



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

**HMP Littlehey**

for reporting year  
February 2019 to January 2020

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*Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody*

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## A Introductory Sections

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### STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB

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

### Introduction to this report

- 2.1 This report presents the findings of the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) at HMP Littlehey for the period 1 February 2019 to 31 January 2020. Members of the Board have visited the prison regularly in order that they might monitor the accommodation and facilities, observe the full range of activities, talk informally to prisoners and staff, attend meetings, review relevant documentation, examine relevant data and both investigate and respond to prisoners' concerns and complaints.
- 2.2 As this report is designed to be a short summary only, there is no requirement to mention in detail all aspects of the prison's work, and the focus is on those areas where standards are particularly high or where significant issues have arisen.

### Summary

- 2.3 Littlehey continues to be a safe, fair and decent prison. It is the largest prison in Europe for men convicted of sexual offences and 47% of its population are aged over 50 (compared with a national prison figure of 17%), and 18% are over 65. Despite this profile, Littlehey still cannot be considered the leader in management for men convicted of sexual offences or for managing older prisoners.
- 2.4 Significant numbers of prisoners are released without being effectively challenged, or increasing their own understanding, about their sexual offence and the factors leading up to it, or what they need to do to reduce their risk.
- 2.5 Much time and effort has been spent by the governor and senior management team in dealing with a range of structural and facilities issues that continue to undermine the morale of prisoners and staff alike. For the most serious of these issues, Prison Service funding has been forthcoming and progress is being made in repairing and replacing aged systems in order to provide hot water and heating to all parts of the prison. Prison managers and staff should be commended for their tactical actions to deal with the lack of hot water and heating, especially during the winter months and for the older and more vulnerable prisoners.
- 2.6 Property going missing when prisoners transfer from other establishments remains a major issue for those affected, takes up a disproportionate amount of time and effort, and is a cause of distress and frustration to both prisoners and reception staff. This issue is compounded by the fact that complaints to other establishments can take months to be answered despite the efforts of the business hub team.
- 2.7 Healthcare provision is generally of good quality but is impaired by the impact of the regime being curtailed on a fortnightly basis to allow for staff training, and also by a limit to the number of hospital appointments that can be scheduled each day.

## **Main judgements**

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### **Are prisoners treated fairly?**

Prisoners at Littlehey continue to receive fair treatment overall despite some concerns about the opportunities provided for older prisoners and the lack of a local strategy for the over-50s (see paragraphs 5.7 to 5.15).

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

Overall, Littlehey is a safe and secure prison, where prisoners are treated with respect, decency, and humanity (see paragraphs 4.3, 5.12 and 8.6)

However, prisoners with mental health illnesses who end up in the care and separation unit (CSU) will often have to wait a long time before transfer to appropriate establishments (see paragraph 6.1).

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

In fulfilling its role as a specialist training and treatment prison providing education, work and the commissioned number of programmes, Littlehey performs well overall (see sections 9 and 10 – in particular, paragraphs 9.1 to 9.6, and 10.1 to 10.4).

However, Littlehey is neither designated nor resourced as a resettlement prison and, although there has been a small improvement on last year, 320 prisoners were directly released with limited and varied preparation for Through the Gate. (See paragraphs 11.1 to 11.7).

A significant section of the Littlehey population is still not eligible to participate in an accredited offender behaviour programme because they are deemed to have a low risk of reconviction for a sexual offence and a large proportion of prisoners will be released without being challenged, or increasing their own understanding about their offences and what they need to do to reduce their Risk of Serious Harm, as measured in the national offender assessment system (OASys) (see paragraphs 11.9 to 11.14).

## **Main Areas for Development**

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### **TO THE MINISTER**

The Board acknowledges the minister's response to our question last year about overcrowding. The minister outlined the plans to increase capacity as new prisons open in future and noted that the first step in that direction had been taken with the opening of 2,100 places at HMP/YOI Berwyn. Yet the Board is aware from the monthly population bulletin that the capacity of HMP/YOI Berwyn is still only 1,865 three years after opening (February 2017). As it takes such a long time for new prison places to become operational, and as the long-term trend in the population of sentenced prisoners is also increasing, the Board has little confidence that the current capacity plans will change the level of overcrowding.

So the Board is not embarrassed to ask, yet again, how the minister will ensure that the prisoner population will remain within the uncrowded capacity of the prison system, so that establishments such as HMP Littlehey can operate at their certified

normal accommodation levels. Housing two prisoners in cells designed for one person is not decent treatment and should not be accepted as standard practice.

## **TO THE PRISON SERVICE**

Last year, in response to a question relating to older prisoners, the Prison Service cited the provisions of the model for operational delivery (MOD) for older prisoners as providing a guide for governors of establishments with older populations. This MOD acknowledges the needs of older prisoners but states that physical infrastructure will remain a challenge and outlines a number of ways to mitigate the impact of the current infrastructure.

When will the Prison Service build or adapt buildings and cells to make them suitable for those with disabilities and/or those with complex health needs who require specialist equipment?

After the thematic inspection of work with men convicted of sexual offences, the Prison Service published an action plan that promised to 'produce a framework, articulating the priorities of the sexual offending management board; ... identifying the priority issues for service implementation'. The action plan targeted July 2019 but this has not yet been published. When will the Prison Service publish the promised framework, providing detailed guidance for governors regarding the management of men convicted of sexual offences?

According to the offender learning and skills service, in 2018 the proportion of prisoners with learning difficulties or development disorders was 34% of the population (and growing), and offender management statistics show that 17% are over 50, and 18% are convicted of a sexual offence. These are significant proportions of the prison population. When will the Prison Service ensure that prison officers are given adequate training to deal with the different needs of these groups of prisoners?

The transfer of property between prisons and the extremely slow response times for subsequent complaints continue to be a significant frustration for both prisoners and prison staff at HMP Littlehey. The Prisons and Probation Ombudsman also says, in their 2018/19 annual report, that: 'Complaints about lost or damaged property continue to dominate our caseload, and the procedures for recording and managing prisoners' property remain outdated and inefficient'. When will the new policy framework for prisoners' property be published? And, when issues do arise, how will the Prison Service ensure that complaints to other establishments are dealt with in a timely manner?

## **TO THE GOVERNOR**

The Board is extremely concerned that HMP Littlehey is currently only resourced to provide four escorts each morning and afternoon for routine medical appointments. This leads to the healthcare department having to prioritise, on a daily basis, which prisoner can attend his appointment and who cannot. This prioritisation is happening because of prison resourcing issues and not because of medical need. This is not equivalent with healthcare in the community. When will the prison be able to provide enough escorts for all routine hospital and medical appointments based on medical need?

We ask, again, when will a local strategy be written and implemented to cater for the 50 and over age group which includes some of the best practice identified in the MOD for older prisoners?

## **Improvements**

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Although there is still a long way to go, the Board is pleased to note the work that has been done to improve the preparation of prisoners for release. Outcomes have improved modestly this year, and by the end of the year a community rehabilitation company had been engaged, and we look forward to further improvements as it starts work.

The Board is pleased that heating and hot water provision has improved this year, following the initial phases of the project to replace the heating system. There has still been a problem in workshops but the situation in prisoner accommodation has been much better.

With the arrival of a new equalities governor, the Board has observed improved monitoring of equalities data. Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Racial Equality has been engaged to provide independent oversight of the discrimination reporting process, and a regular monitoring meeting has been set up with representatives of groups of prisoners from all protected characteristics.

Social care has been a very positive story at the establishment and has seen further improvements to provision this year. The team is now based on-site, operating full time, so has the ability to provide care for a greater number of prisoners than in previous years.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

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- 3.1 HMP Littlehey, located in the village of Perry in Cambridgeshire, is a category C training prison for men convicted of sex offences. Currently, 95% of its population have been convicted of a sexual offence as their main offence. At the end of the reporting year, the prison held 1,206 prisoners, compared with an operational capacity of 1,220 and a certified normal accommodation of 1,154 – 70 cells designed for single occupancy are allocated for sharing by two prisoners. There are four constant watch cells.
- 3.2 Healthcare services, including mental health care, are provided by the Northampton Health NHS Foundation Trust, with support from the charity Phoenix Futures for delivering substance misuse programmes. Social care is provided by Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC). Education is delivered by PeoplePlus, as are library facilities, although these have been subcontracted back to CCC. The contract for facilities management was held by Government Facilities Services Limited (GFSL). The visitors centre and visits hall are run by the Ormiston Trust.
- 3.3 Towards the end of the reporting year, Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire (BeNCH) Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) began work on-site, providing resettlement services, some of which are subcontracted to Nacro.
- 3.4 Other providers to the prison include the Samaritans, Prison Visitors, Prison Fellowship, Peace Partners, Relate, Shannon Trust, Sue Ryder, Christians Against Poverty, and the Mothers Union.
- 3.5 There are 13 wings in total, including a dedicated reception wing, two enhanced wings, an accredited enabling environment wing, a progressive wing, a small wing dedicated to prisoners with indeterminate sentences for public protection (IPP), and two wings dedicated to older prisoners.
- 3.6 The residential accommodation, set in extensive well-maintained gardens, is supported by two kitchens, two healthcare centres, an education facility, workshops, two libraries, two gyms, two multi-faith rooms, a CSU with nine cells, an all-weather sports pitch and a visits hall.
- 3.7 Forty-seven per cent of prisoners are aged 50 years and over, and 16% are under 30 years. There are over 45 nationalities and 25 religious denominations represented in the prison.

## **B Evidence sections**

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### **SAFETY**

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#### **Deaths in Custody**

- 4.1 Across the prison population nationally, according to the Bromley Briefings Prison Factfile from winter 2019 (BB2019), the annual number of deaths due to natural causes is two in every 1,000 prisoners. There were five deaths in custody during the reporting year, all of them due to natural causes (there were eight last year).
- 4.2 BB2019 also says that 17% of the prison population is 50 or over. At Littlehey almost three times as many prisoners are 50 or over (nearly 50% are over 50). The age profile explains the higher than average number of deaths due to natural causes at the establishment.

#### **Vulnerability**

- 4.3 Littlehey continues to be a relatively safe place for staff and prisoners, and the Board was pleased to report a small reduction in the number of assaults on staff and prisoners alike during the reporting year. Assaults on staff reduced by five, to a total of 16, and there were 66 prisoner-on-prisoner assaults (including fights, sexual assaults and violent assaults). This compares very well to the rates of assault across the Prison Service as a whole, which includes 400 prisoner-on-prisoner assaults per 1,000 prisoners, according to BB2019. The rates of assault at Littlehey are also lower than the average across other category C training prisons for men convicted of sex offences.
- 4.4 The Board is pleased to see that self-harm incidents have been on a reducing trend over the year. However, there are a small number of prisoners who the prison clearly finds difficult to help and who accounted for 181 incidents between them during the year.
- 4.5 Ignoring this difficult-to-manage group, there were 30 self-harm incidents per month at the beginning of the year, dropping to 20 per month by the end. There were 254 incidents throughout the year, with half of these incidents attributable to prisoners aged 21–30. Again, this compares very well to rates of self-harm across the Prison Service as a whole, which experiences an annual rate of 732 self-harm incidents for every 1,000 prisoners, according to BB2019.

## **EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS**

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- 5.1 The Board is pleased that the quality and regularity of the HMP Littlehey equality action team meetings has improved during the reporting year. Representatives for all prisoner groups attend and are encouraged to raise both positive and negative issues, recorded in their written reports.
- 5.2 A new equalities data monitoring meeting has been set up which now considers a wide range of prison metrics, and drills down into each one by protected characteristic.
- 5.3 After a long period with no external, independent check of discrimination incident report forms, the Board is pleased that, by the end of the reporting year, the prison had engaged Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Racial Equality to perform this task and also to advise on other aspects of equalities monitoring.
- 5.4 The Board is pleased that the prison continues to encourage a range of cultural events throughout the year celebrating diversity. Notable this year, and taking place during Holocaust Memorial Week, the Anne Frank exhibition was attended by over 200 prisoners, and promoted diversity awareness and social inclusion.
- 5.5 Following an improved awareness of the Armed Forces Covenant, the healthcare system now identifies ex-service personnel. Disappointingly, the prison has not been able to engage SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity, to support this group.
- 5.6 It is pleasing that there has been progress throughout the year in implementing the local 'families and significant others' strategy. The visits area, refurbished during 2019, is a welcoming, well-equipped area, appreciated by visitors and prisoners alike. Family days and veterans days are also arranged regularly and efficiently by Ormiston Trust.

### **Older prisoners**

- 5.7 Ten years ago, the over-60 age group accounted for 8% of the Littlehey population; five years ago, the over-50s made up 30% of the population; and now the over-50s make up almost 50% of the population, and the 65 and overs make up nearly 20%.
- 5.8 Over that time, we have been pleased to see the many positive initiatives introduced to increase provision of purposeful activity for this age group in response to the growth of this part of the prison's population.
- 5.9 However, we are sorry to say that many of these initiatives have closed or ceased operating in the last few years. An 'OAP garden' opened in 2013 but closed in 2018; tea and toast afternoons started in 2014 and currently run spasmodically; specific work packing breakfast packs; and a monthly quiz are all examples of initiatives begun in the last five or six years but no longer operating.
- 5.10 The Board is pleased that a day care room has reopened and is now operating three mornings a week. It targets prisoners classed as socially isolated and who rarely leave their wing. The majority of attendees are older-aged prisoners, although age is not a primary criterion for selection.

5.11 A review of activity allocations in Table 1 shows the number of prisoners who have no formally allocated activity at the time of writing. Over three quarters of the over-65s are not topping up the basic pension of £6 per week (or only partly doing so), some through choice but some because suitable activity is not available.

Table 1: Number (% of age group) of unassigned prisoners in each age group.

Age range	No. of prisoners	Unassigned half-day	Unassigned all day
20–25	75	10 (13%)	14 (19%)
26–30	121	9 (7%)	18 (15%)
31–39	216	28 (13%)	19 (9%)
40–49	222	26 (12%)	20 (9%)
50–64	353	33 (9%)	24 (7%)
65 and over	219	72 (33%)	97 (44%)
	1,206	178 (15%)	192 (16%)

5.12 The situation for healthcare and social care for this age group is more positive, with social care in particular providing an excellent service (see also section 8). Joint work between healthcare and the gym has been recognised as best practice, especially the remedial or social prescribing. Social care has further improved, with a team of full-time carers now based at the prison.

5.13 The Board is pleased that the prison has improved access to the first-floor healthcare centres this year. However, more could be done, as the lift (for Woodlands healthcare centre) is too often out of order and prisoners needing to use the stairlift (for Lakeside healthcare centre) have to wait outside, whatever the weather, until someone answers a doorbell and lets them into the stairwell.

5.14 The maintenance of wheelchairs (personal, council owned, NHS owned) has been a problem throughout the reporting year, affecting 150 wheelchair users. Work is still in progress to resolve this issue, to improve their access.

5.15 Given that nearly half of the current population is classed as older prisoners (over 50), the prison is not meeting the needs of this protected characteristic group as it has in the past, or as highlighted in the MOD for older prisoners. For example:

- Opportunity to earn money is limited, owing to a lack of workshops which are suitable or adapted to meet the older prisoners' needs.
- Except for healthcare appointments, no account is made in the regime and timetables to allow less mobile prisoners to travel from one part of the prison to another.
- Physical limitations can still cause inequality – for example, accessing the Woodlands and Lakeside healthcare centres, which are both on the first floor. There is no plan to move either healthcare centre to the ground floor.
- There has been no specific survey of the criminogenic and/or education needs of this cohort.
- The socially isolated retired older prisoners, who spend their day behind closed doors, are not routinely identified and reported on as part of the safer custody meeting.
- The heating and hot water issues (reported in section 7) continue to be of particular concern to the Board for this older population. However, once again, the

Board commends the action that the governor has undertaken to ensure that these prisoners are treated decently.

### Learning difficulties and disabilities

- 5.16 The latest criminogenic needs analysis completed at the establishment towards the end of the reporting year, with a sample size of 223 respondents, showed 19% as having learning difficulties, 14% with dyslexia and 3% declaring some other form of barrier to learning.
- 5.17 There continues to be very limited evidence that the regime is adapted for these people:
- Where prisoner management plans are written, they are not evident on the wing.
  - Littlehey does not offer any adapted interventions. Instead, prisoners assessed as requiring the behavioural programmes Kaizen or Horizon are sent to HMP Bure. These transfers often unsettle this vulnerable population.
- 5.18 The Board remains concerned that many staff are insufficiently knowledgeable and trained to deal with this significant and vulnerable cohort, who feel that progression is hindered by their condition.

### Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) prisoners

- 5.19 The Board is pleased that there has been progress (albeit slow) on monitoring issues for BAME prisoners, in line with the 2017 Lammy Review.
- 5.20 In the past, the Board has raised concerns about the low level of prison monitoring around discrimination, and the possibility of institutional racism. For instance, adjudication data show the number of BAME prisoners being adjudicated on in disproportionate numbers compared with the proportion of these prisoners in the establishment (Table 2). There is currently no understanding of the causes of this anomaly.

**Table 2: Proportion of adjudications and complaints in the reporting year by ethnicity versus proportion of the population of Littlehey**

Ethnicity	Proportion of population	Proportion of adjudications	Proportion of complaints
White	77%	56%	72%
Black	10%	26%	15%
Asian	7%	7%	7%
Mixed/other	5%	11%	6%
	100%	100%	100%

- 5.21 However, the Board is pleased that the prison is starting to focus on this data, to understand the driving forces behind it.

## Complaints

Table 3: Number of original complaints (that is, not including appeals) in reporting year

Establishment	Comp 1	Comp 2		Grand total
		HMPPS	IMB	
External	342	18		360
Littlehey	2,368	615	28	3,011
Grand total	2,710	633	28	3,371

- 5.22 The Board is pleased to see that the number of complaints made to Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) has fallen 25% this year, to a total of 3,343, down from 4,495 last year (see Table 3).
- 5.23 However, it is disappointing that the Prison Service cannot get to grips with the safe management of prisoners' property when transferring between establishments. Chasing missing property from previous prisons still causes great frustration to prisoners, and there are limits as to what Littlehey can do to keep chasing the large number of complaints to other establishments that can go unanswered for long periods. As can be seen in Table 3, 342 complaints were made to external establishments this year, representing 10% of all complaints. Of these, nearly 75% concerned missing property or refunds for canteen orders that were not delivered owing to a transfer between prisons.

## SEGREGATION/CARE AND SEPARATION UNIT

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- 6.1 The Board is concerned that the prison has no suitable accommodation for prisoners with mental health issues or developmental disorders, such as autism and Asperger's syndrome, whose behaviour sometimes causes problems in normal accommodation. These prisoners are often moved to the CSU and held there under Rule 45. Although this concerns a relatively small number of prisoners, and it is the only place where the prison can safely manage them, it is not appropriate to routinely use the CSU in this manner – neither for the prisoners concerned nor for the long-term mental health of the staff in the CSU.
- 6.2 The same facilities issues as mentioned elsewhere in this report have also had a significant impact on the CSU. There have been long periods when cells have not been available for use because the necessary work has not been completed in a timely manner. For instance, a cell damaged in the previous reporting year (in December 2018) was not available for use until end of July 2019, and, of nine cells in the CSU, four were damaged in an incident in May, and it was not until October that three of those cells were finally available. The fourth cell is still not habitable over 10 months later.
- 6.3 As noted in section 5, and also reported last year, the Board is concerned that there seems to be a large number of adjudications given to prisoners in the BAME community relative to their proportion of the prison population, and this has not been explained. However, it is pleasing to note that the prison has now started to investigate the situation.

## ACCOMMODATION AND COMMUNICATION

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- 7.1 Yet again, the reporting year has seen facilities issues having an impact on the lives of prisoners at HMP Littlehey. Since GFSL took over the employees, systems and processes from Carillion in 2018, there have been only intermittent signs of improvement in the speed and quality of works carried out. Many of the people used by GFSL at the establishment are employed through agency contracts, and there has been a high turnover of senior managers.
- 7.2 It does not feel as if any progress has been made in tackling the huge backlog of outstanding works, with, for instance, several cells being out of action for months due to water leaks. Of particular concern are longstanding security, and health and safety issues – for example, closed-circuit television equipment not working, with some faults outstanding for over a year, and smoke vents inoperable (permanently in the closed position) on one wing for almost a year (the vents have now been fixed since the end of the reporting year).
- 7.3 The years of little (or no) obvious investment in the buildings and infrastructure have culminated in the need for a major £10m project to replace the original heating system. Lack of heating and hot water has caused severe disruption, and this continued at the beginning of the reporting year.
- 7.4 The Board is pleased that the Ministry of Justice has approved the necessary expense to upgrade the heating system. The prison should also be commended for its tactical actions to manage the situation – for instance, bringing in temporary boilers to minimise disruption and permitting the continued use of duvets and electric heaters, as last year.
- 7.5 The Board is pleased that the significant rat infestation was being brought under control by the end of the year. However, it is disappointing to note that little action has been taken to address littering on certain wings, which is one of the underlying causes of the problem.
- 7.6 The Board is disappointed that the demands of the Prison Service on staff make it necessary for the prison to hold fortnightly training days for large numbers of staff at a time, with 26 in total during this reporting year. This leads to regular monthly restrictions on the regime giving prisoners fewer opportunities to complete education courses and reducing purposeful time out of cell. There are also significant consequences for the provision of healthcare (see paragraph 8.3). We note that Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) report from July 2019 recommended that: 'The practice of curtailing the regime for two days a month should cease', although the prison did not accept the recommendation.
- 7.7 The prison is commended for its renovation of the visits hall and the introduction there of red-band orderlies. This has served to make the hall a more attractive, welcoming and safe venue for prisoners' families to visit, and aids the implementation of the local 'families and significant others' strategy (as noted in paragraph 5.6).

## HEALTHCARE (including mental health and social care)

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- 8.1 The waiting times for various healthcare services at the end of the reporting period, compared with previous years, are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Waiting times (in weeks, except where noted) for healthcare appointments

	2020	2019	2018	2017
Ultrasound	8	5		
Optician	4	4	4	3
Dental*	6	8	4	8
Physiotherapist	16	10	13	12
Podiatry	4	4	28	8
Doctor**	7	6	7	5

\* For an urgent appointment, the wait is three days.

\*\* Waiting times for the doctor are given in days.

- 8.2 We are pleased that the waiting times for the podiatrist have been brought back to a reasonable level, and that, overall, the waiting times continue to improve, and seem broadly comparable with those in the community.
- 8.3 Despite periodic variations, some waiting times are generally consistent over a three-year period. However, the Board is concerned that training shutdowns on alternate Mondays have had a particularly significant impact on physiotherapist and ultrasound waiting times.
- 8.4 Audiology treatments, to match those in the community, require a greater level of expertise than is currently available in the prison. All prisoners over the age of 55 are entitled to a hearing check, and 43 appointments were classed as urgent (3.6% of the population). This problem has been escalated to NHS England, as a service level agreement has to be initiated. It is disappointing that there has been no progress during the reporting year, as neither the will nor funds for change have been made available by NHS England or the Prison Service.
- 8.5 The establishment schedules escorts for only four morning and four afternoon appointments at hospitals. This allocation is inadequate and means that prisoners often do not receive the same routine appointments as would be available in the community. This problem is recorded monthly on the corporate risk register.
- 8.6 The Board is pleased that the majority of prisoners experience a quality of care that is comparable to that in the community, and this is supported by a Care Quality Commission inspection resulting in no recommendations. However, we have to question whether all prisoners receive the same standard of care that would be available in the community, given the inadequate provision for hospital appointments.

### Mental health

- 8.7 The mental health in-reach team continues to support prisoners, and during the reporting year there were 702 referrals, an increase of 31%, primarily due to a 'spike' in January.

8.8 The establishment operates in a cluster of four prisons, and continues to have staffing problems caused by continual vacancies and sickness, despite this problem being recorded for the third year running on the NHS risk register. New initiatives, including the dementia pathway and learning disability pathway, have been delayed for this vulnerable group of prisoners. For instance, autism training for staff was planned last year but did not happen.

### **Social care**

8.9 As with last year, the Board is pleased to say that the provision of social care is a very positive story at the establishment. The work at Littlehey is being recognised as a model of good practice, with other prisons implementing local initiatives. Cambridge County Council (the provider) and its social care team, the prison staff and the equalities governor should be commended for this service.

8.10 Since the expansion of the social care team at the prison and a publicity campaign relating to self-referral, the amount of care provided has increased. Ten people are currently receiving this service, up from four last year. The Board is pleased to report that a significant number of adjustments involving the carers and occupational therapist have been made to enable prisoners to enhance the quality of their life and develop their independence. All the suggestions made by the Royal College of Occupational Therapists for independent living are in operation at the establishment.

8.11 It is unfortunate that the majority of toilets cannot have raised seats or toilet frames because of the cell design and the location of pipes. Only a lesser alternative can be offered – for example, grab rails.

8.12 Finally, due to a collaborative working relationship being achieved in the reporting year between multidisciplinary teams, including social care, occupational therapy, healthcare, local hospitals and commissioning bodies, the standard of care has increased for all prisoners – new, departing and existing. A case worthy of mention relates to a patient at hospital who was medically fit for discharge, although it would have been inappropriate for him to return to Littlehey; a cross-county transfer was therefore organised to a prison with 24-hour nursing care which could meet his medical and social care needs.

## EDUCATION AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

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### Education

- 9.1 The Board continues to view education as a significant strength at the establishment, a view backed up by this year's inspection by Ofsted, which stated that, overall, the effectiveness of education, skills and work was good.
- 9.2 A wide range of courses, at all academic levels (from level 1 English and mathematics through to degree courses with the Open University (OU)), are catered for. Basic functional skills in English and mathematics are also taught through the workshops. Learning needs and sequencing are assessed quickly after arrival, so prisoners can be quickly allocated suitable work or education places.
- 9.3 Ad hoc observations indicate that prisoners enjoy attending education and vocational training sessions, and behaviour is generally exemplary. A total of 569 Student Perception Of Course questionnaires have been completed in the current academic year and 97% of respondents feel that their courses have been excellent or good.
- 9.4 OU and distance learning courses are well supported. As of January 2020, there were 45 prisoners enrolled on OU courses and 36 on other distance learning courses. However, the Board is very disappointed that a good computer suite for OU and distance learning was developed on Lakeside but has remained unused for over two years.
- 9.5 The education department has made a number of positive links with outside charities and organisations. Individual support for reading and numeracy skills is provided by Shannon Trust and One to One Maths, respectively. The mathematics programme is well utilised, with 199 prisoners currently engaged. However, the Board is disappointed that a relatively small number of prisoners are engaged with the Shannon Trust. One of the two libraries in the prison stopped opening during the day in April 2019, and since then the number of learners engaged with the Shannon Trust has reduced significantly.
- 9.6 Prisoners under 67 years of age approaching their release date are required to attend the Way Forward course. This is a level 1 course focusing on employability and developing useful transferable skills. A fortnightly job club also signposts real jobs in prisoners' home areas, and positive links have been established with employers, some of whom come into the prison to conduct interviews. This is a good example of very positive work organised by committed members of the education staff.

### Gym

- 9.7 The Board is pleased to note that Littlehey has maintained its position as the number-one-performing physical education department in the Prison Service, with a score of 96%, based on areas such as security, programmes, delivery and inclusivity. This ties in with the Board's own observations of a highly motivated, well-trained gym staff, who are proactive in working to offer well-suited activities to the whole population of prisoners at the establishment. There are dedicated sessions for older prisoners and the staff liaise well with the healthcare specialists to provide tailored sessions for those with specific healthcare needs, such as those with chronic obstructive

pulmonary disease or with mental, physical or drug treatment needs. For the active healthy prisoners, there is a wide range of activities to cater for all tastes in exercise.

- 9.8 There is a highly positive atmosphere in both gyms, and this shows through with occasional sponsored football matches, where, in spite of their meagre earnings, prisoners manage to raise relatively significant amounts of money in aid of various charities.

### **Library**

- 9.9 Library facilities are generally good. There is a wide range of stock to meet most prisoners' needs. Additional needs are met through the inter-library loan system. Prisoners also have access to updated magazines and daily newspapers, and a good selection of audio books, DVDs and CDs. The stock also reflects the multi-ethnic make-up of the prison population.
- 9.10 However, the Board is very disappointed that senior managers have decided not to allocate uniformed officers to supervise the Lakeside library during the day. It is now open for only 45 minutes, on four evenings each week.

## WORK, VOCATIONAL TRAINING and EMPLOYMENT

Table 5: Snapshot of allocated activities by age (shortly after the end of the reporting year)

Activity	Age range						Total
	20-25	26-30	31-39	40-49	50-64	65+	
Programmes	5	3	7	2	6	0	23
Education	9	15	25	28	33	11	121
Vocational	21	38	57	70	98	13	297
Stores		3	5	5	9	1	23
Other	2	0	4	2	7	4	19
Wing worker*	8	21	35	21	34	10	129
Gardener	1	1	4	10	25	5	46
Kitchens	4	3	10	7	21	1	46
Learning assistant			6	3	10	5	24
Orderly	7	11	21	25	48	12	124
Rep/Coordinator		2	7	9	19	6	43
Unassigned**	18	24	35	40	43		160
Retired						151	151
Grand Total	75	121	216	222	353	219	1,206

\* Includes cleaners, painters and laundry workers.

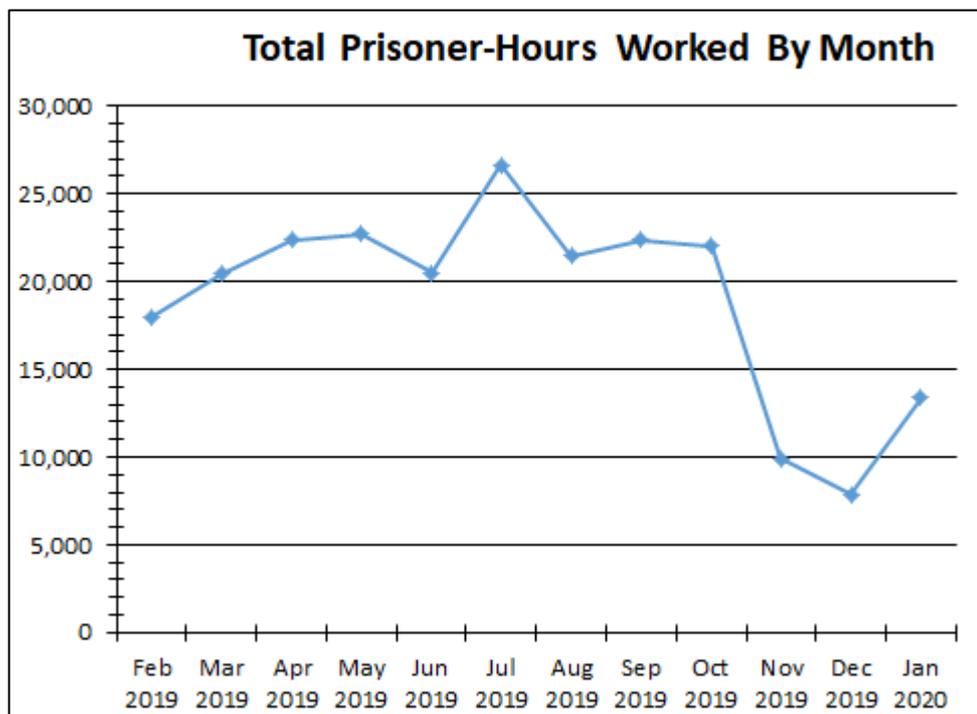
\*\* Includes those who are unassigned for only part of the day, and also those who are unfit or unemployed.

- 10.1 Including those working in the kitchens, in education, in programmes and as wing cleaners and orderlies, at the time of writing 16% of prisoners, from the total population of 1,206, have no assigned activity for any part of the day. If the over-65s, who in many cases may have chosen not to work or study, are excluded, then the proportion of (all-day) unassigned prisoners is 10%. Prisoners under retirement age who are unassigned work or education will spend nearly all day locked in their cells (see Table 5).
- 10.2 This snapshot compares favourably to other establishments: BB2019 suggests that 18% of prisoners in training prisons spend less than two hours out of cell each day, having no purposeful activity. However, the picture is variable, and at the time of the HMIP inspection 17% of prisoners were locked up during the working day (see also section 5).
- 10.3 The Board is also pleased with the number of opportunities that the establishment provides for prisoners to demonstrate their active citizenship or community spirit and responsibility. At the time of writing, 191 prisoners were employed in these roles, including learning support assistants, the many types of orderly helping out in different prison departments, and the various representatives and coordinators.
- 10.4 The AIM group's Awards Suite of Vocational Pathways Qualifications (AIMVOCs) are offered at level 1 in all prison workshops, and a couple of work areas also offer level 2 qualifications. In total, 188 certificates were awarded last year.
- 10.5 We recognise the highly motivated, enthusiastic staff running workshops, for the most part. It is worthy of note that in both vocational training and production workshops, trainers make good use of extension activities to maintain the interest of the more

capable learners and enable them to excel, particularly in engineering, light vehicle body repair, motor mechanics and construction trades.

- 10.6 The Board is very disappointed that the sheet metal moulding and powder coating workshop is still not functional. As a result of highly rated work done by the welding and fabrication workshop, and in order to expand the work that could be undertaken, a substantial investment was made in sheet metal and powder coating equipment. Yet, this has been sitting idle for over 18 months because installation work has not been carried out.
- 10.7 As with other areas of the prison, facilities issues have caused problems with workshops. We are very disappointed that a number of sessions in the workshops had to be cancelled owing to extreme cold in the industrial areas, due to the failure of heating in the prison. The number of sessions lost can be seen from the graph below. The prison can be commended that prisoners did not lose out financially; however, they have spent more time locked in their cells without meaningful activity.

Figure 1: Total number of hours worked by prisoners in each month shows a drop of over 10,000 prisoner-hours worked in November and December 2019, and around 7,000 hours lost in January 2020. This was almost wholly due to workshops closing at times of cold weather.



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## RESETTLEMENT PREPARATION

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- 11.1 The Board is impressed that the prison is focusing effort on prisoners who are over tariff on IPP sentences. A progressive environment was set up for them on M wing during the year, and by the end of the year was fully up and running. However, it is too early to measure the impact that this is having on outcomes for those prisoners.

### **Through-the-Gate resettlement services**

- 11.2 Last year, the Board reported on the woeful state of provision for Through-the-Gate resettlement services. This year, 320 prisoners were released directly from HMP Littlehey.
- 11.3 At the beginning of the year, a resettlement manager and red-band orderlies were appointed to provide a limited resettlement service, focusing on providing identification cards and bank accounts. However, after six months the manager was assigned different duties before a new external provider was in place to take over, and the resettlement orderlies were left without effective guidance.
- 11.4 Nevertheless, during that initial period an excellent guide to resettlement was produced, and this is now given to prisoners six months before their release.
- 11.5 Resettlement services have been arranged through BeNCH CRC, although on-site staff were not fully in place until towards the end of the year. Housing and finance needs have been subcontracted to Nacro, and their staff were also on site towards the end of the reporting year. However, full details of the contract for BeNCH CRC services were still being worked out at the end of the year.
- 11.6 Develop has been engaged to provide information, advice and guidance services, focusing on careers. However, three new starters resigned before even starting in the prison, indicating some problem with communication or expectations.
- 11.7 Overall, the Board feels that prisoners are still not prepared adequately for release. The prison has made some positive investment in this area, but it is too early to observe the full impact on outcomes for prisoners.

### **Reducing reoffending, risk and OASys**

- 11.8 Given the importance of the reducing reoffending function, the Board is dismayed that there have been nine heads of function in the last seven years, which disrupts the continuity of approach. This compares, for example, with security, where the same governor was in post for over nine years, until his retirement just before the start of the reporting year.
- 11.9 It is disappointing that, despite a declared focus on OASys, there has been little impact on the backlog of OASys reports. This is not wholly the fault of the prison, as approximately 30% of prisoners arrive at Littlehey with no OASys report. This delays assessment, and access to intervention programmes. Without an up-to-date OASys assessment and sentence plan, prisoners do not have a suitable treatment pathway, which, in turn, can lead to inappropriate sequencing for purposeful activities. The backlog of OASys reports has increased to 250 (from 125 last year), largely because of a new review timeframe being introduced.

- 11.10 The purpose of the Offender Management in Custody (OMiC) framework is stated as: 'Every prisoner should have the opportunity to transform their lives by using their time in custody constructively to reduce their risk of harm and reoffending; to plan their resettlement; and to improve their prospects of becoming a safe, law-abiding and valuable member of society', and one of the outcomes states that '... The [OASys sentence] plan needs to be commensurate with risk, need and must involve the individual as an active participant'.
- 11.11 Early in the reporting year, the Board spoke with six prisoners, all approaching their release dates, regarding their sentence plans. Only one had any real knowledge of his plan, and he was also taking a very proactive role in his progression and resettlement plans; his OASys report was also updated annually. One other had a vague awareness that his plan had 'stuff on it' about staying away from drugs. The others had no interest or knowledge of their plan or the objectives for their time in prison.
- 11.12 Over 60% of prisoners with determinate sentences are in full or partial denial of their offence or are assessed as low risk using the risk assessment matrix RM 2000. For these prisoners, there are limited places available on accredited interventions and they are only allocated after consideration of individual circumstances. Around half of them will not be required to participate in any intervention.
- 11.13 The Board questions the purpose of imprisonment when a significant proportion of prisoners are not required to attend an accredited intervention programme, nor are they monitored on their risk factors or sentence plan objectives to evidence either a reduction in the likelihood of reoffending or a reduction in risk of harm. The national prison system does not measure reductions in risk, so there is no incentive for either the prisoner or the prison to achieve such a reduction.
- 11.14 The Board notes that no specific training for working with men convicted of sexual offences has been delivered as part of the OMiC training. Without specific training, key workers are likely to have limited impact on guiding individual prisoners to reduce their risk of harm and likelihood of reoffending, and on motivating prisoners to engage or reinforce lessons learned on Kaizen or Horizon programmes.

## C Work of The Board

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- 12.1 The Board has worked well as a team, while maintaining good relationships with prisoners and staff to enable effective monitoring of the establishment. Where appropriate, a range of staff- and prisoner-led meetings were attended throughout the prison to enable the monitoring process. The Board attempts to attend all segregation reviews, and the increase in the number of reviews attended this year reflects an increase in the prison's use of segregation.
- 12.2 In the knowledge that the Board would lose four members during the reporting year – two forced to retire due to the 15-year tenure rule and two for personal reasons – recruitment campaigns were initiated, which resulted in just one applicant being appointed. A review of advertising material was undertaken and greater use of social media was agreed, and resulted in five applicants – three of whom were interviewed and recommended for appointment just before the end of the reporting year. A fourth candidate was scheduled for interview early in the new reporting year. As three of the leavers remained with the Board until 31 December 2019, there was minimal impact on its ability to monitor the prison. Further recruitment will be required during the next reporting year.
- 12.3 The Board thanks the business hub staff for their responsiveness and support, particularly in the continuity of the clerk post.

<b>BOARD STATISTICS</b>	
<b>Recommended Complement of Board Members</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Total number of visits to the Establishment</b>	<b>578</b>
<b>Total number of segregation reviews attended</b>	<b>169</b>

## D Applications to the IMB

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- 13.1 The Board is pleased to report a significant drop of 139 in the number of confidential and normal applications for the reporting year. The 55% reduction in applications relating to property during transfer or in another establishment was most welcome, although property matters still represented 16% of all applications. Although there was a 45% reduction in confidential access applications, prisoners continue to use the system in an inappropriate manner.
- 13.2 Despite the reduction in the number of applications relating to property on transfer and the hastening efforts of the business hub, the Board has continued to be frustrated by the slow (and often lack of) response to complaints sent to other establishments. The Board yet again calls for national action to improve the response to complaints to other establishments.
- 13.3 The unexplained increase in sentence-related applications reported last year was reversed this reporting year. The full role of the key worker scheme and new ways of working in the offender management unit may have contributed to this welcome reduction.

<b>Code</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Current reporting year 2020</b>	<b>Previous reporting year 2019</b>	<b>Previous reporting year 2018</b>
A	Accommodation including laundry, clothing, ablutions	13	22	33
B	Discipline including adjudications, IEP, sanctions	3	3	4
C	Equality	10	18	13
D	Purposeful Activity including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	24	23	19
E 1	Letters, visits, phones, public protection restrictions	31	25	16
E 2	Finance including pay, private monies, spends	5	15	8
F	Food and kitchens	2	5	4
G	Health including physical, mental, social care	16	23	23
H 1	Property within this establishment	19	14	17
H 2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	29	65	28
H 3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	26	28	23
I	Sentence management including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-categorisation	28	54	38
J	Staff/prisoner concerns including bullying	24	35	28
K	Transfers	5	8	13
	Miscellaneous	32	34	28
	No Show	5	16	38
	Confidential Access	28	51	40
	<b>Total number of IMB applications</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>373</b>