



Annual Report
of the
Independent Monitoring Board
at

HMP Erlestoke

for reporting Year
1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020

Published
August 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 Establishment	6

Evidence Sections

4	Safety	7
5	Equality and Fairness	9
6	Segregation/Care and Separation Unit	11
7	Accommodation (including communication)	12
8	Healthcare (including mental health and social care)	13
9	Education and Other Activities	15
10	Work, Vocational Training and Employment	17
11	Resettlement Preparation	18

C	The Work of the IMB	21
D	Applications to the IMB	22

A 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 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

The COVID-19 outbreak has had a significant impact on the Board's ability to gather information and discuss the contents of this annual report. The Board has therefore tried to cover as much ground as it can in these difficult circumstances, but inevitably there is less detail and supporting evidence than usual. Ministers are aware of these constraints. Regular information is being collected specifically on the prison's response to the pandemic, and that is being collated nationally.

Main judgements

Are prisoners treated fairly?

Regular attendance on the wings prior to lockdown, discussions with prisoners, participation in prison meetings and in particular Prisoner Council Meetings, liaison with the Chaplaincy, attendance at adjudications and general observations satisfied the Board that prisoners are treated fairly. However, in the last months of the reporting year the prison's monitoring of equality and diversity was less effective (see paragraph 5.2).

Are prisoners treated humanely?

For the most part prisoners are treated humanely. The end of the reporting year saw the early days of lockdown. Senior management took positive steps to ease the burden by enhancing time out of cells in excess of the norm seen in other prisons. Further, regular bulletins from management and regular attendance by them on the wings helped to reduce tensions in difficult times.

Healthcare meets most required standards although the waiting time for routine GP appointments is unsatisfactorily long (see paragraph 8.6) and the limited number of escorted hospital visits allowed each week causes hardship (see paragraph 8.8).

Although ACCT procedures have improved in that healthcare attend more first reviews than previously, the situation is still far from satisfactory and much needs to be done to establish a multi-disciplinary approach to review, as a norm (see paragraph 8.5).

Poor performance on behalf of GFSL means that prisoners on occasion suffer unsatisfactory conditions such as poor shower facilities and unrepaired glazing (see paragraph 7.1).

Are prisoners prepared well for their release?

Prior to lockdown the provision of education had improved (see paragraph 9.1) and the Board noted a distinct improvement with Offender Management in Custody (OMIC) (see paragraph 11.2).

The Key Worker system still shows room for improvement in terms of management, quality control, training and mentoring (see paragraph 11.7.2).

The Progression Regime would benefit from an exclusively dedicated unit with a dedicated Prisoner Offender Manager (POM) (see paragraph 11.8.3).

Main Areas for Development

TO THE MINISTER

- GFSL continues to disappoint (see paragraphs 7.2 to 7.6). Will the Minister consider ways in which radical changes can be made to ensure a responsive and well-managed system for repairs and improvement?

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

- As reported last year, some of the fabric of the prison is ageing and of poor quality. Can plans be put in place to establish a rolling schedule of repairs and improvement? (see paragraph 7.1)
- Drugs continue to represent a problem within the prison (see paragraph 4.15). What steps are proposed to assist the prison in intercepting drugs being brought into the prison?

TO THE GOVERNOR

- You have improved procedures with regard to ACCT reviews and in particular attendance by healthcare at first ACCT reviews. However, a system that sees healthcare more frequently absent from reviews than present, is unsatisfactory (see paragraph 8.5); what do you intend to do to rectify the situation?
- Communication between Prison Reception Staff and Healthcare Reception Staff is unsatisfactory (see paragraph 8.7). Will this problem be addressed?
- The monitoring of Equality and Fairness requires improvement (see paragraph 5.2). What steps will you take to give the system the robustness that is needed?
- What steps do you intend to take to improve line management, quality control, training and mentoring for Key Working? (see paragraph 11.7.2)
- **To the Governor, and Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership Trust:** What is intended to be done to improve the waiting time for routine GP appointments? (see paragraph 8.6)

Improvements

- The establishment of a Drug Recovery Unit is applauded. (see paragraph 4.16)
- The Board is pleased to see an improvement in the provision of education. (see paragraph 9.1)
- The incidence of self-harm has decreased during the year. (see paragraph 4.5)
- The Board welcomes the improvement within the Offender Management in Custody (OMIC) system with regard to management, training and access to prisoners. (see paragraph 11.2)
- The Board congratulates management on the handling of lockdown.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

3.1 HMP Erlestoke is an adult male Category 'C' predominately rehabilitation, closed programmes prison, now designated and moving towards a prison catering 50% for rehabilitation and 50% for resettlement. It is built in the grounds of the former Erlestoke Park House. It is the only prison in Wiltshire and is situated in a rural location, some 21 miles from Salisbury, and 44 miles from Bristol and 26 miles from Swindon. The nearest Railway Station is in Westbury, some 8 miles away.

3.2 Many prisoners at HMP Erlestoke are classified as Indeterminate Sentenced Prisoners (ISP), serving life sentences and Indeterminate sentences for Public Protection (IPP) prisoners. The remaining population should be serving not less than 4 years although during this reporting year prisoners with lesser sentences have been sent to HMP Erlestoke with the intention in the coming year to create a population where up to 50% of the prisoners are accepted on a resettlement basis. In September 2018, 2 Young Offenders were transferred to the prison. This was with the ultimate aim of housing 30 such prisoners but currently numbers still remain low.

3.3 There are eight residential units; three are standard units, one of which is used for induction, and a fourth is dedicated to intervention programmes. There are four enhanced units one of which is being used to house the Progression Regime whose aim is to help ISP and IPP Prisoners provide information and evidence to the Parole Board that they can be released. The total operational capacity of the prison prior to lockdown was 524 prisoners but at the time of reporting is reduced to 494.

3.4 HMP Erlestoke focuses on the intervention programmes to address drug and alcohol issues and prisoner past behaviours. Following successful completion of the programmes it is aimed to return prisoners to their original prison, however there are times when another prison may refuse to take back a prisoner.

3.5 During the year a Drug Recovery Unit was opened, dedicated to reducing drug dependence on behalf of motivated individuals.

3.6 Healthcare services were provided by Inspire Better Health during the reporting year. Inspire was replaced as at 1st April 2020 by Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership Trust. Education is provided by Milton Keynes College.

3.7 HMP Erlestoke continues to uphold a good image in the community and the Governor and his staff keep local residents involved and informed of relevant developments.

3.8 The Board is pleased to note that the Charity "Friends of Erlestoke Prison" continues to work with the management team to provide services outside the scope of prison service budgets. The current project is to raise sufficient funds to build an all-weather sports pitch for the prison.

B Evidence sections 4 – 11

4 SAFETY

4.1 Changes to the safer custody team have not detracted from the revised team working conscientiously.

4.2 Safety intervention meetings are held weekly and safer custody meetings monthly. Attendance at the latter has been somewhat erratic but is beginning to settle; although statistical trends are reported, more could be done to identify future actions. Contributions from prisoner orderlies at meetings are encouraged.

4.3 Liaison between prison reception staff and healthcare reception staff is poor (see paragraph 8.7). This communication issue should improve when a healthcare screening room is created in the reception building – works delayed by the retendering of the healthcare contract and the subsequent lockdown.

4.4 The one-week induction schedule has suffered with low prisoner attendance particularly when the schedule's content was revised and the location for delivery was changed. This has been addressed but there remains room for improvement to achieve a seamless and professional induction. The situation continues to be monitored by a Board member who meets new arrivals every Tuesday.

4.5 The number of self-harm incidents decreased from 326 in 2018-19 to 211 in 2019-20; a reduction of 35% in direct contrast to the upward trend in national statistics.

4.6 270 ACCT documents were opened – an increase of 9% from last year. A significant number were closed within 24 to 48 hours.

4.7 The on-going issue of compliance with the mandatory requirement to have healthcare attend the first ACCT case review has improved but remains a matter of concern (see paragraph 8.5).

4.8 Listeners have provided a good service and all prisoners have access to the Samaritans. Several new Listeners have been trained replacing those who have left. Despite promotion, take-up of the Listeners' service has been notably lower than previously. Reasons for this decline are regularly monitored and challenged at the monthly safer custody meetings, to identify any trends.

4.9 Two prisoners died during the year – the first deaths at Erlestoke since 2016. One death in August 2019 appeared self-inflicted while the other in January 2020 was due to natural causes. Following the PPO's recommendations regarding the first death, actions have been implemented including the delivery of refresher training in method of entry to cells if a prisoner may be at risk. The Board commends the professional and responsible way in which the aftermath of these tragic incidents was handled.

4.10 There were 123 assaults of prisoner on prisoner and 52 assaults on staff – an increase of 35% and decrease of 11% respectively from last year. Most assaults on staff were not serious. The change in the dynamic of the prisoner population (see paragraphs 9.6 and 11.1) is understood to be one reason for the increase of prisoner on prisoner assaults. Trends are monitored and incidents are managed through the Adjudication/Incentive and Earned Privilege (IEP) process.

4.11 Violence Reduction (VR) referrals totalled 262. Bullying, debt and assaults are the main reasons for violence. The VR programme aims to support victims and initiates personal Care Plans with six such plans as at 31 March 2020 to assist perpetrators to manage anger.

4.12 There were, on average, 12 self-isolators per month. The main reasons for self-isolating include debt, fear of assault and bullying.

4.13 Towards the end of the year, 113 prisoners were designated as high risk under Cell Share Risk Assessments (CSRAs) – a 22% increase from last year. Each CSRA is reviewed every 12 months. This increase is partly due to accepting prisoners recently sentenced and places significant pressure on the establishment's capacity to accommodate single cell requirements.

4.14 Force was used on 81 occasions to the end of December 2019. Extrapolated for a full year this figure would indicate around 108 incidents at year end. The Use of Force Committee, attended by a Board member, monitors levels and types of force by reviewing CCTV/body worn camera footage and documentation to establish compliance. Any lessons learned are shared. Specific officers were accredited as PAVA trainers but PAVA has yet to be deployed.

4.15 The use of drugs and illicit substances continues to be a very significant issue. Greater use of the regional dog team, close liaison with the local police force and intelligence led searching has shown some success but more is needed. Mandatory Drug Testing has been suspended as a result of lockdown.

4.16 A Drug Recovery Unit (DRU) was opened in January 2020. The DRU remains in its early stages of development. Substance misuse services, the wellbeing team and prison staff commenced a group work approach on recovery programmes with prisoners. However, due to lockdown and the need to accommodate prisoners from other establishments, some of the DRU prisoners have had to be relocated which has led to this pro-active initiative stalling for the time being.

5 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS

5.1 Last year a sustained improvement in the monitoring of equality and fairness was noted. During the year the governor responsible for this area was promoted to another prison. Following his departure less emphasis has been placed on the monitoring of equality and fairness and although the administrator working in the department is dedicated and hardworking, he is given insufficient support. Consequently, since January 2020 limited statistics have been collected with no attempt to analyse the information obtained so as to determine whether discriminatory trends exist.

5.2 During the latter part of the year the monitoring of equality and fairness has lacked a robust regime. Previously, quarterly meetings were held with a wide attendance which included senior management, prisoner orderlies, a Board member and representatives from departments including chaplaincy. Statistical information was shared, potentially discriminatory trends could be investigated and the processing and investigation of Discrimination Incident Report Forms (DIRFs) were monitored. Although it was resolved to increase the number of meetings, since the last meeting on 14th January 2020 no such meeting has taken place and no follow-up investigations have been undertaken in respect of potentially discriminatory trends revealed from statistical information which has been gathered.

5.3 Lockdown has prevented scrutinising DIRF investigations for quality and fairness; they have not been processed as speedily as was previously the case. At 31st March 2020 there were 8 DIRFs outstanding and awaiting investigation, the oldest of which was lodged on 4th December 2019.

5.4 In total 87 DIRFs were received of which 27 were assessed as genuine (a reduction of last year's total of 31) and 59 as not genuine. Hitherto, the Board has been satisfied that rejected claims were properly excluded, the process being subject to independent audit with the Board also scrutinizing rejected complaints. With lockdown such scrutiny has not been possible. However, the administrator responsible for the DIRF process has proved trustworthy and there is no reason to believe that DIRFs have been improperly rejected. Further no applications have been received from prisoners complaining about the DIRF process.

5.5 DIRFs judged to meet criteria for investigation were as follows:

Prisoner on Staff	18
Staff on Staff	4
Staff on Prisoner	3
Prisoner on Prisoner	2

Genuine complaints are subject to investigation but the specific results of investigations have not been disclosed although it is said by prison staff that 8 of the 27 complaints have revealed discrimination. In one case a prison officer found to have made racially abhorrent comments was instantly dismissed, reassuring the Board that racial discrimination is taken seriously.

5.6 The prison complaints process, other than DIRFs, has been observed to be overly bureaucratic and slow, leading to unnecessary frustrations among prisoners. Prisoners appear to know how to escalate complaints although the ability ultimately to complain to the ombudsman is a process that many prisoners are unfamiliar with.

57 In general the IEP system appears to operate fairly with progress under the scheme monitored at the daily management review.

5.8 Previous difficulties in families arranging visits have largely been eliminated. Seating in the visits hall is uncomfortable but otherwise the atmosphere there is conducive towards successful visits with adequate arrangements for children. Family days are organised by PACT and are well attended.

5.9 The prison population - 484 at the end of the year - is multi-ethnic. In terms of religious belief, adherents to all the major religions are to be found within the prison.

The chaplaincy

5.10 The Chapel and multi-faith room are used not only for prayer but for sanctuary, peace and quiet, as well as one-to-one pastoral support. Faith studies groups are well attended and also offer help and support.

5.11 However, since lockdown, services and meetings have been cancelled which some prisoners have found difficult. Those Chaplains, who are themselves not self-isolating, are visiting prisoners in their cells regularly, and Religious events are being supported with the assistance of the kitchen staff.

5.12 In normal times the managing chaplain, together with the imam (both full time posts), ensure that all prisoners, totaling some 21 different religious faiths, meet a representative of their faith at least once a month. Chaplaincy staff also work closely with the Safer Custody Team to ensure that self-isolating prisoners, those on an ACCT or in the Care and Separation Unit (CSU) are visited and spoken with daily.

6 SEGREGATION/CARE AND SEPARATION UNIT

6.1 There has been a significant increase use of the care and separation unit (CSU) from 130 in 2018/19 to 233 prisoners in 2019/20. However, some of these were multiple attendees who served a total of 422 days between April 2019 and December 2019. There is no separation between those prisoners located in segregation for misconduct and those there for self-protection. The CSU is well resourced with staff who produce a smooth-running unit despite the potential for volatility.

6.2 35 prisoners were on an ACCT while in CSU. Of these, 16 were opened before segregation and 19 whilst in the CSU. Compared to 2018/19 when 38 ACCTs were opened, in 2019/20 there were 19, a decrease of 50%.

6.3 Whereas there were 14 incidents of self-harm recorded last year, this year figures were not recorded. Instead the figures were incorporated in the ACCT totals with no specification of what prompted the ACCT to be opened

6.4 Sometimes incidents of self-harm are not treated by staff as seriously as they should. Further the Board is concerned at the length of time that some prisoners spend in segregation; during the year there were 18 prisoners held for more than 42 days.

6.5 The infrastructure has been well maintained with a new floor and freshly painted walls. The unit is clean including the showers and toilets which are cleaned by orderlies, albeit that the toilets, constructed as they are to withstand attempts of vandalization, remain stained and unsightly. After a dirty protest, the unit is deep cleaned to acceptable standards by either trained prisoners or maintenance staff.

6.6 The Board commends the staff for their commitment and dedication whilst working in a difficult environment.

7 ACCOMMODATION (including communication)

7.1 The prison has many ageing and, in some cases, poor quality units and needs major investment to improve the standard of accommodation. Avebury wing in particular is an ageing prefabricated structure but even the more modern wings such as Alfred and Wessex urgently require attention. On Alfred there are windows missing and the showers in both Alfred and Wessex are in an unacceptably poor state of repair.

7.2 The emergence of GFSL has still not led to the improvement in routine maintenance that was hoped for. However, some improvement in the timeliness of routine repairs has been noted, although the emphasis is on reactive, rather than preventive maintenance. With GFSL understaffed it may be some time before improvements are seen. However, an historical backlog of works orders of 1500, by September had been reduced to 875, with 487 still outstanding from 2018/19.

7.3 Particularly concerning is the apparent inability of GFSL properly to manage large contracts. Thus, projects earmarked for completion in the current year, now are carried over to the following year. Although successful re-bidding has meant that funds have been reallocated, the mismanagement of projects in this way endangers allocated funding; an inexcusable state of affairs. Indeed, funding for the refurbishment of the healthcare building was almost lost when GFSL consistently failed to provide costing figures.

7.4 The Board identifies failures by GFSL senior management as the principal reason for the very poor performance of GFSL as regards the management of projects both large and small.

7.5 Deep Cleans still remain an issue. This is a contracted-out service overseen by GFSL. Often work has been poor and GFSL has had to call the contractors back to remedy unsatisfactory work - a repeating theme over a number of years.

7.6 Painting within the prison is subject to an ongoing 5-year programme. The programme is not fit for purpose in that repainting is required on a tighter timescale. Further the programme, such as it is, has been inefficiently managed with GFSL running out of paint, frustrating prisoners employed as painters.

7.7 Glazing is another concern, with some windows still requiring repair after 16 months in Silbury and Wessex wings.

7.8 There has been an improvement in cleanliness (a long-standing concern) with the employment of more cleaners and equipment and prison management is to be congratulated in this respect.

8 HEALTHCARE (including mental health and social care)

8.1 Mid-year Inspire Better Health (Inspire) the healthcare providers, made a decision to wind up. Ultimately a two-year contract was awarded to Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership Trust (AWP). Although the new contract has a start date of 1st April 2020, fears that the termination of the contract with Inspire and transfer to a new provider would lead to an exodus of staff and consequent disruption in service provision were not realised.

8.2 During the transfer process the head of healthcare was temporarily transferred to HMP Bristol. Her deputy ably managed the service in her absence.

8.3 Full staffing has been achieved within physical healthcare with the exception of one vacancy for a pharmacy technician.

8.4 The Wellbeing Team is an integrated mental health and substance misuse team. All vacancies have been filled and the section is more resilient than before. However, the high incidence of mental health and drug misuse problems among prisoners means that the team is stretched.

8.5 Last year the Board expressed considerable concern that healthcare was only rarely present at a first ACCT review although such attendance is mandated (see 4.8). On average through the year healthcare attended in just under 15% of first reviews. In October the Governor instituted an initiative aimed at healthcare attendance at all ACCT reviews. This has improved the situation with an average of 38% attendance during the 6 months to 31st March 2020. The March figure for attendance at 56.5% was better. Nevertheless, healthcare attendance at what should be a multidisciplinary review, is still very poor. The Board is satisfied that healthcare attends whenever invited but the prison service consistently fails to notify healthcare of upcoming reviews.

8.6 As anticipated, last year's reduction in GP weekly sessions from 5 to 4 has resulted in an increase in waiting times for routine appointments from 21 days to between 4 and 6 weeks. The Board considers this unacceptable. During lockdown GPs only deal with urgent appointments.

8.7 Liaison between prison reception staff and healthcare is very poor (see paragraph 4.3). Newly arrived prisoners attend the prison reception, which is physically distant from the healthcare building. They are then escorted from reception to healthcare for screening. However, the nurses are without access to NOMIS and the Person Escort Record for each prisoner is not made available to nurses. Accordingly, concerns in relation to prisoners may not be conveyed to healthcare staff. On one occasion a warning that a prisoner posed a risk as a hostage taker was not communicated to healthcare staff. There is a potential for a tragedy where relevant health related matters are not communicated. Works have been commenced to create a healthcare screening room at the reception unit and it is to be hoped that thereafter the communication issue will be resolved (see paragraph 4.3).

8.8 With lockdown, all routine escorted visits to hospital have been suspended. Prior to that the weekly limit placed on routine appointments of 10 led to the problems identified last year with doctors having to prioritise among patients with potentially equal needs and with patients repeatedly having appointments postponed when referrals considered more urgent arose.

8.9 The long-awaited refurbishment of the healthcare building has been delayed as a result of lockdown.

8.10 After lockdown Healthcare made adaptations to routines to ensure the safety of staff and prisoners. Full PPE remained plentiful, enabling nursing staff to attend regularly on the wings. However, mental health nurses remained absent on the wings. Changes in working practices were introduced including medication dispensing regimes, adapted to avoid crowds. However, the lack of face-to-face encounters with prisoners by mental health nurses led to complaints, particularly when changes to medication were made without explanation.

8.11 Apart from the deficiencies noted above in relation to GP appointments the board is satisfied that healthcare is functioning adequately.

8.12 105 complaints were lodged. The average response time was under 16 weeks which compares favourably with the NHS standard of 20 weeks. It has not been possible to investigate the nature of the complaints or the quality of responses.

8.13 Dental care which had been carried out in a satisfactory manner during most of the year was suspended in March with the advent of lockdown, with the exception of urgent appointments.

8.14 There is better liaison between the local authority as regards to social care than hitherto.

9 EDUCATION AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

9.1 The department is in a stronger position than at the end of last year. The transition of education provider from Weston College to Milton Keynes College was very smooth, and a recruitment campaign raised staff levels from 8 to an almost full complement of 19. Most education courses have been running. It has proved impossible to get a tutor for Horticulture, and there were difficulties in the provision of English which had to be covered by the Outreach tutor and sessional staff until a new full-time tutor started in January 2020.

9.2 The attendance rate remains steady at about 75% - an improvement on last year's similar figure because the prisoners are now only being counted as present once they are registered on their class rolls, and not simply because they are in the building. Successful completion of courses stands at 85% (80% last year), against a target of 87%, though the figure for English and Maths is 65%, which, in the case of Maths, is a great improvement on the 30% of last year; perhaps partly attributable to a pay rise to £1.50 per session for these core subjects.

9.3 'Turning Pages' and 'Times 2' are in operation assisted by peer mentors, and the '3/5' Maths challenge is still on offer. The department is supporting the 'Reading Ahead' scheme, though this year the emphasis is on encouraging emerging readers to participate rather than achieving high numbers with voracious readers. The Virtual Campus is finally up and running; a facility which will particularly benefit those prisoners involved in distance learning. In addition, courses are available in Art and Ceramics, Graphics, Origami, Creative Writing, Professional Cookery and becoming a Personal Trainer - though currently Ceramics is being covered by a sessional tutor and Graphics has suffered from the long-term sickness of its tutor.

9.4 The department continues to provide wider educational opportunities. Arts Council funding has been secured for a fourth annual Arts and Literature Festival ('Pinned Up at Erlestoke'), and further cooperation with Salisbury cathedral is planned for the prisoners to participate in the cathedral's 800th Anniversary celebrations. (Both ventures are, sadly, on hold due to lockdown. Hopefully, some progress may be possible in the autumn.) The cooperation with Bath Spa University has not been possible this year, but Bath Rugby are keen to provide some basic rugby skills training and work related to the psychology of sport.

9.5 The education staff are to be commended for working up to the last minute allowed by lockdown, and for providing material for prisoners to keep studying on their Units while classes are suspended.

9.6 The transition of the prison to a 50/50 Resettlement Prison will present one of the most significant challenges for the coming year. The department is already working with the careers advisors 'Prospects', and will need to create good working relationships with other resettlement providers to ensure an appropriate service for the prisoners.

9.7 The library

9.7.1 The Library provides an important service. Over 90% of prisoners join, and there are 430 regular borrowers with c 350 weekly users. The percentage of BAME borrowers reflects the ethnic mix of the prison population - with the exception of prisoners in their 30s.

9.7.2 To help ensure that prisoners are not in the library when they should be in education the library is not opened until classes have started.

9.7.3 'Story Book Dads' DVDs is popular, and the library produces 'Book Packs' (sponsored by the 'Friends of Erlestoke') for prisoners to give to their children at Visits.

9.8 The gym

9.8.1 Staffing is adequate, with 3 full-time PEIs and one in training. Nearly half of prisoners use the facilities, and the gym is open seven days per week with special sessions for the over-50s. Sessions are no longer Unit based but involve prisoners who are in the same workplace or education class. This makes it less likely that gym sessions will disrupt other activities. A new teaching qualification (Level 1 Award in Sport) is being launched.

9.8.2 The problems reported on last year with the building housing the fitness suite have been attended to, and it is once again in use. Its general condition is still poor with ageing equipment. The PEIs want to replace old equipment with new machines reflecting a transition from heavy weight-lifting towards an emphasis on fitness and team sport.

9.8.3 Supporting this aim, the 'Friends of Erlestoke' continue fund-raising to provide an outdoor all-weather playing surface. They have raised £175,000 to date, and need to reach £250,000 before the fund will be matched by a government grant - a remarkable effort.

9.8.4 The PE staff are to be commended for providing outdoor fitness sessions for the prisoners during lockdown.

10 WORK, VOCATIONAL TRAINING and EMPLOYMENT

10.1 Overview

The prison provides a wide range of work, training and employment. The number refusing to attend work has improved since last year. Education and Industries Officers monitor daily, prisoners refusing to attend education or work, with sanctions enforced where merited. The activities and numbers of prisoners participating are recorded and updated regularly.

10.1.2 The prison, before lockdown, was running 453 full-time equivalent jobs. There are 570 purposeful activity places in total. Around 26 prisoners are unemployed because of lack of work. The Head of Reducing Re-offending endeavors to source further opportunities.

10.1.3 There remains a shortage of industry instructors, thought to be due to the low pay offered, compared with the community. Particularly affected are painting and decorating, carpentry and plastering, bricklaying and horticulture.

10.1.4 The number of prisoners who were returned to their cells “not required for work” for various reasons was a concern last year. Due to lockdown improvement cannot be verified. Some prisoners leave to attend appointments in other departments such as OMIC and Healthcare and then do not return to work or education which remains an issue.

10.1.5 Lockdown has necessitated stopping most activities.

10.2 Industry opportunities

10.2.1 The establishment continues to offer a range of opportunities for piece-rate or fixed pay reward. These include orderly positions. The workshop sites have recently been reorganised to enable a better match of space to the work involved but space, and suitable sites for opportunities, is an issue.

10.2.2 The kitchens employ 16-22 prisoners but with a high turnover. The necessary security level of prisoners has been reduced to ensure sufficient staff.

10.2.3 A sewing shop was opened in March. Employing 6-10 prisoners it has made curtains for Erlestoke and other prisons.

10.2.4 The bicycle shop is now more secure with a regular supply of bikes to repair and resell, due to a contract with the Sue Ryder Charity.

10.2.5 Forklift truck training now offers a recognised qualification.

10.2.6 The ‘S and N’ workshop, which produces toiletries, struggle with inconsistency in orders with workers, around 26 in number, often being returned to their cells. Bulk Hardware employ 26 prisoners constructing various components.

10.2.7 Farms and Gardens employs around 30 prisoners, with seasonal fluctuations, and the estate continues to present to an exceptional standard.

10.3 There are no released on temporary licence (ROTL) work opportunities currently.

11 RESETTLEMENT PREPARATION

11.1 HMP Erlestoke became a 50% Resettlement Prison in early 2020. Resettlement involves two stages: the prisoner's journey through his sentence, including sentence planning and offender management; the final 12 to 18 weeks of procedures prior to release.

11.2 During the year Offender Management in Custody (OMIC), previously the Offender Management Unit, has developed in five areas as follow:

11.2.1 Probation Officers (Probation POMS) from the community now work within the Prison with the Prison POMS (Prison Offender Managers), managing OASys and sentence planning/management. Better communication due to both parties working in the same building, has improved efficiency. Consequently, the backlog of OASys reports has reduced from 90 in July 2019 to 8 as of 23rd April 2020.

11.2.2 Prison POMS now work exclusively for OMIC increasing commitment and professionalism.

11.2.3 Risk Assessment is logistically much easier with the Probation POMS working alongside the less experienced Prison POMS. The new system allows for interaction with the prisoner and connexion with the Prison POMS, which did not happen before.

11.2.4 Now, high risk prisoners are seen monthly, medium risk every 6 weeks, and low risk quarterly, as a minimum standard. Further there is a new group Induction held for new prisoners within 5 days of arrival, followed by the usual one to one in week 2. This has put structure into what was before a more random system, which frustrated prisoners with frequent complaints to the IMB. The IMB will monitor this new system, to see if it is working.

11.2.5 OMIC has seen better staff support. All POMS now receive 6-weekly supervision, with a focus on wellbeing, progression and reflection, assisting good practice and professional development.

11.3 The final stage of Resettlement commences 12 weeks before release. Resettlement support from Guys Marsh has ended.

11.4 A newly established Resettlement Hub focusses on final resettlement and consists of representatives of: Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG), Catch 22, a subcontractor of the Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC), a Department of Works and Pensions representative, and a regional team for job opportunities run by New Futures Network. The aim is for these to work together so no work on resettlement is delayed through absence.

11.5 The CRC, often viewed as an accommodation agency, can and sometimes does, much more than this. The slow response of some Community Probation Officers and the Local Council Housing teams who try to push ex-prisoners to the back of the queue for housing, remains an issue. Further problems remain over engagement with the Community Teams around handover and provision of timely licenses. When these arrive late, there is less time for discussion of release conditions.

11.6 Between June 2019 and February, 82 prisoners had been released. 35 went to permanent addresses, 38 to hostels, 1 was deported and 8 had no address recorded.

11.7 Staff-prisoner relationships and key working

11.7.1 The prison population has mostly been settled. Relationships between staff and prisoners are mainly good.

11.7.2 Last year, the Board raised issues regarding Key Working (KW): management by the Custodial Managers (CMs); quality control; refresher training; and aptitude of individual prison officers.

11.7.3 CMs now receive a weekly report on each Key Worker KWer. CM interest is seen to be variable as key worker time is not protected and operational duties take precedence. Critical appraisals of the KWer roles require improvement, both weekly and on formal appraisals (SPDRs).

11.7.4 Metrics are kept for the benefit of all CMs, recording “sessions” when prisoners are actually seen and “entries” when they are not. Quality is being monitored and training/hints delivered by the CM responsible but aptitude remains an issue to be further addressed. Centrally generated targets are not realistic as they take no account of holidays, sickness, night duties, MDTs, searching, escorts etc.

11.7.5 Key workers are now part of the prisoner’s journey. However, confidence in KW success from the perspective of CMs, staff in OMIC, as well as the prisoners themselves, remains relatively weak. Training, commitment and targets all need improvement, and the Board remains concerned about the effective capabilities of key work to date. The statistics for the last 6 months are as follows:

Month	Sessions recorded	Sessions scheduled
Oct 19	1,086	1,145
Nov 19	1,026	1,163
Dec 19	827	947
Jan 20	558	573
Feb 20	522	632
Mar 20 (first 3 weeks)	444	561

11.8 Progression Regime (PR) 2020

11.8.1 The PR caters for those prisoners serving indeterminate sentences by reason either of a life sentence or an indeterminate sentence for public protection. The purpose of the regime is to ready such prisoners for release on licence subject to satisfying the Parole Board that it is safe to do so.

11.8.2 The PR population remains at about 30, despite plans to expand to 80. Referrals are low due to stringent entry requirements. Poor understanding of the Regime among Offender Managers and staff anxiety regarding the impact of additional work of complex cases is also noted.

11.8.3 All POMS share responsibility for the PR residents. The lack of dedicated PR personnel causes problems as the PR team is not co-located, making team cohesion and training opportunities difficult.

11.8.4 The PR population is spread across two units, mixed in with those not on PR. This has a destabilising effect.

11.8.5 Success is noted through the Evidence Based Monitoring (EBM) process. Evidence of self-driven risk management, enabling residents to take responsibility for their actions and thoughts, recorded through case notes, security reports and diaries, is welcomed at parole board hearings as it demonstrates a greater chance of compliance with risk management plans prior to release.

11.8.6 During the reporting year 9 residents have successfully moved from PR to open conditions, 6 have been granted direct release, 6 chose to deselect and 9 were deselected due to poor behaviour. The average stay for those successfully completing the course is 18 months.

11.8.7 The weakness of PR lies in the perception of its aims; residents feel they should be getting more 'support' and staff feel residents should 'take more responsibility'. However, physical projects including the completion of a large functional kitchen, 12 new allotments, and plans for a community shop are positive and welcomed. A PR Residents Committee meets monthly to raise issues, chaired by an appointed PR resident.

11.8.8 The Indeterminate Sentenced Operational Support (ISOS) team have suggested that funding for the PR could be cut to operate at a capacity of 40 if numbers do not increase.

C Section – Work of Board

BOARD STATISTICS	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	13
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	313
Total number of segregation reviews attended	26

D Section - Applications

Code	Subject	Current reporting year	Previous reporting year
A	Accommodation including laundry, clothing, ablutions	4	6
B	Discipline including adjudications, IEP, sanctions	6	10
C	Equality	6	2
D	Purposeful Activity including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	4	11
E 1	Letters, visits, phones, public protection restrictions	7	8
E 2	Finance including pay, private monies, spends	6	5
F	Food and kitchens	0	4
G	Health including physical, mental, social care	9	28
H 1	Property within this establishment	16	23
H 2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	17	37
H 3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	3	0
I	Sentence management including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-categorisation	16	11
J	Staff/prisoner concerns including bullying	12	16
K	Transfers	5	14
L	Miscellaneous	3	
	Total number of IMB applications	114	175