



Annual Report
Of the
Independent Monitoring Board

at

HMP GARTH

For reporting year

December 2018 to November 2019

Published
July 2020



Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introductory sections

Section	Topic	Page
1	Statutory role	3
2	Executive summary	4
3	Description of the establishment	6

Evidence sections

4	Safety	7
5	Equality and fairness	9
6	Segregation/Care and separation unit	10
7	Accommodation (including communication)	11
8	Chaplaincy	13
9	Healthcare (including mental health and social care)	14
10	Education and other activities	15
11	Work, vocational training and employment	16
12	Resettlement preparation	17

C	The work of the IMB	18
D	Applications to the IMB	19

A Sections 1 - 3

1. STATUTORY ROLE

The Prison Act 1952 requires every prison to be monitored by an independent Board, appointed by the Secretary of State from members of the community in which the prison or centre is situated.

The Board is specifically charged to:

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

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

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Main judgements

Are prisoners treated fairly?

The Governor and his senior management team have made continuing strides towards maintaining and developing positive standards of management and care of prisoners throughout this period. This is reflected in the effective resolution of prisoners' complaints, and subsequently in the nature, and reduced quantity, of applications received by the Board. There has been a high turnover of staff, with many new recruits moving on quickly. This inevitably causes problems of continuity but emphasis continues to be given to the need to treat prisoners fairly and in a supportive manner.

Are prisoners treated humanely?

The Board feels that emphasis is given to the humane treatment of prisoners, although some of our previous comments remain pertinent. The development of the key worker scheme, the restructuring of the offender management unit (OMU) to include more probation officers, and the reduction of staff redeployment to other duties gives, and will give, greater continuity of support to prisoners. Ongoing problems include the high numbers of segregated prisoners, difficulties in accessing acute mental health beds and the difficulties relating to prisoners being located too far from their home areas. All of these problems cause increased stress levels and consequent behavioural problems.

Are prisoners prepared well for their release?

The training and education provision has improved during this period (see sections 10 and 11). Offending behaviour programmes continue, based upon recommendations in offender assessment system (OASys) assessments and reviews. However, it should be understood that as HMP Garth is in the long-term high-security estate (LTHSE), few prisoners are released from this establishment.

Main areas for development

TO THE MINISTER

It continues to be a concern that there are too few category B training prisons, and that more should be established in order to contain prisoners as close as possible to their home areas, in order to facilitate family visits, and so forth.

The Board continues to be very concerned about the large number of prisoners serving indeterminate sentences for public protection (IPP) still in the system, with HMP Garth holding about 60 at the end of this reporting period. It is understood that attempts are being made to reduce the number of IPP prisoners but progress is too slow and there is a clear issue of injustice in continuing to hold short-tariff prisoners as much as 15 years beyond their tariff date. The Board continues to believe that retrospective legislation is required to rectify this situation.

The Board continues to identify problems in relation to the accessibility of acute mental health beds in outside hospitals.

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

A major area of concern identified from applications to the Board is the ongoing serious problem of prisoners' property all too frequently not being received into this prison, and being lost in the sending prison. This, we suggest, is a problem that could be easily remedied by the transporting company, and should be addressed urgently. One possible solution would be for the transporting company to purchase secure trailers.

This prison operates three specialist units: the Beacon unit for people with severe personality disorders, the 'building hope' unit for problematic prisoners who are too frequently segregated and need additional support, and the residential support unit, which is a unit for vulnerable prisoners who are not convicted of a sexual offence. These units have proved their worth, and it is strongly recommended that their funding be continued.

Continue to address the number and locations of category B prisons, in order to accommodate prisoners as close to their home areas as possible.

Continue to address the management and release of IPP prisoners.

Continue to address the recruitment, training and retention of new prison officers, including salaries and conditions of service.

TO THE GOVERNOR

Continue to address the usage and location of constant supervision (gated) cells.

Continue to work proactively to reduce the incidence of violence in the prison (*see IMB applications, code J*).

Maintain the current positive developments in the prison regime.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ESTABLISHMENT

HMP Garth is a category B training prison. It opened in 1988 and holds long-term and life-sentenced prisoners, together with IPP prisoners. It has a maximum operating capacity of 845. It is now a part of the LTHSE.

The main service providers are Milton Keynes College commissioned by the Education and Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS)., Lancashire Healthcare NHS Trust, Discover Drug and Alcohol Service, and Amey (maintenance contract).

The prison has three specialist units: the Beacon unit, which treats prisoners with profound personality disorders and is jointly operated with Mersey Care NHS Trust; the 'building hope' unit, for prisoners with additional disruptive needs; and the residential support unit, which is for vulnerable prisoners who are not convicted of a sexual offence.

Evidence Sections 4 - 12

4. SAFETY

The findings of the report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons in 2017 rightly caused concern because of the criticisms it contained, largely in the areas of prisoner safety. At the time, work was being undertaken to rectify many of the problems which had been identified internally, but changes had not been fully implemented. Since then, a follow-up inspection has taken place which has identified positive changes, and under the scoring system the status of the prison has been raised from 2 to 3 in most areas. This improvement is due to the good work undertaken by all staff, directed by the Governor and senior management team.

The Board is pleased to report that, while there is still violence within the prison, this has been well contained by staff and there have been few serious incidents. In large part, this has been because staff have sought to manage the prisoners creatively, by having a consistent approach to allowing privileges where appropriate, while imposing disciplinary measures firmly. There has been improved cooperation from the police, resulting in prosecutions for offences committed within the prison. In particular, there has been a decrease in the number of assaults on staff. However, investigations invariably take a long time to complete before a matter may be brought to the court. This leads to frustration for all involved, particularly for prisoners, who may be waiting many months not knowing what the outcome may be, and can result in them being kept in the segregation unit for an inordinate amount of time.

A positive drug strategy is applied within the prison, together with good support from the drug strategy team. This is regularly reviewed, and adapted as necessary. At the same time, the many prisoners with mental health and personality disorder issues continue to be identified and treated, although this will continue to be an area that will need improvement, not least in terms of providing adequate specialist staff resources.

The key worker scheme is becoming established, and a recognised part of the staff support for prisoners. The Board is keen to see the development of this scheme and continues to advise prisoners that their key worker should be the first point of contact when an issue needs to be addressed. Staffing shortages and the consequences of redeployment of staff detract from the effectiveness of the key worker role but the problems are recognised and are being addressed. This scheme and the rehabilitative culture and procedural justice are having a positive impact on levels of violence, and safety.

There continues to be a relatively high number of assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) documents open for prisoners at high risk of self-harm or suicide, with the number averaging 25–30 at any one time. Staff manage these cases by sensitive and regular reviews, and by appropriate work towards resolving problems. The nature of the prisoner group is such that there will always be a risk of self-harm caused by anxieties relating to drug and alcohol usage and the attendant consequences, such as mental health and personality disorder problems, as well as similar conditions caused by other illness.

The Board suggests that the ACCT strategy should be reviewed, as there were seven deaths during this reporting period. Two were from natural causes and one was self-inflicted. For the remaining four, the final reports on the investigations into these deaths have yet to be received, although three were possibly drug related. Once the Board receives all seven reports from the inquests, it will identify any weaknesses that may need to be addressed.

The number of self-inflicted injuries recorded decreased in 2019, to 673 (from 881 in 2018). Similarly, the number of assaults by prisoners on other prisoners decreased, to 147 (from 168 in 2018). The number of assaults on prison officers decreased by just one in

2019, to 71 (from 72 in 2018). We have no records of assaults by staff on prisoners. Safety is steadily improving overall. The Board has not identified specific reasons for this; however, as mentioned elsewhere, the new key worker scheme is having an impact.

Despite the fact that there is a good drugs strategy in place, drug usage remains a major problem in terms of associated health problems, debt and associated bullying. This will continue to be monitored in future reports. Mandatory drug testing statistics for this period are not available for this reporting year.

The prison has a good network of Listeners, peer mentors and Samaritans, and first night arrangements are good.

5. EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS

The Board has been impressed with the proactive equality team. The prison continues to focus upon fairness and diversity, recognising the needs of LGBT, disabled, black, Asian and minority ethnic, and older prisoners, and also veterans. This work is being led by the equality strategy team. The Board monitors the work mainly by attending meetings and fora, and through regular discussions with the senior management team lead for Equalities. Further monitoring of data collected will be carried out in the next period. Few issues have come to the attention of the Board during this period, which indicates that good progress is being made. Provision for staff and prisoners with disabilities has been poor but is now improving.

The prison holds long-term prisoners, many of whom have reached and passed retirement age, with, in some cases, deteriorating health conditions, and some need extra care. The Board has reported previously that plans had been made for the installation of lifts and/or stairlifts. Presently, there are just two lifts in the establishment, one being in the most recent wing built and the other in the stores department. No progress has been made on the installation of new ones, as the supplier is from Europe and requires payment in advance. The Board understands that this is due to the present Brexit situation.

Equalities meetings are well attended and are clearly effective, and fora have been set up, in the main prison, and also on the wings for prisoners who have committed sexual offences, for all the groups mentioned above. Consideration is given to foreign nationals to support their specific needs. Fora are to be held in the future, possibly every 6–8 weeks in 2020, in respect of those with care needs. The number of care leavers has risen sharply and is expected to continue rising. In May 2018, the prison had identified only 32 care leavers, now there are 73 care-experienced prisoners.

The provision for transgender prisoners was addressed during this reporting period. The number of transgender prisoners is very low, with only two being identified, but their needs and vulnerabilities are acknowledged. During the year, training for prison staff, clinical staff and other service providers was arranged, and was delivered by an experienced training officer/custodial manager from HMP Stafford. One of the Board members attended and shared the information with other Board members.

Black History Month was held during this period and was well received, and several other events for black and ethnic minority prisoners followed in June and July.

Work with army veterans started during the year, and veterans, with guidance from the gardening and grounds department, completed work on a memorial garden; this was used for the first time on 11 November 2019, Remembrance Day. We will continue to monitor progress of this new initiative.

The equality strategy team has worked hard to ensure that minority groups have been given a voice within the prison.

The General Prisoner Complaints System is well established and effective. The Board has monitored this in the context of the number of applications received and the relevance of the Board's interventions. By encouraging prisoners to address such complaints through the normal process, and by using the Board as a last resort, the number of applications received has reduced greatly (four in 2019), and complaints have been referred more frequently to appropriate staff and departments, thus improving the system.

6. SEGREGATION/CARE AND SEPARATION UNIT

This has, for too long, been a troubled unit, with, the Board believes, a disproportionately large number of prisoners being segregated. The unit can hold a maximum of 28 prisoners and it is nearly always full; indeed, prisoners are often held in segregated conditions on their wings when capacity in the segregation unit is insufficient. It appears that the reasons for this are many and various, and we suggest that a full analysis of the causes and solutions be carried out in order to reduce the large number of segregated prisoners.

It can be demonstrated that too many prisoners have been held in the unit for long periods, sometimes receiving confusing and conflicting information about their progression, both within the establishment and towards move-on to more appropriate prisons. This causes unnecessary anger and frustration, which in turn leads to further poor behaviour. Accurate statistics are not available at this time, and the Board will continue to monitor this issue. We believe that this is also a problem in other prisons and that, therefore, the whole question of prisoner transfer should be reviewed. We understand that there are too few category B training prisons in England and Wales, and that, therefore, appropriate and timely transfer of prisoners can be seriously affected.

It is clear that a large proportion of segregated prisoners have mental health and/or personality disorder problems. It is difficult to gain a clear idea of the number of prisoners affected, not least because the diagnosis of conditions can outstretch resources. A pathway-to-progression process has been implemented, which identifies the psychological and mental health needs of the prisoner in order to determine the most appropriate provision. This is proving to be of value but it is not working as smoothly as it might because it is too often not possible to access specialist provision outside the prison. Again, delay causes frustration which in turn causes further poor behaviour.

One positive attempt to improve prisoner behaviour in the unit has been to establish a split level of privileges on the two landings in the unit. This means that the more difficult prisoners are held on the 'ones' and may progress to the 'twos' if their behaviour justifies the move. Physical conditions on the 'ones' are poor and in need of urgent improvement. This is partly as a result of damage caused by prisoners, but lack of electricity, poor sanitation, and so on are not acceptable, and this needs to be addressed fully as a matter of urgency.

For some time, the Board has had concerns about the location and use of constant supervision (gated) cells in the segregation unit and on the wings. It has been proposed to remove these cells to the quieter regime in the healthcare unit. The Board would welcome further development of this plan.

Due to the difficult nature of this unit, it needs to be managed by a dedicated team of volunteer staff rather than directed staff. This is recognised and addressed but the large number of inexperienced staff in the prison makes achieving this difficult. Nevertheless, it is felt that considerable progress has been made.

The Board strives to attend all of the segregation review boards and is generally satisfied with the way that these are managed. This has improved since determined efforts were made to have boards run consistently by the governor responsible for the unit. Segregation unit documents, including the daily log, page 16s (the daily contact log kept for each prisoner), authority to segregate forms, segregation health screens and ACCT documents, are always properly completed and up to date.

Finally, the need to provide high-standard changing and toilet facilities for female staff should be addressed as a matter of urgency. The lack of suitable facilities, which is dependent upon finance being available, has a serious effect upon staff morale, especially when they are required to deal with dirty protests and other insanitary

situations. Please note that this matter has been raised in several of our recent reports and it is noted here that *no progress has been made*.

7. ACCOMMODATION (INCLUDING COMMUNICATION)

In 2018/19, the ageing structure of the prison required attention. Major works had to be carried out. From late December 2018 to early January/February 2019, there were a number of occasions when the heating and hot water systems were not operating efficiently. Some wings had no effective central heating, and others were overheated. This resulted in a new heating system being installed jointly for HMPs Garth and Wymott during the late summer.

Major underground pipework developed leaks during the year, and the sterile area outside the parking area for reception was excavated, that space being affected for approximately two months. The flat corridor roofs in various places sprung leaks each time it rained, making corridors hazardous. On a positive note, the decorating programme begun the previous year continued, and the overall appearance inside the prison is much improved.

The shower provision on the wings is not, in the Board's view, of a reasonable standard. It is difficult to maintain privacy, which should be ensured.

The kitchens have suffered major difficulties, with ovens breaking down and being out of use for many months at a time, freezers breaking down, the halal storage facility not being available for long periods and food mixers/processors being out of use for long spells. There have also been regular power failures. Equipment breakdowns cause major problems, particularly when items are deemed uneconomical to repair, with no money for replacements. This, in large part, reflects concerns about Amey, the maintenance service provider, which, it appears, works rigidly to their contract with the prison and fails to keep on top of many of these problems.

However, complaints to the Board in respect of food and kitchens are very few, with just four for the year. The kitchen staff, prison team and prisoners who work there have to be commended for their endeavour in always meeting the highest standards.

The Board is pleased to note here that there have been few complaints regarding laundry issues during this reporting period. We understand that there have been fewer machine breakdowns that have not been dealt within a reasonable period.

Thirty-seven per cent of all the applications that the Board received during the year were in respect of missing property. Property going missing when prisoners change cells occurs regularly. Property not arriving at the prison when a prisoner is transferring to Garth is very common, and continues to be a major problem. It would help if prisoners were not restricted in the number of bags/boxes they can take with them when moving, as it is usually left at the prison they are leaving, for onward delivery, and may never arrive. One possible solution might be for the transport contractors to use secure trailers to transport property.

The Key Worker Scheme has been operative throughout the prison since August 2019. It was audited during this period and received excellent feedback. There is an understanding and acceptance that an effective Key Worker Scheme will help to build good working relationships between prisoners and staff, and reduce the use of the complaints process.

Access to canteen and mail order procedures work well. The Board received just three complaints about this for the year. The procedures in place to make requests and orders is efficient and effective. Provided that deadlines are met in placing orders, people get their delivery from the canteen on the designated date.

The prison has an active prisoners' council which has representatives from every wing in the prison. It meets monthly and, if necessary, arrangements are made for ad hoc meetings to discuss specific issues or problems. It is well supported by the management team.

Regime curtailment

The prison keeps good records in respect of regime changes and curtailment and this information is easily accessible to the Board. Core hours operate between 8am and 6pm but there will be interruptions such as incidents which result in disciplinary action having to be taken; disruption due to a prisoner requiring urgent medical attention; planned removals of prisoners to the Segregation Unit, or to other accommodation within the prison.

Other factors causing curtailment have included, essential maintenance work within the prison; recruitment and retention of staff; staff absences caused by sickness and, rarely, Serious Incidents.

There is a rolling programme throughout the day for different sections of prisoners on each wing, to ensure that they have the opportunity to collect food, exercise and to shower.

Collections of the lunch meal and dinner are undertaken between approximately 11.15am and 12.45pm. The Board had some concerns regarding prisoners having to collect two meals at the same time, however the Board investigated and no major problems were identified. Only four complaints were received from prisoners about food during the year. See Section 7, Para 2.

A robust appointments system is in place for those attending medical and legal appointments.

.

8. CHAPLAINCY

The chaplaincy provides full-time spiritual and pastoral care for all prisoners, the staff and other services in the prison seven days a week. A member of the team visits all wings on a regular basis and is instantly available at times of bereavement.

Board members work in collaboration with the chaplaincy, and often will consult with the team on matters which are beyond their own skills and knowledge.

There are prisoners at Garth who acknowledge belonging to one of 21 different faiths. The chaplaincy has several permanent chaplains based in the prison, as well as sessional chaplains and visiting ministers.

Religious festivals, celebrations and events are recognised and organised by the department. This is a huge task as these occur every month of the year, and all feast days and festivals were celebrated in some way during 2019. Working in partnership with other departments is a key to success, and this is certainly so when the kitchen department assists in the preparation of particular foods at different times of the year.

A chaplain visits the segregation department daily, to offer support to prisoners.

The chaplaincy offers supportive bereavement counselling to those who have been present when a death in custody has occurred, and to prisoners and staff who have lost a family member or friend.

Religious services and study sessions are held in the chapel. The chaplaincy works well with offender managers and the mental health team, and regularly attends the various prison meetings. In particular, its work with the equalities team and family link workers is time consuming but worthwhile.

Faith awareness training is provided for all new staff, and is going well with the support of the POELT (prison officer entry-level training) trainer.

9. HEALTHCARE (INCLUDING MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE)

During the reporting year, the structure and management of the healthcare department were reviewed, with a view to awarding new contracts from April 2020. Presently, there is a group of providers with individual responsibilities for general health, mental health, personality disorders, and so on.

Over time, the prison has attracted additional funding for specific projects or pilot schemes. A health check and triage service has been introduced for new prisoners. An experienced triage nurse has been recruited and is based in a specially equipped room in the reception centre. After going through the usual checks for new arrivals, and before leaving reception, the prisoner is given a general physical examination. There then follows a general discussion in respect of his current physical and mental health. His previous medical records are checked and any medication that he requires is provided immediately, before he is settled into accommodation. This is proving to be beneficial in settling the prisoner.

The number of applications that the Board has received in respect of healthcare matters almost halved, from 31 in the previous reporting year to 16 during 2018/19. Problems were similar with the length of time waiting for appointments and disagreements in respect of medication predominating.

The prison continues to hold a large number of prisoners who present with mental health and personality disorders. There are several specialist wings in the prison, which invariably are full, so there is often a waiting period for prisoners before they can be given a place on one. This then means a delay in them getting the extra support that they need. However, both the psychology and psychiatry departments provide good and regular support wherever that is needed.

Mention should be made that increasing the length of prisoners' sentences and the continuing failure to resolve the IPP problem (see Section 12) may be seen as aggravating factors for prisoners, who feel that there is no hope, no end to their sentence. As at 30 November 2019, Garth had 58 IPP prisoners.

The shortage of category B training prisons around the country, and the resultant necessity to locate many prisoners at a great distance from their home areas, can and does have a direct effect on some prisoners' wellbeing, as they may have very few or no visits from family and friends. However, the prison has a good network of Listeners, Peer Mentors and Samaritans, and first night arrangements are good (see also Section 4)

10. EDUCATION AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

In the Board's view, the education department offers a wide range of courses, including undergraduate distance learning and functional skills, and is adept at meeting the needs of those of all capabilities and learning needs. Learning plans are formulated for each person.

Prisoners attending the classes work in a large open environment with an art room, kitchen and spacious classrooms. The department is well laid out and is adequately equipped. Tutors and instructors work with prisoners to meet standards, following monitoring guidelines and process.

The education department had an Ofsted inspection in January 2019 and was graded at 2 in all areas. The department had several other achievements during the year:

- Implementation of the new prison education framework (PEF) contract has allowed, and will continue to allow, the department to plan for a broader education curriculum, while meeting its contractual obligations.
- Introduction of the dynamic purchasing system enables bespoke ad hoc interventions to be carried out which are appropriate for some prisoners, in addition to the usual recognised education provision. However, the budget is very limited, restricting the number of opportunities that the department is able to offer.
- A dedicated additional learning support practitioner (ALSP) has been introduced to support prisoners through their learning.
- A project has been delivered to a number of prisoners to promote understanding of prison life and future changes.
- A full-time Open University practitioner has been appointed to provide high-quality support to prisoners.

Overall, the Board is satisfied that education provision is of a high standard, offering a wide choice of courses. A learning and skills support post has been introduced to provide additional help and to drive forward projects and other improvements.

Prison officer staffing and regime curtailments have extreme effects on the continuity of the education and library services. In particular, the library provision during the year has been significantly curtailed, with regular closures. The library is a resource that users of the service value highly to meet both educational and leisure needs.

Physical education is provided in the two gyms. Both are well equipped, with instructors available to give guidance and advice for those prisoners using the facilities. There is a high usage of this provision.

11. WORK, VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

Regime curtailments continue to affect the hours available to prisoners for vocational work and employment; there has been limited workshop output and levels of accreditation could be improved.

During 2019, there have been several achievements of note. For example, the information and guidance service for prisoners has been introduced, through collaboration with an external provider. This has included delivery of L3 and L4 qualifications.

The development of additional non-PEF accreditation for prisoners in workshops and the kitchen is ongoing, although there is presently limited take-up from prisoners who have places in the workshops.

The establishment has been successful in the award of a contract to supply toothbrushes for the Prison Service. Instructors in the prison created a new lighting system which received a national award and which is now being supplied to other prisons

The disparity in pay between prisoners working for outside companies, such as DHL, and internally provided workshops remains a disincentive for some prisoners to take up work. It is recognised that whatever work and training are available should provide worthwhile experience to equip prisoners to find work upon release.

There has been a significant reduction in the number of applications received by the Board relating to work, from 20 in 2017/18 to six in 2018/19. These six applications all came from prisoners who had employment in a workshop.

We have said previously that all prisoners are encouraged and supported to take part in education and we will continue to monitor the provisions that are available.

12. RESETTLEMENT PREPARATION

Throughout this period, the OMU worked towards a change in its staffing. Having been predominantly staffed with band 4 prison officers, supported by approximately 3.5 full-time-equivalent probation officers and a half-time senior probation officer, the decision was taken to reverse the proportions, partly because probation officers are able to work effectively with high-risk offenders and also because problems have been identified regarding the redeployment of band 4 officers to other areas of work at times of need. While inevitable in an operational way, this had an adverse impact on the ability of the department to complete its full range of duties. In the event, the transition was not completed by the end of 2019 because of problems relating to the appointment of probation officers. However, the half-time senior probation officer was replaced by a full-time one, who quickly established herself in the department.

The Board feels that, as this transition takes place, staffing levels should be built up so that officers will be able to work with manageable caseloads. It is understandable that, in a high-security category B prison, many of the prisoners will inevitably spend long periods of relative inactivity in terms of offending behaviour work because it is necessary for them to work through their tariffs, which are becoming increasingly long.

Inactivity can result in loss of the benefits gained by early interventions, and if offending behaviour work is left too long, the negative effects of long-term imprisonment can reduce a prisoner's ability to respond positively later on. A constructive programme is therefore needed throughout the category B part of the sentence.

The personal officer scheme has been replaced by the key worker scheme, and the Board has been pleased to see this change. Examples of good and effective work are becoming clear near the end of this reporting period and this should significantly complement the work of the OMU.

Significant numbers of prisoners are transferred into the prison without a current OASys report having been prepared. OMU staff strive to deal with this problem, and present assessments and reviews of high quality.

The establishment continues to accommodate what the Board considers to be a disproportionately large number of IPP prisoners – 58 as at November 2019. The Board has consistently commented upon the injustice of this sentence, and has consistently advised that, from the point of view of natural justice, the law should be changed to enable the release of all existing IPP prisoners. We understand that this is a contentious issue and that it is not government policy to create retrospective legislation to allow this to happen, but our recommendation remains consistent. We acknowledge that serious attempts are being made to resolve this problem, most notably through the efforts of prison psychology departments, including that at HMP Garth. For prisoners to be held in custody 15 years beyond their tariff date, when that tariff could be as little as a few months, clearly indicates injustice that needs to be rectified.

The OMU is well led and well managed, and the Board is confident that it will continue to develop positively as new developments are introduced and as the staffing restructure is completed.

Section C – The work of the IMB

BOARD STATISTICS	
Recommended complement of Board members	20
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	7
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	5
Total number of visits to the establishment	432
Total number of segregation reviews attended	940

Section D – Applications to the IMB

Code	Subject	Current reporting year	Previous reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	3	17
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives and earned privileges, sanctions	1	0
C	Equality	4	1
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	6	20
E 1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection restrictions	3	12
E 2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	6	11
F	Food and kitchens	4	5
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	16	31
H 1	Property within this establishment	46	41
H 2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	39	30
H 3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	3	10
I	Sentence management including home detention curfew, release on temporary licence, parole, release dates, recategorisation	18	6
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	75	75
K	Transfers	1	5
	Total number of IMB applications	225	264