

Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Manchester

For the reporting year: 1 March 2019 to 28 February
2020

Published: December 2020



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Section 1: The statutory role of the IMB

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

The Board is specifically charged to:

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

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

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.

Section 2: Executive summary

Main judgements:

Are prisoners treated fairly?

The Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) at HMP Manchester is satisfied that the prison endeavours to operate to all relevant regulations and guidelines, and the prison's own locally established principles, in ways which are fair and just to its prisoners. However, resourcing and operational considerations have frequently prevented this from being achieved fully.

This report presents the findings of the Board at HMP Manchester for the period 1 March 2019 to 28 February 2020.

Board evidence is obtained from observations made on visits, scrutiny of records and of data, informal contact with prisoners and staff, surveys and prisoner applications. More specifically, the Board monitored the management of prisoners and their treatment through regular visits to the establishment and attendance at segregation reviews, adjudications and when attending incidents.

The establishment encourages prisoner representation at appropriate meetings, and the Board also acknowledges the fairness of treatment of prisoners through the complaints process and, indeed, our own prisoner application system.

The Board is satisfied that prisoners are treated fairly and within the law, and any incidents within the prison are professionally managed. The wellbeing of the prisoner is a priority but often has to be balanced against operational and security considerations, which sometimes take precedence.

Are prisoners treated humanely?

In the experience of Board members, staff are fair and consistent towards prisoners. We see at close range that officers engage with prisoners in a professional manner.

The Board is concerned that during most of the reporting year staffing has been a concern, as in addition to the reduction in staff numbers, experienced prison officers have left the service. This has impacted on resourcing issues which have meant that there has not been a full or settled regime in operation, and this is evidenced within the various sections within this report. The lack of access for prisoners to meaningful activity became such a concern to the Board that in October 2019 we wrote to the Secretary of State for Justice to raise the issue.

The Board was also concerned by the large proportion of healthcare appointments which prisoners did not attend as a result of there being inadequate resources to escort them there (see paragraph 8.3).

Prisoners are able to access the complaints process, although the Board has raised concerns regarding the standard and thoroughness of responses to prisoners.

The process of induction for prisoners arriving at Manchester has been inconsistent, and this is a concern to the Board, particularly for prisoners entering the prison system for the first time.

Are prisoners prepared well for their release?

Please refer to section 11 of this report.

Main areas for development

To the Minister

The Board reported last year on the efforts of HMP Manchester to secure HMPPS funding to enable much needed improvements across the estate. A business case was presented with priority items for consideration; one of the items identified, and which remains outstanding, was the provision of 'safer custody windows' (see paragraph 7.6). Issues of concern will remain for the Board while prisoners retain the facility to discard litter and food waste via their current cell windows. In addition to the reduction in litter, the design of safer custody windows would reduce the opportunities for prisoners to receive drugs from external routes – for example, prisoners passing drugs/illicit items between each other and drone delivery, which has been an issue for the prison in recent years. These windows also reduce the risk of prisoners self-harming or potentially committing suicide as the design negates the opportunity for tying a ligature to the structure. Can the minister expedite approval of the necessary funding?

Prisoners at HMP Manchester have to take their food back to their cells and eat their meals on their lap from a tray. In some cases, particularly in the 'top jail' (see paragraph 3.2), they only have a screen curtain to separate their accommodation from the toilet area. The Board would enquire of the minister if steps could be taken to provide the prison with a separate canteen facility for its prisoners. This particular issue is one which the Board has raised regularly within recent annual reports.

The majority of applications received by the Board from prisoners has concerned the loss of their property, both when moving cells within the establishment and being transferred to or from HMP Manchester. What assurances can the minister provide to the Board that the handling of prisoner property is being prioritised to and from various prison establishments across the country?

The Board is very concerned about prisoners with seemingly extremely poor mental health being retained at HMP Manchester, and enduring long periods of time under constant watch (see paragraphs 8.10 to 8.16). What assurances can be offered to ensure that prisoners suffering from these symptoms can be swiftly placed in specialist accommodation to best support their needs?

To the Governor

The Board welcomes the arrival of a new Governor to HMP Manchester towards the end of 2019 and notes the positive impact he has had in a short period of time, particularly in relation to the morale of the staff. There do remain concerns, however, with a number of issues at the prison which the Board has raised in previous reports and which, in our view, the Governor should prioritise.

Other than the regular monthly board meetings, can the Governor offer alternative channels of communication to the Board, to keep them abreast of the changes planned for HMP Manchester in becoming a category B training establishment?

Can the prison develop a more efficient process for handling prisoners' property, and particularly in relation to those prisoners in custody at HMP Manchester where there has been the necessity to undertake cell clearances for moves between wings? (Referenced also above, in items for the minister; see also paragraph 7.10). Can the introduction of mandatory body-worn cameras to record cell clearances be initiated?

The standard of responses to prisoners from prison officers following a Request Complaint 1 has given the Board a cause for concern. What processes can be implemented to improve the quality of responses to those prisoners making a complaint?

The Board has noted the increase in staff sickness levels during the reporting year, following a previous period when the management of such issues had identified a positive trend. What processes are being put into place to reduce staff sickness further, to provide a healthy workforce, with high levels of staff attendance?

Throughout the reporting year, the Board has been concerned about the lack of purposeful activity for prisoners and the length of time being spent in their cells (see paragraph 4.24). Can assurances be provided by the Governor that these concerns will be a prioritised, in view of the new profiles for a category B training establishment?

The Board has identified a similar number of assaults by prisoners on staff over the past two reporting years – similarly with prisoner-on-prisoner assaults (see paragraph 4.1). As the number of prisoners on the roll has decreased during the reporting year, this means that, proportionally, there has been an increase. Self-harm levels have also increased significantly (see paragraph 4.3). What measures are being introduced to reduce the risk of violence in the prison and support those prisoners at risk of self-harm?

What plans are in place to improve living conditions further for prisoners, in respect of the vermin infestation across the estate and on a number of wings?

The Board is concerned with the number of outstanding repairs across the estate, and, in particular, the length of time that it takes for repairs to be completed. An example of this can be evidenced in the segregation unit, with prisoners at their reviews making regular reference to broken windows and their cells being cold because of failures in the heating system.

Improvements

A key factor in the report this year is the Board's understanding of the changes across the prison to prepare HMP Manchester for its new role as a category B training prison. The new Governor, who arrived in the last quarter of the reporting year, will require a period of time to elapse before assessing the impact of a new role.

Early indications of change are encouraging, however, with positive messages from the Governor and his plans for the future of the prison being well received by the staff. Our report last year identified a lack of support by members of the senior management team. Staff on wings frequently commented to members of the Board of the lack of physical presence by members of the Senior management Team. This was coupled with a concern from staff, senior managers were unaware of difficulties with which they were facing on a daily basis. The Board would applaud therefore, the move by the Governor to base his

office away from the administration block and relocate it within the main body of the prison on the 'bottom jail' (see paragraph 3.2).

The progression of the key worker scheme has provided evidence of closer engagement opportunities between wing officers and prisoners (see paragraphs 4.14 to 4.21).

An improvement programme has also been welcomed by the Board, with new showers on some wings, the completion of converted cells to accommodate disabled prisoners and the use of H1 wing to maintain a calm and structured regime for older prisoners.

The provision of telephones for prisoners in every cell (except on the segregation unit) has been a major enhancement for prisoners, who are now able to contact relatives and friends throughout the day, as opposed to being restricted to specific time periods previously for using the wing telephones.

Section 3: Description of the establishment

- 3.1 HMP Manchester is a local prison, responsible for detaining an adult male population that has been sentenced and remanded from courts in the Greater Manchester locality. A maximum of 44 high-risk and standard category A prisoners are also accommodated at the prison. The specialist intervention unit (SIU) has the capacity for up to six centrally managed prisoners.
- 3.2 The residential accommodation comprises two Victorian radial blocks, identified as the top and bottom jails. A number of units are included in the wings. The population is housed in either single or double cells, all having integral sanitation and in-cell power points. The Board has been informed that the establishment will accommodate 646 single cells and 49 cells with double occupancy as part of the plans to change its function to become a category B training prison.
- 3.3 There is a separate healthcare centre (HCC), which incorporates both in- and outpatient facilities. All facilities available in the community, including dentistry, optical, podiatry and pharmacy services, are offered.
- 3.4 The chapel is situated between the two accommodation blocks and holds weekly services for a wide range of faiths within the prison population. A world faith centre is located in the education centre.
- 3.5 There are a number of workshops situated on the site, offering a range of skills to prisoners, including a professional print shop, bakery, laundry and textiles. Also located near to the workshops are the prison kitchens and an on-site catering facility for staff, known as Crofters.

A new role for HMP Manchester

- 3.6 The Board is now experiencing a period of transition within its monitoring role and believes that it is important to highlight in this report some context around the plans for HMP Manchester preparing for its new function as a category B training establishment.
- 3.7 In March 2017, following a site visit and review by the Prison Estates Transformation Programme, a decision was made that HMP Manchester would change function, from a core local within the high-security estate to a category B training establishment with a category A function (including category A remand).
- 3.8 This has not been an easy process as there are no precedents on which to draw, as holding category A prisoners securely and safely in, essentially, a category B prison has not been done before, to the knowledge of the Board.
- 3.9 The Board would have welcomed the opportunity to have been more informed about the changes by the prison, as the main communication channels have been restricted to a verbal update received from the Governor at the monthly Board meetings.
- 3.10 The target population for the establishment within its new role has been agreed at 744. The Board has been observing the actions taken to reduce prisoner numbers. This is mainly being achieved by the prison no longer accepting new prisoners from the local magistrates' and Crown Courts.

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- 3.11 The main role criteria for the prison when it becomes a category B training prison will be to have a cohort of long-term category B prisoners. The 'long-term' definition is anyone serving 56 days or more, with 28 days or more remaining from the initial sentence date. The main function will be to provide effective rehabilitation that develops a prisoner's capacity and motivation to change, reducing their risk of harm and reoffending. In addition, it will be resourced to provide secure accommodation and transport for category A prisoners on remand, trial and attending court on a daily basis.
 - 3.12 The catchment area for the category A function will remain.
 - 3.13 The establishment will also maintain and operate the SIU, which will house close supervision centre (CSC) prisoners (Rule 46 prisoners).
 - 3.14 During transition, it has been agreed between HMP Manchester and capacity management that the prison will continue to hold prisoners convicted of sexual offences. The Board is led to believe that this will be reviewed at the end of the transition period.
 - 3.15 The Board understands that there are no plans to house normal location 18–21-year-olds at this time. There will still be restricted status 18–21-year-olds, HMP Manchester does have a responsibility to have a responsibility for 18 years olds due to the number of Cat A prisoners on remand who fall into this category.

Operational capacity

An overall operational capacity of 744 has been agreed, as set out in the table below.

WING	OP CAP	BREAKDOWN	DOUBLES	USAGE
A Wing	103	101 plus 2 DDA	34 Cells doubled	VP's
B Wing	84	82 plus 2 DDA	2 Cells doubled	Gen Pop
C Wing	80	78 plus 2 DDA	11 Cells doubled	Gen Pop
D Wing	82	80 plus 2 DDA	2 Cells doubled	Gen Pop
E Outer	64			VP's
E Inner	28			Cat A
Segregation	6			
SIU	7			Interventions / CSC
G Wing	77	75 plus 2 DDA		YA's
H Wing	39			Gen Pop
H1	11			
I Wing	27			Gen Pop
K Wing	116			Gen Pop
HCC	16			Medical
HCC (CAT A)	4			

49 Cells Doubled

Total Cell Cert	744
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DDA: Disability Discrimination Act VP: vulnerable prisoner; YA: young adult

New core day

- 3.16 The establishment is currently profiled to a local 'model of operational delivery', with a regime where the prisoners can have a domestic period either in the morning or the afternoon. As a training prison, the expectation is that prisoners will work full time. It has been decided that the main core day will finish at 5.30pm. This will allow for sufficient regime hours and the serving of the evening meal to take place in the evening duty period, along with any domestic activities required.
- 3.17 The Board intends to monitor the opportunities available to prisoners for evening association and early evening gym use as a result of the proposed changes.
- 3.18 The Board will also seek to monitor closely the operational delivery of these core days once this has been finalised and the profiling exercise has been concluded.

Staffing reductions

- 3.19 The Board has recognised that the staffing structure to support the new model will result in overall staff reductions. The Board has not received information on new shift patterns at the time of this report but will be monitoring the effects on prisoners in the next reporting year.

Moving forward

- 3.20 The Board understands that this is an opportunity for Manchester to make the most of the challenging period ahead and may be a testing period for members of the Board, to consider how the changes will affect prisoners and staff.

3.21 Initial observations of the Board have included the population movement, with reducing numbers of prisoners occupying the prison. The Board has identified the following changes in the early period of transition:

- **category B** prisoners remaining at HMP Manchester until their security category is downgraded or a progressive transfer is agreed
- **category C** prisoners being transferred out of the prison, although any category C prisoners will be retained at HMP Manchester should the remainder of their sentence not exceed 12 months
- **category D** progressive transfer requests being made to support moves to open conditions. Only one category D prisoner has been affected, and he has since been transferred out of the establishment.

3.22 The Board is able to report that physical works have started to refresh the residential areas. This includes the removal of bunk beds from a majority of the double cells, which will result in the establishment having the number of cells referenced in paragraph 3.2.

3.23 The Board has been advised by the Governor, at its regular monthly meetings, on key changes as they occur, for example:

- Licence revokes and Manchester Magistrates' Court's redirects were moved from HMP Manchester to HMP Forest Bank on 25 November 2019.
- The Crown Court function was switched off for HMP Manchester, and HMP Forest Bank took up this role from 3 February 2020. HMP Manchester no longer received any prisoners from Manchester Magistrates' Court or any Manchester prisoners recalled into custody from that date.

Section 4: Safety

- 4.1 In the previous reporting year (1 April 2018 to 28 March 2019), there were 228 assaults by prisoners on prisoners, and 119 assaults by prisoners on staff. In this reporting year, the Board notes an increase in assaults by prisoners on prisoners, to 236, with assaults on staff also increasing, at 112. As highlighted elsewhere in this report (see section 3), HMP Manchester is preparing for change to a category B training prison, and as a result the population has decreased; therefore, this reflects a proportionally greater increase on the previous reporting year.
- 4.2 The number of times that force was used in the reporting year was 478, up from 422 in the previous reporting year.
- 4.3 The Board is concerned with the large increase in self-harm incidents recorded at the establishment, from 506 in the previous reporting year to 787 in the current reporting year.
- 4.4 The Board has been invited to attend meetings to address violence reduction, and it is at these forums that we understand issues of this nature can be raised. Unfortunately, a number of these meetings have been cancelled and no information has been obtained on the types of issues raised or the recording of any outcomes.
- 4.5 While access to drugs by prisoners remains an issue at Manchester, the Board notes a reduction in the number of prisoners testing positive; a figure of 9.26% has been achieved over the reporting year, compared with just under 13.0% for 2018/19. The number of mobile phones found is also down from the previous year, from 420 to 384.
- 4.6 The Board is able to evidence a number of reasons to explain these statistics, including intelligence-led searches of cells, interceptions of packages containing illicit materials being thrown over the wall, the introduction of a new reception scanner and improved security measures relating to incoming mail.
- 4.7 Resourcing issues have had an impact on the regime and, in turn, on safety. As mentioned elsewhere in this report, the letter sent by the Board to the Secretary of State for Justice Prisons (see section 2, and also paragraph 4.24) identified the reduction in purposeful activity for prisoners; the Board is of the view that prisoners are likely to be more settled when they are aware of their regular routine, and a disruption to this leads to frustrations which could have a direct impact on prisoner and staff relationships.
- 4.8 The Board has recognised the emphasis placed on specific pieces of work and allocating the appropriate resources to undertake management responsibilities. Two prison officers have been made directly responsible for reviewing and introducing revised processes for managing assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) documentation. The Board has noted the new approach and identified that more records record prison officers' engagement with prisoners, as opposed to comments relating to prisoner state – for example, 'prisoner ok, observed asleep in bed'.
- 4.9 The Board recognises the good work of these officers, and members of the Board are regularly invited to attend ACCT reviews across the prison.
- 4.10 The establishment has been experiencing a period of transition, with a number of experienced members of staff leaving the Prison Service through retirement. Over

the past two years, a total of 58 staff have retired from HMP Manchester. In addition, there have been staff leaving wing duties to undertake administrative roles in the prison, which has further reduced the levels of experienced officers working directly with the prison population.

- 4.11 The prison now has around 66% of its current staff with less than two years' experience. The Board has also been concerned at the relatively low retention rate of new officers entering the Prison Service.
- 4.12 The violence reduction team has introduced violence reduction forums, which staff and prisoners can attend to discuss what causes violence and how it can be reduced. The Board notes that the second forum was very well attended by prisoners and staff alike, and some meaningful discussions resulted from the session.
- 4.13 There were eight deaths in custody recorded in the reporting year. It is understood that early indications are that six were due to natural causes, one was a suicide and one resulted from substance misuse. However, inquests into these deaths will need to be concluded before the cause of each can be confirmed.

Key worker scheme

- 4.14 A key worker scheme was introduced in May 2019 to provide prisoners with additional support, by designating an officer to each prisoner, to help with everyday issues.
- 4.15 Sign-off on the key worker programme had not been attained at the time of writing this report. A further support visit has been arranged to assist Manchester in addressing issues with the process, which can only be rectified upon the introduction of the new profiles for the prison.
- 4.16 The prison appointed two key worker champions, to raise awareness of the process and to train prison staff.
- 4.17 The time of engagement between a prison officer and a prisoner is 45 minutes per week or one and a half hours over a fortnight. Whilst this is the expected time for engagement, the Board note the activity between officer and prisoner is not as effective as it should be. For example, prison officers are more likely to have a general conversation as opposed to meaningful conversation relating to the prisoners welfare and concerns.
- 4.18 A quality assurance process has been introduced, enabling staff to record interactions.
- 4.19 There has been a reduction on the number of complaints received by wing officers since the introduction of the key worker programme, Whilst the conversations are not addressing the appropriate issues (see (4.17) Recorded engagement had increased from 15% in October 2019 to 93% in January 2020.
- 4.20 The key worker system is in its early stages, but indications have suggested that improvements can be achieved relating to a reduction in the number of complaints submitted, fewer questions from prisoners to senior managers when attending the wings, and a reduction in wing-related violence.
- 4.21 As at January 2020, 98% of prisoners at the establishment had been allocated a key worker.

- 4.22 The Board will continue to monitor the key worker process and assess the long-term aims, to improve prisoner confidence, build professional relationships with staff, build trust and progress interaction and family ties.
- 4.23 As and when the prison receives sign-off, it will have attained the required standards to introduce rigid-bar handcuff use, PAVA spray and dynamic 1 on 1 defence techniques for their staff.

Regime

- 4.24 The Board HMP Manchester took the unusual step of writing directly to the Secretary of State for Justice Prisons, to raise its concerns about the regime. The purpose of the letter was to raise the increasing concerns of the Board about the ongoing and significant deterioration in the regime, and the negative impact on purposeful activity for prisoners at the establishment. The Board considered that the outcome for prisoners was inhumane, given that most were spending excessive hours in their cells.
- 4.25 The notice below is an example of the information received by prisoners on a regular basis, to illustrate the restrictions imposed on them and their opportunities to engage in purposeful activity.

MANCHESTER INFORMATION NOTICE

REGIME CURTAILMENTS

Due to operational requirements and staffing issues there will be a limited regime throughout the establishment on the afternoon of Tuesday 10 September.

Essential services such as medication and visits will take place and every effort will be made to supply as full a regime as possible.

Apologies for this inconvenience.

GOVERNOR

9 September 2019

- 4.26 During May 2019, the level of regime curtailment rose considerably. Full activity took place on only two days during the month, while the position throughout June, July and August remained broadly similar. During September, full activities took place on only two days. At the time of writing to the secretary of state, there had been no activity for prisoners in the afternoon throughout October, apart from provision for essential services. The situation did not improve materially during the rest of the reporting period.
- 4.27 The Board has looked at available data but has been unable to ascertain whether the impact of the regime at this time had a direct impact on the increase in incidents of violence and of self-harm.
- 4.28 The Board has obtained data, however, to support possible reasons to support these findings, and it is alarming to note that the percentage of time that prisoners spent in industrial duties during the reporting year was 39%, set against a target of 80%.

Section 5: Equality and fairness

- 5.1 HMP Manchester has a diverse population. At the time of writing this report, there are 27% of prisoners from ethnic minorities, including a small number from the Gypsy and Traveller community.
- 5.2 In its report last year, the Board referenced the difficulty it had experienced in trying to evidence support and locate forums to address issues for prisoners with protected characteristics.
- 5.3 At the time of writing this report, the establishment has 49 foreign national prisoners. The Board has witnessed a reduction over the reporting year, from 93 in April 2019. A dedicated officer is responsible for maintaining regular communication with these prisoners, to update them on the progress of their particular cases and offer appropriate support.
- 5.5 Last year, the Board reported the modification of H1 wing, specifically to accommodate prisoners aged 50 and above. The work on H1 has progressed steadily, and recently has seen the permanent assignment of two officers, with a focus on the provision of a tailored regime, delivered in a relaxed setting, with provision for prisoners of this age to associate.
- 5.6 The Board is also pleased to see the enhancement of a number of cells, now fully fitted and adapted to accommodate disabled prisoners comfortably. There are eight cells in total dedicated for disabled use (two on each wing).
- 5.7 The Board is satisfied that the prison meets the requirements in relation to investigating potential discrimination in respect of the protected characteristics through the discrimination incident report (DIRF) system. The process involves an independent Quality Assurance Check' and the Board is satisfied with the way in which complaints were handled. A total of 46 DIRFs were submitted in the reporting year, with the majority of these relating to either racial remarks being made by a prisoner against another prisoner, or a prisoner against a member of staff.
- 5.8 The role of the chaplaincy services and the provision to cater for the diverse range of faiths at the prison are invaluable. The team also offers support to families following deaths in custody, and to any prisoners who may be affected.
- 5.9 The multi-faith chaplaincy team provides pastoral, spiritual and religious support to prisoners and staff of all faiths and none. The Board has observed their important role, and their skills in offering help and regularly engaging with prisoners and staff. Team members are represented on the prison care team and are regularly available.
- 5.10 The Board is pleased to report that prisoners have use of a Unilink kiosk, using 'Ask Chaplaincy', a process by which a prisoner can electronically ask a question directly to the Chaplaincy or by asking a member of staff to call the chaplaincy or by simply stopping a member of the Chaplaincy team on the wing.
- 5.11 The chaplaincy provides services, classes and support to all faith denominations, and a programme of events is published on each wing; application for prisoners is, again, available via the Unilink system.
- 5.12 Prisoners who are members of a faith community can seek help to organise a monthly pastoral visit with their faith leader or a member of their faith community.

Section 6: Segregation/care and separation unit/specialist intervention unit (SIU)

- 6.1 The Board regularly attends the segregation unit as part of its core weekly duties and has fulfilled 100% attendance at segregation reviews throughout the reporting period; this also includes a short period which this report covers when the COVID-19 pandemic was present.
- 6.2 The professionalism of the staff and their respectful treatment of prisoners on the unit is frequently endorsed by prisoners attending the segregation reviews. Favourable comments captured by the Board in their paperwork record quotes by prisoners in respect of their fair treatment which is further endorsed by their improved behaviour during their time on the unit.
- 6.3 The management of the unit, given its nature, does not go without incident, and during this reporting period there was one prisoner who remained on a 'dirty protest' for a lengthy period of time, causing distress and discomfort both to staff and other prisoners on the unit.
- 6.4 The Board has also identified a number of prisoners spending long periods of time in segregation while awaiting a transfer to more specialist accommodation which was more in keeping with the risks associated with their poor mental health.
- 6.5 During the year, a small number of prisoners did not attend their regular segregation reviews. This in the majority of cases was due to the fact that there was insufficient staff numbers available to unlock and safely escort the prisoner to the review, This situation was also hindered by periods of time where the unit was full to capacity and prisoners as there was a shortage of staff to deal with unlocking prisoners held on the unit. . The paperwork is always duly signed by a Board member, and the decision verbally communicated to the prisoner.
- 6.6 As mentioned earlier, in items for the Governor, there have been several complaints from prisoners on the unit about being cold, because of either heating system failures or delays in repairs to broken windows – an example of the poor maintenance record at the prison. Officers have responded to these concerns by supplying blankets to prisoners.

Specialist intervention unit

- 6.7 The SIU is a small unit consisting of six cells. Its purpose is to retain prisoners who are centrally managed on Rule 55.
- 6.8 At the time of writing this report, five prisoners were located on the SIU (which at the end of the reporting year reduced to three), and it was not anticipated that any additional prisoners would be arriving on the unit. The Board has observed the comprehensive management of these prisoners, and the support provided by other services within the prison – in particular, the increased access to psychology staff and the regular input by the mental health team.
- 6.9 The Board recognises the improvements within the unit following the provision for prisoners to be afforded access to a shower and telephone call on a daily basis, where previously this had been permitted only three times a week.

6.10 The Board is satisfied with the cleanliness, security and regime of the unit, and with the professionalism of the staff, who operate a regime in often challenging circumstances. The Board would highlight, however, the frustrations of staff who have expressed their concern about the time taken to complete computer duties, which then restricts their time spent with prisoners.

Section 7: Accommodation (including communication)

- 7.1 As identified in recent Board annual reports, HMP Manchester is an ageing prison, and the Board is now witnessing, on a weekly basis, the poor condition of parts of the estate.
- 7.2 Despite these barriers, the Board has acknowledged a number of improvements, specifically in relation to the heating system, water heating and shower facilities for prisoners.
- 7.3 The Board regularly monitors the wings and has recorded a smaller number of cells that are not available for use compared with the previous reporting year. The number of cells out of use has continued to increase as a result of the prison population reducing, while preparing to become a category B establishment.
- 7.4 A common theme has also been the infestation of vermin throughout the prison, an issue that was highlighted in last year's Board report. While the intention of the prison was to commission a new contractor to manage the problem, it has instead maintained its use of Rentokil, with little reduction in the number of vermin seen on the wings; this has resulted in some prisoners placing barriers under their doors to prevent the access of vermin.
- 7.5 In its rota reports, the Board has also recorded the poor management of the bins outside of health care, which cater for all of the refuse created by prisoners in the top jail and HCC. Owing to the volume of refuse held in this area, all three bins are regularly full, resulting in excess refuse being left in bags at the side. This practice hinders the efforts to manage pest control across the prison estate.
- 7.6 Some members of the Board have visited other prisons and noted that safer custody windows have been provided, physically to prevent litter, food and other objects being thrown from cell windows. The Board would fully support secure window replacement at Manchester, to address the issues immediately and provide a clean and healthy environment for its occupants. Reference has also been made in this report to the reduction in drug access with the fitting of such windows.
- 7.7 The Board continues to be concerned about the lack of decent dining accommodation. We believe that prisoners should not be expected to eat their meals within close proximity to an open toilet in their cells, as is the case at Manchester.
- 7.8 The Board has been made aware of plans to undertake modernisation of some areas; for example, the former area on I wing that was previously used for 'slopping out' creates an ideal space for a kitchen area for prisoners to prepare meals, offering them the opportunity to develop independence. The Board would welcome these measures should they come to fruition.

7.9 The Board remains concerned about the lack of protocol followed in relation to cell clearances – in particular, the loss of prisoner property. This issue has been identified on a number of occasions throughout the reporting year and leads to frustration for the prisoners concerned.

Section 8: Healthcare (including mental health and social care)

- 8.1 HMP Manchester continues to operate and deliver an excellent healthcare service to the prisoners held within its care. A full complement of services is provided, including dentistry, optometry, podiatry and pharmacy services.
- 8.2 A total of 34,001 medical appointments were booked by prisoners throughout the last year, which is a significant increase on the previous reporting year, where 32,989 were recorded.
- 8.3 A total of 6,215 appointments were recorded as 'prisoners did not attend'. The Board has identified appointments being cancelled owing to a lack of prisoner escorts due to existing staffing resources, or prison operations resulting in appointments not being permitted. The Board acknowledges, however, that prisoners may not have attended appointments for other reasons, such as attending legal or family visits, attending work, or simply deciding not to attend.
- 8.4 The prison is responsible for enabling healthcare services, but, while the Governor is committed to improving attendance at healthcare, the number of non-attendances remains high. The Board has concerns that getting prisoners to appointments is not seen as a priority, and prisoners are having to experience further delays for new appointments to be made, resulting in some experiencing periods of discomfort.
- 8.5 A total of 101 clinics were cancelled over the reporting year, covering a range of services, including GP, nurse, smoking cessation, drug and alcohol, day care, dentistry and psychiatry.
- 8.6 The establishment continues to perform above the national target percentage for mandatory drug testing. The statistics do, however, suggest that prisoners undertaking random testing are able to obtain drugs coming into the prison.

Prisoners and mental health

- 8.7 During the reporting year, the Board has noted a number of occasions where prisoners have been placed on constant watch for prolonged periods of time. Rota reports maintained by Board members evidence one prisoner being on constant watch for 14 weeks and 20 weeks (sometimes placed on intermittent watch), and another prisoner for a period of four weeks.
- 8.8 During the reporting year, there have been a number of prisoners on constant observations for prolonged periods of time while awaiting transfer to a secure psychiatric hospital. These are the same prisoners as referenced in paragraph 8.7. The Board has observed four prisoners on prolonged constant watch (sometimes reduced to intermittent) for a period ranging from two to six months.
- 8.9 These prisoners were waiting for a space in a secure psychiatric hospital owing to their poor mental health. As Manchester does not have the capability to care for such prisoners (for instance, forcefully giving medicine that the prisoner is required to take), the priority for healthcare staff was to ensure the prisoner's safety until they could be cared for in a proper facility. On several occasions, however, the waiting time was a number of months, and prisoners' health deteriorated rapidly as the prison was unable to provide the care that a psychiatric hospital could provide – not to mention that constant observations put a strain on prison staffing levels and morale.

- 8.10 For example, a prisoner who was on constant/intermittent watch for five months (up until his transfer) was referred by mental health staff in September 2019 and accepted to hospital in October of the same year, but only left the establishment in February 2020. The prisoner spent most of his time in segregation during this period because of his unpredictable and impulsive behaviour, and the Board observes that, while it may have been the only suitable location for that prisoner in the prison until transfer, the four-month wait in segregation under constant/intermittent watch was unfair and likely to have affected his wellbeing.
- 8.11 The Board would also draw attention to prisoners who, while not on constant watch, are nevertheless mentally unwell and are waiting, often months, for hospital beds. In particular, one prisoner was segregated on arrival in November 2019 owing to his violent behaviour, and remained in segregation until May 2020, rapidly deteriorating mentally – quite possibly because of the lack of appropriate care and from the detrimental effects of prolonged segregation. The prisoner was assessed by mental health staff in December and referred to a hospital in January. He was accepted in the same month but was only transferred in May 2020.
- 8.12 One prisoner was deemed to have learning difficulties, and the prison attempted to manage him as best they could until his health worsened; it was established by mental health staff in early 2020 that prison was not an appropriate environment for him. The prisoner spent prolonged periods in segregation owing to his violent behaviour while waiting for a space in psychiatric facility. He has been in prison since January 2019 and was referred to hospital in February 2020, when his behaviour became unmanageable in prison conditions. He left in May 2020.
- 8.13 The Board is therefore very concerned about the number of prisoners with extremely poor mental health who are at the prison. The prison environment can provide only limited therapeutic support and potentially exacerbates the mental health problems of such prisoners. Owing to their mental health issues, such prisoners often tend to turn to either violence or self-harm, often leading to prolonged segregation or constant watch, which further causes the prisoner to deteriorate mentally. Therefore, the Board concludes that waiting times to provide appropriate care for prisoners with mental health concerns are unacceptable.
- 8.14 There has been a reduction in the number of newly opened ACCT documents which has coincided with the establishment no longer receiving prisoners directly from local courts.
- 8.15 A multi-agency approach to prisoners on ACCT documents has been adopted, to include chaplaincy, mental health and substance misuse staff, and prison offender managers attending reviews, with strong lines of communication between agencies.
- 8.16 Prisoners on long-term open ACCT documents are asked if they would like family involvement, although the majority decline.
- 8.17 The prison received a visit from long-term high-security estate safer custody in September 2019, to review the ACCT process, and it was noted that there had been significant improvements. Manchester is currently training additional band 4 officers to undertake ACCT reviews, a recommendation suggested by the auditors.

- 8.18 Nearing the completion of writing this report, the outbreak of COVID-19 was in its very early stages and the IMB Secretariat advised Board members that access to the prison would be restricted.
- 8.19 The annual report for 2020/21 will highlight further the responses by Manchester to the COVID-19 pandemic and how social isolation measures were implemented, and access to and distribution of personal protective equipment was managed. The Board will also be reporting on any deaths of prisoners and staff resulting from the infection, and the number of prisoners testing positive.
- 8.20 In the final weeks of the period covered by this annual report, however, the Board was able to evidence some measures taken by the prison to reduce the spread of infection; these are listed below:
- mobile wash basins located at the entrance to the prison
 - hand gel and paper towels for visitors and staff
 - regular cleaning of all areas accessed by staff, including door handles and key safe access.

Section 9: Education and other activities

- 9.1 Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service commissioned a new provider, Milton Keynes College, to deliver education and training, starting in April 2019.
- 9.2 The Board reported last year that information in relation to the new provider was limited, as all records relating to education data had been retained by the outgoing provider.
- 9.3 The Board is pleased to advise that, despite the difficulties experienced with the regime in the prison, the initial months witnessed only a small number of classroom closures. However, from June to October, the regime was very unpredictable, with short-notice closures both in the morning and afternoons.
- 9.4 The education provider took steps to address the issues and moved prisoners from the afternoon to the morning classes, so that they could complete their qualifications. This proved very beneficial for the learners, as it provided stability, and also helped to keep them engaged in learning activity.
- 9.5 Milton Keynes College was unable to increase provision to the prisoners on the wings during the closures (other than that already provided) owing to a lack of space and staffing shortages.
- 9.6 The table below records the attendance in education for prisoners throughout the reporting year and highlights the concerns of the Board in relation to the significant lack of access to purposeful activity.

Month	Regime
March	82%
April	84%
May	70%
June	56%
July	60%
August	54%
September	56%
October	45%
November	51%
December	53%
January	54%
February	45%

- 9.7 A positive outcome from the year was the number of initial assessments and learning disability (LD) screenings completed. Milton Keynes College carried out 1,792 initial assessments in 2019/20 – 890 in English and 902 in mathematics. This, along with the introduction of a full-time LD support (as part of the new contract), who carried out 939 screenings during the year, meant that the provider had a much more accurate picture of individuals' learning levels, and whether they need any LD support in their learning (67% of prisoners required no further support).

9.8 The table below identifies the percentage of prisoners who were assessed at each level when they completed their initial assessment on entry to the prison. The table shows that the majority of prisoners are assessed at level 1 in both English and mathematics when they come into the establishment.

English	Pre-Entry	E1	E2	E3	L1	L2
Initial Assessments	2%	6%	20%	25%	37%	10%

Maths	Pre-Entry	E1	E2	E3	L1	L2
Initial Assessments	2%	5%	18%	31%	34%	10%

The meaning of the levels are:

L2 or level 2 is equivalent to GCSE A*–C or 4–9

L1 or level 1 is equivalent to GCSE D–G or 1–3

E3 or entry-level 3 is equivalent to key stage 3 (age 13–14)

E2 or entry-level 2 is equivalent to key stage 2 (age 10–11)

E1 or entry-level 1 is equivalent to key stage 1 (age 6–7)

9.9 For the period April 19 to March 20, the withdrawal rates were high but the vast majority (over 75%) were because the prisoners were either released or transferred before they could complete their qualification. This has been a long-term issue in the prison, as it is a core local establishment.

9.10 Milton Keynes College has unitised delivery as much as possible, so that prisoners can continue their qualification at their next establishment. This should no longer be an issue once Manchester reconfigures to a long-term training establishment.

9.11 The number of educational places changed throughout the year, depending on what classes were running. Below is information relating to the courses run every day:

- 73 places am and 63 places pm for English, mathematics, information technology, English for speakers of other languages, art, business enterprise on F wing
- 18 places in the bakery
- Eight places am and pm on K wing for English, mathematics and creative design
- 12 places on the wings for industrial cleaning.

9.12 Outreach education is provided on the category A unit, HCC, segregation unit and SIU twice per week, as needed. Milton Keynes College also teaches health and safety, warehousing, and food safety and hygiene to the prisoners in work areas.

9.13 In addition to this, the college runs peer mentoring, the award in education and training, and barista courses at various times throughout the year.

9.14 The only wing which does not currently have access to education or classes provided by Milton Keynes College is E wing outer (as the vulnerable prisoners cannot access main education). There is education provision for vulnerable prisoners, but it is only on K wing.

Section 10: Work, vocational training and employment

- 10.1 HMP Manchester is committed to ensuring that its prisoners engage in purposeful activity. In view of the difficulties experienced in the reporting year, with an unsettled regime, there has been a detrimental impact on the capacity for the prison to deliver the opportunities for purposeful activity.
- 10.2 The Board is keen to see how the new profiles are to operate and monitor the benefits for prisoners under the new plans operating as a category B training prison.
- 10.3 There is scope for further improvements in the type of work being offered to prisoners, and in the hours, they are able to invest in improving their opportunities.
- 10.4 The Board is pleased to have been informed, in January 2020, of the plans to reopen the waste management centre. Building works had started, including a new roof. This facility will ensure both a revenue stream for the prison and an opportunity for prisoners to undertake valued work.

Section 11: Resettlement preparation

- 11.1 During the reporting year, HMP Manchester has steadily been reducing its prisoner population, to prepare for meeting the new target of 744. Those prisoners leaving Manchester have been transferred to other prisons, as opposed to being prepared for release back into local communities.

The Work of the IMB

Board statistics	
Recommended complement of Board members	16
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	14
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	11
Total number of visits to the establishment	520
Total number of segregation reviews attended	104 Attended 104 Possible 100%

Applications to the IMB

Code	Subject	Current reporting year	Previous reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	0	0
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives and earned privileges, sanctions	0	0
C	Equality	0	1
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	0	0
E 1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection restrictions	0	3
E 2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	0	4
F	Food and kitchens	1	1
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	5	6
H 1	Property within this establishment	14	11
H 2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	7	16
H 3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	0	1
I	Sentence management including home detention curfew, release on temporary licence, parole, release dates, recategorisation	0	5
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	7	6
K	Transfers	1	5
L	Miscellaneous	24	10
	Total number of IMB applications	59	69