



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

**HMP & YOI Wormwood Scrubs**

for reporting year  
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*Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody*

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### 1 STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB

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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 is situated.

The Board is specifically charged with:

- (1) satisfying 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) informing promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom he has delegated authority as it judges appropriate, any concern it has.
- (3) **reporting 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

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- 2.1 Wormwood Scrubs has undergone significant improvement in some areas this year, although there is still much more progress to be made. The physical environment, cleanliness and basic decency have all benefitted from investment, but safety and violence reduction are still particularly problematic areas.
- 2.2 Over the summer, there was a programme of maintenance and refurbishment work, which has made the prison a much cleaner and more pleasant environment. Resettlement and rehabilitation have benefitted from a greater number of staff, who are therefore able to engage more meaningfully with prisoners.
- 2.3 Although this report covers the year to the end of May, it is right to note that further progress has been made since then. However, there is still more effort needed before the prison can function well in all areas, and there remains the risk that progress might slip back if the necessary resources are not maintained.
- 2.4 Against this generally positive background, it is troubling that the overall levels of violence have not decreased despite concerted efforts by the management team to change this. Young Adults and gang members in particular are disproportionately involved in violence.
- 2.5 Early on in the reporting year, Wormwood Scrubs was named as a “prison of concern” by the Ministry of Justice, and then as one of the 10 prisons that Rory Stewart pledged to improve. This attracted significant funding as well as other resources, which have had a considerable impact on progress.
- 2.6 Around the same time as Rory Stewart’s speech, the prison’s management began to anticipate a follow-up inspection by HMIP (Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Prisons). An action plan was put into place with the aim of getting an improved result should another inspection take place. In March, the prison received notice from HMIP that an inspection would take place the following September.
- 2.7 In May, Rory Stewart took up another post within the government before the conclusion of the 10 Prisons Project. However, his successor, Robert Buckland, was able to provide an assurance that funding would continue until August. The 10 Prisons Project continued into the current reporting year under the next Minister, Lucy Frazer.
- 2.8 As a result of these initiatives, the prison received over £500k of additional funding, which was targeted at physical security and decency of living conditions.
- 2.9 Improvements to physical security included a body scanner, replacement perimeter netting, a machine for scanning incoming mail, CCTV in two more residential wings, and funding for more dog handlers. There was also significant refurbishment work for cells, including 70 privacy screens and 500 new toilets and sinks. Improvements were also made to some shower areas and new flooring was laid where necessary.
- 2.10 As well as improvements to the physical environment, the 10 Prisons Project brought a team of 11 additional experienced prison officers, the SCT (Standards Coaching Team). The remit of the SCT was to work alongside existing officers, demonstrating good practice and encouraging Wormwood Scrubs staff to drive up basic standards. The SCT arrived in February and stayed at Wormwood Scrubs throughout the summer.
- 2.11 The long-awaited introduction of OMiC (Offender Management in Custody) began in June with the initial training of staff as key workers. The intention of OMiC is for each prisoner to have regular meaningful contact with a particular prison officer (their key worker), with each prison officer being responsible for 6 prisoners.

- 2.12 The scheme took effect in January, with 20 key workers being responsible for 4 prisoners each. The following month, there were 44 key workers, with responsibility for 6 prisoners each. However, progress towards full implementation of the scheme has been slow.
- 2.13 The Board's early experience is that interactions between key workers and prisoners are not always meaningful and it intends to monitor the effectiveness of the scheme closely during the next year.
- 2.14 The Governing Governor, Steve Bradford, moved to another role within HMPPS (Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service) during the year and Sara Pennington took over as Governing Governor at the start of October.
- 2.15 In its last report, the Board noted that the prison had finally reached (and exceeded) its staffing benchmark, with a total of 207 officers, allowing a more consistent and productive daily regime to be run. This has generally continued to be the case, although there has been some recent cross-deployment and the Board is still concerned that the regime is vulnerable to occasional problems with recruitment and retention of prison officers. Without sufficient numbers of trained and experienced officers to maintain them, there is a significant risk that the improvements made to Wormwood Scrubs will be lost.

## **Main judgements**

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### **Are prisoners treated justly?**

- 2.16 The Board repeats its previous concern that prisoners do not experience fair treatment in their access to food. Prisoners who are responsible for serving food are able to show favouritism to friends and to bully others, and mealtimes are sometimes difficult to control (5.1, 7.14).
- 2.17 The prison has begun to monitor equality and diversity more actively and effectively and has introduced an updated equality strategy (5.14–5.15, 6.10).
- 2.18 Both Use of Force and segregation are disproportionately used against certain religious and ethnic groups. It is encouraging that the prison takes this seriously, but there is more work to do in order to understand why this happens (5.11–5.13, 6.10).
- 2.19 The management of applications and complaints has improved, although there can still be poor organisation in some areas (5.6–5.7, 8.8).
- 2.20 There are still difficulties with the process for admitting social and professional visitors, and visits booking also continues to attract complaints (7.10).
- 2.21 The Board is pleased to find that the Elizabeth Fry Unit (formerly the Mentoring and Support Unit) continues to operate as intended, and is providing a supportive environment for prisoners who might otherwise have received a poor regime in the First Night Centre or the Segregation Unit (5.2, 6.7).
- 2.22 Although the problem is no longer widespread, there have still been some occasions when prisoners have not been accommodated in the most suitable location, either through difficulties with maintenance or population management (5.3–5.4).
- 2.23 The increased use of CCTV has allowed more adjudications to be completed in a timely manner. Adjudication hearings are generally carried out fairly and with humanity (4.11, 6.11–6.12).

### **Are prisoners treated humanely?**

- 2.24 The prison has taken steps to improve the quality of the ACCT (Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork) process, by facilitating the presence of multiple agencies at ACCT reviews. This has only recently come into effect, and the Board will continue to monitor whether this change is helpful to prisoners at risk of self-harm (4.14).
- 2.25 Shortages of clean clothing and other basic items have persisted throughout the year, particularly while the laundry was not functioning. The prison has recently taken steps to address this problem (7.12).
- 2.26 The quality of the food is variable, but portion sizes are often too small (7.13).
- 2.27 It has been a persistent complaint of the Board's reports that the physical environment in the prison is extremely poor or even unfit for use in many residential areas. While there are still further improvements to make, Wormwood Scrubs has become significantly cleaner and better maintained over the course of this year (6.4–6.5, 7.1–7.9).
- 2.28 The Healthcare Unit has become a more welcoming environment following some maintenance work and staff are generally aware of the individual needs of prisoners held there. There are still too many occasions on which prisoners are not taken to healthcare appointments outside the prison (8.2–8.5).

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

- 2.29 The OMU (Offender Management Unit) has been able to reduce the backlog of OASys (Offender Assessment System) reports but could still do more to help prisoners progress through their sentences (11.1, 11.6).
- 2.30 The CRC (Community Rehabilitation Company), has been able to recruit more staff, allowing it to tackle its backlog. From a position of being unable to carry out its work, it started to see the majority of prisoners before their release. However, it still does not have the resources to engage fully with everyone it should (11.3–11.5).
- 2.31 There is a good range of opportunities for meaningful activity and training for employment after release, but these are not always well attended (10.1–10.5, 11.7).

## **Main Areas for Development**

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### **TO THE MINISTER**

- 2.32 The Board remains concerned by the levels of assaults and other violent incidents at Wormwood Scrubs. The additional funding for physical security has been welcome, but more effort is needed before the prison is a place where everyone feels safe.
- 2.33 Although there have been improvements within the CRC, and some pre-release work is good, it is still not providing a service that meets the needs of prisoners. In particular, the aim of reducing reoffending is undermined by the difficulties in finding housing and employment for prisoners before they return to the community.

### **TO THE PRISON AND PROBATION SERVICE**

- 2.34 When will an updated policy for IEP (Incentives and Earned Privileges) be put in place to better reward positive engagement with the regime and provide meaningful sanctions for challenging behaviour (5.5)?
- 2.35 Although the OMU has been able to increase its staffing, it could still provide a much more effective service. What plans are in place to improve recruitment to OMU posts and to enable the OMU to carry a full range of work to progress prisoners through the system?
- 2.36 This Board and other IMBs across the country frequently report that there is no adequate system for managing prisoners' property. Property is often lost within the system, which leads to frustration and violence (5.8–5.9). What steps are being taken to improve this situation?

## **TO THE GOVERNOR**

- 2.37 What plans are there to ensure that OMiC becomes fully operational at Wormwood Scrubs, and how will the key worker scheme be monitored to verify that it improves outcomes for prisoners?
- 2.38 The Board acknowledges that more Use of Force incidents are now supported by the required paperwork, but repeats its concern that the level of reporting is still not acceptable (4.10).
- 2.39 There is still insufficient control of prisoners at mealtimes, leading to favouritism, bullying and violence (5.1, 7.14).
- 2.40 There are still difficulties in allowing visits to start on time because staff are not available to process visitors until the start of each session (7.10).

### **Improvements**

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- 2.41 Although there is still more work to be done, there have been very significant improvements in the physical condition of the prison's buildings and the standards of decency in the accommodation (7.1–7.9).
- 2.42 Funding for improved physical security and greater coverage of CCTV have helped to combat drugs and violence, although not to the extent that might have been hoped for (4.11).
- 2.43 The prison has renewed its efforts to monitor equality issues and to recognise that certain groups of prisoners have different experiences and outcomes from the rest of the population (5.14–5.15).
- 2.44 After a period when MDT (Mandatory Drug Testing) did not run because of staff shortages, this has resumed as the prison is working harder to control the supply of drugs (4.15).

### 3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

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- 3.1 HMP Wormwood Scrubs was built between 1875 and 1891. It is a Category B local male prison and young offender institution. It accepts both sentenced and remand prisoners over the age of 21 and Young Adults (those aged 18–21) on remand, both groups coming from its catchment area. It is a designated resettlement prison and has an operational capacity of 1,279, although this figure has been subject to occasional temporary reductions.
- 3.2 About 60% of the prisoner population is convicted and serving a custodial sentence. The religious breakdown of prisoners is: Roman Catholic, 19%; Church of England, 11%; Muslim, 31%; Other Christian, 13%; Other, 13%; No religion, 13%.
- 3.3 The establishment has five main wings, housing between 144 and 317 prisoners. Two of the wings offer single-cell accommodation. The First Night Centre holds up to 34 prisoners, usually for one night.
- 3.4 There is also a 55-place detoxification unit (the Conibeere Unit) and a residential Healthcare Centre with 17 beds.
- 3.5 There are on average 92 prisoners aged 50–59 and 34 prisoners aged over 60. This is similar to the previous year.
- 3.6 Education and training for prisoners is delivered by Novus, healthcare is delivered by Care UK, and maintenance is delivered by GFSL (Gov Facilities Services Ltd).
- 3.7 The Community Rehabilitation Company is London CRC (operated by MTC).

## B Evidence sections 4–11

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### 4 SAFETY

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- 4.1 At the start of the reporting year, the Board was pleased to find that a security dog team was established in the prison and dogs were present and working most of the time. Later in the year, in April, a regional search team also moved to Wormwood Scrubs and was able to conduct some productive search operations when not needed elsewhere.
- 4.2 At the end of June, specially trained officers arrived to conduct a complete search of the prison, lasting a week. The Board was able to observe them while they worked. The search team found both drugs and mobile phones, as well as other prohibited items.
- 4.3 As anticipated, the disruption caused by the search operation led to some instability and tensions, and additional support from the dog team was provided for the following 2 weeks.
- 4.4 The additional funding provided by the 10 Prisons Project, as well as other initiatives within the prison, were intended to reduce the level of violence.
- 4.5 In the first 3 months of the reporting year, there were 29.5 assaults per 1000 prisoners (compared to 42.9 across all 10 prisons). By the last 3 months of the reporting year, this had increased to 48.5 (compared to 36.1 across all 10 prisons). The overall rate for England and Wales remained relatively steady at around 33.
- 4.6 It is not possible to comment on whether the level of under-reporting changed during this period, or whether a greater proportion of reported incidents were minor incidents. However, it is apparent that Wormwood Scrubs did not become a less violent place. On average, there is still more than one violent incident or assault every day.
- 4.7 The Board was concerned by a sustained increase in violence linked to Friday prayers, beginning with an incident in which Muslim prisoners had been able to take weapons to a fight which had been arranged to take place at Eid celebrations. This was a particularly challenging day for staff as there had been several other violent incidents that day.
- 4.8 Young Adults, particularly those who are involved in gang activity, are a disproportionate drain on resources. Gang members often feel unsafe and unable to participate in purposeful activity out of fear of encountering rivals. The efforts required to manage them means that less attention can be given to other prisoners.
- 4.9 Use of Force began to increase from January, reaching 83 incidents in May. The principal reasons behind incidents are prisoners fighting or refusing to return to their cells. Most Use of Force occurs on residential wings, although much less on B and E Wings. There is some evidence, however, that the increase in recorded Use of Force corresponds with a greater proportion of those incidents involving force falling short of full restraint.
- 4.10 Last year, the Board reported that Use of Force paperwork was not always completed following an incident. While Use of Force reporting has increased, there are still far too many incidents that are not supported by a staff report. In February and March, 66% of reports were submitted and by May this had increased to 80%.

- 4.11 Funding from the 10 Prisons Project has enabled CCTV to be installed in many areas where it was not already available, and this has proved useful in pursuing adjudications against prisoners who engage in violence. BWVC (Body-Worn Video Cameras) have been similarly effective, but there is scope for more officers to wear a camera. However, the prison's own statistics show that more than a third of violent incidents now take place inside cells, out of view of the cameras.
- 4.12 During the year, the prison introduced CSIP (Challenge, Support, Intervention Plan), a violence reduction strategy which focuses intensively on the most disruptive individuals within the prison.
- 4.13 At any one time, around 40 prisoners are subject to ACCT procedures, although the Board is pleased to note that self-harm has become less frequent in recent months.
- 4.14 At the end of the reporting year, the prison introduced a new practice whereby ACCT reviews would be held on a set day in each wing. Although this practice has only just started to take effect, the early signs are that it has encouraged participation in ACCT reviews by a wider range of staff. It is hoped that this will make the ACCT process more effective for those prisoners who are at risk of self-harm.
- 4.15 This year, the prison has had sufficient staff to run MDT, although the number of tests each month has fluctuated. The rate of positive drug tests has generally been in the region of 20%, although it rose to over 31% in August and November, and fell to 14% in February. It is hard to say for certain whether or not efforts to prevent drug-taking have led to a clear trend over the course of the year.
- 4.16 The Board regrets that there were 6 deaths in custody during the year, of which 3 are believed to be self-inflicted and 3 are believed to be from natural causes.

## 5 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS

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- 5.1 The Board repeats its concerns that there is insufficient supervision of evening meals and this allows the distribution of food to be a hotspot for favouritism and bullying.
- 5.2 In previous reports, the Board has found problems with new prisoners being denied access to the First Night Centre because of lack of space. The establishment of the Elizabeth Fry Unit has done much to resolve these problems, but the prison's management should remain vigilant that this progress does not slip backwards.
- 5.3 In August, the Board found 6 prisoners in the First Night Centre who could potentially have been accommodated elsewhere. One of those was a wheelchair user who would otherwise have been located in D Wing, except that there was no ramp there to enable him to access the shower.
- 5.4 A few weeks later, the First Night Centre received 27 prisoners but was only able to relocate 9 of them the following day. This was because B Wing had no space to take new prisoners for induction, because they in turn could not find space for those who had just completed induction.
- 5.5 The IEP system is not effective in managing challenging behaviour or in acting as an incentive to engage with activities. Prisoners sometimes tell the Board that they choose to act in a violent manner when their requests and complaints cannot be met through legitimate channels. The anticipated new IEP policy has not yet come into force, and the current range of privileges and sanctions is not achieving the desired effect.
- 5.6 The backlog of complaints has remained under control and complaints are generally answered within an adequate time. However, there remains a difficulty with complaints relating to incidents that occurred in other prisons; Wormwood Scrubs will contact the other prison in this case, but the complaint is sometimes considered resolved even if there is no response.
- 5.7 The system for managing routine applications and requests from prisoners is generally functioning. Where prisoner representatives are used to handle written applications, steps have been taken to protect the privacy of those making the application. The Board has noticed that the applications system is more disorganised on C Wing than in other units and complaint forms can be hard to find on C Wing.
- 5.8 Applications to the Board about access to stored property have remained relatively few since the prison introduced a system to address this problem. However, property held at other prisons or lost during transfers continues to be a source of great frustration for prisoners.
- 5.9 There is insufficient management of property complaints, which are often unable to be resolved adequately. Prisoners do not know how their complaint is progressing, or whether they will ever find their property or receive compensation, and frustration can be the trigger for violent incidents.
- 5.10 The Chaplaincy remains an example of good practice, not only meeting prisoners' religious needs but also providing much needed pastoral care. As in previous years, the prison was able to meet the religious and practical needs of a large number of prisoners who fasted during Ramadan.
- 5.11 In May, a typical month, 14% of restrained prisoners were those aged 18-21 and 24% were those aged 21-25, which is considerably at odds with the proportion of prisoners in those age ranges.

- 5.12 Black and mixed race prisoners constitute 41% of the population and are involved in 64% of Use of Force incidents, while white prisoners constitute 40% of the population and are involved in 16% of Use of Force incidents. 31% of prisoners are Muslim, but they are involved in 39% of Use of Force incidents.
- 5.13 The disproportionate involvement of these groups in Use of Force is closely matched by the equivalent statistics for segregation.
- 5.14 The Board is pleased to note that the prison has increased its monitoring of equality trends in segregation and Use of Force and is actively seeking to improve its practices, although it is difficult to judge what effect this has had on the outcomes for prisoners. More work is required to understand what lies behind these trends and to develop strategies to address them.
- 5.15 The prison has also refreshed its equality strategy and has introduced a system of “champions” for each of the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act.

## 6 SEGREGATION UNIT

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- 6.1 The Segregation Unit comprises 18 single cells located on the upper floor, and two special cells (bare rooms with CCTV cameras in the corners) on the ground floor. There is a small exercise yard.
- 6.2 The staff are specially trained to deal with the particularly challenging prisoners who are sometimes held there. Following a death in the Segregation Unit, some procedures have been reviewed in order to reduce the possibility that this could occur again.
- 6.3 The general standard of cleanliness is good, despite the presence of prisoners who carry out dirty protests or flood their cells. However, this does mean that there are often some cells that are unavailable for occupation.
- 6.4 In July, deliberate flooding in the Segregation Unit resulted in a loss of the water supply. It is not possible to isolate the water supply to individual cells, and 7 cells in the Conibeere Unit were also disconnected. Staff had to provide bottled water during the heatwave.
- 6.5 In February, there were further problems with the water supply and hot showers were unavailable for a period. This meant that a prisoner on a dirty protest had to be moved to the H3 healthcare unit.
- 6.6 SRBs (Segregation Review Boards) are held weekly and newly segregated prisoners are reviewed within 72 hours. The Board has to report once again that attempts by the prison to schedule SRBs at a fixed time each week have not been entirely successful throughout the year, with the result that too many SRBs take place in the absence of a Board member. However, the Board finds that the prison takes long-term segregation of prisoners seriously and works to help prisoners move into more suitable locations.
- 6.7 The establishment of a Mentoring and Support Unit (now renamed the Elizabeth Fry Unit, after the prison reformer) has greatly reduced the number of prisoners held in the Segregation Unit in their own interest. The Segregation Unit's population is now made up principally of men who exhibit challenging or problematic behaviour.
- 6.8 No meetings of the SMARG (Segregation Monitoring and Review Group), which are generally attended by the Board, took place during 2018 and information about segregation was not adequately collected. With the appointment of a new Custodial Manager in 2019, this situation has improved and the SMARG has subsequently been reinstated. The group discusses segregation statistics and considers improvements to the regime.
- 6.9 In the months January to May, 224 prisoners were segregated, of which 5 prisoners were segregated for more than 42 days. The longest period of segregation was 117 days.
- 6.10 Segregated prisoners are disproportionately black men (71% at the end of the reporting year) and the main religion of those in segregation is Islam. The 22-29 age group accounts for 40% of segregated prisoners. At the end of the reporting year, there were 13 staff assigned to the Segregation Unit, of which 5 identified as BAME (Black, Asian and minority ethnic).
- 6.11 Adjudications are held daily and attempts have been made to address a backlog. The main reason for adjudications is prisoners alleged to have possession of a prohibited article. CCTV and body-worn cameras have contributed to the resolution of adjudications and an average of 50% of charges are proven each month.
- 6.12 The Board repeats its previous finding that adjudications are generally carried out in a fair and compassionate manner.

## **7 ACCOMMODATION (including communication)**

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- 7.1 For several years, the Board has expressed very serious concerns about the maintenance of the prison's physical environment and has criticised GFSL and its predecessor, Carillion.
- 7.2 Although there are still problems, the prison's management team has taken this issue very seriously and, with the support of additional funding from the Government, has been able to make significant improvements.
- 7.3 At the start of the reporting year, the external areas of the prison were frequently covered in layers of rubbish, which persisted despite efforts to clear them. In August, the Board observed crows eating rotting food outside C Wing.
- 7.4 However, from January onwards, Board members were able to report regularly that the grounds were clear of litter and that the gardens were being attended to. There was still some occasional litter at weekends, but the main courtyard has been consistently clean for several months.
- 7.5 During the reporting year, food serveries were refurbished in several wings and more CCTV was installed. Once the 10 Prisons Project was announced, efforts to improve the accommodation were increased, and the prison's capacity was reduced to 1195 so that one landing at a time could be emptied and refurbished. There were further temporary reductions in capacity later in the year, which additionally eased the pressure on the ability to deliver a full regime.
- 7.6 Throughout the summer, there were frequently contractors working on improvements to the wings and 100 windows were replaced. Prisoners with relevant skills were also permitted (subject to a risk assessment) to carry out maintenance work under supervision, which had not been possible under the contract with Carillion.
- 7.7 The lift in the visits area was finally brought back into use in August, after more than a year.
- 7.8 In December, the management team carried out a complete audit of living conditions, to be repeated monthly. All damaged flooring and windows were reported for repair, initially increasing the backlog of maintenance jobs. In February, a new process was introduced whereby the Governor in charge each day would conduct a check of one particular area for any drop in the standards of decency. An internal audit of living conditions at this time scored amber/red.
- 7.9 Although there have still been some serious problems over the year – failures in the water supply, roof leaks, and some intolerably hot cells with the new window design – the Board's overall assessment is that the investment in the physical environment has brought significant improvements.
- 7.10 Although the Board received some positive comments from legal representatives about visits, problems have persisted with admitting visitors on time. During a random check of an afternoon visiting session starting at 1400, the Board found that legal visitors were processed from 1350 and social visitors from 1357; by 1435, only 10 visitors had gained entry to the prison. The centralised booking system continues to attract complaints.
- 7.11 Shortages of clean clothing and bed linen have persisted at various times throughout the year. A visit to C Wing in August found 50 pairs of boxer shorts and 50 sheets available, for a population of 370.
- 7.12 The laundry was closed for nearly 3 months over the summer, and prisoners began to hoard clothing or take items from other cells; there is some evidence that this behaviour persisted after the laundry began to operate again. The prison ordered new clothing at the end of May.

- 7.13 The Board has observed and sampled prisoners' meals throughout the year. The quality is variable, and some prisoners have made positive comments. The Board has described some meals as appealing on occasions. However, complaints about the portion sizes are more common than complaints about quality.
- 7.14 There is often poor supervision of meal distribution by relatively inexperienced officers. From August onwards, the Board decided to increase its focus on monitoring evening mealtimes because it was concerned about favouritism and bullying. Staff shortages have also contributed to a lack of supervision within the kitchen at times.
- 7.15 At the start of the reporting year, the kitchen had been able to recruit a baker and the prison has been able to produce its own fresh bread.

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

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- 8.1 The physical environment of the Healthcare Centre has continued to improve, and the Board has noticed a positive atmosphere with activities in place to occupy prisoners who are, largely, mentally ill. Prisoners in the inpatient unit (H3) have access to the gym. The communal television sets were brought back into use and are now enclosed to prevent vandalism.
- 8.2 Staff working in the Healthcare Centre are generally aware of the individual needs of prisoners in their care. There is now a board showing which nurses are allocated to each prisoner.
- 8.3 Waiting times for routine dental care have reduced considerably compared to the previous year, and waiting times for routine GP appointments have remained low. 80% of prisoners are screened for blood-borne viruses, and CareUK is active in following up those prisoners who refuse screening or are missed out.
- 8.4 There has been a steady increase in the number of GP appointments available, and the rates of non-attendance have improved compared to the previous year.
- 8.5 The Board repeats its observation that there can be administrative problems in getting prisoners to appointments outside the prison. In October, 25 external appointments were postponed, 11 of these because staff were not available to escort a prisoner. Although the number of cancelled escorts fluctuates, it has not significantly decreased, with 28 cancellations in May.
- 8.6 There have been several occasions in previous years when investigations into deaths have criticised confusion over emergency codes. Although the management team has already taken steps to address this, the Board is pleased to note that the correct emergency codes are now printed on notices near to every cell door in H3.
- 8.7 At the start of the reporting year, the Board found some instances of prisoners with alcohol dependency arriving in the prison and not being located in the Conibeere Unit (which would be the appropriate location). However, these appear to have been isolated incidents and this has not re-occurred during the rest of the year.
- 8.8 Healthcare complaints are handled by a separate system from other prison complaints and the complaints procedures do not appear to be well understood. In September, the Board could not find any healthcare complaint forms in H3 and staff gave incorrect information about how to make a complaint. The Board repeated this exercise in April, with the same results. CareUK has told the Board that it is taking steps to make the complaints process more widely understood by prisoners.
- 8.9 As in previous years, the Board notes that the X-ray machine is still not operational; CareUK has stated that this is the responsibility of the NHS. In addition, there was a prolonged power outage which prevented any use of the dental X-ray machine for over a month.

## 9 EDUCATION AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

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- 9.1 Although the prison has made efforts to encourage attendance, education sessions are not full and could accommodate more prisoners. A visit by the Board in August found 88 out of 133 expected prisoners had attended classes. A later visit in October found 55 out of 122 expected prisoners had attended classes, although statistics showed that this was the worst day that month.
- 9.2 Attendance at literacy, numeracy, ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) and barbering courses has continued to be relatively good.
- 9.3 A new education contract with Novus began in April, and Novus managers are working on recruiting additional staff in order to offer more qualifications.
- 9.4 There was no access to the library between Christmas and the end of January because a problem with the computer system had resulted in the complete loss of the catalogue.
- 9.5 In addition to the library, there are book rooms on the main residential wings, which are intended to make up for limited access to the library. As in previous years, the Board has found these book rooms to be of variable quality. In A and C Wings, the book rooms were closed, messy and filled with rubbish on occasions, whereas D Wing's book room was in good condition and available to prisoners.

## **10 WORK, VOCATIONAL TRAINING and EMPLOYMENT**

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- 10.1 Attendance at workshops has been mixed. On a routine visit in July, the painting and decorating workshop had just 1 prisoner as the majority had failed the necessary risk assessment. The biohazard cleaning workshop had 14 prisoners out of a possible 30 places and subsequent visits later in the year found similar levels of attendance.
- 10.2 The mixed picture continued throughout the year, with a later visit in October finding 17 enthusiastic prisoners working on textiles but the painting and decorating workshop entirely empty as the tutor had left.
- 10.3 In September, 9 prisoners attended a 3-week course on railway maintenance, which provided useful training for possible employment after release.
- 10.4 Other work and training opportunities that have run during the year include cleaning, wood recycling and a Bible study group. The prisoners who attend these appear to derive considerable benefit from them, but there are too many who are not involved in any activities.
- 10.5 In February, Redemption Roasters opened a coffee shop inside the prison and this has so far proved to be another positive activity for the prisoners that are able to work there.
- 10.6 The laundry machines were broken for a significant part of the summer (nearly 3 months). As well as the problems this caused for the distribution of clean clothes, it mean that a lot of meaningful work opportunities were lost.

## **11 RESETTLEMENT PREPARATION**

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- 11.1 At the start of the year, the prison had recruited 3 Offender Supervisors and had 3 more awaiting security clearance, in an effort to reduce the backlog of OASys reports. By August, there were 9 staff carrying out OMU work and Offender Supervisors were able to engage with prisoners on the wings.
- 11.2 Although the CRC was meeting its target to complete BCST2 (Basic Custody Screening Tool) and had completed 90% of BCST3 interviews, it had only 5 staff and 7 vacancies. This meant that it was not always delivering an adequate resettlement service. A decision was taken to end the CRC's contract early.
- 11.3 By August, the CRC had recruited more staff, although there was still a long-standing vacancy for a co-ordinator. The CRC was able to offer a presence on the wings, but could not see all prisoners within 5 days, and some prisoners fell through the gaps.
- 11.4 The Board was pleased to find that the situation had improved in October; the CRC was fully staffed and had largely cleared the backlog in its work. This improvement continued into December, and the CRC was managing to see all prisoners before release. In addition, the Getting It Right course, which offers help with resettlement, was available to 98% of eligible prisoners.
- 11.5 Unfortunately, the CRC's statistics showed that completion of BCST3 had fallen to 71% in November, and it did not significantly improve in the following months.
- 11.6 An internal audit of resettlement work in February resulted in an amber/red score, which represents an improvement compared to the situation at the start of the reporting year. However, the OASys backlog remained a concern and the OMU was still understaffed.
- 11.7 A job club opened in the resettlement workshop in April, and was well received, although it is too early to assess to what extent it has helped prisoners with employment after release.
- 11.8 In August, the Board spoke to a prisoner who had lost his accommodation while on remand. It was disappointing to find that this had happened despite his having approached both the CRC and Citizens Advice for help.
- 11.9 In previous years, the Board has reported on errors in sentence calculation, with prisoners released too early or unlawfully detained. While the Board continues to receive sentencing queries from prisoners, it is pleased to note that no such errors have come to its attention this year.

## C Work of the Board

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<b>BOARD STATISTICS</b>	
Recommended complement of Board members	24
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	19
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	18
Total number of visits to the establishment	457

## D Applications

Code	Subject	Current reporting year	Previous reporting year
A	Accommodation including laundry, clothing, ablutions	14	16
B	Discipline including adjudications, IEP, sanctions	6	1
C	Equality	13	6
D	Purposeful activity including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	9	12
E 1	Letters, visits, phones, public protection restrictions	23	18
E 2	Finance including pay, private monies, spends	13	3
F	Food and kitchens	11	21
G	Health including physical, mental, social care	66	49
H 1	Property within this establishment	44	30
H 2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	17	39
H 3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	14	13
I	Sentence management including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-categorisation	39	55
J	Staff/prisoner concerns including bullying	48	41
K	Transfers	22	22
L	Other	40	48
	<b>Total number of IMB applications</b>	379	374