



# **Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Ranby**

**For reporting part year  
1 April 2019 to 23 March 2020**

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## **Introductory sections 1 – 3**

### **1. Statutory role of the IMB**

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

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

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

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

The Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT) is an international human rights treaty designed to strengthen protection for people deprived of their liberty. The protocol recognises that such people are particularly vulnerable and aims to prevent their ill-treatment through establishing a system of visits or inspections to all places of detention. OPCAT requires that States designate a National Preventive Mechanism to carry out visits to places of detention, to monitor the treatment of and conditions for detainees and to make recommendations for the prevention of ill-treatment. The Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) is part of the United Kingdom's National Preventive Mechanism.

## **2. Description of the establishment**

HMP Ranby is situated in North Nottinghamshire, mid-way between the towns of Worksop and Retford. It is a category C male resettlement and training prison.

Since opening as a prison in 1972, Ranby has had its accommodation capacity regularly and significantly increased due to demand, including most recently in 2008, when further accommodation was built.

In May 2016, Ranby was named as one of six early adopter sites for autonomy, whereby the director of the East Midlands reform group is able to make business and financial decisions separately to the wider prison estate.

The certified normal accommodation (CNA) of the establishment as at the end of March 2018 was 892, and its operational capacity 1,098.

The residential accommodation consists of seven house blocks. Located on the house blocks are: the departments for the induction of new prisoners, resettlement, 'skills for life' and safer custody. One house block accommodates prisoners on the integrated drug treatment strategy (IDTS).

There is provision for a 24-hour healthcare service, as Ranby has no inpatient unit, but has 24-hour healthcare cover on site. The single-storey healthcare building accommodates other functioning departments, such as the drug and alcohol recovery team, IDTS and mandatory drug testing.

The segregation unit is located in one of the old buildings and has 16 single cells. Attached to the segregation unit is a small, paved exercise area, which is contained by a high wall.

The education department is located within two buildings, one of which holds the library and the other the chaplaincy. For prisoners in the segregation unit, there is in-cell learning and teachers visit them as appropriate.

Physical exercise takes place within two buildings and on the sports field. One building instructs prisoners mainly on weights and treats prisoners who have physical disabilities.

### **3. Executive summary**

#### **3.1 Background to the report**

The report for this year is an abridged version due to the ongoing COVID-19 emergency. In line with Public Health England guidance and Ministry of Justice security, the Board left the prison on 23 March, leaving all sensitive information within the prison. This meant that the majority of our reports and the materials to back up our statements became unavailable to us.

#### **3.2 Main judgements**

##### **How safe is the prison?**

The Board considers the prison to be reasonably safe, in terms of acts of violence, and it ranks well in the national average.

##### **How fairly and humanely are prisoners treated?**

It is the opinion of the Board that the prisoners within the confines of HMP Ranby are generally treated fairly and with humanity. However, there are exceptions - including staff communication, cell sharing, cell clearing, lack of hostel space, compassionate moves, transfers to category D prisons, and transfers back from category D prisons – where the Board considers that the prison system fails to provide fair and humane treatment to prisoners (see section 5).

##### **How well are prisoners' health and wellbeing needs met?**

The health service provided by Nottinghamshire NHS is in line with that provided to the general public outside the prison. We consider that this service is satisfactory.

##### **How well are prisoners progressed towards successful resettlement?**

As reported for the last two years, it is our opinion that the prison makes considerable effort to prepare prisoners for their release. However, external agencies and services do not always provide the necessary resources and backup to the prison to provide a completely satisfactory release facility, with some 36% of prisoners still being released without a place to stay that night.

### **3.3 Main areas for development**

#### ***TO THE MINISTER***

1. Will the minister explain what is being done to reduce the need to house prisoners with mental health problems in the segregation unit (see section 5.2)? The minister responded to the same question last year with a comprehensive list of reports, audits, and programmes being compiled/developed by specialised health and justice commissioners, mental health teams in NHS England, the Royal College of Psychiatrists and a select committee. Regrettably, it appears that no actual action to deal with this problem has been planned or taken, and the segregation unit, as well as a cell in house block 4, is being used to monitor prisoners who should, in the Board's opinion, be elsewhere. (N.B. copied from last year's report)
2. Can the minister justify the use of single cells for two prisoners? Can he explain the rationale behind this and how it is reflected in the decency agenda? The minister responded last year that '...plans to transform the prison estate gather pace and more new prisons are being delivered while existing unsuitable capacity is closed'. Meanwhile, the prison population of HMP Ranby remains 200 over the prescribed CNA.
3. Will the minister explain why 36% of prisoners are released with no fixed abode, and why for the same reason prisoners suitable for home release are not being allowed out of HMP Ranby?
4. What steps is the minister taking to resolve the issue surrounding prisoners serving indeterminate sentences for public protection (IPP)? HMP Ranby has 14, who are now all well over their initial tariff.

#### ***TO THE PRISON SERVICE***

1. Will the Prison Service explain why a number of prisoners transferred from other prisons arrive without all their property?
2. Will the Prison Service explain why a prisoner returned from a category D prison on a breach of rules is returned without paperwork or the chance to answer the charges that led to the return, but the return is posted on the Prison National Offender Management Information System (P-NOMIS) and therefore their record?

## ***TO THE GOVERNOR***

1. What action is the Governor taking to ensure that every effort is made to reduce the level of violence in the prison?
2. What action is the Governor taking to ensure that every effort is made to reduce the amount of illegal substances and number of mobile phones in the prison?
3. What action will the Governor take to reduce the level of missed healthcare appointments?
4. What action is the Governor taking to allow all prisoners access to purposeful employment and qualifications, to enable them to obtain employment upon release?

## 1.4 Progress since the last report

One of the main concerns of the prison was the changes to the population of the prison. Being a training and rehabilitation prison, Ranby needs a stable population of prisoners with at least 24 to 30 months of their sentence left. The establishment has received a substantial number of prisoners with only six to 12 months left to serve. This is insufficient time to train a prisoner in any of the trades on offer at the prison. In June, the Governor reported to the Board that there were 620 prisoners, representing approximately 56% of the prison population, who had less than 12 months to serve. This was compounded in September, when the Governor stated that Ranby should be a 70% trainer and 30% resettlement prison, but currently holds 83% resettlement prisoners.

Towards the end of the last reporting year, the establishment introduced the key workers scheme, and in the first months they reached 85% of their target of seeing all prisoners. Regrettably, this fell to 60% in September and had still not reached its full potential by the end of this reporting period.

At the start of 2020, the Governor introduced a revised incentives and earned privileges (IEP) scheme, which required officers to speak to the prisoner prior to issuing a warning. The Board agreed that this was a marked improvement and should reduce the number of unsubstantiated records on P-NOMIS.

In February 2020, the Board carried out a survey of 90 prisoners. The survey contained 37 questions, covering such topics as arrival, residential, security and safety, work, family, the IMB, healthcare, the complaints procedure and release. The survey generally indicated positive feedback for the management of the prison; however, certain items stood out:

- 25% of prisoners do not arrive with their property – this is not the responsibility of HMP Ranby.
- 30% of prisoners state that they never see officers on the wing, and 35% that they see them only sometimes.
- 51% stated that complaints were not resolved on time; only 60% stated that they had used the complaints system.
- 69% felt safe; 27% were unsure.
- 70% said that they had somewhere to go on their release, 8% did not know and 22% said that they had nowhere to go.

The prison staff have now been encouraged not to sit in the house block offices but to mingle with the prisoners; this should reduce levels of self-harm and acts of violence and provide some intelligence for security staff. Senior managers are also encouraged to walk the site, to be seen and to be approached and talked to.



## Evidence sections 4 – 7

### 4. Safety

#### 4.1 Reception and induction

On arrival, prisoners enter through a well-presented reception area and are processed through the system by professional and caring staff before they are assessed by healthcare staff. They then move into a house block, from which they undertake their induction process, which takes approximately two weeks. The process is designed to ensure that each prisoner is being placed on the correct pathway for his eventual release. Board members attend various parts of the process, to meet the prisoners to explain the role of the Board and to confirm the effectiveness of the process. Measures are now in place to speed up the induction process because of the short time that some new arrivals have in the prison.

#### 4.2 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody

There was one recorded death in custody during the reporting period, in January 2020; this was apparently self-inflicted and took place on house block 2. The Board can confirm that all proper procedures were followed, and is waiting for the coroner's report.

Acts of self-harm generally remained static throughout the year, at around 52 per month; although this is generally lower than the national average, it is still a worrying figure. The Board has recommended that officers should be more visible on the wings and therefore more in touch with the prisoners under their care. If the key worker scheme reaches its full potential, this should also add to a reduction in this figure.

The Board undertook an in-depth investigation of the **ACCT (Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork)**. We were concerned that, as ACCT reviews are not carried out at a specific time, and as we were often not on site, we were missing something. Our two-month investigation indicated that the system is operating very well, with staff following the observations requested and completing the forms correctly. We had no comment to make on this.

#### 4.3 Violence and violence reduction, self-isolation

The number of acts of violence averaged 34 per month. This is lower than the national average and, once again, the Board's recommendation about officers being out and about should contribute to keeping levels of violence low.

#### 4.4 Vulnerable prisoners, safeguarding

We do not have any meaningful data to report on this topic.

#### **4.5 Use of force**

The number of uses of force against prisoners averaged 44 per month during the year; this covers planned and unplanned actions, as well as use of handcuffs. When a planned operation is foreseen, the Board and healthcare staff are informed, and a Board member will generally attend the operation. These are carefully planned, to limit the risk to the staff and prisoner. The Board always speaks to the prisoners concerned, either directly after the event or the next day.

#### **4.6 Substance misuse**

Despite managers' best efforts, there was an average of 21 substance finds per month during the reporting year. To counter this, Ranby is pushing more and more prisoners to change to emails rather than letters, and uses the latest sniffing machine to detect substances on incoming mail. All mail is tested, however the ingredients of new psychoactive substances are constantly changing, and therefore machines, and also dogs, need to be retrained to detect these new smells. A new body scanner has been installed in reception to counter drugs coming in that way, and is proving very effective. Prisoners are, however, even turning to household products and chemicals to concoct a substance. Hooch is becoming a favourite, but this is bulky and harder to hide and easier to find.

## 5. Fair and humane treatment

- 5.1 Generally, the Board can report that managers make every effort to treat prisoners fairly. However, we find late replies to complaints, in particular, and poor communication to prisoners in general. Outside the direct control of the prison is prisoners (approximately 60) not being able to transfer to a category D prison, and prisoners being sent back to the establishment from a category D open prison for a misdemeanour without paperwork or the right of redress.

The Board undertook an in-depth investigation into the status of **IPP (imprisonment for public protection) prisoners**: We discovered that the prison is doing all it can for these prisoners. Regrettably, however, their fate is in the hands of external agencies – that is, the Parole Board. Sadly, we need to report that a couple of these prisoners have now become institutionalised and are happy to stay where they are. What we did discover is that IPP prisons are discriminated against when it comes to accessing training suggested by the Parole Board. They are sometimes pushed back if a prisoner with a determinate sentence needs to take the same course.

The Board undertook an in-depth investigation into **Prisoners on basic regime** – this was started as a result of information to the IMB concerning a prisoner who had been on the basic regime for several years (not at HMP Ranby). We discovered that HMP Ranby did have some long-term prisoners on basic, and, more worryingly, that it only kept this information on P-NOMIS, which meant that to discover how long a prisoner had been on this regime meant accessing each individual prisoner's P-NOMIS record. The prison has changed the system so that it knows, at a glance, the names of the prisoners who are on basic.

## 5.2 Accommodation, clothing, food

We do not have any meaningful data to report on this topic. A visit this year by the operational and system assurance group marked cell standards and decency on the wing as green in the audit. Cell clearing following a prisoner's removal from a cell is improving, however there are still lapses in the procedure. Outside of the prison management's control is the continued use of shared cells.

## 5.3 Segregation, special accommodation

The segregation unit has a total capacity for 15 prisoners, with one constant watch cell.

The facilities remain the same as last year. Staff have good interpersonal skills and create a positive atmosphere for the prisoners in their care.

Over the last year, there has mainly been consistency across the majority of the segregation process. However, the Board feels that, during the reporting

year, there has not been sufficient consistent effort to run segregation reviews owing to the lack of regular agreed times, which enables the attendance of Board members as well as other necessary contributors.

As Board members are not in the prison at all times, knowing when segregation reviews will be held is an important part of enabling members to schedule attendance, and we wish to see this practice tightened up in the next reporting year. While we still cannot ensure that a member will be able to attend each review, those we do observe are held in a fair and open fashion, and the prisoner is given every opportunity to express his concerns and discuss his progress.

Board members are notified of new arrivals in segregation, and see these individuals within 72 hours. Segregated prisoners have access to reading material from the library trolley, distraction puzzle packs, colouring books and a radio. The unit is visited on a regular basis by healthcare, mental health and chaplaincy staff, and a member of the Board, as well as daily visits by the duty governor. Board members regularly check all documentation in the unit, including the daily log, history sheets and assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) forms.

A Board member regularly attends segregation reviews. These are normally attended by healthcare and also, if appropriate a member of the substance misuse and resettlement teams, security, safer custody, and the prisoner's key worker.

This provides a multidisciplinary approach to the review process of each individual. At these meetings, discussions focus on the prisoner's mental health and wellbeing. Priority is given to how quickly and safely the prisoner can return to normal location.

The Board is concerned about the principle of the 'virtual segregation' transfer process, as this may result in some of the more challenging prisoners being moved around the prison system without their complex issues being addressed in an effective manner. We are pleased to note that at HMP Ranby there appear to be very few prisoners transferred in this way.

The Board notes with concern that, for prisoners with serious mental health issues, the prison does not have the facilities to sustain their wellbeing on a long-term basis. Within the limited conditions of the segregation unit, prison staff demonstrate their concern and care for these prisoners, while waiting for the slow external mental health protocols to be followed.

The Board undertook a detailed investigation into the **Virtual segregation**. Generally it is accepted that if a prisoner reaches 42 days further segregation must be authorised externally.- It was suggested to the Board that a meeting was organised online by various prisons and a swap was arranged for such prisoners in segregation. The Board investigated the matter and reached the conclusion that such meetings do take place; however, as far as HMP Ranby is concerned, no evidence was found that a prisoner swapped under these arrangements has entered the prison segregation unit on arrival.

#### **5.4 Staff-prisoner/detainee relationships, key workers**

We do not have any meaningful data to report on this topic.

#### **5.5 Equality and diversity**

Equalities staff are to be congratulated on the amount of work carried out and the way they deal with the prisoners, although they have not had a regular officer in the department.

**Hidden disabilities/difficulties:** Pocket guides, for staff and prisoners alike, have been made and distributed to prisoners. These will also be available to prisoners and staff on induction to equalities.

**Social care assessments:** All staff can make a referral, and prisoners are aware through 'Way Out TV' if they wish to refer themselves.

**Discrimination incident report forms (DIRFs):** During 2019, 95 DIRFs were submitted, of which 15% were upheld (2018-19 110 submitted and 20% were upheld).

**PAT Dog (Pets for Therapy):** – Approval has been given for a PAT Dog to come into the visits centre. The first visit took place on 13 February 2020 for the Veterans in Custody with 'Blue' the Therapeutic Pat Dog which the Veterans thoroughly enjoyed. The dog definitely had a beneficial impact on reducing some anxieties, photos were also taken. The Care after Combat Team were also able to use the visit as a prompt to introduce psychological exercises that improve decision making and planning for the future.

**LGBT – (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender)** The small number of prisoners who have declared are called up for a meeting quarterly however, at present they would prefer to talk to Equalities on a 1:1 basis and not have a meeting. It is known that a few other prisoners who are either gay or bisexual, but do not want to declare it for inclusion on NOMIS.

**Equalities peer advisers/buddies:** There is a good team that work hard at present both as advisers and with buddy responsibilities and keep individual logs for their caring up to date. Peer advisers have either completed or are working towards their level 3 advice and guidance qualification.

**Maturity screening tool:** The offender management unit now screens prisoners for low maturity (learning disability/learning challenge).

**Christmas tree festival in Retford:** The equalities department once again set up the Christmas tree at St Swithun's Church, Retford, during December. This is a good way of staying in touch with the local community.

**Equalities training:** Equalities staff are working with the training department for staff to complete the equalities and inclusion e-learning course on MyLearning, together with a dedicated race awareness training course available on CSL.

## **5.6 Faith and pastoral support**

We do not have any meaningful data to report on this topic.

## **5.7 Incentives and earned privileges**

We do not have any meaningful data to report on this topic.

## **5.8 Complaints**

The prison reports that there are, on average, 136 complaints per month, of which 84% are replied to on time. The Board constantly reminds the prison that a lack of a response only produces greater frustration on the part of the prisoner. We urge the prison to respond to all complaints in a timely manner.

## **5.9 Property**

Of all the applications that the Board receives 60% relate to property from other prisons not arriving with the prisoner. Indications are that there are different rules across the estate for the number of 'bags' that a prisoner may have, and the escort company also imposes restrictions on the volume being transported with the prisoner. The inter-prison complaint systems achieve limited success from other establishments, and that is why we receive such high numbers. The Board has been stressing to HMP Ranby the need to carry out the correct cell clearance procedure, and to some extent this has continued to improve, although there are still lapses.

## **6. Health and wellbeing**

### **6.1 Physical healthcare**

All prisoners are seen by healthcare staff at the point of reception, and are subject to a full comprehensive national healthcare screen which will identify any health needs. It covers physical, mental and substance misuse needs; relevant referrals are actioned at this point. Prisoners' health records are received promptly via email, and medications are received at the time of prisoner transfer.

In addition to the normal GP clinic service, the healthcare department also provides dentistry, optometry, podiatry, physiotherapy and pharmacy services. Waiting times are closely monitored, to ensure compliance with key performance indicators (KPIs), and these are reviewed at contract review meetings. Pharmacy services have separate KPIs, and all prescriptions are ordered via an external pharmacy, including both urgent and routine. Review data is shared with the prison's performance team, and is seen as being equivalent to, or better than, comparable external services.

The healthcare centre provides fully functional clinic rooms, offering privacy and dignity for all consultations.

### **6.2 Mental healthcare**

There is a mental health matron, supported by an experienced mental health team which provides care for relevant individuals within a reasonable time frame. Long waiting times, in excess of 28 days, are still being experienced for required transfers. During this reporting year, six prisoners were sectioned. Transfer data is passed to NHS England in relation to waiting times.

### **6.4 Exercise, time out of cell, gym**

We do not have any meaningful data to report on this topic.

### **6.5 Drug rehabilitation**

We do not have any meaningful data to report on this topic.

### **6.6 Soft skills**

The physical and mental health of prisoners is addressed through a monthly 'Time for You' session, which is an educational forum that has a specific theme. Patients are invited to attend, and feedback is requested from attendees. The mental awareness peer support programme continues, with navigators who work closely with the mental health team and two dedicated healthcare representatives (prisoners) who provide feedback from patients on the house blocks. The dedicated involvement team shares ideas with other prisons and the wider Trust. A healthcare forum takes place once a month, where dedicated prisoner representatives bring issues from the house blocks for discussion. A Board member regularly attends, and considers this to be an extremely worthwhile meeting, where problems are actively addressed and

where all members of the group are provided with an overview of prison health issues.



## **7. Progression and resettlement**

### **7.1 Education, library**

We do not have any meaningful data to report on this topic.

### **7.2 Vocational training, work**

The Board commends the work the activities department in providing activities on a daily basis for 800 prisoners (excluding education and house block workers).

The workshops, which are run both by the prison and education department, include: textiles; painting and decorating; woodwork; wood assembly; plastics; Industrial cleaning; officers mess; data input; laundry; powder coating; engineering; plumbing; gardens; and building trades.

The recent procedures that have been in place to track and report non-attendance at work for the past year are working well. If a prisoner is missing without a valid reason, an IEP warning is issued; if he receives three of these, his status could be reduced. This information is also passed to the head of activities, and records are kept. Repeated absences can be traced and investigated.

The increasing population with only a short time to serve is providing additional work for the activities department. The Board is pleased to report that prisoners are usually getting to work within two weeks of their arrival at the prison. Because of the short amount of time some prisoners have left to serve at Ranby, a reduced induction programme has been initiated. Prisoners may not always get the pathway or job they want, but they are placed on a waiting list and they will get the job they want as soon as a space becomes available.

Activities staff admit that there has recently been a problem in providing approved qualifications through the workshops. The Board is hoping that qualifications will be back on track soon.

Activities staff also admit that the number of prisoners at work has fluctuated throughout the year because of the loss of some instructors.

### **7.3 Offender management, progression**

We do not have any meaningful data to report on this topic.

### **7.4 Family contact**

We do not have any meaningful data to report on this topic.

### **7.5 Resettlement planning**

The Board has a member compiling a report on this specific issue, and expects to be in a position to issue this as a separate document by the end of this calendar year. An exit survey was instigated prior to lockdown, and the initial findings indicate that 36% of prisoners being released from HMP Ranby have no permanent address or hostel to go to. This slightly higher than the

response to our survey, but is a much more accurate figure as it is based on actual men leaving the prison.

## 8. The work of the IMB

The Board has been highly active this year. We have: investigated **ACCTs** (section 4.2) and their effectiveness; **IPP prisoners** (section 5) and what the prison is doing for them; **prisoners on the basic** regime (section 5); and **'virtual segregation'** (section 5.2); carried out **a survey** (section 1.4); and been compiling a report on **rehabilitation and release**, to be published at a later date.

## Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	15
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	8
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	9
Total number of visits to the establishment	530
Total number of segregation reviews attended	40

## Applications to the IMB

Code	Subject	Previous reporting year	Current reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	24	28
B	Discipline, including adjudications, IEP, sanctions	18	30
C	Equality	18	11
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	22	26
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection restrictions	24	17
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	26	32
F	Food and kitchens	2	24
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	55	46
H1	Property within this establishment	55	41
H2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	58	98
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	16	33
I	Sentence management, including home detention curfew, release on temporary licence, parole, release dates, recategorisation	59	78
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	25	53
K	Transfers	29	43
L	Miscellaneous, including complaints system		
	Total number of applications	431	560



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