Annual report
of the
Independent Monitoring Board
at

HMP/YOI Eastwood Park

for reporting year
1 November 2018 to 31 October 2019

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Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody
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1. Statutory role of the Independent Monitoring Board

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 Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) 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 they have 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.

The IMB at Eastwood Park is committed to treating all those with whom it interacts, with respect and fairness regardless of such factors as race, colour, ethnicity, religion, belief, national origin, gender, age, marital status, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or disability.
2. Executive summary

This report presents the findings of the IMB at HMP/YOI Eastwood Park for the period 1 November 2018 to 31 October 2019. IMB evidence comes from observations made on 419 visits to the establishment by Board members. In addition, members have scrutinised records, reviewed data and drawn conclusions from much interaction with prisoners and staff.

2.1 Main judgements

In the Board’s view, Eastwood Park is a well-run prison where managers and staff treat prisoners with professionalism and care. However, despite this the Board was concerned by high levels of self-harm and violence.

Are prisoners treated fairly?

Prisoners at Eastwood Park were treated fairly with few exceptions. The cases that caused the IMB most concern were those transgender women who were segregated for long periods because they were considered a risk to others. (Sections 5 and 6.)

Are prisoners treated humanely?

Managers and staff at Eastwood Park treated prisoners humanely with few exceptions. The cases that caused the IMB most concern were the women with severe mental health problems that should have been dealt with in the health rather than the justice system. (Sections 8.)

Are prisoners prepared well for their release?

Resettlement services at Eastwood Park were inadequate although showing signs of improvement. The IMB was most concerned about the numbers of women being released without suitable accommodation. Homelessness undermined progress made on addressing any other offending-related issues. (Section 10.)

2.2 Main areas for development

To the Minister

When will the funding be made available for the replacement for the offender management unit (OMU) building and can it be guaranteed that the planned additional workshops and classrooms will remain a central part of the plan? (Sections 7 and 9.)

Will the Minister discuss with the Secretary of State for Health how to reduce the number of prisoners with serious mental health needs entering and being kept in the prison system? (Sections 8.)

Will the Minister put plans in place to reduce the levels of homelessness of women released from prison? (Section 10.)

To the Prison Service

What steps will be taken to address the woeful arrangements for building maintenance at Eastwood Park? (Section 7.)

What can be done to reduce levels of self-harm at Eastwood Park and in other prisons in the female estate? (Section 4.)
When will the conversion of part of a residential unit into an offender behaviour unit be undertaken? (Section 6.)

What steps can be taken to reduce the need to segregate for long periods transgender prisoners considered a risk to others? (Section 5 and 6.)

Will the chief executive officer of HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) ensure that the contracting arrangements for health providers result in a more sustainable outcome? (Section 8.)

When will the new offender management model for women be implemented? (Section 10.)

How will HMPPS ensure that there are sustained improvements in the resettlement services at Eastwood Park? (Section 10.)

To the Governor
Can the Governor improve communication with the IMB regarding segregation decisions and the timing of review boards? (Section 6.)

Will the Governor increase the sharpness of focus on outcomes in the safety, drugs and security meeting? (Section 8.)

2.3 Improvements

We were pleased to see a cohort of new officers starting work at Eastwood Park, most of whom were women, thus addressing the imbalance in the male/female officer ratio that had grown over the years.

Last year, we reported on an issue about the inefficient prosecution of prisoners who had committed violent offences within prison. We were pleased to note that this had improved and welcomed the support in achieving this from the Police and Crime Commissioner’s office.

There was improved cooperation between prison, health, probation and community rehabilitation company (CRC) staff on resettlement.
3. Description of the prison

HMP/YOI Eastwood Park is a female closed local prison situated mid-way between Gloucester and Bristol by the village of Falfield, South Gloucestershire.

The operational capacity of Eastwood Park is 442 prisoners. Based on a snapshot, 80% of the prisoners were sentenced, the same as last year. Twenty-six percent were sentenced to less than 12 months, up from 21% last year; 28% to between 12 months and less than four years, down from 30%; 12% to four years or more, down from 16% last year; 4% on indeterminate sentences, reduced from 14% last year; and 10% had been recalled, which was the same as last year.

Eastwood Park has 10 residential wings. They include a mother and baby unit (MBU), two wings specialising in dealing with those with substance misuse issues, a personality disorder unit, an induction wing for new prisoners, a wing for those on an enhanced regime and a wing for prisoners with complex needs requiring significant mental health and other input.

Eastwood Park also takes remand and sentenced prisoners from local courts, covering a wide catchment area extending over South Wales, the south, the southwest, and the Midlands. Eastwood Park is the local prison for 74 courts. Around a third of its prisoners came from Wales.

Healthcare is provided by Inspire Better Health and education by Weston College.

An inspection led by HM Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) took place in May 2019 and reported in August 2019. The overall conclusion was that Eastwood Park remained a safe, respectful and purposeful prison. There had, however, been a decline in the standard of resettlement work, which was judged to be ‘not sufficiently good’.
4. Safety

In a survey of prisoners carried out by HMIP as part of its May 2019 unannounced inspection, 70% of prisoners said they felt safe on their first night in prison, 50% said that they felt unsafe at some time during their time at Eastwood Park and 16% said they currently felt unsafe.

In 2018 – 2019, there were no self-inflicted deaths in custody.

4.1 Levels of self-harm and violence

Levels of self-harm at Eastwood Park had risen significantly since last year. In the January to October 2019 period, there were 1364 incidents of self-harm, compared to 852 in the same period in 2018. Of these 63.5% were committed by prolific self-harmers.

In January to October 2019, there were 165 violent incidents; 45% were committed or attempted against staff and 55% against prisoners. Over half of the assaults on staff were committed by eight individuals, who were responsible for between two and seven incidents each. The overall level of violence had been reduced from red to amber by the end of the reporting period.

4.2 Management of safer custody

Safer custody was managed by the head of safer prisons in collaboration with other functional heads. It was clear that a more multidisciplinary approach had been taken. A monthly meeting focused on safety, security and drugs. This was helpful because of the interconnectedness of these issues. With more drugs coming into the prison through increasingly imaginative routes, the levels of bullying, violence and self-harm tended to rise.

Incidents of self-harm and violence were reported on and discussed at the daily operational meeting. A monthly multidisciplinary meeting reported on levels of violence and self-harm with very good data analysis support. In addition, there was a weekly safety intervention meeting to discuss the most difficult risks.

4.3 Assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) procedures

The IMB has reported in previous years on the high levels of open ACCT documents at Eastwood Park, averaging between 50 and 60, and as high as 77 at one point. In practice, some wings carried higher levels of ACCTs than others. The higher the number, the more difficult it was for staff to make the ACCT process meaningful and to engage with prisoners to keep them safe from harm. During a night monitoring visit, IMB members were told by one member of staff that it took an hour to complete all the observations, by which time it was necessary to start again.

During the year, a three-day review was undertaken and many ACCTs were closed. The average of around 30 was maintained for a period, but it began to creep up. A further review reduced the numbers and, at the time of reporting, this was being maintained. The safety team had reduced the number of days from the opening of the document to the first review and so closure was more prompt. Health staff’s attendance at first reviews was hitting around 90%, a continued improvement.
The IMB looked at 385 ACCT documents over the year and spoke to many of the prisoners concerned. Nearly all the prisoners were positive about their experience, especially of the support offered by their case manager. Observations were rigorously recorded and there had been some improvement in the quality of recorded conversations with prisoners. The monitoring of ACCTs did highlight some issues including:
- the absence of photographs on the file
- some failure to record the dates of reviews
- some cases where mental health staff should have attended reviews but did not
- concerns about the quality of care maps – not covering what appeared to be clear risk factors
- some recording with illegible handwriting
- some prisoners reporting that night observations disturbed their sleep

4.4 Safer custody strategies

A violence reduction strategy had been in place at Eastwood Park since February 2018.

There was a small team of trained Listeners (prisoners trained to give peer support) working in the prison, whose role was to provide one-to-one support to those struggling with their time in prison. There were times when, due to turnover, there were insufficient Listeners for the demand. This will always be a problem at Eastwood Park because of the high churn of prisoners.

All staff had been trained in the new ACCT procedures. A trauma-informed training course had also been delivered to all staff.

The exit survey had been reviewed and redrafted by prison and probation staff and was being administered routinely.

There was a small team of safer custody orderlies working in the prison. They were a prominent presence and could be seen routinely on the residential wings. They saw all new prisoners both in reception and once they had been allocated to a wing.

A Time to Talk scheme had been operating at Eastwood Park since August 2018, visiting every residential unit for an hour weekly. This was a popular option for prisoners.

Prison orderlies prepared cells for new residents. This had been trialled on the induction wing and was extended across the prison. This improved the first night experience especially for those in prison for the first time.

The challenge, support and intervention plan (CSIP) process was implemented in September 2018 and continued to be routinely reviewed. A small number of women – three in October 2019 – were being managed through CSIPs. This was a much lower number than the previous October. All violent incidents triggered an assessment for a CSIP, although a range of risk management options was considered.

During the year, the IMB received a small number of applications from women who felt they were not well enough supported, after they had identified they were being bullied.
4.5 Concerns

There was a significant increase in the levels of self-harm, albeit that this was partly generated by the presence of a small number of prolific self-harmers.

The levels of violence, although lower, were still unacceptably high.
5. Equality and fairness

Equality and diversity were made the specific responsibility of a custodial manager and a significant proportion of an officer's time was ring-fenced for equality. However, this officer was frequently called on to fill gaps in staffing elsewhere. Despite this, there had been a stronger focus on equality. In addition, equality lead officers were being identified for each of the protected characteristics.

The diversity and equality action team (DEAT) was chaired by the governor and membership included a range of senior managers and other staff, representatives from health, education and chaplaincy departments and the IMB, plus prisoner representatives.

The following information is drawn partly from the equality officer's report and the chaplaincy report from August to October 2019.

5.1 Foreign national prisoners

There was a significant reduction in the number of foreign national prisoners at Eastwood Park – 18 compared to 30 last year, based on a snapshot. Of these, the largest group was Irish national prisoners. The Irish embassy was informed, as they had visited in the past.

In support of these prisoners, Eastwood Park had started to run clinics on the wing where most of them were accommodated and those on the enhanced wing had regular access to the equality officer who was based on the wing. A Home Office immigration officer visited Eastwood Park routinely.

5.2 Race

The population at Eastwood Park was 86% white, mirroring the racial profile of the catchment area. There had been little change in this profile. During Black History Month, the prison put on a range of relevant activities, for example, a 'cook off' involving prisoners showcasing different ethnic cuisines. The IMB did have feedback from one black prisoner, who had felt excluded from the activities. Others, however, spoke very highly of the prison’s efforts.

5.3 Age

In October 2019, there were 15 prisoners aged 18 to 21; 21% of prisoners aged 22 to 29; 41% of prisoners aged 30 to 39; 22% of prisoners aged 40 to 49; 8% of prisoners 50 to 59; and 14 prisoners aged 60 and over.

A well-regarded group called The Rubies ran frequent groups for women over 50 and the Bluebells group was run for prisoners in their 40s. The Board continued to be impressed by the dedication of staff running this service.

5.4 Religion

The largest group defined themselves as Christian (43%) and just under 5% as Muslim.

Notwithstanding the arrival of a new managing chaplain at the start of 2019, the chaplaincy had been understaffed, with the managing chaplain being the only full-time member of the department for the duration of 2019. This was as a result of a combination of factors, including difficulties in recruiting to fill the vacant roles and awaiting clearances. Despite significant efforts from the managing chaplain, there were a number of days each week when the chaplaincy was 'single-crewed', which resulted in risks to the provision of
statutory religious groups, statutory duties and wider pastoral care in the event of leave, for which no cover could be arranged.

The chaplaincy continued to offer a large amount of pastoral support to residents of all faiths and none, especially in relation to bereavement and loss. It recognised the need for more in-depth and caseload-type provision in support of the attitudes, thinking and behaviour reducing reoffending pathway.

One chaplain continued to have particular responsibility for young prisoners.

Chaplains endeavoured to attend multidisciplinary reviews wherever possible and welcomed the new approach to the grouping of ACCT reviews by residential area.

5.5 Disabled prisoners

The total number of prisoners with a disability numbered 218 – down from 225 in the last year. The largest group of these prisoners (173) were those with mental health problems, which was slightly lower than last year.

Eastwood Park staff continued to try and make sure those with a disability were catered for, but the campus remained unsuitable for individuals with mobility problems.

Prisoners in wheelchairs could not reside on some wings and this meant a lack of equality of opportunity. The governor has recognised that adjustments could be made.

A questionnaire was issued to 216 women who were identified as having mental health or physical mobility issues, and a good number of women had responded, with 110 returns. There was a lot of feedback regarding problems with medication. This involved a number of women coming into custody on medication prescribed by their outside GP, but once in Eastwood Park this was stopped, and they were then left for weeks awaiting new medication.

The number of prisoners requiring personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs) because of their disability had increased slightly. During the year, it was identified that not all staff were sufficiently aware of the PEEP process. A notice to staff was issued and a plan put in place for the equality officer to keep up-to-date photographic records of those requiring a PEEP.

5.6 Lesbian, bisexual and transgender prisoners

There were usually three to four transgender prisoners at any one time at Eastwood Park, with most being well integrated into the prison community. The new transgender policy was implemented at Eastwood Park. Local transgender case boards were held within 14 days of arrival, giving time to gain information about the prisoner in an advanced disclosure form. The deputy governor chaired the local boards.

The IMB remained very concerned that transgender prisoners who had been segregated, as they were considered a risk to others, were left for periods in excess of 42 days while decisions were made about their future. It was considered that this represented inhumane treatment. There seemed to be a lack of urgency to find a resolution for these centrally managed cases.

It was of note that the library had a good stock of books, both fiction and non-fiction, relevant to people who are transgender, on prominent display.
5.7 Young prisoners

The number of young prisoners has declined over the last few years and was averaging around 12 individuals, the lowest it has ever been.

There were 28 incidents involving the use of force in the 18-21 age group over the months May – July 2019 – the highest for all age groups. Twenty-three of those incidents concerned four individuals. The only specific activity for these prisoners was a group run by the chaplaincy. The IMB raised this issue in the three previous reports.

5.8 Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) prisoners

There were eight prisoners who self-identified as GRT. It was thought that this was an underestimation as some chose not to identify themselves. A discussion group was offered to these women.

5.9 Discrimination incident reporting forms (DIRFs)

Eastwood Park averaged 7.5 DIRFs per month – this was lower than the average of 10 a month last year. Most DIRFs were centred on race. The incidents were equally spread across all wings.

Since the last annual report, a voluntary organisation from Bristol called Stand Against Racism and Inequality (SARI) was commissioned to carry out a DIRF validation. The IMB commended the prison for opening up its process to an independent and expert review body. There were generally positive findings – investigations were timely and taken seriously, witnesses were interviewed and the prison had a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of discrimination and a positive culture, where staff spoke out about abuse.

There were proposals for improvement that focused mainly on follow-up support for victims and witnesses and learning from the incidents. There was also a set of ideas on improving the facilities and food for ethnic minorities at Eastwood Park.

Concerns

The delay in making adjustments to allow freedom of location for disabled prisoners in wheelchairs continued to be a concern.

There was a lack of focus on younger prisoners.

Transgender prisoners considered a risk were unable to participate in the regime and were segregated for long periods.

Facilities, canteen choice and food could be better for black and minority ethnic and Muslim residents.

The equality officer’s time was not always ring-fenced.

There were a number of days each week when the chaplaincy was ‘single-crewed’.

6. Segregation and discipline
6.1 Segregation

Eastwood Park does not have a care and separation unit. If segregation for good order or discipline (GOOD) or cellular confinement (CC) are awarded, prisoners are confined to their cells on their normal location, unless for security or safety reasons a wing move is indicated. Whenever possible during confinement, prisoners are allowed out of their cells twice a day for exercise, but it is up to the prisoner whether they go outside.

This arrangement has some advantages because prisoners feel less cut off from their peers – other prisoners will often talk to the prisoner through the cell door. Unfortunately, with numerous prisoners being segregated during the reporting period, this has resulted in considerable disruption for the wings affected, with the majority of prisoners being locked up while those segregated have exercise.

As indicated in our previous annual report, following a review of segregation at Eastwood Park in 2018, it was agreed that part of a residential unit would be converted into an offender behaviour unit. Funding had been agreed, but complications with the tendering process led to repeated delays. At the time of reporting, conversion works still had not commenced.

During the overall reporting period, there were 466 prisoners segregated under GOOD or cellular confinement. The total number of segregations was 10% lower than the previous reporting period. Two hundred and twenty-four of those prisoners segregated had open ACCTs, which was a considerable reduction on the 334 referred to in our previous report. Segregation periods were normally between one and 26 days; however, there were two instances in excess of 42 days, which were referred to the head of the female estate for authorisation. One of these prisoners remained segregated for 92 days prior to their transfer to another prison.

Board members visited every prisoner on CC/GOOD when they were in the prison and in the majority of cases no complaints were made about their confinement. The Board was normally informed within 24 hours of confinement; however this did not always happen. Generally, segregation paperwork was of an acceptable standard.

Despite assurances given following our previous annual reports, it was regrettable that IMB members were still unable to attend the majority of segregation review panels as advance notification of these meetings was the exception. This was contrary to the locally agreed policy and meant that we were unable to monitor the process or sign the paperwork for continued segregation, indicating our satisfaction with procedures and that the decision reached was reasonable. Those review panels that we did attend were conducted well and with sensitivity.

6.2 Adjudications

The number of adjudications was fairly consistent when compared with that recorded in our previous annual report. There were 1296 adjudications held during the reporting period, of which 962 were proven, 166 were dismissed and 168 not proceeded with. The IMB observed adjudications as part of our routine monitoring. All adjudications attended were conducted fairly by a senior manager.

A total of 187 cases were referred to an independent adjudicator, which was a 60% increase on those reported in our previous annual report. These referrals resulted in the award of 1659 added days. This was a 60% increase on the previous year. Thirty charges were dismissed/not proceeded with.
The most serious cases were referred to Avon and Somerset Constabulary for investigation and there was a notable improvement in its response to such referrals during the last year.

### 6.3 Levels of violence

There were 112 prisoner-on-prisoner assaults and 142 prisoner-on-staff assaults during the reporting period. Overall assaults in Eastwood Park increased by 9% when compared to our last report, although during the second half of the year violence was declining.

The prison tried to reduce violence e.g. through the use of CSIPs and the active management and placement of known disruptive individuals.

It should be noted that some individuals were responsible for repeated assaults. In a three-month period, 15 women were responsible for 84 assaults.

Use of force is sometimes necessary in a prison. There were 303 instances during the reporting period, which was a 5% increase on the previous year. The most common reason was non-compliance and then the next most common reason, preventative action to avoid harm to another prisoner, a member of staff or to the prisoner herself. If this occurred during a rota visit, IMB members observe, and on those occasions we did not witness anything untoward.

Eastwood Park has formed a panel to review film from body-worn cameras taken when planned use of force has been necessary. An IMB member observes the operation of this panel regularly.

### 6.4 Concerns

The failure of Eastwood Park managers to keep the IMB informed of some segregation decisions and GOOD review panel arrangements was a continuing cause for concern.

The increase in adjudications for violence at Eastwood Park was a great concern.
7. Accommodation

7.1 Staffing levels

In the previous two annual reports, we drew attention to the shortages in staff and the negative impact that this had on maintaining the safety and humane treatment of prisoners. In response to these reports, in both cases, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice drew our attention to increases in staffing across the prison estate and efforts made to improve recruitment in prisons in rural settings, such as Eastwood Park. Whilst we can report that there had been a net inflow of staff, adequate cover at times of fluctuating demand was still a challenge. There were still many occasions during the year when the Governor was forced to 'lock in' prisoners due to insufficient staff to run a safe regime. It seemed that HMPPS was unable to develop a responsive mechanism for dealing with short-term, but frequent, fluctuations in staffing.

7.2 Living conditions

The most frequent applications about living conditions during the year concerned the non-availability of a range of TV channels on specific wings, lack of shower curtains and flasks, the state of the mattresses and broken cell safes.

The IMB looked into the issue of TV channels, to find that Eastwood Park has an old and complex system for delivering TV channels to the wings. A refit was considered and found to be too expensive to install on all wings.

Shower curtains, curtain poles and flasks were frequently lacking, due to prisoners taking the items with them when they moved cells. More curtains always seemed to be on order but rarely materialised. In-cell safes were reported as broken or with no key, but when the IMB have intervened, this was quickly sorted. There was often a shortage of toilet rolls, toothbrushes and toothpaste.

There was a number of examples of hot water boilers breaking down. Having a hot drink is important for many prisoners. One boiler was out of order for a considerable time. This caused health and safety concerns for the IMB as we observed the use of electric kettles in situations not set up for the use of boiling hot water.

Many of the mattresses were old and in poor, lumpy, hard condition, as were the pillows. This was not good for the older women, those suffering from arthritis and pregnant women. The latter, in particular, were given an extra mattress when they requested it, but they were still old mattresses.

The complex needs unit was a continual concern. Throughout the year, the wing had at least one cell blocked and in need of repair. As the wing was often full and had a waiting list, this was an ongoing problem. Frequently, the cause of the blockage was women on the dirty protest protocol and the need to keep moving them for hygiene reasons; the cell then had to await deep cleaning.

Staff were stretched to their limits and had all gone above and beyond with immense patience and tolerance in the most difficult situations. They should be commended for their work.

The grounds at Eastwood Park were always well looked after, and, during the year, additional efforts had been put into growing vegetables. There was one exception, which has proved difficult to resolve. Down the side of one wing, prisoners threw rubbish,
including food items, out of their cell windows and this detritus can sometimes take a long time to clear up, causing a health hazard.

7.3 Building maintenance

The Board has reported in consecutive years on the woeful arrangements for dealing with building maintenance issues. Eastwood Park was built in the 1960s and is showing both its age and the results of an inadequate programme of works. The IMB has every sympathy for the Governor, who found this situation extremely frustrating.

The following were some examples that were raised on a monthly basis:

- There had been a serious roof leak over the main corridor between residential units 1-4 and the main dining hall for several years. (See the photo below.) Despite repeated assurances over several years that this problem was being resolved, at the end of the reporting period, three buckets were on permanent standby to catch rainwater and stop the floor flooding. This inaction meant that the roof structure and wall finishes were deteriorating due to constant exposure to rainwater. There were examples of prisoners slipping and falling as a result of the wet floor caused by the leak.

- The perimeter security gate to residential unit 7 did not have an adequate lock-back facility and was permanently locked shut. This meant that residents on this open wing had to wait in all weathers for passing key holders to unlock the gate so that they can gain access to their place of work or return to the house block.

- Approval was given to convert two single cells on one wing into a single cell for disabled prisoners. In error, works commenced on two double cells. Whilst demolitions had commenced, the works were stopped and it took several months for the cells to be reinstated. A new bidding process was then required to secure funding for the original project.

- The planned redecoration programme was several weeks behind the agreed schedule.

- As part of the refurbishment of two wings, alterations were undertaken to the plant room, which has made it unsafe for engineers to enter and service fire alarm and water
systems. Special systems of work were having to be developed so that service engineers could enter the plant room safely.

- Damp on cell and corridor walls on one wing remained unresolved. (See photo below.)

- Replacement windows and doors were manufactured by Prison Industries and then taken into storage whilst a separate bid was made to determine if funding for installation was available.
- The standard of cleaning in non-residential areas was poor.
- The eight-stage process for undertaking works appeared to be overly bureaucratic.
- There were 600 outstanding maintenance jobs at the end of the reporting period.

To illustrate the scale of the frustration, the following was the timeline for sorting out an issue with damp walls on one of the residential wings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 2018</td>
<td>Survey of the problem was commissioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 September 2018</td>
<td>Survey carried out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 October 2018</td>
<td>Survey report delivered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 2018 – April 2019</td>
<td>Estimates sought and chased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2019</td>
<td>Bid submitted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May – September 2019</td>
<td>Detailed specification in development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 September 2019</td>
<td>Detailed bid submitted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 October 2019</td>
<td>Decision to reduce costs. New bidding process required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov – Dec 2019</td>
<td>Re-scoping of the project – still no clear timeline for completion.</td>
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In addition, during the year, two portacabin buildings housing the OMU and the mental health and safer custody teams had serious issues necessitating closure. This resulted in the teams having to squeeze into an estate already struggling for space.

7.4 Food

The quality and availability of food is an important issue and one about which the IMB receives surprisingly few applications. Comments to the IMB over the year have generally been good, although consistently there were complaints that quantities were not enough. This probably reflected the small daily budget for feeding a prisoner. However, it was observed that portion control was not always good. This led to shortages of food for those
at the end of the queue and women had to supplement their meal with sliced white bread and their own canteen supplies.

Prisoners often complained that menus were high on carbohydrate and low on protein and vegetables. There were complaints that the daily milk allowance was not enough for cereal plus hot drinks for rest of the day. A nutrition-rich menu was due to be trialled with 30 women, from the end of November 2019.

Prisoners said they would like more fresh fruit. They received one piece of fresh fruit a day. It was commented that the food was at its best when HMIP inspectors were in the prison. However, when a questionnaire was given to 387 women, only 65 were completed. Most of the requested changes were implemented. The food logs, where prisoners can write positive or negative comments also seemed to be under-utilised. It was difficult to criticise/compliment the service with so little feedback given by prisoners.

Apart from one extra piece of fruit and an extra carton of UHT semi-skimmed milk, there was no extra allowance made for pregnant women, e.g. no extra night-time snacks, which meant they had to rely on their own canteen supplies.

The most frequent applications to the IMB about food related to special diets, e.g. gluten- and lactose-free diets. It appeared difficult for the kitchen to provide for them within the constraints of the extremely tight budget.

Most prisoners working in the kitchens found the hard work helped them to focus their minds and stopped them from thinking about family problems. They also enjoyed working as a purposeful team.

Regime curtailment, usually caused by staff shortage, meant meal changes, sometimes leaving prisoners with a sandwich, piece of fruit and a biscuit from 4.30pm until the following morning’s breakfast. On one occasion, during lock down, dried noodles (to be reconstituted with hot water) were handed out, but the women were not allowed out of their cells to get hot water due to staff shortages.

7.5 Visits

The national system for booking visits had variable comments ranging from ‘quick and easy’ to ‘being left hanging on the end of the telephone’ and staff being rude. Booking could be done online but one person said that when they arrived at Eastwood Park having done that, they were told there was no record of the booking, despite being given a reference number. However, this person had nothing but praise for Eastwood Park staff when they sorted the glitch out and the visit took place as planned.

Earlier in the year, the visits room and children’s area was criticised as being grubby and untidy. There was a significant improvement. Toilets were always clean and well maintained. The food and beverages on offer in the Busy Bean café, run by the prisoners, were always appetising.

7.6 Mother and baby unit

This excellent 12-bedded unit was sadly under-utilised. Mothers in this unit were full of praise for the unit and its staff, frequently saying they had access to better treatment in Eastwood Park than on the outside.

At one point during the year, the unit was empty and, at other times it has had, at most, five mothers and their babies. To counteract this, other mothers (of older children) in the
prison, particularly those coming to the end of their sentence, could apply for a sleepover with their older children. This proved popular and seemed a good use of this facility, but there were only five sleepovers in the last year.

7.7 Reception

This was praised consistently by incoming prisoners. The area is clean, tidy and well kept. Staff were praised for treating incoming prisoners with tact and sensitivity. Food and a hot drink were offered by prison orderlies, and prisoners saw their overall initial experience at Eastwood Park in a very positive light.

7.8 Property

Applications to the IMB increased this year. Applications regarding lost property were usually successfully resolved, although due to a backlog, this process was frequently delayed. Weekend staff were responsible for dealing with property applications, and, during times of short staffing, this work was not done, leading to long waiting times.

7.9 Concerns

As in last year’s report, the general fabric of the buildings was deteriorating and there had been no notable improvements this year. The system for commissioning work was bureaucratic and inefficient.

There were regime curtailments due to staff shortages.
8. Healthcare

There were three main healthcare providers in Eastwood Park, which came together as a group called Inspire Better Health (IBH). Bristol Community Health (BCH) provided medicine management, planned care, urgent care and a psychosocial substance misuse service; Avon and Wiltshire Trust (AWP) provided mental health and substance misuse services; and Hanham Health provided administration and GP cover. NHS England health and justice commissioners commissioned IBH, which is supported by other health providers: dentistry (Time for Teeth); optician (Homecare Opticians); midwives (North Bristol NHS Trust); and sonographer (GP Care).

Pathways, the primary care centre, which is similar to a GP practice in the community, was open Monday to Friday and operated up to eight clinics simultaneously, seeing between 60 and 70 prisoners a day.

8.1 Primary care

Prisoners were seen within 24 hours of arrival at Eastwood Park by healthcare staff. Eastwood Park had 24-hour nursing care and 24-hour on call GP cover. Prisoners were able to access female clinicians across all specialties. Patient care was tailored to clinical need, including escorts and bed watches at outside hospitals.

Access to medication to support prisoners who were not able to have medication in possession had been improved by access to nurse administration through patient group directions.

A member of the health team chaired a monthly user group discussing the user experience of prisoners and took forward suggestions to improve service information and design.

The head of healthcare responded promptly to inquiries by the IMB about specific prisoners, which helped to resolve many of the issues raised in applications.

Waiting times for the dentist were in line with those for the wider population, with average routine visits taking 25 days and average urgent waits at four days. Pain relief and other medication is given while waiting to be seen.

Towards the end of the reporting year, BCH, a member of the partnership, served notice on its current contract for health services across five prisons. This difficult decision was taken following the unsuccessful re-tender of the adult community health contract and the confirmation that the remaining three contracts that BCH hold are not self-sustaining for their remaining terms.

The position at the end of the reporting period was that the remaining IBH partners and commissioners were working to agree the continued provision of the IBH prison health contracts in the future. The target date for transfer was 31 March 2020.

Applications to the IMB relating to healthcare were down this year. The IMB has tried to ensure the prisoners complete a Listening to You form (part of the local healthcare complaints system) which may account for the drop in applications. Prisoners, however, were put off using the healthcare system because of the long response times; although often shorter, it could be as long as 20 days. The applications that have been submitted have mainly been concerns about the medication that the prisoners receive in the first few days. Critical and essential medications were prescribed at reception, but some medications were not prescribed until healthcare staff obtained confirmation form the
community GP. This delay could cause distress, especially at weekends with long-term and essential medication not being given.

In August 2019, the IMB carried out a review of the treatment of pregnant women. The IMB interviewed pregnant women and discussed policy and practice with staff. The midwifery service received great praise from the women, but issues, such as extra food during pregnancy and the availability of appropriate clothing, were criticised. This was the responsibility of the prison. In addition, the IMB found that there was too little communication between health and prison staff, and that wing staff had received little input on what to look out for if there were problems with the pregnancy. Very few people were aware of the detailed guidance that was available.

8.2 Substance misuse

In Eastwood Park as with all prisons, the nature and availability of illicit substances was constantly changing and represented a significant challenge. Equally challenging was the complexity of the prison population. According to HMIP, 48% of women came into prison with problems with illicit drug use. Often these women had disparate and complex needs – some with severe mental health problems, compounded by drug dependency. Eastwood Park tried very hard to supply a level of care that adequately and appropriately responded to those needs.

Progress on the strategy to address substance misuse was reported on at the safety, drugs and security meeting monthly. The sharpness of focus on progress and outcomes could have been improved.

The substance misuse service at Eastwood Park offered a range of options, depending on the nature of a prisoner’s substance misuse problem. Women were encouraged to engage with the team to achieve one of three options – rapid detoxification, stabilisation or longer-term maintenance prescribing.

Typically, during reception, a prisoner had an initial screening interview with healthcare staff to identify any immediate needs. The prescribed treatment was then reviewed by a non-medical prescriber five days afterwards when adjustments may be made. A specialist wing was designated for prisoners needing detoxification or who had a high level of need. Typically, a prisoner spent a month on this wing before moving on. A range of pharmacological interventions were available, supported by psychosocial interventions according to need and the complexity of the problem.

During the year, the team struggled to get up to full strength and, as a result, some services had to be reduced.

In response to a recommendation in HMIP’s inspection report on the supply of illicit substances coming into Eastwood Park, the prison had put in place a range of actions to address this. This was routinely reported on at the safety, drugs and security monthly meeting.

The supply reduction plan was reviewed and monitored through the monthly drug strategy meeting. It was also made a standing item on the senior management team meeting.

Psychoactive substance misuse, alongside the use of other sophisticated drug forms, was increasing. The prison established a range of procedures to stem the illicit flow of drugs. A wide range of evidence and assessments were used to identify the likelihood of particular prisoners bringing substances into the establishment. Steps were taken to reduce the movement of illicit substances around the prison.
The type of drugs being used was an ever-changing landscape and it was recognised that training was needed on the effects of specific drugs and also evidence handling. Staff from the substance misuse team were providing monthly updates on trends in drug use.

It was a recommendation in the HMIP inspection report to improve the recording of release planning and actions. Planning and putting in place interventions through the gate were often hampered by the shortness of sentences.

The team maintained close links to organisations in the community. When interviewing prisoners due for release, it was frequently the case that prisoners with substance misuse issues had been in touch with organisations in the community that could help them on release. It was sadly the case, however, that the failure to identify suitable accommodation for prisoners being released undermined any work done with women to address their substance misuse problems.

8.3 Mental health

Since April 2016, the health contract IBH focused on greater integration between the different health providers to ensure that the women received the right care at the right place and time. The intention was to forge much stronger working links between mental health and substance misuse psychosocial services. The service model changed from April 2018, but continued to provide a stepped model of care using a trauma-informed model to inform all the interventions offered.

From December 2018, the team had approximately 3125 referrals, a significant increase since last year. There were 34 Mental Health Act transfers and three s.117 Mental Health Act returns to custody.

Progress was still ongoing and improving in relation to attending first case ACCT reviews.

A mental health crisis team operated 365 days a year with an 8am to 8pm service. The team operated across all wings of the prison, providing support to first case ACCT reviews, assessing women who were in crisis and implementing intervention plans to support women who were acutely mentally unwell and were being transferred to psychiatric hospital or who were self-harming. This included the women who were in the complex needs unit.

The mental health team provided mental health assessment by practitioners who had the additional qualification of being a non-medical prescriber and so could prescribe, adjust and review medication. The assessments could also consider non-pharmacological interventions, which might be appropriate for the women.

The service introduced a new band 5 registered nurse role to the primary care model, which aimed to process the routine referrals quicker, reducing waiting times.

There was a dedicated team of staff to provide group work and interventions across the stepped model of care. The wellbeing groups were changed to a three-session programme.

The SystemOne (cross-NHS IT system) templates were working reasonably well, although practitioners had highlighted that the care plans and risk assessments were not dynamic enough; although they captured relevant information, they could not be amended.

Monthly reflective practice was established for the mental health team.
The most complex cases were held in the 10-bed complex needs unit. The prisoners tended to be the most challenging to deal with. There were often multiple self-harm incidents. There had been violence against staff, dirty protests, and very challenging prisoners. The staff dealt extremely well with the challenges. However, there had been a lack of spaces during this period. Prisoners who should have been in this unit had been unable to be accommodated. This has been due to the physical damage done to cells by prisoners and this has meant some cells have been blocked, reducing capacity for the women. However, the crisis team could be flexible and assess/review women in all locations within the prison.

The number and complexity of cases has grown in the last two to three years. There have been occasions when the IMB has found that very ill women have been sent to prison as a place of safety because suitable facilities were not available in the community. Once in prison, there did not appear to be a sense of urgency to ensure prompt transfer into the healthcare system. Health and prison staff have expressed their frustration at not being able to find suitable placements for women with severe mental health problems. Even when beds became available, they were often in places at a considerable distance from the prisoners’ family.

In prison, medication can only be given to women with their agreement. At the point that they enter prison, they are often beyond the point where they are competent to make decisions about their medication. Prisoners in crisis like this should be transferred more quickly into the healthcare system, where proper arrangements can be made to re-stabilise them.

In addition, health and prison staff were concerned about the lack of suitable arrangements for women being released into the community at the end of a sentence or when court proceedings ended. Some of these women presented significant risks of harm to themselves and sometimes to others.

8.4 Personality disorder

Eastwood Park has had a specialist unit and service for women with a personality disorder since 2015. The Nexus service was commissioned by NHS England and HMPPS and forms part of the national offender personality disorder pathway.

The Nexus service consists of the following components:

A day service in the unit that provided assessment, formulation, pathway planning and one-to-one and group therapy. The day service included a well-established dialectical behaviour therapy programme, which was offered alongside a range of interventions related to risk/offending and wellbeing, including those for personality issues, such as emotion regulation, relationships and trauma. A ‘pattern changing’ programme was established and delivered within the service.

A psychologically informed planned environment (PIPE) with 16 residential places, which focused on relationships, problem solving skills, and embedding skills gained from treatment, was in place. Those living in the PIPE engaged with the day service.

An outreach service to the wider prison for women who were unable to access the day service (i.e. due to their level of motivation or behavioural instability). This consisted of providing low-intensity interventions to women in their unit. The demand for this aspect of the service had increased. To cater for this increase, social creative groups, including ‘info buzz’ and ‘read and relax’ were offered to women within the most closed part of the prison.
Nexus offers consultation to professionals on complex cases, in addition to regular training and supervision to staff. Training has included subjects such as personality disorder awareness and working with transgender people in prison. They also provided consultation to staff to support those working with the women who were not yet ready for direct work with the service.

Nexus facilitated pre-release planning meetings for women on their caseload and aimed to refer them to relevant services and link into the offender personality disorder pathway team in the woman’s home area. In addition, it had a well-established transitional worker who supported the women resettling in Wales.

The women felt that they had an experience that was very different from the other wings. They had more access to talking about problems rather than acting on them.

8.5 Concerns

The sharpness of focus on outcomes in the safety, drugs and security meeting could have been improved.

The gaps in staffing in the substance misuse team were a concern, as this resulted in a reduced service.

Women with serious mental health needs were being sent into and kept in the prison system because of a lack of suitable facilities in the health system.

There was often a delay in maintaining the continuity of non-critical medication when a woman came into prison.

The Board was concerned about the fragility of the commissioned services available for the provision of healthcare in the prison.
9. Education, other activities and work

9.1 Education, learning and skills

Education at Eastwood Park had been provided by Weston College since 2013. In an unannounced inspection in May 2019, HMIP and Ofsted assessed that the learning and skills work in the prison was good and that prisoners were encouraged and enabled to learn both in prison and on their release.

The range of provision at Eastwood Park was limited by the physical space available. The desperate lack of additional classrooms and workshops was highlighted in the IMB annual reports of 2017, 2018 and 2019. Additional facilities have not kept pace with the expansion of the prison population. The lack of classroom, workshop and specialist staff has also restricted the diversity of learning opportunities available for all women.

There have been plans in place for three years to build a new facility that would expand the classroom and workshop space. Considerable frustration was generated by the decision to re-tender for the new building. During the year, a range of courses were postponed/curtailed because of a lack of suitable specific accommodation.

Robust processes for assessing literacy and numeracy skills during induction identified prisoners with special educational needs, who were referred to specialists for additional support. Learning was tracked through functional skills courses.

Specific needs were noted on individuals, but not yet included in sentence plans, although identified needs and personal learning plans were available to offender supervisors.

Access arrangements were in place for women identified as having a specific need. All staff had training in learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

An increase in the number of guided learning hours for functional skills courses impacted on the number of courses that could be delivered during the year.

Opportunities for those serving longer sentences increased to include Open University degrees, distance learning qualifications and additional national vocational qualifications. Negotiations began with the University of West England regarding opportunities to bring lecturers and students into the prison to work alongside the women.

An average of 100 women engaged in education on a daily basis. Classrooms were fully utilised. Attendance for functional skills courses attracted higher wages and bonuses. Pay remained higher for education attendance than wing work.

There was a strict policy of only rewarding women with work places when functional skills courses had been completed. Education attendance was over 80%, which was very good; if authorised activities were included e.g. attendance at the Pathways Health Centre or court hearings, then the average rose to around 98%. Regime activities/curtailments were the main reasons for non-attendance.

Education and training ranked amongst the last aspects of the daily regime to be affected by curtailment due to a shortage of staff. When curtailment had to be implemented the impact on education/training caused sessions to be closed, interrupted prisoners’ learning, disrupted course planning and progression.

Since April 2019, 36 teaching sessions were lost, equivalent to four weeks’ delivery. As a result, the prison would incur cancellation costs for the first time ever. It also had a huge impact on the women and their progress.
From discussions with prisoners, they considered that the provision for education and opportunities to gain accredited qualifications was better at Eastwood Park than other women’s establishments. Education and training were seen to be keys to future success in the community.

Applications received by the IMB regarding education concentrated on course availability; the outcomes were usually clarified by the administrative staff. Prisoners’ applications questioned rejections for specific courses for which security was seen to be the main factor.

Two information, advice and guidance workers were employed to link with the OMU and resettlement teams. It was acknowledged that coherent discussion was required between all parties to assist future planning for the women to prioritise courses and opportunities with a clear link to employment potential.

9.2 Work and purposeful activity

The HMIP inspection in May 2019 was critical of Eastwood Park because 90 prisoners were not allocated work opportunities. It was noted that sickness, disability and offending history accounted for most of these, but that there were around 30 prisoners who could have been eligible for work if the space had been available to put on more activities.

It would have been advantageous to offer skills/qualifications providing access to less stereotypical female careers/roles (e.g. construction, engineering) but this was prohibited by a lack of specialist accommodation, staffing and facilities.

A contract for assembling and packaging goods employed a number of women throughout the year. The company terminated the contract due to the lack of accommodation for expansion.

Employment was available for orderlies in the chapel, education, reception, physical education, equality and diversity and safer custody departments, as well as in the kitchen, and serveries and as wing cleaners.

The café run by prisoners expanded its range of refreshments. All women stated they had acquired skills for employment and gained self-esteem while working in the café.

The resource management area expanded, but problems remained with the accrediting body for courses in this field, as with those associated with industrial cleaning (biohazards training being the priority). It was disappointing that Eastwood Park was unable to offer work opportunities tailored to these qualifications that would have improved entry into local job opportunities.

The Nelson Trust delivered courses addressing domestic violence and trauma. In addition, Restore and the Nurturing programme, based around parenting, were offered.

Release on temporary licence (ROTL) opportunities were limited by the rural location of the prison and the associated lack of transport links.

Work, skills and training opportunities were disadvantaged by regime curtailments.

Applications received by the IMB regarding work, skills and training concentrated on payment/availability, particularly when the impact of regime curtailment was experienced.
9.3 Concerns

The limitations imposed on education, learning and skills at Eastwood Park due to lack of classroom and workshop space is a key concern. This was exacerbated by the delays in building the long-planned additional facility.

The level of regime curtailment caused by staff shortages and leading to the loss of 36 sessions (equivalent of four weeks’ delivery) was worrying.
10. Resettlement preparation

Most prisoners being released from Eastwood Park received resettlement services from a CRC for the southwest and Wales, under contract with Seetec. The National Probation Service dealt with those who presented a higher risk of harm.

The average stay at Eastwood Park was around 42 days, with many spending considerably less time. This made meaningful and thorough preparation for release difficult to achieve.

Resettlement activity focused mainly on housing and, to a lesser extent, on employment and finance/benefit/debt. Family contact was a priority.

An inspection by HMIP in May 2019 found that resettlement work at Eastwood Park had declined since the last inspection in 2016. The inspection found that:
• although the strategic management of resettlement was good, the needs analysis was not comprehensive
• ROTL was underused
• some prisoners did not have an up-to-date offender assessment system assessment and the quality of pre-release assessment and planning was not always adequate
• the OMU’s work was far too reactive and often lacked meaningful engagement with prisoners
• the identification and application of contact restrictions were robust
• the CRC provision had been very limited for a long time – although there were some signs of improvement, it was far too early to see the impact of this on improving outcomes for prisoners
• resettlement pathway work was variable
• the number of prisoners released homeless was too high
• outcomes for prisoners were not sufficiently good against this healthy prison test

During the year the IMB looked at samples of prisoners being released and asked them a simple set of questions about their experience of preparation for release and what arrangements were in place to help them. Our findings were very similar to HMIP’s and we were particularly concerned about the lack of engagement with prisoners. Many told us they did not know what was happening. For many it was only a day or two before their release that they knew what arrangements had been made or, for some, that no arrangements were in place. For many women this uncertainty heightened levels of anxiety about release.

It is the IMB’s view that there were signs of improvement in the resettlement work at Eastwood Park, but it was too early to be confident that plans would be fully implemented and sustained. Last year, we criticised Eastwood Park for not having a more joined-up approach. This had definitely improved with good cooperation between departments.

Progress was limited by the failure of the Ministry of Justice to make progress on replacing the OMU and providing more classroom and workshop space. The prison was running on around 20% unemployment rate where women could work, but there were insufficient places available. At the time of reporting it became clear that funding for the new build had not been included in capital projects going forward. This meant that the planned improvements were again delayed. This is a significant obstacle to the prison being able to improve resettlement services. The IMB is very concerned about this lack of progress.

The prisoner pay budget at Eastwood Park was lower than at many other prisons. It seems inequitable that rates of pay for the same or similar work would be different in different prisons.
During the year, discharge boards were introduced. These panels brought together those staff responsible for all aspects of planning for release. Prisoners were invited to attend. There were some issues with attendance e.g. four out of 15 attending. There had been mixed reviews about the usefulness of these boards.

One stated aim this year had been to increase the number of prisoners going out to work under ROTL. Last year numbers were static at around one or two per day. There was a small improvement this year, with as many as five women out on ROTL in one day. The IMB noted the additional effort being put into sustaining these external placements.

10.1 Housing

Prisoners were assessed on entry to Eastwood Park and any housing issues arising from imprisonment were identified and attempts made to resolve them. Prior to release prisoners were given the option to attend a resettlement programme, which had a housing focused groupwork session. It was still the case that there was a lack of suitable accommodation in the community to support those released in maintaining a crime-free life.

From July to October 2019, the percentage of women being released without safe and suitable accommodation ranged from 24% to 40%.

10.2 Health and substance misuse, employment and education

These areas are covered in sections 8 and 9 and are also resettlement pathways. There was evidence of good cooperation between the prison, health, substance misuse, education and voluntary sector representatives to develop a more joined-up approach.

10.3 Finance, benefit and debt

The CRC delivered a session of the resettlement programme on support and advice to improve money management. Steps were being taken to improve the focus on gambling awareness. Arrangements were in place with a bank to enable women to open a bank account whilst in custody.

10.4 Family contact

The Prison Advice and Care Trust (PACT) has been working at Eastwood Park, supporting the maintenance of family contact for some years by organising family visits and running courses for women on improving family relationships.

Towards the end of the reporting year, it was announced that funding for two of the three PACT workers had been withdrawn by HMPPS. It was of great concern that this was done without consultation with the prison and without proper explanation initially. A social worker had been employed, addressing a recommendation in the Farmer Review.

One noteworthy development was that prisoners could apply for older children to have an overnight stay hosted in the MBU. This happened on two occasions and was very well received by both the mothers and the children.

During the year, the IMB received a number of applications about arrangements for inter-prison visits (IPVs) and phone calls (IPPCs), where prisoners have contact with family members also serving a sentence. The procedure for setting these up appeared to be complex and long-winded. When trying to find out what progress had been made for an IPV/IPPC, it proved impossible to track the application.
The IMB also received applications from prisoners in their early days at Eastwood Park having trouble setting up their contact with family. There is a process of checks that has to be gone through, but this could sometimes take several days.

10.5 Attitudes, thinking and behaviour

Eastwood Park had struggled for a number of years to develop and implement groupwork programmes aimed at addressing prisoners’ attitudes, thinking and behaviour. There were firm plans in place for the Nelson Trust to deliver a suite of programmes, including Healing from Trauma, Pattern Changing (for women who had been in abusive relationships) and Beyond Anger and Violence.

10.6 Support for women who had been abused

It was disappointing, given the high numbers of women at Eastwood Park who had been abused, that more was not being done to ensure support on release.

10.7 Support for sex workers

There was an issue with identifying those women involved with sex work as this information had not routinely been gathered. The Nelson Trust had made some progress with identifying women in part of Eastwood Park’s catchment area and the groupwork facilitator, specialising in supporting sex workers, was about to run the Pegasus course aimed at advising women on how to work safely and supporting them to exit the work if they wished.

10.8 Offender management

Last year, we reported that the planned building to replace the crumbling OMU was significantly delayed. During the year, there was further delay as the funding was cut and new plans had to be drawn up and re-tendered. This was very disappointing as many of the plans for developing rehabilitative activities were reliant on this development. In the meantime, the offender management teams were scattered in different buildings and some remained in building, most of which had subsided and been condemned.

Also, last year we reported that the Ministry of Justice had failed to implement a new offender management model for women. This is still the case as POA action and consequent negotiations have caused delays.

The probation team struggled with low staffing levels during the year and, as a result, some areas of practice were not up to standard e.g. HMIP picked up an issue with the assessment and categorisation of serious risk of harm cases. This was addressed following the inspection and is kept under review.

The inspection also highlighted that indeterminate sentence prisoners required more support to progress through their sentence. The lack of staff presented a challenge. It was acknowledged that, although there were examples of good practice, especially for those women involved with the Nexus programme, more work needed to be done for this group of prisoners. At the time of reporting, work was under way to address this.

Communication and cooperation between probation and CRC staff was hampered by the low staffing and subsequent changes of personnel.

10.9 Concerns
Our main concern during the year was the overall inadequacy of the resettlement service. There were, by the end of the reporting year, signs that this service was improving.

The continued delay in moving forward with the new OMU building was frustrating and meant that the prison's ability to provide purposeful activity for all women was limited.

The failure to agree a way forward to implement a new offender management model was a concern.

The inefficient arrangements for IPVs and IPPCs needed improving.

More needed to be done to ensure women at risk of abuse were supported on release.
### Board statistics

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## Applications

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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Applications by month**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>Jun</th>
<th>Jul</th>
<th>Aug</th>
<th>Sep</th>
<th>Oct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16/17</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/18</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18/19</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Time taken to deal with applications**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Within one day</th>
<th>Within one week</th>
<th>Longer than a week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018/19</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Analysis of applications**

The volume of applications to the IMB was slightly lower than last year. It was the Board’s view that the complexity of applications remained high. There were significant increases in property and staff/prisoner relations applications. There was a small reduction in health-related applications.

The numbers of applications per month went up and down and, based on comparisons with previous years, there do not appear to be seasonally based fluctuations.

It was pleasing that 86% of applications were closed within a week of receipt.

**What do IMB members do with applications?**

Every prisoner has access to the IMB via an application process – this is an important part of upholding the rights and decent conditions of the prisoner. Each wing in the prison has
a locked box into which prisoners can post an application to the IMB. They can also stop us at any time and ask to make an application verbally or we can help them write one.

Every Monday we collect the applications from the previous week. We usually speak to the applicant before we start looking into it to ensure we understand what they are hoping for. We then investigate the issues. This often involves speaking to staff in various departments. If there has been a mistake or oversight we are able to prompt this being addressed. Sometimes there is little we can do to help. In either case, we then go back to the prisoner and explain what we have done and what the outcome has been.