



# Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Channings Wood

**For reporting year  
1 September 2019 – 31 August 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 Channings Wood is a category C adult male training and resettlement prison with a capacity of just over 700. The prison operates a split-site regime across all areas for the two groups of prisoners it holds: main location and men convicted of sexual offences (MCoSO).

The prison opened in 1974 on the extensive site of a former Ministry of Defence base and is in a rural area of south Devon between Totnes and Newton Abbot. The site is bounded by a high fence and there are a number of public footpaths around the perimeter. Internal fences separate the two prisoner groups and control prisoners' movement on the site. There are eight permanent living blocks (LBs), as well as one that is temporary, comprising Bunkabins. There are also workshops, a kitchen, a care and separation unit (CSU), a health centre, a well-equipped gym and sports hall, a multifaith place of worship and a separate chapel, greenhouses and

polytunnels, and buildings housing other services. All buildings are either single or two storey.

The nine living blocks are split between main prisoners (LB2, 3, 4, 6 and 8) and MCoSO (LB1, 5, 7 and 9), with LB2, LB6, LB7 and LB9 housing enhanced prisoners. New receptions are placed in LB1 and LB8, which during the pandemic have been reverse cohorting (ie quarantine) wings. Five of the living blocks have a central entrance area, off which there are offices, classrooms, a servery and two association rooms. Cells in these blocks are on four corridors on each wing, two on each floor, arranged at right angles to each other. Most blocks have single cells with a toilet and communal showers, while LB8 has double cells with ensuite showers. Part of LB1 was been equipped with bunk beds for dual occupancy by new arrivals.

Education and vocational courses are provided by Weston College, the community rehabilitation company (CRC), Catch22, Jobcentre Plus and Prospects, which is concerned with careers guidance.

Healthcare services are provided by Care UK, whose staff are based in a health centre adjacent to the CSU. There are no inpatient beds. Nursing staff are on duty every day and the out-of-hours GP service is provided by Devon Doctors. Most acute care is provided by Torbay Hospital. Care UK also provides on-site pharmacy services and social care. Dental health services are provided by Time for Teeth. The psychology service is regionally managed across the South West cluster of prisons and oversees offending behaviour courses. The integrated substance misuse service (ISMS) is contracted to Care UK.

### **3. Executive summary**

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

The COVID-19 outbreak has had a significant impact on the Board's ability to gather information and discuss the contents of this annual report, as half of the reporting year was business as usual and half was under lockdown restrictions. The Board has therefore tried to cover as much ground as it can in these difficult circumstances, but inevitably there is less detail and supporting evidence than usual and some areas have not been reported on. Ministers are aware of these constraints. Regular information is being collected specifically on the prison's response to the pandemic, and that is being collated nationally.

#### **3.2 Main judgements**

Based on its monitoring, the Board believes that HMP Channings Wood is, overall, a well-run prison that treats prisoners with fairness and operates within a safe environment. The Board particularly recognises and commends the governor, managers and staff for their response to managing a prison that had very early cases of COVID-19, and their subsequent handling of restrictions. It was reassuring that despite these significant restrictions and the consequent frustrations caused by the necessary regime change in response to COVID-19, key violence indicators either fell or were maintained at the levels of the previous year. The Board has concerns about the impact of COVID-19 on prisoners' mental health, which can exacerbate the incidence of self-harm, which has continued to be the main reason

for them being placed on an assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) document.

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

The Board is encouraged that despite the additional pressures and constraints caused by measures introduced in response to COVID-19, the prison has remained largely safe, with assaults down by almost 20%. In the last report, the Board highlighted concerns over the large number of self-harm incidents, and this has reduced slightly in the current reporting year. The number of open ACCTs reduced this year by more than 20% and there has been a drop in the monthly average since the introduction of COVID-19 restrictions. The Board notes the increased level of scrutiny now being applied by managers to ACCT documentation. In the last report, the Board also expressed concern about the number of prisoners who were self-isolating, as this had risen for a second year. This situation has improved, with the average number of prisoners recorded as self-isolating each month falling until the start of lockdown. The Board's judgement is that, overall, force does not appear to be overused and seems to be used proportionately.

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

Following the introduction of a significantly restricted regime in response to COVID-19, the Board had concerns about how this would be received. The Board was very much heartened by what was learned about how staff rose to the challenge and how prisoners reacted, mostly with tolerance and understanding.

The Board has continued to find that the poor physical state of the accommodation is a serious concern. The poor condition of the fabric of most of the wings, and the state of repair of most showers, as well as their lack of privacy, does not promote decent living standards. The Board believes that the delay to remedial work caused by lack of investment by government has gone on for far too long and has a major impact on the prisoners. However, the Board is encouraged to note that despite much maintenance work having been put on hold, some key infrastructure projects are now back on-line. The Board's monitoring showed that, internally, the living blocks were clean, with information well displayed and telephones in working order.

It is regretted that until February 2020, staff with equalities responsibilities were often assigned to other work. Since then, their reassignment has had to be authorised at deputy governor level, but the Board feels strongly that they should be protected from redeployment to other duties.

The Board is pleased to report that the handling of prisoners' complaints has continued to improve and is now well managed. It would seem that this has increased confidence in the prison complaints process and has resulted in fewer applications to the Board. However, any complaints which required an answer from another prison often resulted in a significant delay. The largest number of applications to the Board continued to be about property, particularly on transfer from another prison. The Board is disappointed that the Prison Service and its contractors do not seem able to manage this problem and fail to give it a high enough priority.

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

The Board's monitoring supported the judgements of Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) clinical reviewers, that care in the prison was generally of an equivalent standard to that received in the community. The Board considers that staff responded effectively to COVID-19 infections within the prison and recognises the work that Care UK has done in setting up a range of new delivery models to cope with the restricted regime. The Board notes, with great concern, the number of prisoners with serious mental health conditions, especially those requiring a transfer to a secure psychiatric hospital. For prisoners needing to be transferred to a unit outside the prison's NHS Trust area, the Board believes that the assessment and transfer process has taken an unacceptably long time, which has increased since the COVID-19 restrictions began. The Board is concerned that if restrictions were to persist, the number of these cases would very likely continue to rise, putting mentally ill prisoners at greater risk and increasing demands on healthcare provision and discipline staff.

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

The Board welcomes efforts made by prison managers to improve education services, and notes that outcomes improved in several areas for the period April 2019 to March 2020. National vocational qualification (NVQ) functional skills success rates now exceed national averages in mathematics and English. Completion rates for vocational and most other courses rose to 94%, but attendance rates of 88% fell short of the target of 90% for 2019/20. The Board supports managers' keen monitoring of attendance levels and their taking steps to overcome any obstacles. Distance learning and Open University (OU) applications increased significantly during the reporting period.

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

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

Why are there often significant delays, caused by NHS practices, in making arrangements for prisoners requiring secure mental health provision, despite concerted efforts by prison and healthcare staff?

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

Why are the Prison Service and its contractors unable to manage the efficient and secure movement and storage of prisoners' property, particularly during transfers? The loss of personal items causes a great deal of frustration and unhappiness for the individuals concerned that often detracts from their ability to settle. The costs to the Prison Service in replacing lost items must be significant.

#### ***TO THE GOVERNOR***

While the Board very much welcomes the continued downward trend in many key safety indicators, progress in reducing levels of self-harm and the use of psychoactive substances is slower. What steps are planned to further reduce the number of prisoners self-harming at Channings Wood? Despite successes in the interception of drugs, can even more effective measures be taken to reduce the availability of drugs in the prison?

### 3.4 Progress since the last report

| <b>Questions from the 2018/19 annual report</b>  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>TO THE MINISTER</b>   |  |
| <p>What plans do you have for upgrading the accommodation and living blocks, so there is a common standard of decency across HMP Channings Wood? Without a commitment to a serious and extensive repair schedule, there seems little prospect that the safety of prisoners will be guaranteed and the inequality in living provision criticised by HMIP and the IMB can be eradicated.</p> | <p>Although the Board acknowledges that some improvements have been made and more are planned, the lack of investment for routine maintenance continues to be a serious issue. This, together with the large backlog of work, means that the Board continues to see the poor state of the buildings as an ongoing concern that affects prisoners' day-to-day life and wellbeing.</p>   |
| <b>TO THE PRISON SERVICE</b>   |  |
| <p>How do you intend to bring down the exorbitant cost of often quite mundane repairs and improvements? And why is more use of the prisoners' skills not tapped into, if only for basic jobs?</p>  | <p>The Board acknowledges the problems in obtaining contractors and the constraints they have to comply with. This is likely to increase costs, but the resulting costs continue to seem excessively high.</p> <p>The Board has been pleased to see, during monitoring visits, the impressive results of prisoners taking responsibility in painting the interior of living blocks which has greatly improved their appearance. Some work has been done by prisoners on replacement to flooring.</p> |
| <b>TO THE GOVERNOR</b>   |  |
| <p>What steps are planned to reduce the number of self isolators and self harmers at Channings Wood? And despite substantial successes in the interception of drugs, what further steps do you intend to introduce to reduce the availability of drugs and the growing bullying and debt that results from them?</p>   | <p>The number of self-harm incidents dropped slightly and the Board acknowledges that there is now increased focus on identifying vulnerable prisoners.</p> <p>During the first half of the reporting period, a number of measures to reduce the supply of psychoactive and other illicit substances was introduced and had some success.</p> <p>Subsequently, the altered regime further reduced prisoners' access to these.</p>  |
| <b>PROGRESS IN OTHER AREAS</b>   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of prisoners self isolating because of debt-related bullying decreased during the restricted regime, when there was greatly reduced movement on the site.</li> <li>• The management of complaints improved, and it would seem that this had a knock-on effect on the number of applications to the Board which dropped.</li> </ul>     |  |

## **Evidence sections 4 – 7**

### **4. Safety**

#### **4.1 Reception and induction**

The prison was unable to provide the Board with the total number of transfers into the prison over the whole of the reporting period, but from March to August 2020 there were 537 arrivals. From late March and through April, transfers into the prison initially ceased because of COVID-19, but picked up slowly again by May and returned to near-normal levels from June. The reception process included immediate health and temperature checks on arrival and social distancing arrangements, although some of the small room accommodation in the reception area made this challenging. Prisoners were then held in reverse cohorts (i.e. quarantine) for 14 days on the induction wings.

Last year, the Board reported that it had concerns regarding the use of LB8 for prisoners other than those on induction. This appears to have reduced during the first part of this reporting period and into COVID-19 period. Board members continued to attend weekly induction sessions on both the main and MCoSO prisoner wings before March 2020, and this was a generally satisfactory way for most prisoners transferring into Channings Wood to learn about the Board. Members noted that the consistency of wing staff and induction orderlies added to the effectiveness of induction. From March 2020, Board members were unable to conduct their contribution to inductions face to face. During a remote conversation in July, staff and induction orderlies reported to the Board that '[prison] induction is mostly going well'. Complying with quarantine requirements, departments such as ISMS, education and the gym provided written introductions rather than having face-to-face meetings with new prisoners.

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

Over this reporting year, there were three deaths in custody – one more than in the previous year. Last year, one of the deaths was self inflicted and the other was thought to be from the effects of psychoactive substances (PS). Of the three deaths this year, two were COVID-19 related and the other was thought to have been self inflicted. The PPO reports on all three deaths have not yet been completed, so the Board is unable to comment further.

In its last report, the Board highlighted the large number of self harm incidents. This year, there was a small reduction, of 4%, from 498 to 477, but the Board remains very concerned that self harm is the main reason for prisoners being placed on an ACCT. Although the average monthly number of self harm incidents during the COVID-19 restrictions fell from 44 to 34, there was a spike of 54 incidents in August, the highest monthly figure in the year. Cutting remained the usual method.

Listeners and safer custody representatives have reported that anxiety over the restricted regime due to COVID-19 and associated mental health issues were mainly affecting younger prisoners and those known to be poor copers. These were most likely to self harm. The data available to the Board revealed a reduction in the

number of opened ACCTs this year, from 490 to 387, a significant fall of over 20% and a monthly average of 32 opened ACCTs. There was a brief drop in the monthly average in April and May to 22 following the introduction of the COVID-19 restrictions, before levelling off at an average of 33 opened ACCTs a month in the final three months of this reporting period. Board members attended some ACCT reviews and scrutinised a sample of the documents during the first half of the year, reporting that the quality of the process was mostly satisfactory. Since April, Board members have not been able to attend ACCT reviews, but have been encouraged to note the level of scrutiny applied by managers to ACCT documents, as shown in the minutes of the weekly safety intervention meeting. The Board has seen no evidence to suggest that in the initial months of lockdown the drop in opened ACCTs was the result of less contact with prisoners, in fact self harm incidents also fell over that period.

The prison has experienced a reduced team of Listeners throughout the year and remained two below the minimum requirement at the end of the reporting period. Listeners that Board members spoke to last year had said that they felt undervalued and were sometimes seen by staff as an inconvenience. It is regrettable that the Board has found that their view has not changed. The Board noted that there were some restrictions when there were active COVID-19 cases, so Listeners could not be called after 8 pm. However, this situation appeared to have been rectified by late July. By comparison, safer custody representatives still believe that they 'make a real difference', are generally supported by staff (except in the area of training) and are trusted by prisoners. There is little formal training for safer custody representatives and it seems that they learn 'on the job' by shadowing others, although there has been some input from healthcare workers. Previously, monthly group meetings enabled sharing and debriefing about incidents, and provided a form of supervision, but these no longer appear to take place.

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

Overall, the Board's judgement is that governors and staff have worked hard to continue to drive down the levels of violence in the prison. The Board is encouraged that the downward trend noted last year in most key indicators has been maintained, despite the additional pressures on staff and frustration among prisoners caused by COVID-19 restrictions. Based on data supplied by the safer custody unit, the Board noted that the total number of assaults was again down, year on year. The number of prisoner-on-staff assaults had fallen from 61 last year to 52, a drop of 15%. Prisoner-on-prisoner assaults showed a fall from 153 to 122 (down 20%), while the overall reduction in all assaults was 19%. Assaults before and during the restricted regime revealed little significant variance. On average, each month there were two fewer prisoner-on-prisoner assaults and one more prisoner-on-staff assault during the restricted regime. The Board's analysis of formal complaints made by prisoners using the prison complaints process from September 2019 to June 2020 found that 23 (or 3.6%) out of 630 were violence related.

Staff and prisoner representatives have reported generally good levels of compliance, and, anecdotally, reports to members were of a 'common enemy' and an 'all in it together' attitude. It has been difficult to test the data against prisoners' experience, but at a meeting with some safer custody representatives held in August, the Board was told that Channings Wood was 'not felt to be an unsafe

prison'. While there were violent incidents, they considered that the risk of serious injury was low compared with their experiences in other prisons. The representatives also commented that during the previous year there had been considerable staff turnover, which had subsequently stabilised, bringing greater consistency in the staff they dealt with, although in March 2020 many staff had been reshuffled. On LBs 5 and 7, a core of staff had remained in place. This was felt to be helpful in establishing trust and relationships, having a positive effect on violence reduction: 'Staff were mostly felt to be quite helpful'.

In its last report, the Board registered concern about the number of prisoners who were self-isolating, which had risen for a second year. Prior to the restricted regime, this had prompted members to monitor prisoners who were 'behind the door' because of the concern over the increased numbers in December 2019 (17 prisoners) and February 2020 (19 prisoners), while noting possible inconsistencies across the prison in recording and monitoring self-isolators. On two separate visits in February, it was difficult for our members to confirm exactly which prisoners were self isolating. A safer custody representative commented on the number of self isolators, especially among newer arrivals and on LB4, with debt and bullying as the primary factors. It was unfortunate that lockdown followed so soon afterwards, as this was an issue that the Board remained keen to focus on.

Despite the limitations of remote monitoring, members can report some improvement. Compared with last year, the average number of prisoners self isolating each month fell from 14 to 11. Analysis of the numbers before and during the restricted regime revealed that the average number of self isolators each month fell from 13 to eight. It is not possible to say with any certainty whether this was due to improved procedures and safeguarding by prison staff, or the much greater restrictions on association and movement, and is likely to be an element of both. Members' scrutiny of the weekly safety intervention meeting minutes revealed a greater focus on engagement with self isolating prisoners and the quality of daily case notes, with any gaps noted being followed up by the safer custody unit.

#### **4.4 Vulnerable prisoners, safeguarding**

Since March some prisoners had been shielding in line with government guidelines. At the end of August, there were three (down from five) and they had chosen to self isolate because of their concern regarding the risk of exposure to COVID-19. They have received the same amount of time outside for exercise, and access to showers as other prisoners, while having food and medication delivered to their cells.

In January, special provision was introduced for a group of prisoners identified as 'non-copers'. Specific group activities, such as a Scrabble club, were available during the week and on Saturday mornings. Initially, these were welcomed and well attended but they were paused from late March. The safer custody representatives remained active throughout the summer in supporting prisoners on an individual basis and ensuring that they had distraction packs.

The Board is pleased to report the launch of an offender personality disorder pathway, known as 'Out of the Box'. This is a three-tier service, of which tier 1 (the reach out service) is already under way, taking referrals since the beginning of

August and currently engaging with 11 prisoners. Tier 2 will be delivered in social groups and can be introduced when the prison enters stage 2 of the COVID-19 National Framework for Prison Regimes; tier 3 (psychological intervention delivered by a multidisciplinary team of operational and clinical staff) should be in place early in 2021. A total of 166 prisoners met the entry criteria, but full capacity in the first year will only be 36. It is too early for the Board to comment on its effectiveness but we plan to focus on its further development.

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

The use of force reported to the Board has remained fairly consistent with last year's figures, albeit with a slight increase. Last year, 229 use of force incidents were recorded (an average of 19 per month), while in this reporting year the figure was 257 (an average of 21 a month). Members saw a slight increase in incidents during the COVID-19 restrictions, of 133 compared with 124 in the first half of the year. However, this was largely explained by a spike of 36 incidents in May, when restraints were used on a number of high-risk, gang-related prisoners during their transfer out. Most incidents have occurred on main wings (LBs 3 and 4) and in the segregation unit. Per head of prison population, the age range 18–24 was over-represented in use of force incidents, but the majority of incidents were among 25–34 year olds. With the exception of May (when two mixed race prisoners were involved in seven use of force incidents as part of a planned transfer out) the Board has seen no evidence of disproportionality in relation to race and ethnicity.

Most of the use of force incidents involved the deployment of control and restraint (C&R) techniques, usually because of non-compliance by prisoners. Again, the use of handcuffs during the transfer out of some high-risk prisoners was the main reason for the 34 C&R incidents in May. Over the reporting period, batons were drawn on six occasions, but were not used. PAVA spray was issued to trained use of force instructors in May, but to date has not been used. In February, one serious incident of a four-man barricade in a cell took place, but was resolved through negotiation, and only one prisoner had to be restrained. There was no requirement during this year to call in national-level assistance.

Channings Wood has a system to debrief prisoners involved in use of force incidents. From our analysis of use of force meeting minutes, the Board could see that the vast majority of prisoners chose to engage with the process from January to June and, of 147 incidents, just six resulted in formal complaints by the prisoners involved. The Board's judgement, based on the statistics provided by the prison and the minutes from use of force meetings, is that overall, force did not appear to be over used and seemed to be proportionate.

#### **4.6 Substance misuse**

In the last annual report, the Board noted a reduction in the number of incidents attributed to PS, as also reported by the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP's) independent review of progress: 'The use of new psychoactive substances has declined and the mandatory drug testing rate has shown a reduction in recent months.' The Board agreed that reasonable progress had been made but remained concerned that any loss of focus by the staff team could see a return to the high levels of misuse common in 2018. This has not happened but, although the situation

is stable, there has been only minimal improvement. This year, there were 322 incidents related to substance misuse, down from 327, but still with a weekly average of six incidents. The Board noted that over the six months prior to the COVID-19 restrictions, the average number of weekly incidents was eight. Since the tighter restrictions in March, the monthly average dropped to four. ISMS staff believe that this fall may be explained by the increased availability of 'hooch' since May.

ISMS staff also reported to the Board that, in their view, 'the prison appears to be safer this year' although they recognised that there were still some incidents going unreported, either to them or to healthcare staff. Even so, they considered that there had been much better engagement between wing staff and healthcare/ISMS workers, allowing a more joined-up approach to substance abuse. Although the Board has not been able to speak directly with prisoners using the service, ISMS staff reported conflicting views from prisoners about the availability of illicit items. A majority of service users stated that it was difficult to obtain illicit items, while some claimed that PS were freely available, despite measures to reduce supply, such as photocopying mail, increasing the amount of internal fencing and greater movement control. Safer custody representatives confirmed to members that, in their view: 'It's hard to do stuff under the radar – most gets detected'.

Prisoner representatives also reported on the way that the ISMS was provided during the restricted regime. There had been no face-to-face work until the prison moved to level 3 at the end of June. During the restrictions, everything had been paper based via the applications system, which was not seen as responsive and was not providing the level of support that prisoners needed. ISMS staff did not completely agree, saying that they had maintained face-to-face contact, although initially this had only been for urgent and essential contact, such as assessments, welfare checks, ACCT reviews and release planning. By June, however, they had returned to providing a one-to-one service, and from July some substance misuse assessment and referral team (SMART) sessions had resumed, first on the main and later on the MCoSO prisoner wings, with two prisoners and one facilitator working in socially distanced groups.

## **5. Fair and humane treatment**

### **5.1 Accommodation, clothing, food**

At the beginning of the reporting year, the Board embarked on a more targeted programme of visits to living blocks, beginning with those which had caused members the greatest concern in the previous year, and which prompted a 'question to the minister'. On each visit, a Board member was accompanied by the dedicated wing representative. On the whole, monitoring showed that the wings were clean, noticeboards were informative, telephones were in working order and members generally heard positive comments about the food. Once direct monitoring stopped, visits were carried out remotely through telephone calls to the living blocks and by receiving the minutes of the wing representative council meetings. Prior to the COVID-19 restrictions, these meetings had taken place monthly, but from April 2020 they became a weekly event. The Board noted that this was a valuable internal communication tool, as well as a mechanism for dealing with real-life issues, being well attended and always chaired at governor level.

The physical state of the blocks continued to be the Board's main concern. LB7 is a case in point, also mentioned in the Board's last report, as the fabric of the whole wing (particularly the poor quality showers and their lack of privacy) remains unfit for purpose. The general lack of privacy also applies to the gym showers, where there is also rusting equipment and poor ventilation. There is little evidence of long-promised remedial work having been carried out, other than on LB5, where refurbishment for disabled shower access was completed on one wing. When members spoke to the head of residence, it was reported that budgetary constraints had not been the main issue, but rather the impact of COVID-19 regulations, which determined when work could begin and how long it might then take. The Board believes that any further delay to this work will have a major impact on the prisoners in custody, especially on LB7, as the showers will continue to remain unfit for purpose. These facilities are neither acceptable nor, in our view, safe for an increasingly ageing and frail population. For prisoners to spend yet another winter in these conditions is a real concern which needs addressing urgently. The Board was told that funding was in place for refurbishment of the showers on both LB3 and LB7, and it was hoped that work would begin in November 2020.

It is encouraging to note that, despite much maintenance work having been put on hold, some projects came back on line. Boiler refurbishment began and the programme of patchwork re-roofing started, as well as some long-awaited repairs to LB6. Work on replacing the gas and water mains across the whole prison was also due to start in November.

The problem of vermin, both inside and outside the living blocks, has been raised by many of the wing representatives and acted upon by managers. As a result, Rentokil was contracted to lay bait and to identify and reduce potential habitats for the rats.

In summary, while the Board accepts the inevitable impact that COVID-19 restrictions have had on the planned maintenance programme across the establishment, it is regretted that the fabric of the prison has been allowed to deteriorate to such an extent. The Board hopes that the work now in hand or being planned and sustained investment will lead to more acceptable standards and improved conditions of decency.

## **5.2 Segregation, special accommodation**

The CSU has eight residential and two holding cells. There is also an office and a large room where reviews and adjudications are held, and a smaller room for carrying out mandatory drug testing. There has been continuity in the governor responsible for the management of the unit but, although there has been greater consistency and commitment in the staff working in the unit, some Board members have reported that they have experienced a poor handover of information. Overall, staff have exhibited compassion and kindness in the face of often very challenging prisoners.

The Board welcomes the establishment of data collection on the unit, which can support analysis of trends for a range of factors. In the last report, we noted that from May to August 2019, there had been 29 prisoners in segregation, with the longest stay being 81 days and 10 prisoners staying for more than 28 days. From the

available data for the period January to August 2020, there had been 67 prisoners in the unit, the longest stay being 112 days. Four prisoners had stayed for more than 84 days and six prisoners for between 42 and 83 days. These figures showed a significant increase in the number of prisoners spending longer periods in the unit, but the average stay had remained fairly constant, at about 20 days. Some of the increases could be attributed to limited transfers during the COVID-19 restrictions. There was a slight rise in the proportion of prisoners in the unit who were aged between 20 and 29, from 40% to 43%, but a drop in the prisoners aged between 30 and 39, from 40% to 31%. The largest proportion, at 78%, was of white British ethnicity (only 2% less than the previous year) and this is in line with the prison's population.

The Board is concerned that a number of prisoners on ACCTs were in the unit, although, unfortunately, no data on this was available. Of particular concern was that some of the longest stays were by prisoners on ACCTs. Despite the considerable efforts of prison and healthcare staff, in several cases it proved very difficult for the NHS to obtain a placement in secure facilities, resulting in significant delays for the prisoners concerned. It is regrettable that the unit has had to be used as a place of safety for prisoners with significant mental health needs, although they received the same level of support from the mental health and psychiatric teams as prisoners in other locations in the prison.

Unfortunately, the plan to seek enabling environment accreditation has been put on hold due to COVID-19 demands.

The building has been maintained internally but is continuing to await large-scale refurbishment. The facilities in the exercise yard continue to be very limited and the roof of the covered area is in a poor state, leaking badly during wet weather.

Prior to lockdown, members met all prisoners within 72 hours of their arrival in the unit. Members attended good order and/or discipline (GOOD) reviews on a Tuesday or a Thursday and were at 35 in person. We were satisfied that these were conducted correctly and fairly, often with sensitivity and patience. A member of healthcare staff was almost always present. During the COVID-19 lockdown, when members stopped going on site, members were able to listen in to the majority of GOOD reviews through a telephone link. Although the sound quality was sometimes poor, members were able to ask for clarification when needed and also could speak to the prisoners involved. Again, members were satisfied that reviews were conducted correctly.

From September 2019 to March 2020, Board members attended 150 adjudications. From January to August 2020, adjudications involved 241 individuals, facing 1,591 charges. Eighty-nine cases were referred to the district judge because of the severity of the alleged offence. Nine prisoners each accounted for more than 30 charges, while, at the opposite extreme, 35 prisoners faced only one charge. Members who attended adjudications were content with the way the process was conducted.

### **5.3 Staff/prisoner relationships, key workers**

The Board lacks sufficient information to comment in this area.

## **5.4 Equality and diversity**

The Board finds that there have been some improvements in many equality and diversity areas. This is probably as a result of a greater awareness across the prison since the publication, in June 2019, of the local equality action plan. However, up until February 2020, the equalities officer was often employed on other duties, sometimes only able to devote three to four hours a week to equality duties. The Board feels that the equalities function has not always been given the attention it deserves. While it recognises the constraints of staff shortages, especially due to gaps caused by the need for staff to self-isolate, the Board feels that this role should be protected from redeployment to other duties. It is hoped that the policy of redeployment only on the authority of the deputy governor will help. However, the Board wishes to acknowledge the efforts of the former equalities officer, who during most of this period was able to deal with the more pressing issues with some assistance from another officer and the two equalities orderlies.

One area where the Board has noted improvements has been with foreign nationals. There are currently 39 foreign nationals (the largest groups being Irish and Albanian) but numbers have been higher during the year, given the pausing of transfers and deportations because of the COVID-19 restrictions. Immigration surgeries were held, so that eligible prisoners could be ready for deportation when restrictions eased. These monthly surgeries reduced the numbers waiting to be processed, from 55 to eight. Another example of good practice observed by the Board was the production of a risk register for prisoners whose first language was not English. With support from the safer custody unit, the equalities officer has been able to assess these prisoners' written and verbal English language ability, given concerns about their ability to understand procedures and restrictions introduced because of COVID-19.

Other positive areas noted include the special arrangements made for Ramadan during the restricted regime, so that Muslim prisoners could have a hot meal after sunset. Although Board members were unable to observe this at first hand, the reports that members have seen showed that this worked well. The Board is also aware of a tailored LGBT distraction pack, produced to ease the stress caused by lockdown restrictions, and the improved availability of Black, Asian and minority ethnic products being included on the canteen list.

In the calendar year 2019, 53 discrimination incident report forms were submitted (including three from staff) – an average of 4.4 per month. In the first eight months of 2020, there were 46 (including two made by staff against prisoners). Discounting those, the average number per month to the end of the reporting year was 5.7, an increase of almost 30%. Our own applications from September 2019 to August 2020 show that, of 191 received, nine (5%) were categorised as equalities or discrimination issues. Prisoners from ethnic minorities that members were able to speak to generally said that they did not have any issues relating to their treatment, or to discrimination.

## **5.5 Faith and pastoral support**

COVID-19 restrictions necessitated the suspension of all communal faith group activities and practices. The chaplaincy had to adapt very quickly to working in new and innovative ways while dealing with a number of constraints, especially reduced staffing. Several staff were shielding or were limited to working in only one prison.

Volunteer chaplains, and others who were not directly employed by Channings Wood, were unable to attend as usual. Consequently, apart from the managing chaplain, there was one Anglican chaplain employed for 16 hours a week, a Muslim chaplain contracted for 18.75 hours and one sessional Buddhist chaplain for four hours per week. Despite this, members of the chaplaincy team continued to attend ACCT reviews, see new arrivals, carry out daily visits to the CSU and speak to individuals on constant watch each day. As well as prisoners in custody, they also supported some members of staff. The Board is aware that the chaplaincy received many appreciative comments and letters of thanks. One prisoner wrote that 'we know that chaplaincy haven't forgotten us'. As well as in-person support, weekly news sheets were introduced. Other in-cell material was also provided to all faith groups represented in the prison, allowing the major religious festivals to be marked. In addition, the chaplaincy provided books (not just of a religious nature), CDs and DVDs as distraction tools for the prisoners. Overall, the Board judges that the pastoral and welfare support provided by the chaplaincy team has been especially significant during the COVID-19 restrictions, given that other support groups have not been able to enter the prison.

## **5.6 Incentives and earned privileges**

The Board lacks sufficient information to comment in this area.

## **5.7 Complaints**

Complaints from prisoners peaked in February this year, at 87, and were at their lowest in April (the first full month of COVID-19 restrictions), at 41. On average, the prison complaints system dealt with just over 60 complaints a month. Residential matters accounted for about 23% of complaints (ahead even of property) and, taken together, these areas accounted for almost 40% of the total. The Board finds this unsurprising, given the backlog of repairs.

The Board finds that the breakdown of complaints received mirrored the subject matter of applications made to us. The Board's judgement is that the handling of prisoners' complaints appears to have shown improvement compared with previous years and is now better managed. However, timely and detailed answers to requests for information made to other prisons still remained difficult for Channings Wood staff to obtain.

## **5.8 Property**

Complaints about property continued to feature highly in the range of prison complaints (some 16%, the highest after residential issues), as has been the case for many years. Property was also the top subject (43) of all applications received by the Board, some 23%. It appears to the Board that the Prison Service does not seem able to manage this problem and has failed to accord it a high enough priority.

# **6. Health and wellbeing**

## **6.1 Healthcare: general**

Care UK is the provider of health services. During this reporting year, there has been no Care Quality Commission (CQC) assessment or HMIP report on healthcare

provision. Healthcare staff levels have been good, and some new appointments made. These have sustained the improvements in staffing arrangements, highlighted in our report for 2018/19, that had been made to ensure that the last CQC report recommendations were implemented. In meetings with the head of healthcare, members were told that the staffing levels have generally been adequate and that some additional appointments have been made to improve efficiency. A new full-time ISMS worker, made available by NHS England, was the most significant recruitment to the team.

## **6.2 Physical healthcare**

During the initial COVID-19 lockdown, which began in March, there were no GPs or dentists on site, but the unit was staffed by nurses and mental health workers. The GPs worked remotely and there were virtual clinics. Dental emergencies were arranged on-site. Members were also informed that a change in how medications were dispensed was necessary, to avoid healthcare staff moving between the wings. This resulted in 96% of prisoners being in possession of their medication and reduced the number of wing collections by nearly half, from 70 to 38 a day.

Some 30 extreme-risk prisoners received notifications from NHS England, and were offered isolation in shielding units, where welfare checks could be carried out daily and health checks weekly. Requests from prisoners to be isolated were patchy, with some initially taking up the offer of isolation and then not continuing with it after a relatively short period. There were 160 prisoners classified as vulnerable (that is, over 65 or with pre-existing medical conditions), and they were also offered isolation options.

The first case of COVID-19 in the prison was in March, when testing started, with results being available within 48 hours. The head of healthcare informed Board members that personal protective equipment (PPE) was readily available for staff. Prisoners suspected of having COVID-19 were transferred to separate protective isolation units. Two prisoners died after transfer to hospital, one in April and one in May, neither of whom had been in the extreme-risk category.

## **6.3 Mental healthcare**

Once the national lockdown began on 16 March, healthcare delivery had to adjust to a new way of working, to ensure the safety of patients and staff as far as possible. Devon Partnership NHS Trust (DPT) is subcontracted by Care UK within the Devon cluster prisons to provide mental health services. Delivery of these services has had to change, with face-to-face contact only occurring in exceptional circumstances, such as for those with acute symptoms of psychosis and/or severe mood disorder. The care of those in the high-risk group was generally provided remotely if this was considered suitable, but prisoners assessed to be too mentally unwell for this were seen face to face, with appropriate PPE. After June 2020, when there was a relaxation in the restrictions, there was a change to service delivery. Since then, the Board has noted that mental health referrals have gone up by 49%, and opened ACCTs by 17%.

Prisoners with serious mental health conditions and requiring a transfer to a secure psychiatric hospital have increased over recent years. In the two years from January 2018 to January 2020, four prisoners were transferred. However, in just the first eight months of 2020, five were moved to secure institutions. If such a transfer was within

the DPT's catchment area (Devon) or within the South West Provider Collaborative (Cornwall, Devon and Wiltshire), the assessment, transfer and treatment process has tended to run smoothly. However, if a prisoner needed to be transferred to a secure psychiatric unit outside of these areas, then, in the Board's view, the assessment and transfer process has taken an unacceptably long time. This is due to the funding for the provision having to be arranged with the appropriate clinical commissioning group, and the availability of a consultant psychiatrist to visit the prison to assess the patient. While this process is taking place, the prisoner has to remain in accommodation at the prison which is unlikely to be appropriate to his mental health needs.

From what the Board knows, this appears to be a common problem in a number of other establishments and is one that has increased since the COVID-19 restrictions began. If lockdown conditions were to persist, the Board is concerned that the number of prisoners needing secure psychiatric hospital provision will very likely rise, leading to more being kept in unsuitable accommodation while awaiting transfer.

#### **6.4 Social care**

At the time of writing, 56 prisoners were on the personal emergency evacuation plan register and there were 43 prisoners aged 65 or older (the oldest was 88), who made up around 6% of the total prison roll. They mostly live on LB5, where social care packages are available if required, and are provided by Care UK. There are currently two in place and they appear to have worked more effectively since this arrangement was assigned to Care UK last year. There is also a team of 'buddies', who are prisoners trained to support those who require assistance with care other than personal care. The Board understands that this support has continued throughout the COVID-19 period.

#### **6.5 Exercise, time out of cell**

During stage 4 ('lockdown'), prisoners were confined to their cells for up to 23 hours a day. Following the move to stage 3 ('restrict'), distanced gym sessions were started, together with some open-air activities outside the living blocks for those prisoners wishing to participate. Due to the short time allowed, some sessions being only 20 minutes in duration, take-up has been reported as poor. The Board shares the concerns expressed by wing representatives and prison staff about the number of hours that prisoners remain locked in their cells, and the potential effect on their mental health.

#### **6.6 Drug rehabilitation**

The Board is aware that pre-release drug education has been made available to prisoners. Care UK uses the 'Socrates' system to upload prisoners' medical files. On release, prisoners can download the companion app, so that they can access their medical records on their smartphone. This can make continuity of care much simpler and help to avoid the delays that can be encountered when GPs and other health professionals in the community apply for details of medical histories and previously prescribed medications. Despite the clear potential for giving prisoners a greater degree of control over their health, the Board is disappointed to note the reported poor level of take-up by prisoners on release. The Board is unable to say why this is the case, but has been told that it is not because of a lack of access to smartphones.

## **6.7 Summary**

The imposition of the COVID-19 restrictions has greatly limited the Board's ability to gather evidence. In particular, it has not been possible to engage with prisoners routinely in the ways that members would normally do, to understand their impressions and perspective on how the prison healthcare system has operated. It had been the Board's hope that some prisoner feedback might be forthcoming from the health needs assessment patient survey conducted by the prison, but the results were not found to be informative. It may be that other planned surveys (an NHS mental health assessment survey and a COVID-19 patient experience survey) will shed more light on the prisoners' experience. Consequently, much of the evidence for this report has been obtained either through attending a sample of healthcare-related meetings or by reviewing the minutes of the weekly wing representative council meetings. These have been supplemented by some limited face-to-face or Zoom meetings with the head of healthcare and with staff.

The Board recognises the work that Care UK has done in setting up a range of new delivery models to cope with the restricted regime. This has provided an opportunity to incorporate some of the new initiatives into the way that healthcare operates in the establishment going forward.

## **7. Progression and resettlement**

### **7.1 Education, library**

In its most recent report (2019), HMIP found that the education service provided by Weston College broadly met the needs of the majority of prisoners. The Board welcomes efforts made by prison managers to improve education services over time. As well as the provision of mathematics, English and information and communications technology (ICT), the curriculum offers a range of academic and vocational courses. Provision is made for those prisoners wishing to enrol on NVQs and OU courses. The promotion and use of distance learning and OU courses are an important element of the prison's education provision. During the reporting period, distance learning and OU applications increased to 60, compared with 36 for 2018/19.

Typically, over the seven months pre-COVID, an average of 130 prisoners (roughly 18% of the prison population) was engaged in education, completing full- and part-time courses. Prison managers have correctly highlighted the need to increase the number of enrolments in education courses in their improvement plans. At 94%, completion rates were high for vocational and non-vocational courses (excluding functional skills). At 88%, attendance rates improved but fell short of the prison's target of 90% for 2019/20. The Board supports managers' keen monitoring of attendance levels and their taking steps to overcome any obstacles such as increased and more time-consuming roll calls.

The Board welcomes evidence that NVQ functional skills success rates have improved over time to 84% in mathematics and 91% in English, exceeding national averages in these subjects. Effective use has been made of learning difficulties and disabilities support, to ensure that all learners have been given the best chance of

succeeding. Courses have suitably encouraged personal development and rehabilitation with a view to reducing reoffending. The Board notes with concern the views of education managers that the ICT course content is outdated and does not currently meet prisoners' prospective employment needs. The Board welcomes ICT curriculum development planned for 2020/21 to rectify this.

Successful 'taster' sessions, attended by over 200 prisoners in December 2019, included yoga, music, drama, arts and crafts, games, sport and cooking, resulted in a small increase in the number of prisoners undertaking education courses for the first time.

During the period of COVID-19 restrictions, weekly learning packs were made available to prisoners by Weston College. The library has yet to return to normal service, but since July a new process of replacing, in bulk, the library stock carried on each wing (100 books and 20 DVDs) was introduced. This system includes time for quarantining the stock before being issued to another wing. Prisoners remain unable to gain direct access to the library for any specific or individual selections, although general applications for specific requests are dealt with by the library staff and then delivered to the wing office.

## **7.2 Vocational training, work**

As a result of an increase in the number of industry team leaders during the year (from two to five), training for larger projects became available before the COVID restrictions. From late March, with the exception of Cleaning which was considered essential in order to maintain a clean environment, vocational training was purely theoretical and delivered through in-cell training packs.

The types of work opportunities across the various industries remained similar to those in previous years but there was a significant increase in the number of prisoners completing the more popular courses. For example, the forklift truck licence course rose to 90 attendees from a previous average of 60 (a 50% increase). The Board notes with concern the adverse impact on course development, as a result of split regimes and increased roll calls in the first half of the year followed by the COVID-19 restrictions.

The Board supports the view that annual employer days can promote job seeking on release by prisoners, and welcomes planning currently under way, aimed at extending employer participation in employer days and course delivery. Managers that Board members have spoken to said that that employer engagement and participation in classroom delivery or employment fairs have had a positive impact on prisoners' behaviour and motivation. They cite the contribution made by employers as one factor for improved average attendance at work (which rose to 88% in this reporting period) and also point to 301 achievements in short accredited courses, directly linked to industry sectors.

## **7.3 Offender management, progression**

The required number of prison offender managers (POMs) is in place in the offender manager unit, enabling the unit to operate much more efficiently than in the past. At

the end of the reporting period, there was just one temporary vacancy to cover, for a promotion. This led to a significant reduction in the number of prisoners who awaited assessments, or whose assessments were overdue, from 110 at the time of the 2019 report to 28 at the time of writing. Of these, the majority had only very recently moved into the prison. Two new members of staff had not yet been able to undertake fully the training required to become POMs, which had slowed progress, although these individuals had taken on other tasks, allowing POMs to concentrate on assessments. Progress towards implementing the Offender Management in Custody model has been slow. Managers reported to the Board that this was because key working in the prison had suffered as a result of an insufficient number of fully trained staff.

During the year, Board members followed up on prisoners' concerns about transfers and categorisation. In particular, prisoners who had achieved category D status but remained in Channings Wood made representations to the Board. Board members, following the advice of prison managers, informed prisoners that there were insufficient spaces for category D prisoners within the whole prison estate. The construction of a new living block at Channings Wood should address some of the concerns of category D prisoners but, again, progress has been slow in getting this block commissioned and operational.

During this reporting year, 681 prisoners were released from Channings Wood, either on completion of their sentences or to transfer to other prisons. Eighty-one prisoners were released on home detention curfew (HDC) conditions but none on release on temporary licence (ROTL). Thirty-nine prisoners had category D status, all others being category C.

Links with outside probation agencies and the parole board were mainly effective. Catch22 workers have overseen resettlement plans and pre-release arrangements, and have supported prisoners nearing the end of their sentences.

All offending behaviour courses were suspended in March 2020, which resulted in the loss of at least four planned courses. Those prisoners who were already enrolled and taking part (some were half-way through their course) are now the priority for courses such as Horizon (aimed at medium-risk prisoners who have committed sexual offences) when it restarts. Some prisoners who had begun but not completed this course have since been released into the community. Neither the Board nor prison staff can say whether they will be offered a place to complete it while on licence. Other prisoners who would ordinarily have been a priority for a place have now missed out because of not having enough time to complete it before release. Spaces on this course are limited in the community, so it is by no means certain that any will be offered treatment.

These changes and the consequent delays have affected 27 prisoners who had been assessed as both suitable and likely to engage and complete the programme. They have since lost six months of participation. Of those 27, six had been recalled from licence and so would not have been considered suitable for release by the parole board without successful course completion. At this point, given the backlog, it cannot be said for certain what the final effect on their release dates will be. The Board thinks it very likely that this situation is not unique to Channings Wood. Given the impact of COVID-19 on mental health already noted in this report, being unable to complete or access offending behaviour programmes, through no fault of their

own, is another possible source of stress and anxiety for vulnerable prisoners. The Board is concerned that this has the potential to exacerbate any underlying mental health issues.

#### **7.4 Family contact**

The Board considers that arrangements to support and maintain family contacts work efficiently. Prisoners make good use of telephone bays, which are available in every block. They have occasionally complained at the length of queues for telephone use. Before and during the COVID-19 lockdown period, there were no electronic tablets available for prisoners to have 'virtual' visits with their families, although the Board is aware that these began after the end of this reporting period. Effective arrangements were in place for booking family visits, and these were understood by prisoners and their families. During the restricted regime period, prisoners were awarded an extra £5 per week to pay for more frequent telephone calls with families and friends because visits were not permitted. Prisoners and their families told a Board member observing a visit that they were grateful for the additional money. Visits by family members and friends are well organised, and Board members have found that prisoners and their families have been very positive about visits. Those we spoke to praised Channing Wood's approach during and after the COVID-19 lockdown, the prevailing view being that staff had done 'as much as they could' to sustain reasonable family contacts. A spacious visits hall has ensured that prisoners and their families could enjoy a suitable amount of privacy. Effective monitoring by staff has promoted a secure and safe visiting environment.

The Choices organisation has provided good support to prisoners' visitors, in a purpose-built visitor centre which has suitable facilities for adults and children. Visits normally take place on four days a week, with up to 40 prisoners receiving visitors in each session. Visits were suspended during the lockdown period, in line with national guidance. When they resumed in August, 13 prisoners at a time were permitted visits, to ensure adequate social distancing. The monitoring of such visits showed that prisoners and their families carefully obeyed social distancing and other safety guidance. Prior to lockdown, Board members received a few representations from prisoners about the amount of time that families had to queue on arrival to get access to the visits hall.

#### **7.5 Resettlement planning**

The Board believes that well-thought-through procedures provide prisoners with useful information prior to release into the community. As reported last year, Catch22 staff have supported prisoners as they approached the end of their sentences. Until March, staff worked with prisoners face to face, beginning with a prisoner needs assessment 12 weeks prior to release, during 'Make a Change' workshops. Focused, personalised work was carried out with individuals. Group meetings were held, two weeks before the release date, to consider potential barriers and provide prisoners with helpful strategies for overcoming them. Since March, packs have been made available for in-cell work with prisoners. Prisoners continue to receive support to complete assessments, using wing office telephones to communicate with Catch22 workers if they faced difficulties or to clear up misunderstandings. However, Catch22 staff felt that the lack of face-to-face meetings 12 weeks prior to release,

and the suspension of pre-release group meetings, had had an impact on their service.

Support focused on benefit entitlements, probation officer contact, accessing services such as substance abuse and harm reduction, 'free' community services (for example, food banks) and Wi-Fi access. Prior to lockdown arrangements, the majority of prisoners who spoke to Board members broadly welcomed the support provided by Catch22 and prison staff. However, there is anecdotal evidence that prisoners did not always settle smoothly on release. One former prisoner drew the attention of the Board to shortfalls which occurred following release – for example, the amount of time it took for ex-prisoners to receive benefits. This leads to cases where prisoners have just their release grant (£46) to live on for a number of weeks. Prisoners are given advice about accommodation on release, including telephone numbers of local authority housing agencies. Many recently released prisoners had moved to bed and breakfast or hotel accommodation for the first few weeks of their time in the community, and Catch22 referred to the 'postcode lottery' effect when it came to providing accommodation.

Prison staff reported to the Board that prisoners have occasionally expressed concerns about what would happen on release because of their perception of the prevalence of COVID-19 in their home or release areas. Board members have also heard these views expressed. Catch22 workers updated advice – for example, by providing prisoners with specific information about COVID-19 and staying safe in the community. Since March 2020 and due to the initiative to keep rough sleepers off the streets, no prisoners were released to no fixed accommodation.

## 8. The work of the IMB

The table below shows the number of visits made by members, and segregation reviews attended in person by Board members from September 2019 to March 2020. Following the Board's withdrawal in March 2020, members were able to listen in to most segregation reviews through a telephone link. However, this was not always successful because of the poor sound quality of the equipment, but when it did work, members were able to speak to the individual prisoners, which reassured members about the process.

### Board statistics

|  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Recommended complement of Board members                      | 16 (reduced to 14 following review) |
| Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period | 14                                  |
| Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period   | 13                                  |
| Total number of visits to the establishment                  | 291                                 |
| Total number of segregation reviews attended                 | 35                                  |

## Applications to the IMB

This table reflects the changes that the Board adopted to deal with applications in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Once members stopped on-site monitoring, applications were dealt with remotely using secure email and through the 0800 telephone service.

| Code | Subject   | Previous reporting year | Current reporting year (totals) | Current reporting year applications received during lockdown |                    |
|------|---|-------------------------|---------------------------------|--|--------------------|
|      |   |                         |                                 | From the 0800 service  | Other applications |
| A    | Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions                                       | 12                      | 2                               | 1  | 0                  |
| B    | Discipline, including adjudications, incentives and earned privileges, sanctions            | 5                       | 1                               | 0  | 0                  |
| C    | Equality  | 2                       | 9                               | 2  | 1                  |
| D    | Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell | 7                       | 8                               | 0  | 1                  |
| E1   | Letters, visits, telephones, public protection restrictions                                 | 9                       | 18                              | 2  | 1                  |
| E2   | Finance, including pay, private monies, spends  | 6                       | 3                               | 0  | 1                  |
| F    | Food and kitchens   | 2                       | 5                               | 0  | 1                  |
| G    | Health, including physical, mental, social care   | 56                      | 21                              | 2  | 6                  |
| H1   | Property within this establishment  | 30                      | 19                              | 0  | 0                  |
| H2   | Property during transfer or in another establishment or location                            | 51                      | 24                              | 0  | 2                  |
| H3   | Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)  | 6                       | 3                               | 2  | 0                  |
| I    | Sentence management, including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, recategorisation           | 45                      | 14                              | 1  | 1                  |
| J    | Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying   | 32                      | 24                              | 5  | 10                 |
| K    | Transfers   | 16                      | 16                              | 1  | 1                  |
| L    | Miscellaneous, including complaints system  | 0                       | 24                              | 3  | 2                  |
|      | Total number of applications  | 279                     | 191                             | 19   | 27                 |



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