



Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Leicester

**For reporting year
01 February 2019 – 31 January 2020**

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Introductory sections 1 - 3

1. Statutory role of the IMB

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

Under the National Monitoring Framework agreed with ministers, the Board is required to:

- 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
- inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom authority has been delegated as it judges appropriate, any concern it has
- 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 Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT) is an international human rights treaty designed to strengthen protection for people deprived of their liberty. The protocol recognises that such people are particularly vulnerable and aims to prevent their ill-treatment through establishing a system of visits or inspections to all places of detention. OPCAT requires that states designate a National Preventive Mechanism to carry out visits to places of detention, to monitor the treatment of and conditions for detainees and to make recommendations for the prevention of ill-treatment. The IMB is part of the United Kingdom's National Preventive Mechanism.

2. Description of the establishment

HMP Leicester is an adult male local prison and serves the magistrates' and Crown courts of Leicestershire. It caters for remand and recall prisoners and those serving less than 12 months. Category C prisoners sentenced to between one and four years are transferred to HMP Ranby, and those to over four years to HMP Stocken. Over 60% of the population is from Leicestershire, with the remainder usually from the wider Midlands. The number of prisoners held increased during 2019 from an average of 307 in January to 340 in December, and the operational capacity changed to 350.

Leicester is a Victorian prison built in 1874, behind a gatehouse dating from 1825, and it occupies a site of three acres, close to Leicester city centre. A visits and administration block was added in 1990. The main residential unit is a long rectangular cell block with four galleried landings, including full integral sanitation and in-cell electricity. Usually, two prisoners share a cell. There are separate areas on the main wing for the segregation unit, the Lambert unit (for disruptive prisoners), the induction unit (for newly received prisoners) and the Parsons unit (for enhanced prisoners). Vulnerable prisoners are housed in the Welford unit, which is in a separate building, with the healthcare facility. Prisoners undergoing management of substance misuse are fully integrated on the landings. Other buildings on site include those housing reception, learning and skills, workshops, the gym, the multi-faith room, the chaplaincy, the IMB office, and legal visits. There are outdoor exercise areas.

Service providers:

Healthcare – Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, commissioned by NHS England (Midlands and East)

Dental care – Time for Teeth, commissioned by NHS England

Integrated drug and alcohol treatment services (IDTS) – Turning Point Leicester and Leicestershire

Education and skills – Milton Keynes College, replaced in April 2019 by PeoplePlus

Library services – Leicestershire County Council

Community rehabilitation company (CRC) – Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire and Rutland (DLNR) CRC, owned by the Reducing Reoffending Partnership, which comprises St Giles Trust, Ingeus UK and Change, Grow, Live (CGL)

Escort Contractor – GEOAmey

Catering suppliers – Bidfood

Maintenance - Amey

3. Executive summary

3.1 Background to the report

This report presents the findings of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Leicester for the period 1 February 2019 to 31 January 2020. Evidence has been drawn from observations made on regular rota visits, from informal contacts with prisoners and staff in all areas of the establishment, from dealing with prisoner applications, from incident monitoring, from scrutinising records and data, from targeted monitoring of particular areas and processes and from attendance at a range of meetings in the prison. The data in this report are locally collected.

3.2 Main judgements

Leicester Prison is a well-run establishment. There is strong leadership by the energetic and strategic thinking Governor, supported by a hardworking senior management team (SMT) and an engaged body of staff. Opportunities are constantly sought to improve the day-to-day experience of prisoners and to foster a rehabilitative culture.

How safe is the prison?

The population rose by about 30 prisoners during 2019, which may account for some of the increase in the number of incidents noted in this report. However, the Board felt that the establishment remained safe. Induction processes improved, and a debt strategy was introduced for the early days in custody (see section 4.1). Although levels of self-harm increased, its management was good and there was a more strategic approach to those prolific in this behaviour (see section 4.2.1). Violent behaviour increased but was well managed (see section 4.3.1), order and control was good (see section 4.5), and the use of the Lambert unit increased the safety of the prison as a whole although the intervention programme needs to be improved (see section 4.3.2). The availability and use of new psychoactive substances (NPS) continued to fall (see section 4.6) and the security department put in very strong performance (see section 4.7). Prisoners reported feeling safe (see section 4.3.4).

How fairly and humanely are prisoners treated?

The Board believes that prisoners are treated fairly and with respect. There is a predictable regime, and its delivery was a priority, even when staffing was stretched because of disruptive and challenging prisoners. Time out of cell is reasonably good (see section 6.4.2), and prisoner consultation is excellent (see section 5.1.5). Capital investment has somewhat improved decency and living conditions (see section 5.1.3). However, the accommodation in the segregation unit remains very poor (see section 5.2.1), and the Board judged that two mentally ill prisoners necessarily held there while awaiting transfer to a secure hospital suffered inhumane conditions (see section 6.2.1). The Board was also concerned about fairness for a prisoner detained on an IS91 for over 12 months (see section 5.4.3).

How well are prisoners' health and wellbeing needs met?

The healthcare team has continued to deliver a very good service, with some innovations, and is appreciated by prisoners (see section 6). Drug rehabilitation services are similarly efficient and well regarded (see section 6.5). Prisoners are supported by an energetic chaplaincy team (see section 5.5), by peer advisers, mentors and Listeners, and by key workers (see section 5.3). Staff-prisoner relationships are very good (see section 5.3). The library (see section 7.1.2) and the programme of cultural enrichment activities (see section 7.1.3) contribute effectively to prisoner wellbeing.

How well are prisoners progressed towards successful resettlement?

The delivery of the new education contract from April 2019 caused concern, although remedial actions were in place at the end of the reporting year (see section 7.1.1). Training opportunities were increased (see section 7.2). Phase 2 of the Offender Management in Custody programme was successfully introduced (see section 7.3), and the Reducing Reoffending Partnership received an 'outstanding' rating for implementation of the enhanced 'through-the-gate' (TTG) specification across the East Midlands (see section 7.5.1).

3.3 Main areas for development

TO THE MINISTER

1 COVID-19 measures

Although outside the reporting period, the Board wishes to inform the minister that the restrictions imposed by the measures to combat COVID-19 were carried out in a fair and humane manner, with prisoner welfare the first concern. There was a consistent regime, allowing daily telephone contact with the family and regular exercise for each prisoner. It is to the credit of all concerned that during the first six weeks of the public lockdown (to the time of submitting this report) the prison was settled and prisoners accepting of the situation.

The Board is anxious to be reassured that when restrictions are eased there will be no loss of the planned capital improvement programme (see section 5.1.3), which will improve the decency and safety of the accommodation and allow more space to be brought into use for purposeful and rehabilitative activity. Similarly, the Board hopes that the planned additional security measures (see section 4.7), which will improve safety, will still go ahead.

Is the minister able to offer reassurance on these matters?

2 Staff assaults

When serious assaults on staff are referred to the police and the courts, the process is slow and the sentences awarded are variable (see section 5.2.6).

The Board asks if the minister is satisfied that the management of those prison officers subjected to assault is fair, and comparable to that for other public servants.

3 Foreign national offenders held under IS91

The Board believes that the present system of holding foreign national prisoners in prison for many months after their sentences have expired, under immigration powers on an IS91, is unfair (see section 5.4.3).

The Board asks the minister to consult with the Home Office minister to review this process.

4 Transfer of the seriously mentally ill

Although the numbers are small, and the Gatekeeping process has improved, the Board has still had to report that two prisoners were held for a long time in inhumane conditions with deteriorating mental health while waiting for secure hospital accommodation (see section 6.2.1).

In his reply to the Board's previous report, the minister stated that 'NHS England and NHS Improvement are currently working with the Quality Surveillance Team internally to provide assurance as to the quality of the prison mental health services. National audits have now been undertaken to review the processes and gain a better understanding of issues. The Prison Transfer and Remission Guidance (2011) has been reviewed and will go out to public consultation.....A patient consultation has also been commissioned'.

The Board would like to know if the outcome of this work is available and whether it has led to any increase in secure mental health provision.

5 The performance of Amey

Last year the Board reported the problems with Amey Facilities Management, and the minister's response acknowledged the problems and indicated that changes had been made to the company's management structure and resourcing and that there would be a positive approach to the first-time fix of reactive repairs. Planned changes in the commercial department would produce an improvement in receiving estimates for reactive tasks and project work.

During 2019 the Board was pleased to see the rapid response of the local Amey team to urgent repairs, but other aspects of the service remained unsatisfactory (see section 5.1.2).

The Board would like the minister to be aware that there are still ongoing concerns.

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

1 Segregation improvements

The delays in improving the accommodation in the segregation unit have been of great concern to the Board in this reporting year (see section 5.2.1).

The Board asks that the Prison Service regard this as a priority for investment during 2020.

2 Lost property

Loss of prisoner property between establishments continues to occur (see section 5.7).

The Board raised this last year and was told that a Ministry of Justice-led project was taking place during summer 2019 to review existing property processes, with the expectation that a new prisoners' property policy framework would be published later in 2019.

The Board wonders if the new framework is available, and if so what difference it will make to the prisoner who asks the Board to help him when his complaints about loss of property, submitted through the usual establishment channels, have not been successful?

TO THE GOVERNOR

The Board is very supportive of the Governor's efforts to:

- improve decency in the whole estate, especially in the segregation unit
- develop the Lambert unit and its rehabilitative regime (see section 4.3.2)
- hold contractors to account, in particular Amey (see section 5.1.2) and PeoplePlus (see section 7.1.1).

The Board would welcome a re-invigoration of the 'equality and diversity' function.

3.4 Progress since the last report

1 Capital investment

The concerns about decency because of leaking roofs, poorly fitting windows, defective floors and a failing heating system have been accepted, and the Board is

pleased to report the allocation of capital funding to start to address these problems during 2020 (see section 5.1.3).

2 Timing of resettlement plans

Last year the Board raised concerns about the value of time spent in completing the basic custody screening tool 2 (BCST 2) within eight days of reception for those prisoners about to serve a long sentence. The minister replied that resettlement processes were being redesigned and that pilot studies were in progress.

The Board was pleased to see that the new enhanced TTG specification model introduced in April 2019 still deals with immediate and long term resettlement needs but removes the requirement for BCST 2 to be completed within eight days of reception for those with over four years to serve. The Board also welcomes the removal of unnecessary duplication of BCST1 data for some prisoners.

Evidence sections 4 – 7

4. Safety

4.1 Reception and induction

After a trial period, prisoners and staff felt that the subterranean induction unit was a gloomy and unwelcoming area for new arrivals, particularly those experiencing their first time in custody, and the accommodation was swapped with the Parsons unit with benefit. Although Parsons' prisoners were disgruntled, there is still a waiting list for that unit.

During 2019 a high number of new receptions meant that prisoners had to be moved on to the main wing before the five day programme was completed, and some prisoners were overlooked or refused to attend. In September a more successful timetabled three day rolling programme was introduced. It is delivered by peer mentors and staff and covers healthcare, education, chaplaincy, gym and the library and ensures completion of the BCST 1 and 2. There is better tracking of attendance and there are weekly assurance checks by managers. Unfortunately the problems in education delivery (see section 7.1.1) meant that the nine places allocated daily for education induction were not always filled, and this resulted in a significant backlog sometimes numbering over 60 men, which led to delays in the allocation of activities and paid employment. This was being urgently addressed at the end of the reporting year.

Prisoners raised two issues relating to early days in custody with Board rota members and peer mentors, and in the regular prisoner forums and in a specially convened debt forum:

- some newly admitted prisoners lacked supplies and could wait up to two weeks until their first canteen delivery
- some lacked funds in their spend account for PIN telephone credit and items such as vapes.

These led to borrowing and debt, and in turn to an increased risk of bullying and self-harm.

Improvements were in place by the end of the reporting year. While first canteen delivery is awaited, early days packs are available for purchase, and these can include groceries, vapes and PIN credit. Prisoners are given a small payment for attending the induction course, and can in addition apply for two advances of funds during the first two weeks in custody, with the money gradually recovered after a further interval of two weeks.

4.2 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody

Safety is a high priority in the establishment, and there is a 'whole prison' approach. A very effective safety intervention meeting is held weekly and attended by all departments, to discuss: incidents from the past week, all prisoners held in the segregation and Lambert units, individuals at risk of self-harm or on violence management interventions, self-isolating prisoners, cell sharing risk assessments

and safeguarding issues. There is good multidisciplinary discussion, and a strategic plan for each individual.

4.2.1 Self-harm

Levels of self-harm increased during 2019, with a total of 471 incidents, compared with 383 in 2018. The number of prisoners involved, however, was 219. A review of the HMP Leicester population for December 2019, when 36 incidents were recorded, showed that 16 prisoners had self-harmed, 248 never had, and 95 had a previous history. There were two prolific self-harmers (a prisoner who self-harms 20 or more times during a 12 month period) and four repeat self-harmers (a prisoner who self-harms more than once during a seven day period).

All of these prisoners were managed by the assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) process, but additional work was done during the reporting year, with the support of the regional adviser, to analyse prolific self-harming behaviour. This mainly involves white prisoners aged between 21 and 29 years, and usually involves cutting, most often superficial and the opening of old wounds, but which is sometimes life threatening. The safer custody team, together with the Listeners and peer advisers, held three prisoner forums - two focussing on self-harm and one on the experiences in custody of this younger age group. The consensus was that prolific self-harmers often show manipulative and goal-orientated behaviour, sometimes for extra vapes or telephone credit; that such prisoners need to agree to an individual management plan, setting clear boundaries for entitlements; and that staff need to take a firm and consistent line.

Unfortunately serious self-harm was inflicted by 35 prisoners in 2019, compared with 27 in 2018, and there were some 'near misses', usually involving ligaturing or deep cutting, averted by the prompt actions of staff, including successful cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Six prisoners were admitted to hospital and 16 treated in the accident and emergency department, compared with four and 14, respectively, in 2018.

4.2.2 The ACCT process

A total of 426 ACCT documents was opened in 2019, compared with 418 in 2018, and 102 were closed at first review after 24 hours, indicating a cautious approach. The number open on any day varied from five to 23 (compared with four to 30 in 2018), but was most often between 10 and 17 (compared with 12 to 18 in 2018).

ACCT reviews are properly timetabled and attended by a mental health nurse. The Board attended a number of them, and found these to be well conducted. Leicester was a pilot site for ACCT version 6 documentation from February for four months, and the Board found this version more user-friendly and prone to fewer omissions. The monthly safer custody meeting has become more strategic, with data interrogated for possible action, rather than just reported.

A dedicated safer custody telephone line is available for members of the public who are concerned about a prisoner's welfare. These calls are properly logged and promptly followed up by a check with the prisoner, and appropriate action is taken.

There were 37 episodes of constant supervision (suicide watch), compared with 22 in 2018, occupying a total of about 352 days, with an average time for each prisoner of nine days and a range from a few hours to 93 days.

During 2019, the chaplaincy continued to provide a DistrACCTion group. This offered an hour each week of low-pressure social time away from the main wing for prisoners on open ACCTs, and those self-isolating or judged to be coping less well, identified through the safety Intervention meeting. It is attended by about six prisoners each week and a Listener, and is a valuable additional support.

4.2.3 Deaths in custody

The Board regrets having to report four deaths in custody during the reporting year. All appropriate and legally required procedures have been followed and the determination of an Inquest is awaited.

4.2.4 Listeners

The Board is pleased to see continuing strong support for the Listeners and appreciation of their work. The Samaritans provide training, visit weekly to provide group support, and, with Listener representatives attend the safer custody meeting. There are usually between six and 10 Listeners in post, and they fill a duty rota and also provide a good deal of informal support to prisoners. At the end of the reporting year Listeners and peer advisers were involved in a trial project to 'meet and greet' new arrivals in reception and to strengthen informal contacts with prisoners on the induction unit.

The recording of contacts is in line with the Samaritans national policy. During 2019 there were, on average, 50 calls per month, lasting typically half an hour, and mostly accommodated in the Listeners' suite. The Issues raised remain confidential, but were most frequently related to mental health, self-harm and family matters. Samaritans telephones are also available for prisoners to use, free of charge, on request.

4.3 Violence and violence reduction, self-isolation

4.3.1 Violence and violence reduction

The establishment, again, had to deal with some very challenging behaviour. During 2019, violent incidents averaged 105 per month (compared with 90 in 2018). The category with the highest total was threatening behaviour, with 340 occurrences (153 in 2018). There were 300 episodes of damage to prison property and accommodation (255 in 2018), particularly in the segregation unit, and this was a repeated behaviour for a few individuals. There were eight episodes of fire setting and the fire brigade attended on five occasions (compared with four and three, respectively, in 2018).

There were 133 prisoner-on-prisoner assaults (compared with 104 in 2018), and the number of fights was 47 (50 in 2018). Both were usually related to family or 'outside' gang issues or 'inside' debt. Every effort was made to act on intelligence received and to separate or transfer antagonists out but, despite this, some prisoners received very serious injuries, with three requiring hospital admission (the same number as in 2018), and 14 attending the accident and emergency department (compared with 11 in 2018). Referral to the police was discussed with the victims, and support was offered.

There were 103 assaults on staff (compared with 79 in 2018), although most were low level, including barging and pushing. However 18 were serious, and included biting, stabbing, spitting, punching and kicking, and all of these were referred to the police or the independent adjudicator (see section 5.2.6).

The challenge, support and intervention plan (CSIP) process was used throughout 2019 to identify prisoners who posed a risk to themselves or others, and up to 19 had a plan in place at any one time, and were accommodated on the Lambert Unit if appropriate.

4.3.2 The Lambert unit

Up to 11 prisoners are housed in this small unit adjacent to the segregation unit. The intention is that they receive, in addition to a standard regime and a CSIP plan, a series of interventions over a two- to three-month period from the 'Time Wise Bite Sized' programme, with trained officers delivering the one-to-one sessions, overseen by a senior psychologist. The aim is to modify disruptive or violent behaviour and for the prisoner to reintegrate successfully back into normal location and activity.

Unfortunately, during 2019 the unit seemed to lose direction. Board rota members had occasion to report that prisoners were unsure of their progress and of what was expected of them, and they seemed not to have enough to do to occupy their time. Staff rotations and pressure on staffing during the summer meant that insufficient officers were trained and interactions were not always purposeful.

The regime was reviewed and changes were introduced during September, so that prisoners were encouraged to attend education on the afternoons they were not timetabled for 'Time Wise', and individual management plans were agreed for progression off the unit. Before this could be fully effective, there was an episode of concerted vandalism and the participants were transferred out. A formal investigation was performed by the Governor of another prison, and the recommendations were being implemented at the end of the reporting year. Management and staff training were to be strengthened, and the progress of prisoners and outcomes against a clear exit strategy were to be better defined and evaluated.

The Board remains supportive of the aspirations of this unit and believes that despite the problems during 2019 the Lambert unit made a valuable contribution to the overall safety of the establishment. Focussed monitoring will continue over the coming year to ensure that the planned changes are successfully embedded.

4.3.3 The management of those who self-isolate

Self-isolating prisoners are those who choose not to mix with other prisoners or to come out of their cell, except for essential purposes. The reasons cited usually relate to debt or conflict with other prisoners, but are sometimes personal. Those wishing to self-isolate are properly assessed and have an agreed written management plan and an assigned key worker. They are reviewed personally by the head of residence weekly and discussed at the daily briefing and the weekly safety intervention meeting. During 2019 there were between six and 10 self-isolating prisoners at any one time. The Board did a spot check during the year, and found that paperwork and processes were satisfactory, and there was good staff contact.

4.3.4 Feeling safe

A zero-tolerance policy was strictly adhered to and all violent incidents, however low level, were recorded and actioned, an approach which the Board supports as it reduces the risk of escalation. However, the statistics give the impression that HMP Leicester is more violent than its comparator group of prisons. In fact, staff were very good at maintaining order and control, and reacted promptly when an incident occurred, and those who were violent or disruptive were usually managed in segregation or the Lambert unit.

The Board believes that the prison felt safe for the mainstream population. This was supported by:

- attendees at the younger prisoners forum (see section 4.2.1)
- respondents to 'experience at the servery' in the food survey (see section 5.1.4), who reported that they felt safe
- a risk management audit in early 2019 by the national rehabilitative culture lead, which reported that all prisoners and staff who were questioned said that they felt safe
- the national safety team, which visited in November 2019 to review safer custody, and held focus groups with the SMT, with operational staff and with prisoners, and found that there was a good atmosphere in the establishment, that much of the reported violence was low level, and that it felt safe at Leicester and was much better than they had expected.

4.4 Vulnerable prisoners

Vulnerable prisoners, including those convicted of a sexual offence, are housed in the self-contained Welford unit in safe separation from the main wing. There is a healthcare room, and meals are brought over from the kitchens. The population on the unit tends to be older, and there is a cell and bathroom suitable for a wheelchair user. During 2019 the offender management unit (OMU) worked hard and effectively to achieve transfer of those convicted of sexual offences being inappropriately held at Leicester (see section 7.3). The number of vulnerable prisoners being accommodated elsewhere in the prison fell to five or fewer, and remained well below the numbers (up to 12) reported by the Board as a concern in its previous report. There were problems with bullying in the unit at the end of 2019, which were managed very effectively by the safer custody team. They instituted a closed-door policy for domestic and association periods for a fortnight, and held two open forums to discuss the incidents and the expectations for future behaviour.

4.5 Use of force

In 2019, force was used on 544 occasions, compared with 611 in 2018. Force was usually low-level - for example, guiding arm holds, to counter threatening behaviour or refusal to return to cell - but there was also prompt higher-level intervention to contain incidents of violence or vandalism. Eighty-three episodes were 'planned' interventions, compared with 80 in 2018, and were usually to move a prisoner to the

segregation unit or to effect transfer to another establishment, and on most occasions the prisoner behaved compliantly. A prisoner subjected to the use of force is seen that day by the duty governor and by healthcare staff.

The Board monitors the use of force committee, and was present at three meetings during 2019. All incidents are discussed and a number of cases chosen at random are reviewed in detail. This includes the viewing of closed-circuit television (CCTV), body-worn camera footage for unplanned, and hand-held camera recordings for planned, episodes, so that a judgment can be made about the circumstances and appropriateness of the use of force. Feedback is given to the staff concerned, and learning points are incorporated in the use of force training programme.

The Board has monitored both planned and unplanned episodes and found that force was used appropriately. Members also observed a number of incidents when the professionalism of staff defused a volatile situation without the need for force.

Use of the safe cell is reported in section 5:2

4.6 Substance misuse

The impressive reduction in the supply and use of NPS reported last year continued during 2019, in large part because of the continued use of the Rapiscan, which detects NPS-impregnated paper. In 2019, about 125 items of mail tested positive, including letters purporting to be Rule 39 (legal) mail opened under proper authority, some with many A4 pages of NPS-soaked paper. On occasion, legal paperwork brought in from court has tested positive, and the prisoner has been supplied with photocopies. The police liaison officer is informed of all cases.

During 2019, 'in possession' finds of NPS and cannabis numbered about 85, compared with 165 in 2018. Episodes of a prisoner 'under the influence' fell to 133, compared with 360 in 2017 and 277 in 2018. In 2019, one prisoner was attended by paramedics and five attended the accident and emergency department, compared with four and six, respectively, in 2018. All cases are referred to Turning Point, and about 10 prisoners at any one time are on the frequent urine testing programme, which continues until three consecutive tests, taken over several weeks, have proved negative. Some prisoners have found this helpful in managing their drug misuse.

4.7 Security

Security was strengthened during 2019. There were more lock-down searches carried out by the regional dedicated search team. Two dog handlers were based on site, each with a passive search dog for work in visits and reception, and an active dog for work on the wings, and a third team was added at the end of the reporting year. The police liaison officer based in the establishment now shares intelligence with three dedicated officers in the community, who form the prison crime team and have specialist knowledge of the way the prison works and its inhabitants.

Security was challenged in summer by the presence of a significant number of organised crime gang members, arrested by Leicestershire police as part of

Operation Lionheart, which focused on drug rings. There was a threefold increase in weapons finds in April and May, some allegedly held for self-defence, but this was successfully controlled and numbers fell back to normal as a result of increased searching and a weapons amnesty. More than 70 weapons and 65 mobile phones were removed from circulation during 2019, and this made the prison safer for all.

Unauthorised items, including drugs, tobacco, mobile phones and SIM cards continue to enter the prison by four main routes:

- visits: an enthusiastic and dedicated team assisted by CCTV and the dog team detected a significant number of passes. Nine visitors were detained for the police, and six arrested.

- throw-overs: eight were intercepted, some multiple and sizeable, and referred to the police, with CCTV evidence. One crashed drone was found inside the wall.

- mail: see section 4.6.

- reception: prisoners arriving at HMP Leicester from the courts, other establishments or on recall sometimes conceal unauthorised articles internally. These pose the most difficult detection problem.

The Board welcomes the recent approval for an X-ray body scanner to be installed in reception in summer 2020. Gate security for staff and visitors is also to be enhanced by the installation of metal detectors and a property X-ray scanner.

5. Fair and humane treatment

5.1 Accommodation, food

5.1.1 Accommodation

The accommodation remains dilapidated, acknowledged by the Her Majesty's Prisons and Probation Service (HMPPS) operational and system assurance group (OSAG) audit of living conditions in September 2019 with a red/amber rating. Nonetheless, the Board commends the Governor and SMT for their efforts during 2019 to improve decency for prisoners and to tackle some very longstanding problems. There were temporary repairs to flooring. The very cold conditions in winter were ameliorated by works to the heating system and the supply to each cell of a slim-line heater.

As funds became available from the Governor's empowerment budget, each prisoner was supplied with a duvet, and all cells were fitted with curtains and with lockable boxes for possessions. A start was made on a rolling programme of cell refurbishments. Decency checks were introduced at weekends and broken furniture and fittings were removed and replaced.

The higher standard of cleanliness reported last year was maintained, and litter and waste management inside and outside remained very good. There were regular painting parties and some excellent murals appeared on the landings.

5.1.2 Amey contract

Reactive maintenance and the repair of vandalised cells improved markedly during 2019, and the number of cells out of use reduced from typically 18 in April to one or two at the end of the year, with repairs usually achieved within 48 hours.

However, some maintenance and repair projects failed to occur during 2019 despite being repeatedly highlighted at the monthly contract review meetings, raised with the regional estates manager, and the subject of formal complaints from the prison to the contractor. There were also long delays for estimates and completion of works, and the need for contractors to return because the work done was not of the required standard.

Examples:

- drainage grilles in the main wing communal shower rooms remained broken for over 12 months.
- broken drain covers in the Parsons unit were repaired in November 2019 but were still awaiting remedial work several weeks later.
- the kitchen floor was reported as unsafe and requiring remedial work in January 2019, following a previous repair. After a long wait for an estimate from the subcontractor and the submission of a formal complaint, work was done in May 2019, but the repair was failing again by the end of the year.
- two of the three food waste disposal units in the kitchens failed in January 2019, and the third was unreliable, although it functioned intermittently during the year. The Governor asked for a change to the food waste contract, involving the regular collection of waste in sealed units and the replacement of containers, a change

which would also assist in reducing vermin infestations. A temporary system was introduced in July 2019, but was unsatisfactory, and Board reports frequently had cause to mention the unpleasant smells arising. The issue was raised at every contract review meeting, but even in January 2020 the situation had not been satisfactorily resolved, and dirty bins were not being replaced consistently with clean ones.

5.1.3 Capital Investment

The planned installation of in-cell smoke detectors and landing smoke extractors was postponed until 2020, but some preliminary works were done, including fire door replacement.

The Board is, however, pleased to report that the replacement of the roof of the reception building was completed in January 2020. Additional repairs and a planned refurbishment will ensure that reception becomes more welcoming and fit for purpose.

Funding has also been allocated for repairs to the roof of the gym and of the legal visits block, which will allow accommodation damaged by water ingress to be brought back into use, and create space for purposeful activity. Upgrading works to the prison heating system have also been approved.

5.1.4 Food

The kitchen staff continue to deliver food which is appetising and of very good quality, with a good menu choice and the daily provision of 2,500 calories. Prisoners often tell the Board that the food is better than that offered in other prisons and that the 'staff are cool'. The team motto is: 'we always deliver'. There is good consultation about menus via the six-monthly food survey, the prisoner forum and the suggestions book in the servery, and constructive ideas are acted upon if possible. The Board received positive comments about the menu choices offered during Black History Month and over Christmas, and the arrangements for Ramadan and Eid were efficient and appreciated. An assessment of food safety management by the regional catering team in January 2020 found a high standard, and commented on the good working relationship between staff and prisoners in the kitchen.

5.1.5 Communication

Way Out TV remains available and offers a good range of educational and motivational material, as well as local information. National prison radio (NPR) is now accessible through the TV.

Prisoner consultation is very good, and staff are responsive to prisoners concerns. Notices to prisoners are now available to read in a dedicated area near the servery, as well as being held in the library. Members of the SMT are visible at times of unlock and are approachable. Seven meetings of the prisoner forum were held in 2019, with very good staff representation, and constructive ideas were acted upon. The discussions included the incentives and earned privileges (IEP) policy, pay scales, items available on canteen, ways of avoiding debt during the early days in custody, availability of telephone calls and the speed of PIN allocation. It was frequently the case that prisoners were raising the same issues with Board members on rota visits and in applications, as with staff on the wings, and so genuine concerns were promptly highlighted.

Additional special topic forums were held with prisoners, organised by the safer custody team, to discuss self-harm, debt, weapons, issues affecting prisoners aged 21-29 years (see section 4.2.1), and bullying on the Welford unit (see section 4.4), and by the equalities team to discuss issues arising from the Lammy Report (see section 5.4.1).

5.2 Segregation

5.2.1 Accommodation

During 2019 IMB had frequent cause to criticise the decency of the segregation accommodation. The six cells remained in a very poor state, and the dilapidations were worsened by frequent episodes of vandalism and flooding. The unit remained very cold during winter. An improvement programme to strengthen the fabric and fit unbreakable furniture was put in motion, but progress was slow. New doors were ordered, with sliding observation panels to protect staff from assaults by spitting or excreta, but the wrong type were installed and were awaiting replacement at the end of the reporting year. The drainage grilles in the shower room remained broken for over 12 months.

5.2.2 Prisoners

In 2019, there were 107 episodes of segregation on Rule 53 pending adjudication, 23 of cellular confinement after adjudication and 113 on Rule 45 good order or discipline. Five prisoners (compared with eight in 2018) were held for over 42 days (range 48 – 92 days), and the Board was particularly concerned about the welfare of two who were severely mentally ill and awaiting transfer to a secure hospital unit (see section 6.2.1).

Dirty protest was more frequent than in 2018, and some episodes lasted a week or more. These were well handled and the guidelines were followed.

During 2019, segregation staff had to deal with some very challenging prisoner behaviour, particularly in June and July, when there were repeated episodes of flooding, vandalism, threats, assaults and dirty protests. Sometimes, staff spent virtually the whole day wearing personal protective equipment, because, of the six prisoners segregated, four had a four-man and two had a three-man unlock. Prisoners were treated respectfully, regardless of their behaviour, and on several occasions the Board commended the resilience of the staff in the unit.

5.2.3 The safe cell

In 2019, the safe cell was used on 13 occasions compared with 11 in 2018, most often for between two and four hours, either to prevent self-harm or to defuse violent or aggressive behaviour. For one prisoner this was necessary on six separate occasions. A body belt was used once in 2019 for one and a half hours, and the Board agreed that this was justified.

5.2.4 Adjudications

A total of 1,584 charges was laid in 2019 (compared with 1,667 in 2018), and the number proved was 798 (924 in 2018). The Board monitored 195 adjudications (compared with 186 in 2018) and found them to be fairly conducted. A member was

present for 10 of the visits of the independent adjudicator (11 in 2018). The judge continues to take a firm line, and awarded a total of 2,100 additional days (compared with 2,060 in 2018), predominately for the possession of unauthorised items, including mobile phones, weapons and drugs, and for violent behaviour.

5.2.5 Legal visits and the video link

This accommodation remains a valuable asset to the establishment and is appreciated by prisoners. In 2019 it was booked for 643 (797 in 2018) court links and 2,291 (1,820 in 2018) legal visits.

5.2.6 Referral to the police

All serious assaults on staff were referred to the police, because this is HMPPS Policy. However cases seemed to receive low priority, the outcomes were inconsistent and, in some cases, disappointing.

Of a series of 40 cases, including four sexual offences, eight were returned as 'insufficient evidence' or 'not being in the public interest'. Nine were referred to the Crown Prosecution Service, of which one is still at court and eight had a guilty plea and verdict. The delay between an offence and the verdict was several months. One prisoner who had committed multiple assaults was awarded an eight week prison sentence. One serving prisoner received a concurrent 2 week sentence, thus essentially no punishment at all, for a serious bite on an officer, a case which took 6 months to come to court.

Staff have therefore tended to prefer that the case be heard by the independent adjudicator, as this offers swifter justice, although with lighter awards. This occurred on 23 occasions. However, the victim then is noted in official records as 'returned for adjudication due to the victim's preference' and as 'failing to engage with the court'.

5.3 Staff-prisoner relationships, key workers

The very good supportive, friendly and constructive interactions between staff and prisoners have remained a strength of the establishment, and staff work hard and cohesively as part of 'Team Leicester'. The OSAG team who audited living conditions in September 2019 said that staff attitudes and relationships with prisoners were some of the best they had seen in their large number of establishment visits, and that this in itself mitigated somewhat the poor standard of the accommodation. Staff well-being is emphasised, and the People Hub manger received a regional award for her work on this.

Staffing was stretched during a challenging period in summer, both in segregation (see section 5.2.2) and in supporting at times up to four prisoners on constant supervision and, simultaneously, a number of bed watches in hospital, resulting in the equivalent of 10 full-time staff removed from normal operational duties. The regime for prisoners was continued but the delivery of key worker sessions fell for a temporary period. This was back on track at the end of the reporting year. Prisoners questioned by the Board at intervals through the year knew who their key worker was and indicated that 'staff with life experience and people skills' were the most appreciated in this role.

The increased operational capacity during the year led to an increase of about 30 prisoners accommodated, and hence more work for all, but particularly for reception, induction, healthcare and OMU staff. The very slow recruitment and training process for prison staff meant that although new staff were promised, very few reached the establishment by the end of the reporting year.

5.4 Equality and diversity

The protected characteristics applicable to Leicester prisoners as listed in the Equality Act are: race (includes nationality and ethnicity), age, disability, sex and sexual orientation, religion or belief, and gender reassignment. The Board monitors whether prisoners with any of these characteristics suffer disadvantages.

HMP Leicester holds a diverse population. Typically, 15 nationalities, 18 ethnic groups and 16 religious faiths are represented. About 30% are from a black, Asian and minority ethnic background, and 10% are over the age of 50 years.

Equality processes were strong during the first half of 2019. The equality officer continued to meet and supervise a group of up to seven peer equality representatives, who, after training, joined a rota and made themselves available to promote tolerance and awareness of diversity, and to investigate perceived unfairness, offering advice and practical help. Unfortunately, after May, a reorganisation of work patterns resulted in the equality officer frequently being allocated to support operational duties elsewhere in the prison, and the time spent in the role fell far below the 65% achieved in 2018. Good work continued in supporting individual prisoners, particularly those with limited mobility; a wheelchair user and a man relying on a Zimmer frame each told Board members that they were well supported by staff and by prisoner 'buddies'. However, the structured system of mentored peer advisers and their meetings stopped, and a lot of good ideas and enthusiasm were lost.

There were three meetings of the equalities and diversity action team during the reporting year, and equality data were embedded in other establishment meetings. However, overall, the Board felt that the function lost its way after a very strong presence during 2018, and hopes to see a renewed focus during 2020.

5.4.1 Protected characteristics

There were fewer community-linked events. The Gypsy, Roma and Traveller forums, previously held three-monthly and supported by representatives from the Leicestershire Gypsy and Traveller Equality (GATE) project, were discontinued when a key member of staff moved away. There was, however, an LGBTQ+ awareness day in August, and Black History Month was enthusiastically celebrated as usual.

In March a prisoner forum was held as a follow-up to the Lammy Report, with involvement of the equality representatives and prisoners from a black, Asian and minority ethnic background.

5.4.2 Discrimination incident report forms (DIRFS)

Forty-two DIRFs were submitted during 2019, compared with 26 in 2018. They covered the whole range of protected characteristics and were equally divided between complaints from prisoners about staff, prisoners about other prisoners and

staff about prisoners. DIRF management changed after July and the forms were allocated to members of the SMT, with each responsible for a protected characteristic, with the hope of better identifying and acting on trends. All DIRFs were investigated, and one against a prisoner was upheld, and none against staff. The deputy governor performs quality assurance checks on the responses.

5.4.3 Foreign national prisoners and those held on an IS91

Foreign national prisoners make up about 20% of the population. During this reporting year, the Board has been very concerned about those who are sentence served and held on an IS91 awaiting deportation, who numbered between four and six at any one time. An immigration officer sees each monthly, and their offender manager helps as able with information and interpreters if necessary. However, some prisoners are held for a very long time. One individual whose IS91 was served on 3 May 2019 was still detained 12 months later, and spent the whole of this period self-isolating and with poor mental health, and lacking the access to the internet, mobile phones and legal advice available to detainees held in an immigration removal centre. The establishment and the Board have been powerless to influence this situation, because it is a Home Office matter.

5.4.4 Veterans in custody

The establishment's armed forces liaison officer has been energetic in developing community links, and contacts continue with charitable organisations, including SSAFA, the armed forces charity. HMP Leicester has signed the Armed Forces Covenant, and in November 2019 received the Silver Award. In May 2019, two members of the SMT and the equality officer attended an army engagement event, to highlight the benefits of employing service leavers and reservists, who could include staff or prisoners.

5.5 Faith and pastoral support

The chaplaincy team is well led, and provides cohesive multifaith support to all prisoners, embracing 21 participating faith groups. A member of the team sees newly arrived prisoners within 24 hours, all segregation prisoners daily and those on ACCTs weekly, in addition to providing the DistrACCTion group (see section 4.2.2).

Each faith has one hour of worship and one hour of study timetabled each week, and outside leaders are invited in for the smaller faith groups. Links have been fostered with community groups, and the 'Welcome Directory' which is made available to prisoners, lists those local faith groups willing to welcome ex-prisoners and to offer them advice and practical help, which might include mentoring, employment and accommodation. The chaplaincy is also involved in the multi-agency 'Leicester Homelessness Charter'.

Typically, 20% of the Leicester prisoner population is Muslim. In 2019, the observance of Ramadan in May and Eid in August was as usual very well and respectfully managed, and appreciated by the participants. In April, two events were held - Easter awareness and Islam faith awareness - which involved cooperation between the equalities team, chaplaincy and Turning Point. These two events attracted 110 visitors altogether.

5.6 Complaints

About 1,100 formal complaint ('Comp 1') forms were submitted to the establishment in 2019, most commonly in the 'residence' category, followed by 'security', where property loss was the most common issue. The new national complaints system was adopted during the reporting year and is much more user friendly, giving a clear explanation for the prisoner about what can be expected, and clear advice for staff to follow in responding. Prisoners are pleased to receive a receipt detailing who will respond and a deadline. About 60 Comp 1A (Appeals) forms were submitted. The Board has occasion to inspect the paperwork when applications are being investigated, and can confirm that the quality of responses has improved. Participants in the younger prisoners' forum (see section 4.2.1) also confirmed that they had been satisfied with responses and their timeliness.

5.7 Property

Loss of prisoner property continues to concern the Board. In 2019, 14 applications were received relating to property lost in Leicester, compared with five in 2018. An investigation showed that sometimes there was a failure to secure the cell when a prisoner was moved out for any reason, allowing others to have access. A revised cell clearance policy was introduced during the year with good early results.

Fifteen applications were received relating to property lost on transfer from another establishment, compared with 10 during 2018. Property which does not accompany the prisoner is at risk of 'disappearing' in the system without an effective paper trail, and with neither the discharging nor the receiving prison willing to accept ownership of the problem. Sometimes a chain of establishments is involved. Often there is disagreement between the prisoner and the establishment over the loss and its value, and the 'property card' itself is sometimes missing. The Board continues to believe that an electronic system for recording property would be more reliable.

6. Health and wellbeing

The Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust has continued to deliver a very good service, with little reliance on agency staff and locums. The 28 members of the healthcare team form a cohesive and well-organised group and are fully integrated into essential establishment meetings and prisoner reviews. They liaise effectively with IDTS and safer custody, and maintain contacts with community services to aid continuity of care for prisoners on release.

The deep clean of the healthcare accommodation to meet infection control standards was not achieved in 2018. The governor continued to raise the issue at the monthly contract meetings with Amey and the regional estates manager and a quote for the work was eventually obtained in February and the work completed in April 2019.

Funding was agreed at the end of 2019 for replacement of the faulty flooring in the corridor and some treatment rooms, and the three-week work programme started in March 2020. Funding was also agreed at the end of 2019 for works to the substandard accommodation in the Welford unit medical room, with renewal of flooring and refurbishments to proceed in 2020.

6.1 Physical healthcare

Twenty four hour nursing and medical provision continues for both routine and urgent care, and staff are frequently to be seen engaging with prisoners on the landings. Primary care input increased in 2019 and now provides a morning general practitioner (GP) surgery every weekday, and a Saturday presence in the prison for urgent consultations. The advanced nurse practitioner provides an afternoon clinic every weekday. The wide range of outpatient clinics continues, with the addition in 2019 of clinics for reception, vaccination and metabolic monitoring, and the clinics for chronic conditions (hypertension, diabetes and respiratory illness) became well established. Waiting lists are comparable with those of outside providers and in some cases better. The NHS Stop Smoking Service remains available.

The hepatitis C treatment programme has been very successful. All prisoners are offered a test, and, if positive, a six-month course of oral therapy. Working with the Hepatitis C Trust, this is delivered by senior staff from the primary care team and a trained peer adviser in the establishment, and is continued in the community on release. Counselling is available for the prisoner and his family. Five or six prisoners are in the programme at any one time.

Separately, an infectious disease nurse specialist attends regularly. Streptococcus A infections were well managed. From April to October 2019, between one and five prisoners per month were treated in isolation for 48 hours, following NHS Guidance, and there were 24 confirmed cases between July and December. There was good circulation of information to prisoners and staff. Hand sanitisers were widely available. In July, when anxiety was heightened because of media reports, the Board raised prisoner concerns, and a member of the healthcare team attended the prisoner forum to explain the local situation, and additional information was circulated for reassurance.

A good dental service was maintained in 2019 with the introduction of a new servicing and payment process for equipment. At the end of 2019, the waiting list for

routine appointments was three weeks, with reserved slots available for urgent cases.

Prisoner attendance at booked appointments during early 2019 was fairly good at 70-80%, and was improved to sometimes over 90% by the introduction of a 48- rather than 24-hour notice of appointment to prisoners. This gave the opportunity to cancel or rearrange if necessary, so allowing the vacant slot to be allocated to another prisoner.

Outside hospital appointments were consistently facilitated. Substantial work has gone into the development of tele-medicine video link consultations. If successful, these could improve security, reduce costs and provide extra support for the patient because nursing staff will be in attendance for the consultation.

6.2 Mental healthcare

About 50% of prisoners self-report mental illness, and the caseload of those with moderate to severe illness is usually between 60 and 70. During 2019 there has been full staffing, with five mental health nurses, one allocated daily to triage, one to ACCT reviews and one to casework. An appointed psychiatrist attends for a full day each week, providing continuity of care. The psychological wellbeing practitioner continues to offer support and coping strategies for low-level anxiety and depression, and some prisoners are referred to the forensic psychologist. If a prisoner refuses a booked mental health appointment, a mental health nurse visits him to check his welfare.

6.2.1 The Gatekeeping process

This is the system by which prisoners with severe mental illness are transferred to secure psychiatric accommodation.

The mental health team is energetic, and continues to have excellent liaison with the commissioners. Nottingham NHS Trust is leading the development of a 'Provider Collaborative (Impact)' for secure services in the East Midlands, which is being fast-tracked by NHS England to go live in 2020, and which involves eight other providers. Since November 2019, referrals have been managed through this system, which uses a modified version of the Gatekeeping spreadsheet developed in HMP Leicester in 2016. So far, the change seems to be working effectively.

In 2019, the team identified 19 severely mentally disturbed prisoners (compared with 18 in 2018). Nine were subsequently removed from the Gatekeeping process (seven in 2018): for two, this was because their condition improved on medication, and for six because they were assessed by secure unit staff as not fitting their admission criteria, while one prisoner with only a few days left to serve was released with increased community support. In addition, one prisoner whose mental health had deteriorated relatively suddenly was detained under section 2 of the Mental Health Act on the day of release, and two were recently diagnosed and awaiting assessment.

In 2019, therefore, seven prisoners (compared with 10 in 2018) proceeded to transfer under section 47 or 48 of the Mental Health Act. Six were sentenced

prisoners, and one held on remand (compared with six and four, respectively, in 2018).

One of the seven was non-urgent and was managed on a routine waiting list. For five, the average time interval between referral and first assessment by secure unit staff was 16 days (range 7 – 27), compared with 21 days (range 0 - 39) in 2018. A human error outside the control of the establishment led to one prisoner waiting 54 days. The time then spent in HMP Leicester by these six prisoners accepted and awaiting transfer to a secure bed was an average of 29 days (range 19 – 69), compared with 34 days (range 13 – 77) in 2018. Five of the six transfers were out of area.

These are small numbers, and the process compares favourably, on the whole, with 2018. However two of these prisoners caused the Board considerable concern while they awaited transfer. Both were held in segregation; one for 67 days, with rapidly deteriorating mental health and self-neglect, giving great concern for his wellbeing; and the other for 92 days, with such violent, threatening and unpredictable behaviour that, for their own safety, staff frequently needed to unlock him with three or four in attendance wearing full personal protective equipment. Ideally, the secure hospital estate would have 'urgent access' beds available for such prisoners.

6.3 Prisoner engagement and satisfaction

A monthly healthcare prisoner forum began in August 2019, attended by prisoner representatives and staff from healthcare, pharmacy and IDTS, and prisoners' suggestions are acted on if possible. A healthcare orderly is now in post to provide peer support and information. The HMP Leicester Healthcare newsletter has been issued two-monthly since July. Regular NHS user surveys have given positive feedback, and a recent mental health peer review, to which 'challenging' prisoners were invited, reported prisoners as saying that staff 'listened, cared and were respectful.'

6.3.1 IMB applications

In early 2019, a small number of prisoners reported that, after reception, there were delays sometimes of over seven days before they could be prescribed their regular medication, occasioned by the slow transfer of information from the community. There is now a much-improved information technology system in place, which works to the required standard and timings.

In March, a change was made to the prescription of pregabalin and gabapentin, now to be managed as schedule 3 controlled drugs. The Board received five written applications and had a number of conversations with prisoners who were unhappy about the outcome of their medication review. In all instances the correct guidance had been followed, and prisoners gradually came to accept the situation.

6.4 Exercise, time out of cell and the gym

6.4.1 Exercise and the gym

Defective flooring had compromised the use of the gym during 2018, but, following a review by a structural engineer additional matting was installed as a temporary solution, and full use resumed. The Board welcomes the planned capital investment in this building, planned for 2020 (see section 5.1.3).

The three enthusiastic PE instructors continue to provide a very good service which is appreciated by prisoners. As usual, there were no applications to the Board about this area of the prison. Most main-wing prisoners attend twice a week, and they are also offered a session at the weekend. There are dedicated sessions for Welford, segregation and Lambert unit prisoners. There is a good range of activities to suit all levels of fitness, and regimes for health needs and 'rehabilitation' are tailored to the individual. There is wheelchair access. Staff sessions and fitness training are also offered. Outside exercise is offered daily to all prisoners, weather permitting.

Staff and prisoners alike joined enthusiastically in the 'Time to Change Challenge Pledge', a sponsorship event for 'Rethink mental illness'. This involved a virtual journey from HMP North Sea Camp in Lincolnshire across Europe and back, and a relay with East Midlands region prisons each contributing in turn the mileage accumulated by participants in various activities including cycling, running, rowing and walking. There was very good teamwork, and Leicester organisers reported that 'prisoners more than played their part'.

6.4.2 Time out of cell

This is unchanged, and is fairly good for those prepared to engage with the regime. There are sufficient activity places to accommodate all prisoners. Peer workers and fulltime kitchen workers have just over nine hours daily out of cell, and those in part-time activity have six hours plus mealtimes. The 10% of prisoners on the basic regime are allowed between two and three hours plus mealtimes.

6.5 Drug rehabilitation

The IDTS are delivered by Turning Point, which works closely with prison and healthcare staff and is supported by GPs from 'Inclusion Healthcare'. During 2019, about 50% of prisoners at any one time were engaged with IDTS, with about 80 on medication and 80 receiving psychosocial support. Group support sessions continued, supplemented by one-to-one sessions and in-cell work. Each prisoner is assigned a named recovery worker and is in receipt of an individualised care plan, which continues on release. An additional worker was engaged by Turning Point in 2019 to strengthen this support in the community.

About 12 prisoners at any one time are on an alcohol withdrawal programme and receive support also from Dear Albert, a local mutual aid organisation which provides weekly group sessions and ongoing help on release.

The IDTS team provides an efficient service and is well regarded by prisoners. The Board received no applications on this topic during 2019.

7. Progression and resettlement

7.1 Education, library

7.1.1 Education

Education is the main purposeful activity in the prison. In April 2019, new commissioning arrangements were introduced through the Prison Education Framework, which specifies the following as core common curriculum subjects and their common awarding organisation (COA): English and mathematics (City and Guilds), English for speakers of other languages (Gateway qualifications), and information and communications technology (OCR). These changes are welcome for Leicester, where 40% of sentenced prisoners stay less than three months before transfer out, as it should enable them to continue and complete a qualification at the receiving establishment. Courses are delivered in units of about 20 hours of study over four to six weeks, which also suits the Leicester population.

On first assessment, 80% of prisoners fall below level 2 English, and 91% below level 2 mathematics, and so the teaching emphasis is on improvement in these subjects before the prisoner moves on to other courses or paid work. Any convicted man assessed as below level 1 literacy and numeracy is mandated to attend college. Learning support is available at any time for about six prisoners with learning difficulties and disabilities, and education mentors are employed to support students and promote the uptake of education.

The education provider changed in April 2019 from Milton Keynes College to PeoplePlus, and there was an associated increase in funded places from 40 to 49 in the morning and 40 to 44 in the afternoon. Unfortunately, there were significant difficulties in delivering the new contract.

Prisoner attendance between January and March 2019 had reached, and sometimes exceeded, the target of 80 per day, and in May and June about 60 to 70 of the 93 places were filled. However, from July, attendance of 40 to 60 became more common, and the Board began to be concerned about the delivery of education.

After April there was a loss of some academic staff, and difficulty in recruiting replacements, so that by September four of 16 posts were unfilled, and this led regularly to the cancellation of three or four sessions per week. Education was not promoted strongly enough to prisoners and was not always sufficiently engaging, as evidenced by a high refusal rate. In addition learning plans and quality assessment of teaching, feedback and staff appraisals were not robust enough. A sizeable backlog also built up for the delivery of education induction and initial assessments (see section 4.1)

The Governor made education a 'whole prison' priority, and prisoner attendance was reported at every daily briefing meeting, with explanations sought for unauthorised absences. Changes were made in the delivery of students to college and to the follow-up of refusals. Performance was reviewed at the monthly contract review meetings, and in August the prison made a formal complaint to the contractor. From September, the Governor withheld the performance-related element of payment. The issues were raised with the regional head of learning and skills, and an improvement plan, with deadlines, was introduced. The Board is pleased to report that by the end

of the reporting year changes had been made and performance was beginning to improve.

When teaching was successfully delivered, prisoner outcomes were good. Between April 2019 and February 2020, 973 prisoners registered on a course and 696 completed. A total of 561 (80%) achieved a qualification, and this put Leicester in the 'green' rating of prison performance tables, in the middle of its comparator group.

7.1.2 Library

The library is very well used, and there is a welcoming atmosphere. There is always 'something going on', with an invitation for prisoners to sign up and participate.

'Storybook Dads' involves the recording of a prisoner reading stories on to a CD, which is then sent to his family. The scheme remained popular and was run by volunteers from De Montfort University (DMU). In April 2019, the library organised 'Once upon a time', a four-day storytelling project funded by the Arts Council, with recordings made for broadcast on NPR, as well as for the family. Later in the reporting year a workshop session was held for writing stories to be recorded, and in January 2020 there was an all-day storytelling workshop. Prisoners told the Board that the 'Christmas CDs' were particularly popular, and appreciated by families.

The Shannon Trust reading programme unfortunately lost mentors during 2019 and was halted temporarily. However, a change of shift patterns in December released time for four staff members to facilitate the scheme, and the recruitment of prisoner mentors was underway at the end of the reporting year.

7.1.3 Cultural enrichment activities

Enthusiastic collaboration between staff from all departments continues, and again prisoners were able to take part in a varied programme of cultural activities, many of which involved visitors from outside. The Board commends these activities, which are a welcome addition to the purposeful activities and improve wellbeing, confidence and literacy. The Listeners at one safer custody meeting said that these events 'give prisoners something to look forward to, reduce boredom and make them forget they are in prison, even if for just a short time'.

The senior community librarian and the writer-in-residence were again successful in attracting funding for a variety of projects. In May 2019, the library hosted a four-day 'Cell Block Science' project in collaboration with scientists from Leicester University, which included a question and answer session recorded for NPR, and this was followed in November by 'Your Brain on Science'. The celebration of 'Creative People from a Working Class Background' continued, with spoken word and writing projects and a book group with a published author.

The three year research project 'Potential Unlock Art in Prison – the Impact of Arts on Mental Health in a Custodial Setting' continues. This involves groups of prisoner artists, healthcare staff, the CRC, DMU and Soft Touch Arts. Prisoner artwork has again been exhibited in the Soft Touch Arts Heritage Centre in New Walks, Leicester.

The third 'Talent Unlocked Festival' was held from 4-14 November, and was organised by staff and students of the DMU Arts and Festivals Management BA course and a member of the CRC team. Community partners included the University

of Leicester, Soft Touch Arts, Drum and Brass, PRS for Music and Wayout TV. There was an art exhibition and 22 timetabled events including workshops for beat making and mixing, music making, guitar tuition, creative writing, art, drama and the spoken word. There were performances by the DMU string section, Leicester University Big Band and local hip-hop and rap artists. There were also pop-up performances in different areas of the prison, including one by Andy Pierce, a Radio Leicester DJ. The festival was reported in Inside Time, the national prison newspaper, including comments from prisoners on the very positive effect on their morale, and that they had seen 'things they had never considered before', 'things to remember' and 'things to discuss with their family'.

There were other valuable inspirational events. There was a performance by the Oddments Theatre Company, arranged by chaplaincy, and Gethin Jones, an ex-prisoner, paid a two-day visit and spoke to groups of prisoners and staff about his life story and how simple supportive conversations could make a big difference.

A conversation between the writer-in-residence and a prisoner led to an invitation to Russell Brand, who visited in November and spoke frankly about his addiction and recovery. Sixty men attended in the morning and 15 in the afternoon, together with staff from Turning Point. The visit was talked about long after the event as having made a real difference to attitudes. Inside Time reported prisoners as saying 'an amazing day, a real treat', 'the experience will stick with me and many others for years to come', and 'if he can face his addictions, then so can I'.

A weekly yoga session was introduced from January 2020.

Prisoners also played their part in the establishment's charitable activities. As well as the 'Time to Change Challenge' (see section 6.4.1), the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal was very well supported, and prisoners and staff also contributed generously to the food bank appeal of the neighbouring Holy Trinity Church.

7.2 Vocational training, work

Although not designated as a training prison, the establishment does its best to help prisoners make a start on qualifications which can be continued on transfer and which will improve the prospect of employment on release. Work opportunities were reviewed during 2019, and jobs are now linked to qualifications as far as possible. Prisoner representatives were involved in these discussions. The allocations team meets weekly, and the process has become fairer and more transparent, so that convicted prisoners are prioritised and no prisoner has more than one paid role. Including education, there are about 310 paid activity places.

Part-time work is available for prisoners in the laundry, cleaning services and the small recycling plant, which links to COA WAMITAB cleaning and facilities management services qualifications. Other roles include orderly positions in reception, the healthcare facility, the library, education classes, the segregation unit, the induction unit, the chapel and the gym. There are painters and barbers. There are full-time positions for three education mentors and five peer advisers. A redband prisoner is employed to maintain the garden and green spaces.

Up to 32 prisoners are employed in the kitchens. These popular full-time jobs are linked to levels 1 and 2 COA City and Guilds catering and hospitality courses,

including baking, food hygiene, food preparation and cooking, and food and beverage customer service. The rota includes the opportunity for prisoners to staff the Gateway Café in the visits centre. The report of a regional catering visit in January 2020 commended the very positive atmosphere in the kitchens, with staff and prisoners working together in a relaxed and respectful manner, and the Board has always found this to be the case on rota visits. This report also stated that 'PeoplePlus should be applauded for their delivery of training and the record keeping.'

The GRIP-IT workshop offers 15 morning and afternoon places, and prisoner attendance has been good. The company interrupted production because of restructuring during 2019, but work resumed later in the year.

The handyman instructor continued to deliver training in plastering, decorating, tiling and woodwork, although the opportunity was limited to four prisoners at a time because of the small size of the current workshop.

The Construction Skills Certification Scheme course is offered three times a year. Eleven certificates were awarded between April and the end of the reporting year, with five of eight prisoners successful in the November assessment.

The Governor used the prison education dynamic purchasing scheme to buy new training for prisoners. A three week long 'Customer Service and Barista' course was delivered by Redemption Roasters in September, in which seven men were trained, one of whom was offered an interview on release. The course was repeated successfully in October, when six prisoners graduated, and in January.

7.3 Offender management and progression

Phase 2 of the Offender Management in Custody model was successfully rolled out in October 2019. A senior probation officer is in post, and those prisoners sentenced to over 10 months have a prison offender manager (either a prison or a probation officer), who liaises near the time of release with a community offender manager (a probation officer). The team supports prisoners and key workers with a drop-in session on the wing. Only five applications to the Board in 2019 related to sentence management, and four had already been dealt with when members made first enquiries

During 2019, the staff in the OMU worked hard and effectively to transfer out more than 40 category B prisoners who were inappropriately housed at Leicester, as well as some longer-term category C prisoners. OMU staff, probation officers and the CRC resettlement team are housed in the same office area, thus facilitating a coordinated approach.

7.4 Family contact

The 'email a prisoner' scheme and prisoner voicemail are in place, and prisoners have been satisfied on the whole with telephone access, although there have been some delays in PIN allocations.

'Storybook Dads' and storytelling projects have been successfully provided by the library (see section 7.1.2).

Prisoners continue to comment appreciatively to the Board and through the prisoner forum about the visits hall, ('The Gateway') which has an airy and welcoming environment and a well-used children's play area. Visit sessions are staffed by a dedicated group of officers and there is a cafe with a good range of refreshments, staffed by prisoner kitchen workers (see section 7.2).

Council-funded 'Family Visits' courses continued and included a family day in October 2019 for 10 families and a Christmas family day on 23 December. A family day was held in May for one adult visitor and children under 18 years of age without the need for the prisoner to attend a course first, and in July there was a family day for prisoners on the IDTS programme.

A family engagement worker is in post, provided by the Prison Advice and Care Trust (PACT) as part of the family services contract, to help individual prisoners to keep in touch with their children by liaising with the family and with social services. PACT is also developing a 'Coming Home' programme to help prepare prisoners for family life after release.

7.5 Resettlement planning

7.5.1 DLNR CRC

The new through the gate (TTG) enhanced specification was introduced in April 2019. The CRC already had most of the advanced processes in place, and in the TTG inspection in January 2020, the Reducing Reoffending Partnership, which owns both the Staffordshire and West Midlands and the DLNR CRCs, was scored 'outstanding'.

The CRC is well embedded in the establishment and well regarded by prisoners. The hardworking case workers are proactive, seeking out prisoners and holding a weekly drop-in service on the wing. There are specialist team members who deal with specific areas such as finance and accommodation, and there is very good liaison with community services. One case worker received the 2019 National Probation Award for Change and Innovation.

During 2019 four St Giles prisoner mentors were employed and working towards level 3 City and Guilds qualifications in information, advice and guidance.

7.5.2 Finance and debt

During 2019, the highly regarded full-time finance officer each month assisted an average of 75 prisoners by contacting and negotiating with about 40 creditors (30 in 2018), and addressed about £60,000 of reported debt (compared with about £30,000 in 2018). He continued to deliver money management and budgeting courses to groups of prisoners and to offer ongoing support for local prisoners after release, through an advice workshop in the community.

About 12 prisoners each month (compared with 13 in 2018) were enabled to open a bank account, usually with HSBC. Some prisoners used the services of the

Clockwise Credit Union. There are strong links with the Jobcentre Plus coach, who advises about job applications and work experience as well as assisting with benefits claims. Universal credit cannot be set up while in prison, but some vulnerable prisoners are met on release and assisted with a claim for an immediate advance.

7.5.3 Release planning

Since March 2019 all prisoners released from HMP Leicester have been supplied with an identity card, to enable them to progress in seeking accommodation, employment and benefits. The required copy of their birth certificate was funded for a number of necessitous prisoners by a donation from Rebecca Hussey's Leicester Prison Charity.

The CRC has continued to engage with agencies and partners in the community, and to invite them into the prison to meet clients at a variety of workshops and events. Resettlement fairs have been held at intervals, allowing groups of around 50 prisoners within 12 weeks of release to access help directly.

During 2019 the pre-release courses 'Restorative Justice' and 'Foundations of Rehabilitation' started.

7.5.4 Accommodation

This remains the greatest challenge for successful resettlement. The proportion of prisoners housed on release has fallen to 60%, compared to 82% in 2018 and 90% in 2017.

Considerable support is available to those who declare themselves homeless. Since June 2019, advisers from Leicester City Council Housing Options have attended the establishment regularly to meet those local prisoners in the greatest need. The CRC has appointed a St Giles Trust worker to 'meet and greet' certain prisoners at the gate on the day of release and to help them with their ongoing arrangements. The CRC housing and welfare officer provides ongoing support in the community.

There is some accommodation available for ex-prisoners through a number of charitable organisations. The Bridge (Loughborough) offers up to nine months supported accommodation, and Carpenter's Arms can support 12 prisoners for drug and alcohol rehabilitation. Action Homeless and the YMCA (for 18-25 year olds) also work with Leicester City Council Housing Options to offer accommodation. There is however overall a shortage of accommodation, and the Board has been told that this has worsened over the past five years because of the closure of hostels and the loss of around 250 beds.

There is a lot of goodwill in Leicester for homeless and rough sleepers, and practical help from charitable organisations including Help the Homeless, the Salvation Army, 'Number 5' (Hill Street) and The Bridge Rough Sleepers programme. However those prisoners who reoffend and return to prison frequently mention lack of accommodation as a contributory factor.

7.5.5 Employment

The charity Leicestershire Cares has two projects to increase employability for ex-prisoners: the Wire (Working in Rehabilitation and Employment) project, which supports and mentors prisoners in a two-week unpaid placement with a local employer, and UP (Unlocking Potential) for the 18-25 year old age group, which is a six-week programme. The CRC offers employment, training and education (ETE) support in the community.

At the time of release, about 10% of prisoners during 2019 reported that they had a job or work placement to go to, compared with 5% in 2018. Longer term data suggests this number is lower six weeks later, although its accuracy depends on input into the N-Delius system, which is not yet of proven reliability.

7.5.6 Reducing reoffending processes

During 2019 there were two changes of head of reducing reoffending, and fewer meetings were held to coordinate the good work being done by the groups in the reducing reoffending function, which includes healthcare, IDTS, education, chaplaincy and the CRC. A new strategy was introduced at the end of the reporting year, and the Board hopes that regular multidisciplinary meetings will resume. Although at present only about 25% of prisoners received at HMP Leicester ultimately have local release, this is likely to increase in future, with the re-designation of HMP Leicester as a local prison with a 45% remand and a 55% resettlement function, and so strong reducing reoffending and rehabilitation services will be even more necessary.

8. The work of the IMB

Board members are made welcome in all areas of the prison, and access to prisoners is readily facilitated. Two members make rota visits each week and reports are prepared promptly and circulated to the Governor and thence cascaded to the SMT. It is reassuring to the Board that concerns are generally already known to the establishment through staff and prisoner pathways, and solutions sought if possible. The role of the Board is explained during the induction process by staff and peer mentors, and by members as they make their way round the small estate. Informal prisoner contacts and conversations are frequent.

During 2019, one member attended the IMB New Members course, and one the IMB Annual Conference. The Board was represented at each East Midlands Regional Chairs meeting. Members hosted a visit from IMB Peterborough in March and IMB Sudbury in June, and visited IMB Peterborough in December.

In the half-hour training session held before each Board meeting, the respective head of function updated the Board on education and skills training, the work of the OMU, the management of foreign national prisoners, safety and CSIP management, and business assurance and prison performance, and there were presentations from the equality officer and from the IMB regional representative for the East Midlands. Two members attended the establishment's anti-corruption training.

Members continued to monitor prison meetings, including safety intervention, safer custody, reducing reoffending, equalities and diversity action team, and use of force, as well as the daily briefing and staff meetings.

A member gave a presentation about the work of the Board to a group of second-year criminology students at the University of Leicester in March 2019.

During the reporting year, three members left, one because of reaching tenure. Three new members were recruited. The IMB clerk was rotated to new administrative duties in April, and the Board thanked her for her help over the past four years. The Board was pleased that her successor was enabled to take up duties straightaway.

Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	15
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	12
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	12
Total number of visits to the establishment	329
Total number of segregation reviews attended	Figures not available

Applications to the IMB

Application boxes are available in the induction unit, Welford unit, Lambert unit, segregation unit and Parsons unit and on the second floor landing of the main wing.

Code	Subject	Previous reporting year (2018)	Current reporting year (2019)
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	5	10
B	Discipline, including adjudications, IEP, sanctions	2	5
C	Equality	2	2
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	4	1
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection restrictions	8	12
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	3	6
F	Food and kitchens	0	1
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	8	16
H1	Property within this establishment	5	14
H2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	10	15
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	2	8
I	Sentence management, including HDC, release on temporary licence, parole, release dates, recategorisation	7	5
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	7	16
K	Transfers	4	8
L	Miscellaneous, including complaints system	2	12
	Total number of applications	69	131

The issue had already been resolved before IMB spoke to the prisoner in 43 cases, and advice was given to follow the prison complaints procedure in 28. For 33 cases, the Board took forward the application immediately, without requiring the prisoner to follow the establishment's procedure first, and these were the occasions when Board intervention seemed to make a difference.



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