



Annual Report

Morton Hall Immigration Removal Centre

1 January - 31 December 2018

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A: INTRODUCTION

1. STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB

The Prisons Act 1952 and the immigration Asylum Act 1999 require every establishment and Immigration Removal Centre (IRC) to be monitored by an Independent Board (the Board) appointed by the Secretary of State from members of the community in which the establishment is located.

The Board is specifically charged to:

(i) satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody within its establishment and the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release;

(ii) inform the Secretary of State, or any official to whom he has designated authority, as it judges appropriate any concerns it has;

(iii) report annually to the Secretary of State on how well the establishment has met standards and requirements placed on it and what impact these have on those in custody.

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

Board members are appointed by the Home Office. They are unpaid and independent of both Her Majesty's Prison Service (HMPS) and the Home Office. Board members are the only independent presence in the centre on a frequent basis.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings of the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) at Morton Hall for the period between 1 January 2018 and 31 December 2018.

The evidence has been collated from observations made and recorded during monitoring visits to the centre (97 during 2018), a scrutiny of available documents and data, frequent conversations with detainees, formal and informal meetings with senior staff and applications submitted by detainees.

The operational capacity of Morton Hall is 391 detainees. For much of 2017 the centre operated nearly at full capacity. However, in keeping with other IRCs, the roll fell significantly during 2018; the average figure for the year was 293.

MAIN JUDGEMENTS

(i) Are detainees treated fairly?

At Morton hall there is an ethos of ensuring fair treatment for all detainees. In the vast majority of cases this is successfully achieved. The IMB recognises the professionalism and calmness of

staff in helping to bring this about especially when they are required to operate in challenging and, sometimes, confrontational situations. (4.1; 5.1; 5.3; 6.6).

However, the IMB has previously expressed a concern about the policy of housing detainees with criminal backgrounds at Morton Hall alongside men with no such background. The proportion of Time Served Foreign National Offenders (TSFNOs) remained high during 2018, on occasions reaching 52% of the total number of detainees. The Board continues to take a view that the presence of large numbers of TSFNOs sometimes has a marked adverse effect on the safety and welfare of more vulnerable detainees. We regret this policy remains in place and question whether the presence of such a diverse population ensures fair and safe conditions for all. (4.12).

Detainees have access to a complaints procedure which operates according to DSO3/2015 (Detention Services Order) standards. Complaints are audited annually. Whilst the Board is content that responses to complaints are completed within the prescribed 20 working days, on occasions, by this time, detainees have been removed from Morton Hall. The complaints procedure has to balance the time given for matters to be properly investigated with a timely response to detainees. (5.10).

(ii) Are detainees treated humanely?

Detainees at Morton Hall occupy a relatively relaxed environment where security is proportionate to the task. Every effort is made to treat detainees with dignity and respect. (4.1; 6.6).

The IMB recognises the efforts to improve the standards of decency across the centre and commends the programme in place to enhance the quality of the residential units. Standards have markedly improved during 2018 though there remains work to be done. (7.2)

Mental healthcare provision has continued to improve; there has been an increase in staffing. The Mental Health Team is professionally recognised as offering a high-quality service. (8.2)

The Board is concerned about the significant increase in the number of incidents of self-harm at the centre during 2018, especially at a time of a falling population. However, it is noted that during the second quarter of the year there was a number of prolific self-harmers and that during the third quarter three detainees were responsible for 53% of the incidents. (4.5).

There was a decrease in both drug finds and detainees being found under the influence of drugs in 2018 as compared to 2017 (4.7)

On occasions during the year there was a small number of detainees held at Morton Hall who were judged by the Home Office to be 'adults at risk (level 3)'. In such instances, professional evidence indicates that a period of detention is likely to cause them harm. This is a matter of particular concern for the IMB. (4.14).

(iii) Are detainees well prepared for their removal or release?

The IMB would like to see detainees having access to the Home Office decision makers for their cases and greater transparency in the decision-making process. The Board takes a view that this might both reduce frustration and the risk of this affecting behaviour at the centre. (4.5; 10.8).

The IMB commends the work and commitment of the Lincolnshire Action Trust (LAT) in providing welfare services for detainees and, rightly, giving close attention to preparation for release. The Board encourages the LAT Team to continue to work closely with the centre management in order to further enhance the quality of their provision. (10.2; 10.3).

Detainees have access to a variety of education provision, workshops and courses often leading to internal accreditation. The contractor makes a considerable effort to ensure that all detainees are made aware of the opportunities. During 2018 18% of detainees took advantage of the opportunities offered. (9.1).

The Board considers that the nature of the reception/departure suite is not fit for purpose. It is small, cramped and fails to provide the necessary privacy for incoming and departing detainees. On occasions it gets congested. (10.1).

RECOMMENDATIONS.

The Board continues to question the suitability of an IRC environment for detainees with significant mental health conditions. It remains of the view of the IMB that such detainees should be accommodated in a more appropriate place. (4.14).

The Board remains particularly concerned about the small number of detainees (1%) held for over six months. It would like to see systems in place which accelerate decisions regarding removal and release. (4.11).

The average length of stay of detainees at Morton Hall is progressively being reduced. Therefore, it is important to have in place a complaints system which has regard both for a timely responsiveness to detainee concerns with the equally important need to give adequate time for proper investigations. (5.10).

The Board notes the enhanced working relationship the centre management has established with the police and that a new local protocol is likely to be devised. The IMB considers this to be work in progress to be kept under review. The Board would welcome greater support from the police, most especially in instances of serious damage to property and personal assaults. (7.8).

MAJOR ISSUES OUTSTANDING FROM THE LAST REPORT

The Board reiterates the need for attention to be given to the reception/departure suite which is judged to be not fit for purpose.

The Board acknowledges the effort, enterprise and success of the staff in trying to combat the supply and availability of drugs at the centre. However, this remains a matter for continued vigilance and attention.

The Board continues to be of a view that the presence of large numbers of TSFNs sometimes has an adverse effect on the safety and welfare of more vulnerable detainees. TSFNs were over-represented in acts of violence, with the exception of two months of the year. This raises issues of safety and fairness for the rest of the population at the centre.

Although there is a new contractor providing the escorting services the Board is disappointed that the service provided for detainees, in general, has not materially improved.

3. DESCRIPTION OF ESTABLISHMENT.

Morton Hall is an IRC located to the south west of Lincoln. It is managed on behalf of the Home Office by Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS). It has an operational capacity of 391 detainees. During 2018 it had an average occupancy of 293 (2017: 376). The Home Office Immigration Manager and staff are located on site.

The centre occupies a large geographic area having residential units and a range of other facilities. Residential occupancy is single occupancy; it comprises two double storey units and three smaller single units. Additionally, there is a two-storey induction unit.

Healthcare is commissioned by NHS England; it is provided by Nottinghamshire Healthcare Foundation Trust. Catering services are delivered by HMPPS. Education/training is provided by Lincoln College and Facilities Management by Amey plc.

Welfare support for detainees and their families is offered by Lincolnshire Action Trust (LAT).

B. EVIDENCE

4. SAFETY¹

4.1 The safety, welfare and dignity of detainees are matters of priority at Morton Hall. This is amply evidenced in our observations from monitoring visits, weekly rota reports and subsequent discussions at monthly Board meetings. Board members frequently ask detainees during rota visits, whether or not they feel safe at Morton Hall. The majority report that they do feel safe.

4.2 Weekly Safer Detention Meetings take place with representatives from LAT, Healthcare, Home Office and officers involved with detainees on Assessment Care in Detention Teamwork Plans (ACDTs) and Vulnerable Care Plans. Additionally, there are monthly meetings of the Safer Detention Team with peer supporters able to attend in order to convey the views and concerns of detainees.

Members of the Board attend these meetings, when possible, and report that matters are discussed in an open way. Detainees and staff are given the opportunity to present their views. Importantly, action plans are put in place, where necessary, and other staff made aware of these.

4.3 The Safer Detention Team has an appreciable level of expertise and experience. Members of this team provide guidance and support on suicide prevention and self-harm/violence reduction management.

4.4 All detainees are issued with an analogue mobile phone on arrival. Calls from these are not monitored.

4.5 The Board notes the significant increase in the number of incidents of self-harm (181 in 2017; 217 in 2018). During the second quarter of 2018, there were a number of prolific self-harmers; during the third quarter of the year three detainees were responsible for one third of 34 incidents. In a number of instances, acts of self-harm were said by detainees involved to have been promoted by a feeling of frustration and uncertainty about being held in detention.

4.6 The number of detainees with ACDTs increased from 307 in 2017 to 324 in 2018. Careful attention is given to these documents by staff. Members of the Board commend their quality and the allied support which stems from them. The IMB recognises the vigilance of staff in identifying detainees who are struggling to cope within the IRC.

4.7 The IMB remains concerned by the number of detainees gaining access to drugs within the centre. During 2018, 135 detainees were found under the influence of illicit substances (compared to 210 in 2017). A significant number of these instances involved psychoactive substances, sometimes requiring emergency health interventions. In 2018 there were 42 drug finds in the centre as opposed to 82 in 2017.

4.8 The IMB commends the efforts of staff in preventing drugs entering the centre and finding them when they are present. New strategies have been developed. The trial of an itemiser to test incoming mail for drugs proved successful. A business case has been submitted for the funding of an itemiser. The Board strongly supports this. The centre also now has its own dog

¹ Data sources for this section: Morton Hall IRC Safety Team; MH IRC monthly population data reports.

handler. However, the support offered within the region regarding the supply of dogs and the training for personnel has been disappointing.

4.9 The contribution of the Substance Misuse Practitioners is applauded by the IMB; their service is well used by detainees who often commend its quality and availability.

4.10 Physical assaults/fighting between detainees continue to be a relatively common occurrence. During 2018 there were 86 such altercations (117 in 2017). The number of assaults on staff recorded in 2018 was 37 as opposed to 38 in 2017 when the centre's population was higher.

There were 233 reported instances of the use of force in 2018, this figure having changed little from the previous year. In general, the IMB is impressed by the professionalism and calmness of staff in managing challenging situations.

4.11 The average length of time detainees spent at Morton Hall during 2018 was between two and four weeks. Some 12% of the population spent between two and four months at Morton Hall. Around 1% of detainees were held at the centre for more than six months. All of these detainees were Time Served Foreign National Offenders (TSFNOs). The five longest-serving detainees spent between 381 and 843 days each at an IRC. One of these detainees spent 571 days at Morton Hall.

4.12 The proportion of TSFNOs remained high during 2018, being of the order of 50%, as opposed to some 45% in 2017. The IMB previously has expressed concern about the housing of detainees with criminal backgrounds alongside detainees with no such background. The Board continues to take a view that the presence of large numbers of TSFNOs has an adverse effect on the welfare of more vulnerable detainees. TSFNOs were over-represented in acts of violence, apart from during two months of the year. On occasions, detainees mentioned such a concern to members of the Board, particularly with regard to potential bullying.

4.13 During August 2018 one of the residential units was converted to make provision for more vulnerable adults. The average population of this provision over five months of its operation was 20. The IMB welcomes this initiative.

4.14 The IMB questions the suitability of an IRC environment for detainees with a significant mental health condition or who have other circumstances that might heighten vulnerability.

A number of detainees are held at Morton Hall even though they are categorised 'adults at risk', arising from the likes of a mental health condition/impairment, a serious physical disability or, possibly, been a victim of torture or violence. During 2018, at any one time, there was an average of 42 detainees at Morton Hall where there was professional evidence indicating such conditions (level two adults at risk). Moreover, on occasions during the year, there were men judged to be at level three where professional evidence indicated that a period of detention is likely to cause them harm. Taking twelve snapshot data points, on the first day of each month, there were two occasions when this was the case. On the first day of July 2018, two detainees were designated level three; on the first day of September there was one.

5. EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS²

5.1 The centre holds quarterly Detainee, Staff Diversity and Equality Action Team (DEAT) meetings to ensure a forum for identifying issues relevant to protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act in all areas of activity in the centre. These meetings provide an opportunity to identify inequality and trends. They initiate measures to address potential exclusion and fairness issues. The meetings also are attended by detainees' peer supporters.

5.2 Considerable effort is made to ensure equal access to various activities and services, including purposeful activities, healthcare and education, as well as the provision of other services such as food, internet access and the library. For example, during 2018 consultation took place with Polish detainees to plan menu changes and ensure more eastern European food choices at meal times.

5.3 A strong emphasis is placed on identifying any links between protected characteristics and risks, particularly self-harm. For example, it became evident younger detainees, aged 18-25 years are more likely to self-harm. During 2018 they accounted for some 33% of self-harm incidents though they comprised only 20% of the population. As a result, the Centre has stepped up its actions to consult and engage with the younger detainees. There has been a number of initiatives. Monthly consultation groups have led to investment in arcade game machines, play stations and other activities to supplement existing provision. Monthly wellbeing days now include crafts activities suggested by some of the younger detainees.

5.4 The centre houses a very diverse population. For example, in the final three months of 2018 there were 66 nationalities represented at Morton Hall. The largest numbers were from Pakistan (9% of all detainees), India (8%), China (7%) and then Iraq, Poland and Vietnam (6% each). The ethnic mix of the Centre was Asian (35%), White (25%) and a diverse range of other ethnicities, including Black, Black African and Black Caribbean (16%) and Arab (11%). Ethnicity data was not available for 6% of the source database.

5.5 The largest faith group in the centre was the Muslim faith (41% in the last quarter of 2018), followed by the Christian faith (33%). The Sikh, Hindu and Buddhist faiths collectively accounted for 14% of the population. A multi-faith centre provides facilities for all faiths. There is a full time Muslim chaplain. Chaplaincy support for Christians was limited during 2018 owing to difficulties recruiting a new chaplain.

5.6 In cases where sexual orientation was known, the vast majority of detainees were recorded as heterosexual (73%); 0.5% were recorded as bisexual or gay. A further 10% chose not to disclose their sexual orientation and there was no data for 16% of detainees.

The centre has a number of initiatives to promote and raise awareness of LGBT equality, including meetings with peer group supporters. Such initiatives play an important role in an environment where some detainees might be hostile and intolerant to those of a different sexual orientation.

5.7 Data showing detainees with disabilities indicates a relatively small number of men. For example, during the third quarter of 2018, 22 detainees were recorded as having a disability; of

² Data sources for this section: Morton Hall Diversity and Equality Team quarterly reports.

these six had a mental illness and four a learning disability. The Board takes a view that detainees with disabilities are satisfactorily looked after.

The geographically dispersed nature of the centre does not make it particularly suitable for detainees with mobility-impairment. Advanced planning arrangements are in place to ensure such men are not normally housed at Morton Hall.

5.8 Frequent events are held to celebrate and raise awareness of diversity. Each month the centre identifies a 'country of the month'. These are being supplemented with celebrations of the national days of each of the top 15 nationalities represented in the centre. Monthly wellbeing days are held; in July a World Cup Wellbeing Day was held with some 150 detainees attending and competing in a blow football world cup tournament. Community engagement events are held twice a year. On 3rd December, The International Day of People with Disabilities was celebrated.

5.9 A 'cultural kitchen' (where detainees are able to cook their own food and celebrate their own cuisine) is available. The IMB annual report for 2017 reported that its use had dwindled, in part owing to an adjusted staffing regime having limited its availability. This underuse continued for much of 2018 but towards the end of the year it was used more frequently. Moreover, the ingredients' budget was increased from £30 to £50. However, it is the view of the IMB that the facility remains underused compared to its potential. The Board is pleased that the centre management is keen to promote a stronger take-up.

5.10 Detainees have access to a complaints procedure; the operation of this system is explained during induction meetings. Complaint forms and boxes are available on all residential units. The complaints process operates according to DSO3/2015 standards. Complaints are audited annually.

During 2018 134 complaints were submitted. Fourteen of these were substantiated and 22 partly substantiated. All responses to complaints are copied to the Chair.

Detainees are advised that they will receive a response to complaints within 20 working days. The IMB is content that there is adherence to this timetable. However, in some instances, detainees are at the centre for a shorter time. In such instances every effort is made to forward the response. We consider it is important to have in place a complaints system which is able to balance the need to give adequate time to properly investigate matters with the need to give a timely response to detainees, especially given that we are seeing that many detainees are spending shorter periods in detention at the centre.

5.11 The IMB considers that the centre's programme of community events and invitations to external organisations to engage in activities with detainees is extremely valuable. The centre has an ongoing collaboration with JUST Lincolnshire, a local charitable organisation with specialist expertise in championing equality and tackling discrimination, and with Stop Hate UK.

5.12 The IMB at Morton Hall has an explicitly stated commitment to diversity and equality. At the end of 2018 there were nine members; five women and four men. One member comes from a black, Asian or minority ethnic (BAME) background. Efforts are being made to try and ensure the recruitment for new board members reaches all parts of the local community.

6. REMOVAL FROM ASSOCIATION AND TEMPORARY CONFINEMENT³

6.1 During 2018 Rule 40 was employed on 196 occasions (257 in 2017), of which 30% were moves of detainees to the Care and Separation Unit (CSU) prior to removal. Rule 42 was used on three occasions; this is a significant fall over 2017 when the figure was 18. Detainees are made aware of the reason/s for their transfer to the CSU. The Board is content that Rules 40 and 42 were appropriately employed.

6.2 There were 29 occasions when detainees were held for more than six hours in CSU. On 15 occasions detainees were held in the CSU for more than three but less than six days.

6.3 Where detainees are transferred to the CSU prior to their departure, the IMB is content that judgements to do so by staff are exercised with discretion. Such transfers were viewed to be in the best interests of the detainees and the centre community.

6.4 The CSU facilities are basic but adequate; they comprise single rooms. Whenever possible detainees have access to an exercise area and shower; they have freedom to walk around the unit. There is a 'reflective room' where detainees have access to TV/games and a play station. Detainees are able to make telephone calls to family, friends and legal advisers.

6.5 Board members are promptly advised of admissions to the CSU. Should this occur after 22.00 hours, members are notified shortly after 8am the following day.

6.6 Members of the IMB invariably visit detainees held under rules 40/42 during rota visits. They speak with detainees, inspect documentation and attend review meetings whenever possible. Should a detainee seek a meeting with an IMB member outside routine visits, every effort is made to grant that wish.

6.7 Board members routinely report the professional manner of staff working in the CSU, often under stressful and challenging conditions. There have been a several occasions during 2018 when attention has been drawn to the particularly accomplished management of detainees in the CSU.

7. RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

7.1 All accommodation units offer an association room, kitchenette with basic appliance and laundry. The larger residential units have en-suite facilities; the smaller ones are communal. Each unit/landing employs a detainee as a cleaner who has supervised access to cleaning materials. On occasions, professional cleaning services are engaged.

The separate induction unit has been used intermittently during 2018 owing to the lower population. This has not been to the detriment of detainees.

Two residential units have constant watch rooms.

7.2 The reduction in the number of detainees on roll during 2018 has presented a welcome opportunity for the centre to improve the standards of decency by way of a programme to

³ Data source for this section: Morton Hall IRC Safety Team.

enhance the quality of the residential units. Detainees were particularly keen that attention be given to communal toilet and shower facilities; these are receiving attention.

The communal areas in the two small residential units have been refurbished. New kitchens and equipment have been installed. Detainees' rooms have been repainted and furniture replaced where appropriate. Lockable medical cabinets have been provided in cupboards. Work continues in the larger residential units.

7.3 Graffiti has been addressed with considerable success.

7.4 Notice boards and racks containing various applications and other details are found in the reception areas of the residential units. The IMB notes that these are better managed than formerly, thereby giving detainees improved access to the information they seek.

On occasions, language is a barrier with written communications although this is addressed wherever possible. Oral translation services are available and effectively employed.

7.5 The catering department is well managed and operated. Despite the disparate ethnic groups, menus are varied and an appreciable effort is made to accommodate different tastes and diets. Portions served are generous; there is a relaxed attitude towards food being taken away from the dining room for consumption on the residential units. There is a separate 'cultural kitchen' which enables different ethnic groups to prepare their own food.

7.6 The IMB expressed concerns in the last report about the failure to promptly address the breakdown of kitchen equipment. There has been an improvement regarding this during 2018.

7.7 Vandalism remains a concern both within the residential units and more widely across the centre. Despite the vigilance of staff, CCTV footage and intelligence regarding those detainees responsible for the damage, subsequent sanctions are limited.

7.8 On occasions both staff and detainees have expressed a concern to members of the IMB about a disappointing response by the police towards incidents of serious damage/assaults at Morton Hall. Of 60 referrals during 2018, only seven resulted in convictions. While there is an agreed memorandum of understanding between the police and prisons/IRCs, it is assumed that establishments are able to invoke their own sanctions. However, IRCs have fewer sanctions than prisons. The IMB would welcome greater support from the police in instances of serious damage to property and assaults.

It is noted that an enhanced working relationship recently has been established with the police which is likely to lead to the revision and simplification of the referral form, along with the development of a local protocol. The IMB considers this to be work in progress by the centre management.

8. HEALTHCARE⁴

8.1 Healthcare provision at Morton Hall continues to build on the former HMIP/Care Quality Commission (CQC) Inspection reports with respect to strong clinical leadership, an effective team approach, an integrated service, sound governance and a good partnership with the centre's management team. A more robust communication system with the Home Office was put in place which has proved to be beneficial for detainees with a mental health diagnosis.

8.2 Mental health provision has continued to improve. There has been an increase in the staff component from three to six, consisting of two clinical matrons, three senior mental health nurses and one mental health nurse. A particular focus for the Mental Health Team during 2018 was to increase awareness of the challenges of healthcare provision in an IRC and how different this is to provision in a secure centre with a more stable population.

8.3 For the second year running the Mental Health Team has been recognised in the Quality Network for Prison Mental Health Services (QNPMHS) Peer Review (2018) as offering a high-quality service, coming second with a score of 91% of standards fully met.

8.4 During 2018 there were no transfers to secure hospitals.

8.5 While healthcare is an agenda item on the monthly Residents' Representative Group's meetings, detainees feel they have limited involvement in the governance and development of the service. This is possibly a matter for future consideration.

8.6 Three formal complaints were submitted. They were investigated but not upheld. There were 11 'expressions of concern'. All were resolved to the satisfaction of the complainants.

8.7 During 2018 the IMB received 11 applications (20% of the total) from detainees raising a healthcare issue. Primarily, these challenged the appropriateness of medication prescribed or not prescribed and contentions that medical issues had not been taken seriously. These matters were fully investigated by the healthcare team and explanations given to the detainees.

8.8 'Wellbeing Days' are held monthly. They continue to be supported by all pathways; primary care; mental health and substance misuse.

8.9 The healthcare team continues to be proactive with respect to the management of complex cases. Complex case meetings are held every week and attended by everyone on shift, including primary care, mental health, substance misuse and pharmacy. Consideration is given to identifying individuals at risk or vulnerable and to the appropriate level of risk/vulnerability classification. In addition, at weekly Operational Safer Detention Meetings, attended by Heads of Operations, including Healthcare and Welfare representatives, all detainees on ACDTs are reviewed.

⁴ Data sources for this section: Morton Hall IRC Healthcare Team; applications submitted to the IMB.

9. EDUCATION AND PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY⁵

9.1 Education provision is contracted to Lincoln College. A full and varied timetable is available embracing both short and more substantial units of work. Additionally, arts and music activities are offered. The timetable is frequently reviewed to meet the transient needs of the population and reflect the skills needs. Places invariably are found for detainees requesting provision. A waiting list for short courses is operated. All detainees are offered an induction session to familiarise them with what is on offer.

9.2 Education provision is available every weekday apart from bank holidays. It is delivered in 2.5-hour sessions giving 25 hours each week.

9.3 Typically, around 18% of detainees take advantage of the opportunities; provision has to compete for time with paid activities, physical education and other activities.

9.4 Seventy-three percent of enrolled detainees achieved a level of certification; the retention rate was 86%.

9.4 Detainees seeking help with English skills are able to access the popular ESOL lessons both within the education suite and during outreach sessions in the centre. Other popular courses included those designed to provide skills for the opportunity to set up businesses following release such as barbering, window cleaning and barista training. Detainees also particularly valued business studies and ICT/web design courses.

9.5 Classes rarely are cancelled. The feedback of detainees shows that they rate the quality and range of courses as good.

9.6 There is a wide range of activities in the gym and sports hall; facilities are well used. Typically, the gym is used by some 55% of the population. During 2018, gym inductions were given to 1549 users.

9.7 The library is open Monday to Saturday mornings and afternoons with one evening session. There were no closures during 2018. Books are stocked in 46 different languages. There is a high use of DVDs. Detainees are complimentary about the quality of service provided by the library staff.

9.8 There is a good range of paid activities including cleaning, kitchen work, library work, painting and decorating gardening, recycling and barbering. The IMB considers that posts are fairly allocated. The participation of detainees in paid activities makes a substantial contribution to the operation of the centre. Such activities are paid at a rate of £1 an hour; we understand this rate has not changed for many years.

10. PREPARATION FOR REMOVAL/RELEASE

10.1 The IMB reiterates the view that the reception/departure suite is not fit for purpose. It is small, cramped and fails to provide necessary dignity for both incoming and departing

⁵ Data sources for this section: Lincoln College; Morton Hall IRC Library Team.

detainees. On occasions it gets congested and when staff are operating under pressure, the arrangement could lead to errors being made.

Board members are aware of the centre's wish to improve these conditions which continue to be hindered by budgetary constraints.

10.2 For the first four months of 2018 the escorting services were provided by TASCOR. This service was unsatisfactory sometimes to the detriment of detainees. In May 2018 Mitie Group PLC (Mitie) commenced a new escort agency contract. The Board is disappointed that the service provided for detainees, in general, has not materially improved. However, it is noted that Morton Hall staff report a willingness of Mitie to communicate/work with them to improve the quality of service.

10.3 Welfare services at Morton Hall are delivered by the Lincolnshire Action Trust (LAT). The LAT team comprises three full-time and four part-time staff. Operations cover inductions, removal directions, family support, welfare appointments, drop in sessions and work in the visits' hall. The use of the 'Little Action Ted' booklet for visiting children is applauded by the IMB.

10.3 LAT is relatively new to offering their services in an IRC environment having commenced their contract in April 2018. Understandably, the team has taken a while to fully understand the particular requirements of detainees at Morton Hall. Consequently, there have been some initial difficulties but LAT has worked closely with the centre management to resolve issues and develop and maintain a more robust system. There now is a consensus that the provision has improved; there is less disruption to the service than formerly.

10.4 LAT holds an induction meeting with all detainees when release work starts. Subsequently, post-release support is offered; detainees are given a presentation of slides with relevant information. Additionally, detainees are given details of the 'Tracks?' website, which enables them to access up to date information about their returning country, along with a LAT leaflet. All detainees are encouraged to devise a 'What If?' plan in conjunction with staff.

During their period of operation in 2018 LAT staff worked with 69% of detainees served with removal notices and 75% of detainees served with release notices. During LAT's operational times, there were no instances where detainees were released to 'no fixed address'.

10.5 Every detainee served with a movement order or given bail is given the opportunity to meet with a member of the LAT team in order to prepare them for release or return. Where appropriate, LAT liaise directly with their families if in the UK, or outside agencies such as Hibiscus, if due for deportation. A family tracing service is offered by the Red Cross who attend the centre on a weekly basis, if required.

10.6 LAT has work in progress to establish more external agency involvement, especially to add to post release support and having particular regard for minority groups. A stronger relationship is being developed with the Visitors' Group.

10.7 LAT welcomes the imminent establishment of the on-site Home Office Engagement Team, as does the IMB. They take a view that this will bring about considerable welfare benefits to detainees. Preparation and planning are underway to launch this team; new staff have been appointed.

10.8 Detainees are frequently required to attend Home Office interviews at Morton Hall. The face to face contact with Home Office staff is welcomed but detainees frequently express their frustration as they have no direct access to the decision-makers for their cases. It remains of concern to the IMB that Home Office procedures can be laboured and heighten frustration and risk in the centre. The Board would like to see greater transparency in the decision-making process and better access to the decision makers.

10.9 It has been a practice for detainees to wait at an external gate for Home Office interviews; on occasions, their wait has been for some 20 minutes, sometimes in inclement weather conditions. Following concerns raised by the IMB, the Home Office has initiated a practice whereby detainees are offered the choice of waiting indoors in the nearby library building.

10.10 Where a detainee about to be released has been prescribed medication at Morton Hall, the Healthcare Team invariably is contacted to ensure that suitable arrangements are in place for them to access the medication, if necessary, following release.

10.11 Detainees have access to education provision, courses and workshops. These often will provide internal accreditation to help to prepare detainees for possible, subsequent employment.

10.12 All detainees have access to legal advisers and are enabled to arrange appointments with the support of staff in the library, if required. Legal advisers attend Morton Hall during weekdays.

C. THE WORK OF THE IMB

In December 2018 the Board at Morton Hall comprised nine members, two of whom were relatively new.

It is with great sadness that the Board reports the death of the Chair in February 2018. Members lost a highly committed and industrious colleague who was well respected by detainees, staff and board members. A new Chair and Vice Chair assumed office in March 2018. The new Board Development Officer (BDO) has made a significant impact on proceedings; his energetic and valued work has added appreciably to the training and development of board members.

The Board has sustained its programme of rota visits, typically two each week. Board members also have taken advantage of training events. The generous contribution of time and expertise of members is much appreciated by the Chair. IMB business has been admirably supported by our clerk.

In view of anticipated imminent retirements, we are about to commence a recruitment campaign and aim to make every effort to achieve a more diverse Board.

During the year board members have worked hard to ensure that detainees are aware of the precise nature of our role and the ways in which we might assist them. We realise we have more work to do regarding this.

D. BOARD STATISTICS AND APPLICATIONS TO THE IMB

IMB MORTON HALL - BOARD STATISTICS - 2018

Board statistics	2017	2018
Recommended complement of board members	12	12
Number of board members at start of the reporting period	9	8
Number of board members at end of the reporting period	8	9
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	0	3
Number of members leaving within the reporting period - end of tenure / other reasons	1	0 / 2
Total number of board meetings during reporting period	12	12
Average number of attendees at board meetings	7.6	6.9
Number of attendances at meetings other than at board meetings	11	21
Total number of visits to the IRC (including meetings)	270	221
Total number of applications received	70	54
Date of Annual Team Performance Review	23 May 2017	22 May 2018

IRC MORTON HALL - APPLICATIONS TO THE IMB - 2018

CODE	SUBJECT	2017	2018
A	Accommodation including laundry, clothing, showers etc	Nil	2
B	Use of force, removal from association, temporary confinement	2	1
C	Equality	4	1
D	Purposeful activity including education, paid work, training, library and other activities	3	6
E1	Letters, faxes, visits and telephones	2	2
E2	Finance including detainees' centre accounts	2	0
F	Food and kitchen	1	1
G	Health including physical, mental and social care	19	11
H1	Property within this establishment	3	2
H2	Property during transfer or in another establishment	3	2
I	Issues relating to detainees' Immigration case; including access to legal advice	22	20
J	Staff/detainee conduct including bullying, of which: - alleged misconduct by staff - alleged misconduct by detainees	5	5 4 1
K	Escorts	4	1
	Total number of IMB Applications	70	54