their development. In November, greeting card creation was

introduced as a hobby. It very quickly turned into a cottage industry and with over £300 taken selling cards in the library, farm shop and visits, that money was reinvested in buying further materials to continue with this work. Since then the range and quality of the cards has improved significantly, with demand now outstripping supply. Prisoners are now designing their own artwork for the cards which are unique, innovative and price competitive. All profits are ploughed back into the business. Hopefully more prisoners will get involved in this creative and relaxing pastime. The other constraining factor is space as this activity is now taking up a sizeable section of the library.

9.6 The prison is partnered with University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN) holding regular debates on legal topics in the prison. Both prisoners and students find these stimulating and challenging. There is a plan to hold a debate between prisoners and officers later in the year.

## 10 WORK, VOCATIONAL TRAINING and EMPLOYMENT

---

10.1 There is a wide range of work opportunities in Kirkham, from skills based courses such as painting and decorating and barbering to more unskilled work in food packing and recycling. There is something to suit everyone. In particular, the barbering course seems to have the broadest learning base which equips prisoners not only to perform the skills they have learned, but also how to set up and run a business as a self-employed person. Since it was opened just over two years ago it has been successful in supporting at least three prisoners in setting up their own businesses. It is a stretching course and a lot could be learned by exploiting and teaching the self-employment aspects of this course more widely.

10.2 There are a number of prisoners who have offers of outside work but are prevented from taking this up until they have fulfilled all their ROTL requirements. In early 2019 Kirkham has been selected as a test site for changes to ROTL which could help where prisoners have the opportunity to work in outside jobs, the Board will be monitoring what the changes mean with interest over the next reporting period.

10.3 In the prison, prisoners tend to want to work for the highest wages which are on offer from private companies on site. However, these jobs tend to be repetitive and unskilled and do little to teach anything other than a work ethos.

10.4 Again this year there were some complaints about payment of wages and a number of prisoners felt that they were being underpaid by one of the companies on site. The issue was resolved by the Board, which looked into the matter and pointed out that the alleged shortfall was a deduction to cover the standard payment which everyone receives irrespective of whether they work or not.

10.4 The Board also pointed out on a number of occasions that prisoners working in noisy areas like timbers were not wearing ear defenders which they were supplied with. Prison management resolved the issue by making prisoners aware that this is a mandatory requirement for their own protection. There were also problems in timbers with the extraction of MDF dust, resulting in small fires when the fans overheated due to being blocked so the area was shut down until new extractors were installed.

## 11 RESETTLEMENT PREPARATION

---

11.1 There are continued concerns regarding the consistency of approach towards ROTL within the Offender management Unit (OMU). The Board continues to highlight cases where similar sets of circumstances have different responses depending on the Offender Supervisor (OS) involved.

11.2 There are weekly ROTL clinics, where prisoners can go along and ask general questions regarding access to day or overnight leave, but not on the specifics of their own case.

11.4 Home Detention Curfew (HDC) is regularly used where prisoners meet the eligibility requirements. The recent changes to HDC have had little impact at Kirkham as the establishment was already granting HDC where possible.

11.5 There is a weekly Job Advice Club where job inductions take place. This is of particular interest to prisoners within their last six months prior to release.

11.6 However, because there is a failure to line up processes, prisoners are trained and ready to go out to work but are stymied because they have not done the required one month of charity work. They may already have done a month on the charity bus but that does not count. Also there is a shortage of placements available. This means that prisoners are missing out on work opportunities which can be secured before they leave prison. The end of the journey in terms of accommodation and work prospects does not look good for some men. Hopefully the new ROTL test process [for which Kirkham is a test site] will alleviate some of these pressures and make the build up to release more positive for those with no outside support.

11.7 Jobcentre Plus provides the same comprehensive and solid support to prisoners approaching release as it does to people looking for work in the community. At the end of the year the figures they have provided are as follows:

- 2% of prisoners have employment to go to on release
- 6% claim Employment Support Allowance (ESA)
- 25% claim Universal Credit (UC)
- 12% claim Jobseekers Allowance (JSA)
- 25% claim State Pension or other partner related benefit

11.8 Prisoners are trained to do job search on line and to make on line claims for benefits as these processes are now digital. Appointments are booked for them in

advance at their nearest Jobcentre and they are signposted to other agencies who can provide support.

11.9 Last year Shelter provided figures which showed that 99% of prisoners had accommodation on release. This year we have not had the same level of cooperation from Shelter and the only figure they have given us is that at least 14 prisoners went out as No Fixed Abode (NFA). One of them had to travel to one of the London boroughs to report to the council for overnight accommodation.

11.10 In the three months prior to release, Shelter work to find accommodation for prisoners who could potentially become homeless. They are finding that that Councils have little or no sympathy/help for prisoners and that families with children already on waiting lists take precedence. Also there is no check on the outcomes and they don't know whether the man travelling to London ever arrived there.

## **C Section – Work of the Board**

---

The Board completes rota visits, attends various meetings throughout the establishment, meets informally with prisoners while doing rota visits in places such as the library, the prisoners' support centre and while walking round the establishment. This year the Board visited Lancaster Farms, has hosted a visit from IMB Buckley Hall as well as a North West Chairs' meeting.

During 2018 the Board has increased by one, a recent recruitment exercise only resulted in one application despite advertising in the local press and local area.

<b>BOARD STATISTICS</b>	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	13
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	4
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	5
Total number of visits to the Establishment	127
Total number of segregation reviews attended	n/a

## D Section - Applications

---

Code	Subject	Current reporting year	Previous reporting year
A	Accommodation including laundry, clothing, ablutions	1	0
B	Discipline including adjudications, IEP, sanctions	0	2
C	Equality	0	0
D	Purposeful Activity including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	1	1
E 1	Letters, visits, phones, public protection restrictions	1	0
E 2	Finance including pay, private monies, spends	2	0
F	Food and kitchens	0	0
G	Health including physical, mental, social care	2	0
H 1	Property within this establishment	0	1
H 2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	5	7
H 3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	0	0
I	Sentence management including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-categorisation	10	6
J	Staff/prisoner concerns including bullying	3	0
K	Transfers	2	0
L	Miscellaneous	0	1
	<b>Total number of IMB applications</b>	27	18

