



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

**HMP Preston**

for reporting year  
1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020

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*Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody*

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## A Introductory sections 1 – 3

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### 1 Statutory role of the Independent Monitoring Board

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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 Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) is specifically charged to:

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

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This report presents the findings of the Board at HMP Preston for the period 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020. Board evidence comes from observations made on visits, scrutiny of records and of data, informal contact with prisoners and staff, surveys and prisoner applications.

Given the significant impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in the early part of 2020, on both the day-to-day operation of the prison and the monitoring methods which the Board was able to employ, some of the information provided in this report relates to less than the full year – this is clearly indicated in each instance.

Overall, the Board continues to find Preston to be a well-run prison, with generally good relationships between officers and prisoners.

### **Main judgements**

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

Overall, the prisoners receive fair treatment in this establishment (see section 5.1). This is also a view which the Board hears directly from prisoners themselves in conversations, both individually and during meetings such as prisoner consultation groups.

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

The physical environment of the prison does not meet modern standards, owing to the fact that the prison was mainly built in the Victorian era. Particular concerns are reception (see section 4.1) and the size of cells (see section 7.1). The personal relationships between staff and prisoners are good, as shown by the low levels of use of force (see section 4.3) and the reduction in the number of complaints against staff (see Appendix D).

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

Preston is a local prison in which resettlement is an important function. The new Offender Management in Custody (OMiC) model has been implemented successfully.

### **Main areas for development**

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#### **To the minister**

Will the minister ensure that additional resources are provided for capital projects necessary to maintain the fabric of the prison? The two main areas are the improvements to reception (see section 4.1), and the installation of air conditioning in the visits halls (see section 7.1).

#### **To the Prison Service**

Will the Prison Service secure the resources for and progress the purchase of the site of the adjacent county museum building, to secure the perimeter of the prison and to open up potential for other associated possible improvements in the prison structure (see section 4.6)?

## To the Governor

The use of body-worn video cameras has increased over the year, but they are not being switched on early enough in the escalation phase of an incident. This needs to be improved (see section 4.3).

The key worker scheme has been implemented, and the targeted contacts made. This was anticipated to have led to a reduction in the number of applications to the Board, but application numbers have not subsequently decreased (see section 5.3). This needs to be investigated further. If key workers were able to deal with more of the minor issues and problems raised by prisoners within their respective workloads, this would both improve prisoner-officer relationships and free Board resources to address wider, and possibly more complex, issues.

## Improvements

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**Last year the prison group director was asked to vary the cell certificate for the smallest cells to single occupancy (see section 7.1). This was done in October 2019, and although it reduced the operational capacity to 715, it was a humane decision.**

A major effort to improve shower facilities across the site, which started in 2018/19 with limited resources, has been carried through to provide further improvements during 2019/20 (see section 7.1).

The improvements seen in the performance by the works contractor, Amey, which started last year, have continued and been built upon (see section 7.1).

The implementation of an in-house maintenance team, Q Branch, consisting of two officers and two trades-qualified prisoners, to carry out non-contracted maintenance jobs, has proved effective and economical, with an immediate and very positive impact on the quality of life for prisoners which is to be commended (see section 7.1).

## 3 Description of the prison

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### 3.1 Overview

HMP Preston is a predominantly Victorian radial prison, constructed between 1840 and 1895. It operates as a category B male local and resettlement prison, servicing courts across north west England. It holds male prisoners aged 18+ who have been remanded in custody, are awaiting trial, serving sentences of 12 months or less, or are awaiting transfer to another prison after sentencing. It is situated on a very confined site near to Preston city centre, and experiences all of the difficulties typical of this style and age of establishment. Its location, however, allows good transportation links for visitors.

### 3.2 Prison roll

At the time of this report, the prison roll averages around 700, with an operational capacity of 715 (reduced from 811 at the start of 2019/20 following changes detailed in section 7.1), against a certified normal accommodation of 433.

### 3.3 Prison facilities

In addition to the core residential accommodation and prison facilities, the following are available to the prisoners:

- a 30-bed healthcare centre, with regional beds for north west prisons
- a 28-bed recovery wing for those with addiction problems
- a dental surgery meeting current National Health Service (NHS) guidelines
- a well-stocked and managed library and a resettlement area
- an education department which includes an information technology (IT) centre (with 48 computers) and an art suite
- well-equipped PE facilities inconveniently on three sites, but well managed and delivered
- a textile workshop
- a horticulture centre.

### 3.4 Partner agencies

#### 3.4.1 Education and training

The education function is run by Novus, part of The Manchester College. It provides a mixed and balanced curriculum focusing on enhancing the employability prospects of prisoners on release, and reducing reoffending. The training function is run by HMP Preston.

#### 3.4.2 Healthcare, and drug and alcohol recovery

The establishment operates a regional hospital facility, which includes a general medical ward with 12 beds, as well as a mental health ward with 18 beds. It takes prisoners from other prisons who have serious conditions or who are recovering from operations, and it has a palliative care role.

Since 1 April 2017, these services, along with those in other prisons in the north west and elsewhere, are run by Spectrum Community Health CIC ('Spectrum'). Spectrum provides primary care services, including integrated substance misuse services, pharmacy services and GP sessions. Spectrum is also responsible for the provision of the following services:

- mental health services (with its partners Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust)
- non-clinical substance misuse services
- optical services
- dental services
- a range of therapies (including physiotherapy and podiatry).

The integrated mental health team (IMHT) offers prisoners a full mental health assessment, from initial reception through to discharge, and also a crisis resolution service. The IMHT also attends all assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) reviews (for prisoners at risk of suicide or self-harm). The team is wing based, to facilitate access by wing staff and prisoners.

### **3.4.3 The library service**

This service is provided by Lancashire County Council. The library is operating well, with very enthusiastic and committed staff, and now has books in 27 different languages, which reflect the needs of the prison population. The library is a particularly good place for orderlies to learn new skills because of the complexity of the job and the close supervision available.

### **3.4.4 Housing, debt and financial advice**

This function is the responsibility of the community rehabilitation company (CRC) Sodexo, which has subcontracted the work to Shelter.

## **B Evidence sections 4 – 11**

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### **4 Safety**

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#### **4.1 Reception**

HMP Preston operates as a local prison taking remand and convicted prisoners both from magistrates' and Crown Courts in the north west of England. However, it regularly receives prisoners from outside its designated catchment area from courts in Merseyside, Carlisle and Durham. This can delay the arrival of the last prisoner, and it is a credit to the staff in reception and the first night centres that the prisoners are processed efficiently.

The physical layout of reception has been a concern of ours over a number of years and has been mentioned in previous reports. With an average of 12,000 movements through reception each year it is a credit to staff that they are complimented on their performance in every external report. The Board has two concerns about the future of the reception area. The first is the introduction of a body scanner, and the second is the redesignation of Preston as a 'reception' prison.

The introduction of the body scanner is a welcomed addition in the fight against the bringing of contraband into the prison. The introduction was originally planned for April 2020, so the planning has already taken place. The need to create a safe operational space in an area that is already lacking in space is proving very disruptive to the processing of prisoners. The redesignation of Preston as a reception prison will increase the number of movements through reception.

The current situation in reception is of continuing concern. The introduction of either of the above two elements will enhance the need for capital expenditure, to make the reception area fit for purpose.

#### **4.2 Psychoactive substances**

The use of drugs in prisons is an ongoing problem. The increased use of the 'email-a-prisoner' facility, currently running at 200–300 uses per day, has reduced the amount of impregnated paper being sent into the prison. The main reason for the increase is that it is cheaper for prisoners and their families than using conventional mail. There was a substantial drop in finds in the last quarter of the year, before the coronavirus lockdown took place. Since then, cell searches have almost been eliminated, for safety reasons, with the exception of intelligence-led searches, using staff in full personal protective equipment. The closure of visits to prisoners, and the 14-day quarantine of all new prisoners arriving at Preston, is likely to have reduced the amount of drugs entering the main accommodation area.

#### **4.3 Use of force**

The use of force has increased over the last year. When compared with comparator prisons, however, Preston is at or below average for its use of force – planned or unplanned. The submission of written reports of use of force is monitored closely, with the result that the quality of reporting has improved, and the number submitted outside the reporting period has reduced substantially and is within the national target. The use of body-worn cameras has increased, but these are not used on all occasions. On unplanned cell entry, they need to be switched on earlier in the development stage, as once entry has started, the close proximity and rapid movement of officers and prisoners means that the amount of information to be gathered from them is very limited.

Last year, Preston was one of the prisons trialling the use of PAVA (an incapacitant spray). When the trial was completed, PAVA was retained at Preston until a national review was



completed. When the review recommended the issue of PAVA nationally, with new guidelines, these were implemented at the establishment. With the new guidelines, the use of PAVA has reduced. From Board attendance at use of force meetings, at which incidents are analysed and reviewed, we are satisfied that the use of PAVA in Preston is appropriate and proportionate, often saving considerable risk of more serious injury to staff and prisoners.

When consulted at the prisoner consultative committee meetings, prisoners state that they think force is only used where appropriate.

#### **4.4 Deaths in custody**

There has been one death in custody this year. It was initially classified as due to natural causes and is awaiting the final report of the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman.

#### **4.5 Substance misuse and recovery**

The establishment is committed to supporting the recovery of prisoners with a history of substance misuse who are motivated to address the issues. A dedicated recovery unit is located on a small separate wing, isolated from the main prison accommodation units. The unit has a maximum population of 28 and is run jointly by the prison and by the Discovery Drug and Alcohol Service. All prison officers who work on this wing are volunteers, and contribute strongly to a therapeutic and enabling environment that encourages rehabilitation. Prisoners and the Board alike are very positive about the successful work done by this unit.

Unfortunately, owing to the lockdown imposed by the coronavirus, work on the unit has had to be heavily curtailed.

#### **4.6 Perimeter security**

Preston was built in the Victorian era, with the courthouse adjacent to the prison. The courthouse forms part of the boundary wall of the prison. For many years after the court closed, the building was used as the county museum. In this period, it was occupied and had an element of security, but in recent years the building has been limited to only partial use. In this reporting period, there was a successful attempt to place drugs in the prison from the roof of the museum. Increased security has had to be installed, but the building still remains a security risk on the perimeter. This has now been accepted by prison estates after a perimeter security review.

## **5 Equality and fairness**

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### **5.1 Disadvantages and discrimination**

The Board has received a number of applications alleging staff racism towards prisoners. Most of these were not substantiated, but there is evidence of some inappropriate use of 'loose language' within the prison, which suggests a need for awareness refresher training. Substantiated allegations are taken seriously by the prison, and we are satisfied that appropriate disciplinary and other action is taken.

The prison takes its responsibility in this field seriously, and monitors its performance across a range of actions. The use of force and the implementation of the incentives and earned privileges (IEP) scheme are measured and reviewed against age, ethnicity and religion. Some figures show trends, such as the increasing prevalence of the 21–29-year age group being on the basic regime, and charged and being proven guilty on adjudication. In addition, the disproportionate number of Muslim prisoners being placed on adjudications continues. Other areas indicating concern are tempered by the very low number of prisoners in those categories. The prison was starting to address these results by holding focus groups with the

prisoners in the affected groups, but the coronavirus lockdown curtailed these. Now that the lockdown is easing, these meetings are being rescheduled.

## **5.2 Faith and religious activity**

The chaplaincy is well regarded by the Board. It caters for all faiths, and prisoners can observe festivals of all faiths recognised by the Prison Service. Its family liaison duties make it the link between prisoners and their families, especially in times of crisis. As the prison houses a regional healthcare unit, the chaplaincy arranges the visiting protocol for families of prisoners residing there. In particular, this is so for those receiving palliative care by arranging security clearance for their loved ones so that they can have unrestricted access to the bedside of their relative when required. This support is continued after the death of a prisoner.

This year, the chaplaincy ran two 'Sycamore Tree – Understanding the Restorative Justice Process' courses. This is an accredited programme on victim awareness and restorative justice, run by the Prison Fellowship. These courses had a profound effect on the prisoners who took part.

## **5.3 Prisoners' rights and consultation**

Prisoner consultation is well structured. It is led by a prisoners' consultative committee, chaired by the Governor. Items are fed into this meeting through a series of subgroups for specific aspects of prison life: residential, reducing reoffending, safety and equality, and healthcare. These meetings are attended by prisoner representatives from each wing, and allow the prisoners to raise relevant issues that concern them. Each subgroup meets regularly and is chaired by a custodial manager. Prisoners are free to express their views and allowed to ask for written or verbal answers at the next meeting.

The Listeners, the prisoners trained by the Samaritans, also attend the relevant section of the safer prison meeting, where, again, they are expected to, and do, give their views freely and constructively.

There is a well-established complaints process, although prisoners are encouraged to speak to wing staff or to their key worker to resolve complaints informally before resorting to the formal process. In the early part of the year, the Board identified some concerns relating to the timeliness of responses to some complaints; these concerns were examined and addressed quickly by the prison. There is a separate complaints process in place for healthcare concerns to the provider, Spectrum, about which the Board receives regular updates. All forms relating to these processes, along with information about the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman and IMB, are available on each wing through a prisoner information desk (PID).

Emphasis this year has been placed on consolidating the role of the key worker. Each prisoner has a dedicated officer, a key worker, who has time allocated each week to talk with him and assist with any problems. It is hoped that this continuity of contact improves relationships in prison. The implementation of this role has been successful in Preston, with 61% of the scheduled meetings between the key worker and the prisoner taking place, one of the highest rates in the region. Surprisingly, this has not led to the expected reduction in applications to the Board, or complaints to the prison. Unfortunately, with the coronavirus lockdown, this function has been retained towards the end of the year only for those prisoners considered to be at high risk, or who have been placed on an ACCT. For the average prisoner, this loss of their key worker is not as detrimental as in normal circumstances. The restricted regime in lockdown means that, with fewer prisoners out of their cells at any one time, the officers have more time per prisoner.

## **5.4 Family relationships**

The prison takes its responsibility to maintain family ties seriously and holds six family days per year. These days all have different themes, aimed at strengthening family relationships. The prison is helped by volunteers from Crossgate Church and staff from the charities Prison Fellowship and the Prison Advice and Care Trust (PACT). Unfortunately, attendance at these days is not always as high as it could be. Prisoners having domestic violence alerts, no child contact alerts and general restriction orders reduce the numbers eligible for attendance. In addition, as a local prison, Preston's population is not static owing to transfers after sentencing.

The prison also runs programmes, organised by partners, such as PACT and the Probation Service, to help prisoners manage their anger and rebuild family relationships.

The visits hall still suffers from lack of ventilation, as reported regularly over previous years, and in the summer period it is extremely hot and stuffy. The bid for the installation of air conditioning has been approved, subject to funding being made available. This year did not see the release of any funds for this, and so another hot and stuffy summer was experienced. Partners of Prisoners (POPS) continued its partnership with the prison. It is hoped that the organisation's access to resources will eventually enhance the visits experience for families with young children. Crossgate Church, in partnership with the prison, has opened Redwood Café, which is located opposite the visitors centre. Visitors call into the café and are met by POPS staff, who can give advice and guidance regarding visits, and give them a booking-in number; therefore, queuing in the open outside the visitors centre is no longer necessary. Within the visits area, they have created a play area for 2–16-year-olds, and provide a play worker during visits.

## **6 Segregation/care and separation unit**

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The care and separation unit has 16 cells. The unit has established staff, who are professional and patient with what can be the most taxing of prisoners, showing sympathy and common sense, despite the violence and abuse they sometimes have to face. The Board member on rota duty is notified promptly when a prisoner is segregated under Rule 45 (Good Order or Discipline), enabling us to visit them appropriately, and officers facilitate our speaking to the prisoners on request. Documentation is well organised, and kept properly completed and up to date, including ACCT monitoring.

The prison makes every effort to keep time in segregation to a minimum, and there were only two instances in the year where a prisoner was segregated for over 42 days, one of these being held on two separate occasions. Special accommodation was used on only two occasions, one for 45 minutes and the other for one hour.

Improvements were made to the cell accommodation by the installation of specially designed furniture which could be fixed to the floor and walls, replacing the free-standing units. The new furniture is far more robust and difficult to damage, ensuring that all prisoners have proper and decent furniture when they arrive in the unit. This also significantly reduces the maintenance cost and improves availability of the unit.

## **7 Accommodation (including communication)**

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### **7.1 Accommodation**

Preston is a Victorian prison, built to the standards of the time. The cells were designed for single occupancy, with no internal sanitation and no facilities for disabled prisoners. Over the years, the prison has tried to improve the physical conditions there. Internal sanitation was installed in the 1990s, by which time the cells had been classified as double occupancy. Some

of the toilets can be viewed directly from the observation panels, and many have no lid. Shower curtain screening has been installed to provide privacy, but generally this does not have a long life because of vandalism. These are the conditions that the prisoners have to eat their meals in, as there are no mess areas on the wings.

Following a survey of all the cells, the prisons group director was asked to vary the cell certificate for the smallest cells, which he did in October 2019. This resulted in there being 90 single cells in the prison. This has reduced the operational capacity of the prison to 715, but it was a humane decision. It also resulted in the reorganisation of the functions carried out on the wings. The main change has been the consolidation of the two first night centres onto one wing. Originally, there were two first night centres – one for prisoners with addictions, and one for those without – situated on separate wings. The reduction in the capacity of the addiction wing, due to the redesignation of some cells, meant that more capacity had to be found. The two centres have been combined on one wing on an adjacent landing. Initially, teething problems were experienced owing to the complications of installing modern computer networks in a Victorian prison building, but these have now been resolved. The system was needed to provide access to computerised medical records, and is now working well.

Immediately before the end of our reporting period, the coronavirus lockdown came into being. The two first night centres have become the reverse cohort units, where new arrivals are kept for 14 days in isolation before they are moved into the body of the prison.

The shower areas have been an area of concern for a number of years, as has the lack of air conditioning in the visits hall. This year has seen a concerted maintenance programme to bring the showers up to a more acceptable standard. There has been no improvement in the visits hall, and this remains a concern. This year has also seen the full introduction of Q Branch. This is a small team of tradesman-qualified prisoners, led by two officers, who carry out small works not covered by the maintenance contract. Q Branch has proved effective and economical, with an immediate and very positive impact on the quality of life for prisoners, which is to be commended

The general performance of the works contractor, Amey, has improved this year with the appointment of a permanent and dedicated site manager. This resulted in the completion of the final Equality Act 2010 compliant cells, commissioned in 2018/19, this year.

## **7.2 Catering**

One of the more important items for the prisoners is their food. Menus provided by the catering department meet national nutritional guidelines, supplying three meals a day. Menus state all food allergens and are pictorial, making them easier to understand, especially for prisoners with literacy problems or those for whom English is not their first language. Menus are created on a four-week cycle, and, where possible, reflect seasonal variations. Faith-related and dietary requirements authorised by the healthcare department are also catered for. Celebration food is also provided for religious festivals.

The catering department delivers recognised training to level 2 in food safety to prisoners, after which they receive a certificate valid for three years as a foundation for catering services work on release.

This year, there was a period when complaints were being made that hot meals were not hot when they were served. Following investigation, this proved to be the cumulative effect of a number of factors. The food trolleys used to transport the food from the kitchen to serveries around the prison were suffering because of mistreatment and vibration due to the long haulage on the internal roads. Seals were damaged or even missing, resulting in the inability to reach and hold their temperature. In addition, the serveries were not monitored as fully as they should have been. To improve the situation, the trolleys were subject to a maintenance

programme and new trolleys were procured. The serveries were monitored more closely, with an incentive system introduced for the servery workers.

## **8 Healthcare (including mental health and social care)**

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Since 1 April 2017, Spectrum has been responsible for healthcare provision. Following the appointment of a new healthcare manager in early 2019, Spectrum's healthcare provision continued to improve during the year with the implementation of wing-based clinics, resulting in a significant reduction in the need to move prisoners to the separate healthcare unit from the wings. There has also been a marked improvement in the management of queues at medicines hatches on the residential wings. Each of these improvements reduced the length of wait for prisoners, and led to a resultant reduction in the interruption of daily activities. Works carried out to improve the use of available space on the regional mental health care wing has resulted in increased capacity.

Healthcare services are accessible to prisoners, with all initial healthcare needs being assessed within 24 hours of reception. The waiting time to see a GP is no more than six days, and waiting times for both dental and ophthalmic services (both of which are subcontracted) are generally no longer than four to six weeks.

The healthcare manager instituted a number of improvements in the healthcare complaints and comments process during 2019/20, which have resulted in significant improvements in the monitoring of the system and availability of information to the Board. The improvements in communications with prisoners introduced in 2018/19 have been continued and improved on, with well-run monthly meetings with prisoner representatives from each wing to discuss any suggested changes or address any concerns they raise. Board discussions with prisoner representatives at these meetings have regularly provided positive feedback on satisfaction with healthcare services throughout the year. Analysis of prisoner complaints and compliments shows a good level of satisfaction with the service provided.

Governance arrangements for healthcare are well structured, with a health delivery plan overseen by a joint local delivery board.

## **9 Education and other activities**

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Novus provides education and training. It is an essential aspect of a prisoner's induction week, and all prisoners are advised to enrol on a course that reflects individual needs. Individual courses are based on the following:

- literacy levels
- numeracy levels
- lengths of stay
- sentence plans
- areas of interest
- motivation

On average, 90% of the population at HMP Preston are at level 1 or below in English, and 88% at level 1 or below in mathematics. This reinforces the importance of prisoners attending training in functional skills to address their educational needs in the key areas of English, mathematics and IT.

Key points of note:

- Education is viewed positively by prisoners, and Board discussions are held with them on a regular basis.
- Vulnerable prisoners have access to all the courses except mentoring and specialist IT courses.
- A large proportion of prisoners arrive with an entry level in functional skills.
- Every prisoner is offered a place of work or other activity.
- The prison ensures that functional skills are delivered by making it a conditional part of each work placement.
- Vocational training is delivered in a painting and decorating workshop and in an industrial cleaning workshop.

This year, following a retendering process (which was won by the existing provider), Novus staff in the prison have been through a restructuring, with some staff affected by redundancy and demotion. Clearly, there was a great deal of staff anxiety and some disruption to service during this process. Some course provision has been lost but the curriculum offered has not been affected. A clear structure is in place for provision of the service going forward, and it was operating well prior to the disruption which COVID-19 began to cause towards the end of the year.

## **10 Work, vocational training and employment**

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HMP Preston is a Victorian category B local prison on a restricted inner-city site, and these factors influence the range of activities provided. The layout of the prison limits the number of workshops available for industrial work, and the local classification of the prison results in a high turnover of prisoners of relatively short duration. This means that the focus of activities is mainly on the development of prisoners' functional skills (as referenced in section 9), although a range of vocational activities, such as sewing, catering, horticulture, waste management, and painting and decorating is available.

In common with other prisons, Preston functions with the assistance of prisoners in areas such as the reception, laundry, kitchens, serveries and library. They are also employed as cleaners and painters, and staff the PID on each wing, which act as a reference point for the prisoners, enabling them to obtain information about many aspects of the prison.

The Governor continues to ensure that purposeful activity is a key feature of prison life, and has organised the regime to ensure maximum participation in education or work-related activities, while being mindful of the special needs of older or disabled prisoners. Currently, there are sufficient activity places to engage around 80% of prisoners in purposeful activity (work or education). Prisoners not involved in any form of purposeful activity are typically those who are currently awaiting security clearance, undergoing education screening or refusing to work.

A prisoner needs analysis was completed during the year, and is shared with all services involved in the resettlement pathway. The available choices of activity are easily accessed by prisoners, and applications are, in general, processed on the day of receipt, taking into account availability, any disabilities and security clearance. However, while activities are rarely cancelled, and Board observation indicates that prisoners do, in general, engage positively with their activities, the prison would like to see an improvement in attendance. The prison is aiming to improve this through a combination of increased encouragement from staff (in particular, through the key worker role), better management of attendance and links to the IEP scheme.

Where possible, reputable and recognised qualifications are offered to prisoners in preparation for release (such as City and Guilds), within the constraints described above. The prison is also in partnership with the information, advice and guidance service, to enhance opportunities for employment on release. Prisoners are equipped with a curriculum vitae to assist with potential employment on release.

## **11 Resettlement preparation**

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### **11.1 Offender management**

A new approach, OMiC, was introduced to all prisons in September 2018. During 2019/20, the OMiC model has been successfully implemented in HMP Preston. Key workers have been trained and have been allocated caseloads. Board observations reveal that, in the main, OMiC has been well received by staff and prisoners alike. When asked, most prisoners knew the name of their key worker and found them to be helpful over many issues. It would seem that the more the key worker became involved in general problem solving (as opposed to purely sentence planning), the more positive the relationship.

Prison offender managers (POMs) have been appointed, and there are now six probation officers and 7.5 prison officers undertaking this role. New prisoners are allocated key workers and offender managers, and offender assessment system (OASys) assessments are completed. These are quality assured by the senior probation officer (SPO). The new assessment framework, which was due in April 2020, has been postponed for 12 months, to allow staff training to be implemented on the new system.

The impact of the coronavirus outbreak towards the end of the year has meant that the key worker scheme has been in general withdrawn, although vulnerable prisoners are still being offered key worker support. In addition, POMs no longer interview prisoners, except to undertake specific duties – for example, parole reports or in emergency situations.

In terms of management responsibilities, the SPO is responsible for the OMiC delivery, and a governor for strategic aspects. This appears to be working well as the SPO is also the lead for public protection (high-risk and multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) cases) and the single point of contact for vulnerable releases and early release risk assessments.

### **11.2 Reducing reoffending**

Since April 2019, Cumbria and Lancashire CRC has delivered the ‘through-the-gate’ (TTG) services. The CRC is responsible for seeing all prisoners within the first five days of the basic custody screening tool 1 being completed, and 12 weeks pre-release. CRC staff address crisis needs relating to the pathways in the OASYS assessment. Once the needs have been identified, the CRC staff make the required referrals into operational partners, and work with the service user and their community responsible officer TTG. Before release, the OASys assessment is updated by CRC staff, and the next steps are set for the service user.

### **11.3 Housing**

The CRC operational partner, Shelter, is contracted to deliver specialist interventions for accommodation, and finance, benefit and debt.

### **11.4 Encouraging family links**

Preston’s policies for children, families, significant others and care leavers are intended to meet all the main recommendations in the Farmer review. This involves having family and significant others involved in the management of a prisoner’s sentence and being key drivers in supporting them in reducing reoffending, while also hopefully reducing inter-generational crime.

## C The work of the Independent Monitoring Board

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The Board has lost no members during the year. A recruitment campaign was successful in adding two new members to the Board during the year.

During the reporting period, the Board has carried out its role via a variety of methods, including rota visits, dealing with applications from prisoners, attendance at segregation reviews, adjudications and prisoner consultative meetings, as well as through targeted monitoring of other areas, such as prison training exercises and some specific meetings.

We convene a Board meeting each month to review our work, and each meeting is attended by either the Governor or Deputy Governor, to give us a detailed report on the previous month. Additionally, each meeting is preceded by a targeted training session on a specific aspect of the prison or our work.

<b>Board statistics</b>	
Recommended complement of Board members	15
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	7
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	9
Total number of visits to the establishment	408
Total number of segregation reviews attended	33



## D Applications to the Independent Monitoring Board

The statistics provided below for 2019/20 include applications for April 2019 to January 2020 only.

Code	Subject	Current reporting year	Previous reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	20	24
B	Discipline, including adjudications, IEP, sanctions	10	4
C	Equality	7	8
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	19	16
E 1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection restrictions	31	39
E 2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	21	11
F	Food and kitchens	11	10
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	78	61
H 1	Property within this establishment	38	56
H 2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	16	21
H 3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	10	15
I	Sentence management, including home detention curfew, release on temporary licence, parole, release dates, recategorisation	18	31
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	56	79
K	Transfers	19	14
L	Miscellaneous	72	67
	<b>Total number of IMB applications</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>456</b>

Although the absolute number of applications recorded here for 2019/20 is lower than that for the previous year, it should be noted that this total is for a shorter period than the full year. In fact, monitoring through the year indicated that numbers were increasing rather than decreasing, mirroring the prison's own complaint numbers. It had been anticipated that the introduction of 'key workers' would have resulted in a stemming of this increasing trend, but it may be that more time is needed for that effect to occur. This will be monitored over the coming year.