



# Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Forest Bank

**For reporting year  
1<sup>st</sup> November 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> October 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 the 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 IMB is part of the United Kingdom's National Preventive Mechanism.

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

HMP/YOI Forest Bank was a purpose-built Category B male prison operated by the private operator Sodexo Justice Services. It holds adult men both on remand or sentenced and young prisoners between the ages of 18-21 years. These include vulnerable prisoners, kept apart from the main population because of the nature of their offences. The operational capacity is set at 1460 with a Certified Normal Accommodation (CNA) of 1064.

During the pandemic this number has been reduced by 30 to enable the use of single cells for isolation purposes.

During the period under review, the prison has become the main Reception prison for all courts across Greater Manchester. Those prisoners with longer sentences have or are being transferred to longer term prisons around the north west.

The establishment opened in 2000 and so the buildings are relatively modern. There are eight residential houseblocks with a total of sixteen wings. There is also a Healthcare Centre, which has a twenty-bed in-patient facility, and a Care and Separation Unit which can house up to twenty-five prisoners, if necessary. Other areas of the prison include: an education centre with classrooms, a library and computer suite. The facilities include a chapel and a gymnasium with a sports hall and an outside, all weather sports pitch. There is an Industries department comprising of separate workshops, as well as a Reception centre, visits hall, an administration block, and kitchens.

### **3. Executive summary**

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

During the period under review there have been two significant occurrences that have affected the prison:

The first has been the ongoing planned transition from a conventional Category B prison to becoming the main Reception prison, dealing with all court activity in and around Greater Manchester. This has brought about many challenges as the prison population has changed from more long-term residents to men on remand and awaiting sentence, many of whom are likely to spend short periods at HMP Forest Bank.

The second has been the affect of the Global Pandemic which has disrupted the whole country and beyond. Following the initial nationwide lockdown in March, the prison dealt with the effects of this in an extremely professional manner. Its imaginative and forward planning has been extremely important, bearing in mind the much higher turnover of men due to the reclassification of the facility and the fact that its location in Greater Manchester is one of the worst hit areas by the virus. As most of the period under review has been during the pandemic, this report focuses on the considerable efforts made to keep staff and prisoners safe.

For example, in late October on just one day there were 9 Covid + prisoners, 14 Covid + staff members and 114 members of staff had to self- isolate. This put considerable pressure on the remaining staff who have gone beyond what might normally be expected of them to maintain the regime.

The lockdowns and ongoing restrictions have severely restricted physical visits made by the Board, but the prison management team have worked hard to engage with us as we monitored both directly and remotely during this ongoing pandemic.

In the context of the move to becoming a Reception prison, snapshots of the population of HMP Forest Bank were taken in July 2020 and again in November 2020.

In July 77.1 % of the population were sentenced/recall/convicted awaiting sentence, In November this dropped to 62.3%. The number of Life sentenced residents remain consistent at around 80-82, and Licence recalls at around 350, at any given time.

## **3.2 Main judgements**

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

Despite this being a difficult year, the Board are satisfied that the Management team put the safety of both prisoners and staff high on the agenda. Applications received by the Board regarding staff and prisoners' concerns, including bullying, have dropped from 52 last year to 33 this.

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

Prior to lockdown, we have always agreed that prisoners, with no exceptions, are treated as fairly and humanely as is possible in a large prison environment. Since lockdown, the prison staff have gone the extra mile to deliver a fair and humane experience even when there have been significant staff shortages due to positive Covid tests and high levels of self-isolation. In line with HMPPS guidance, prisoners have received extra telephone credits, televisions for all, comfort packs and in cell education, to offset the fact that they have necessarily experienced lengthy periods in their cells.

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

As detailed in Section 6 of this report, the prison has excellent facilities and resources to meet residents' healthcare needs and ensure their wellbeing. The applications received regarding Healthcare remain virtually the same as last year's figures, but closer examination reveals that most of these have been resolved by the Board contacting the Healthcare team directly. In the few instances where we have had to get involved matters have been promptly dealt with.

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

The recent change in HMP Forest Bank taking remand prisoners has meant that the role of the Probation service has been reduced, their primary task now being to move those prisoners who have been sentenced to a more suitable prison in which to serve their sentence. However, short sentence prisoners are still catered for, but this has proved difficult since March as the area has been under higher levels of lockdown than many other parts of the prison estate. One workshop is currently being converted into an area that is to be used to progress these shorter- term prisoners towards release.

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

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

Can the Minister comment on the exceptional partnership work conducted by HMP Forest Bank, HMPPS and Public Health England to control the Covid 19 outbreak and to keep staff, residents, and visitors safe and what will happen after the pandemic?

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

Can HMPPS comment on how they are ensuring that the new offender flow process supports HMP Forest Bank by progressively transferring licence recalls, category B prisoners and Lifers that a reception prison should not hold?

#### ***TO THE DIRECTOR***

Can the Director comment on the percentage difference in the levels of violence, self-harm, use of force and accidents at HMP Forest Bank between the last annual report and this one?

### **3.4 Progress since the last report**

Violence, self-harm, use of force and accidents have been reduced at Forest Bank, since the last report. This has been achieved despite the additional pressures placed on the prison in keeping staff and residents safe during Covid 19. Forest Bank is a big, busy complex prison with forty receptions per day, therefore this is a significant achievement. The work to reduce the risk of Covid 19 in partnership with Public Health England and HMPPS has been impressive. The Board would like to thank the entire management team and staff at the prison for the exceptional work that they have done during this extremely difficult period.

## **Evidence sections 4 – 7**

### **4. Safety**

The team dedicated to safety at HMP Forest Bank has 3 members for the current year, namely a Manager, a senior officer, and an Analyst. The team monitors incidences of violence, self-harm, and death in custody in the establishment. The Covid pandemic has of course given the team fresh challenges to overcome and required some changes to their working practices. There has, though, been a plentiful supply of personal protective equipment available and the prison now has quick access to swab testing. Indeed, the Manager of the team was required to self-isolate for 2 weeks.

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

The prison is currently reviewing the early days in custody process which will include the use of “Insiders” to assist with delivering the induction to new receptions coming into the establishment. Unfortunately, the ongoing COVID restrictions are having an impact on this plan. They insiders are currently providing induction on a one -to-one basis following safe systems of work. At the time of writing men are tested on day 1 for Covid 19 and then kept isolated until day 6 when if they retest negative, they are able to join the general prison population at whatever levels of regime it is operating at. A new early days in custody process is planned to start in February 2021.

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

Self-harm has fluctuated this year. Some of this is attributed to the restricted regime which has benefitted some residents whilst hindering others. A number of residents have informed staff they feel safer with a more controlled regime and fewer residents out at any one time. However, others have reported they are struggling with the long periods spent in their cell. Overall, the level of self-harm is recorded as lower compared to previous years. During this period there have sadly been two deaths in custody. One is believed to be of natural causes and the other self-inflicted. Both these are currently being dealt with by the Coroner but on each occasion the prison offered support to staff and other residents.

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

We have seen a steady reduction with regards to violent incidents. The current highly controlled environment due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions has meant less time out of cell for residents and therefore less time for residents to engage in violence. The safer custody team have also improved

the identification and management of violent and refractory residents. The weekly SIM (Safety Intervention Meeting) oversees violence management interventions to address violent behaviour. On every daily briefing sheet all residents that are on a Challenge, Support, Intervention Plan (CSIP) are listed, and it states who the responsible manager is for each person on a CSIP, as well as the date for the next review. Any missed reviews are highlighted for attention.

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

Vulnerable Residents continue to be managed safely on a separate residential unit. Access to visits has also been reviewed to ensure appropriate safety measures are in place when visits have been possible.

Safeguarding procedures are in place with clear links between the Offender Management Unit (OMU) and external partners to ensure concerns are raised to the relevant authority and addressed appropriately. These safeguarding procedures are also being transitioned to the laptop sessions bought about by the pandemic, to ensure that where visitors would not ordinarily be allowed a physical visit that they cannot enter a virtual visit on a laptop.

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

Work is constantly ongoing to address the levels of use of force within the establishment. Every incidence of use of force is recorded in the prisons daily operational log. This includes the implementation of a weekly use of force review meeting. This multi-disciplinary meeting reviews incidents of force to ensure, amongst other metrics, that the force used is lawful and compliant with use of force policies. During the period under review the use of force has reduced.

#### **4.6 Substance misuse**

The Integrated Substance Misuse Team (ISMS) have continued to provide support to residents. The focus during the pandemic has been on completing initial assessments and release planning, however existing residents on the caseload have still received 1-1 reviews or telephone welfare checks. Unfortunately, the ongoing COVID restrictions have had an impact on delivering psychosocial group interventions and a shift to in-cell work has had to happen. Also, due to bed spaces and resident movements this has had an impact on the recovery unit however plans are in place once the restrictions are lifted.

As visits have been restricted there has been an increase in contraband thrown over the security fences into the exercise yards and despite netting, a concentrated security operation involving physical patrols, and a regular Greater Manchester Police presence around the exterior of the prison, drugs

have been smuggled onto the wings for residents' use. Residents involved in retrieving packages have been temporarily banned from the Exercise Yards.

The Board is pleased to report that plans have now been agreed to reintroduce Drug sniffer dogs into the regime.

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

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

As the prison facilities have now been in service for around 20 years, the Board is pleased to report that the building and accommodation is still generally in good condition, giving a bright, airy, and light environment. There have been occasional delays to repair and replacement issues due to staff shortages brought about by the pandemic and the number of additional cells that have required "Deep cleaning" because of holding infected men. However, routine painting and decorating continued up until March with noticeable improvements in the reception block.

Most of the netting over the exercise yards has now been replaced with more robust material to reduce the success of drone delivery attempts and throwovers. The Board commented that the yards themselves were becoming heavily littered, but this has now been addressed by staff and a large project of replacing and repairing cell windows and exercise yard netting was due to start in January.

There have been issues with clothing as seen in the increased number of applications received by the Board. These have increased as visits by family were intermittent for most of the reporting period. Some applications from inmates claim that staff are using Covid restrictions as an excuse for delays in property and clothing being handed over. However, the Board is still investigating this.

As we reported last year, the catering at Forest Bank is generally regarded as being very good, with only one application received. The Board inspected the kitchens 37 times and focused on areas such as cleanliness, use of PPE, food storage and handling, and temperature control. As the pandemic developed, a more socially distanced layout was brought in for the staff canteen. This severely limited capacity which resulted in the use of takeaway containers for all food service, with staff required to take food to their desk or a rest area to eat.

This scenario has been replicated on the wings where food is served from cell to cell rather than residents coming to the point of service. Some menu items have had to be revised to assist with this. For instance: providing individually wrapped and portioned desserts instead of the usual bulk service for deserts such as rice pudding, or cake and custard.

Since about April, weekly comfort packs have been issued to each resident which contains supplies for 7 days. The packs have come from the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and have continued throughout the pandemic.

## **5.2 Segregation, special accommodation**

The CSU comprises 24 cells, including: one constant observation cell, two special accommodation cells, two holding cells and a meeting room – used for adjudications, good order or discipline (GOOD) reviews and general meetings in normal times. There are also two showers, a toilet and dedicated exercise yards.

Staffing in the CSU consists of one manager, two senior officers and eight prison custody officers. The Board would like to commend the staff in the CSU, who when dealing with prisoners, often at their most vulnerable and disruptive, have done so with the utmost professionalism. The segregation of prisoners is monitored through multidisciplinary GOOD reviews. The Board tries to attend these reviews whenever possible, however this year the numbers have been reduced for obvious reasons. The reviews that members have attended have always been in accordance with the set procedure and are appropriately documented. The Board has also monitored adjudications on a regular basis by attending hearings whenever possible. Despite the Pandemic all residents are seen by a Duty Governor every morning on rounds and entries are updated on Nomis, all enquires are then actioned. Decency and welfare checks continue to be completed by staff daily during the food servings.

All adjudications are currently held in the Chapel due to COVID, to ensure social distancing is maintained. Staff and residents wear appropriate PPE (face masks) for the duration of an adjudication to enhance safety levels. Adjudications continue to be held as standard and independent Tier 2 adjudications are carried out via secure access on a laptop.

In-cell education and distraction packs are provided to relieve boredom and stress, ensuring all residents have reading material. The Programmes team, Recovery and OMU complete weekly rounds, ensuring further contribution to the reintegration of residents.

During the reporting period the unfurnished accommodation ('special') cell has not been used. Daily rounds continue to be carried out by Chaplaincy and Healthcare, with the Doctor completing rounds x 3 daily.

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

Staff prisoner relationships are generally good, despite a higher than preferred turnover of staff. The in-house learning centre provides new staff with a good basic understanding of their role. As they then move into operational roles, around the prison, they are mentored by many highly experienced staff who lead by example.

Prior to lockdown, the prison had put in place a good key worker scheme with one officer being responsible for 6 men with positive initial results. Unfortunately, the Board has not been able to monitor this since then.

### **5.4 Equality and diversity**

Diversity and Inclusion continues to have a high profile within the prison, with a clear and co-ordinated diversity and inclusion policy committed to promoting fair and equitable outcomes for all residents regardless of race, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religion, or disability.

The policy and supportive action plan are focused on responding to the issues raised at the wide range of regular residents' forums as well as one-to-one support sessions via in-cell phone calls that residents can request via the electronic kiosk system. Through these mediums, the prison works to actively break down barriers and create an inclusive, supportive and tolerant environment.

There has been a total of 75 discrimination incident report forms (DIRF's). These were fully investigated and responded to in a robust and prompt manner. Samples were also quality checked by the IMB as part of its ongoing monitoring procedures. DIRF's are widely available, and generally prisoners demonstrate a good understanding of the process.

Since January 2020, 1340 Diversity, Care and Support Plans were put in place for those residents with protected characteristics (i.e., at risk of being disadvantaged through race, equality, nationality, religion, disability (including mental, physical, learning difficulties), gender and /or transgender issues, sexual orientation, or age.)

Care and support plans are multi-disciplinary and ensure that appropriate levels of care and support are provided consistently. These are available for all staff to reference. The Diversity Lead also updates residents case notes on NOMIS following all interactions with residents. With the Diversity Surgery closed due to the pandemic, in-cell phones have now been introduced to ensure residents' wellbeing and to allow staff to quickly and easily update themselves on what support has been offered by the Diversity Team.

The equality data relating to the regime, its services, and to the treatment of residents with protected characteristics is monitored and presented for review at the Diversity, Inclusion Action Team meetings (DIAT). Actions are identified, agreed and monitored by the team as well as being monitored at the monthly Senior Management Team (SMT) performance meeting. Members of the Board also attend DIAT meetings on a regular basis.

In addition to celebrating a wide range of multi-faith religious festivals throughout the year, the prison delivers awareness days through way out TV for staff and residents.

Even through the pandemic, the Diversity team have continued to offer support to residents and staff to create a safe environment for all.

## **5.5 Faith and pastoral support**

It has been a challenging, unpredictable, and a busy year for the chaplaincy team at Forest Bank which has continued to deliver its services to the residents and staff as stated in the PSI's & PSO's to a high standard. All statutory duties (seeing new Inductions, completing CSU & healthcare rounds, daily) in addition to visiting all residents on ACCT books at least once a week, visiting all residents who are approaching their release date 2-3 weeks prior to their release and, in some cases, referring them to outside agencies and partners for support with various services have been completed.

Prior to Covid-19, the chaplaincy team responded, daily, to an average of 25 applications by residents requesting to see a chaplain. This is one of the main duties of chaplains and is considered vital to the wellbeing of residents as it helps solve some of their problems and reduces violence and frustration amongst them.

The chaplaincy has also run weekly services, groups, and bible studies courses, to residents of faith, or no faith, and celebrated all major religious festivals, including festivals for those who don't have a chaplain available to them.

It provided one course on Victim Awareness (Sycamore Tree) with 15 residents completing the course run by the prison fellowship as well as working with the Message Trust which has been coming to Forest Bank, for several years, to deliver courses to Faith groups and to conduct detached work with residents, targeting those between the ages of 18 and 25.

Since the Covid-19 outbreak, all communal services, groups, courses, and activities have been suspended. Despite this suspension, the chaplaincy team have continued supporting residents at this difficult time, ensuring its statutory duties are complied with. Throughout, the team have continued to visit all residents on ACCT documents, attending ACCT reviews, and discharge visits prior to residents' release, and have even supported residents through the gate on the day of their release.

The chaplaincy receives weekly resources from chaplaincy HQ faith advisors. These are distributed weekly to residents according to their faith, and specific faith broadcasts are on National Prison Radio and Way-out TV.

The Prison Service provided the chaplaincy with two iPads to allow residents to watch their relatives' funerals, during lockdown, as funeral escorts have

been suspended. So far, they have facilitated approximately twelve funeral webcam/ZOOM views for residents and their feedback has been positive.

It is also worth mentioning that since lockdown, the chaplaincy now receives almost double the number of applications by residents and again, almost double the number of phone calls from family and friends concerned about residents' welfare.

Three members of the chaplaincy team retired this year, and 3 new members appointed, a full time Anglican chaplain, a 20h/pw RC chaplain, and an 8h/pw Muslim chaplain who are an asset to the team.

The Jehovah's Witness & Hindu Chaplains have been shielding since the beginning of Covid, however, they continue to send weekly resources to the residents. The prison is still without a Pagan chaplain despite attempts to rectify the situation.

The Board would like to commend the work of the Chaplaincy during a very challenging period.

## **5.6 Incentives and earned privileges**

At the beginning of the year the prison changed the IEP scheme to follow the new national guidelines to reward positive behaviour. However, due to lockdown, the old basic regime was removed, and all residents benefited from a revised standard regime. The Board has not yet been able to monitor, effectively, the impact of the new national scheme due to the restrictions in place.

## **5.7 Complaints**

The prison runs an effective complaints system that deals with written complaints from individual prisoners. During the period under review, the dedicated complaints clerk has dealt with a total of 3462 complaints made up of 3177 Comp 1's, 223 Comp 1a's and 62 Confidential Access issues. The Board is very grateful for the assistance given to members by the clerk responsible, particularly during periods of remote monitoring where members have not been in the prison.

## **5.8 Property**

Property continues to be a problem area with prisoners. Either, within the establishment (12 applications) when prisoners are transferred to CSU at short notice but also when prisoners are moved between establishments (22 applications).

The Board tries hard to resolve issues reported to them, often talking to other Boards about specific cases but often has had to refer issues back to the

official complaints system. It is understood that moves are afoot to introduce a revised property movement scheme nationally.

## **6. Health and wellbeing**

Healthcare provision has always achieved and maintained a good standard. The current manager has a clinical background and is respected by staff and managers. A member of the nursing team attends GOOD reviews, CSU safety reviews, multidisciplinary and ACCT reviews

The Healthcare department had a CQC inspection on the 6/7 November 2019. The CQC highlighted areas needing improvement, which included:

- Developing a referral pathway for prisoners with learning disabilities which meets their needs and provides appropriate support.
- Ensure that primary mental health prisoners are referred to and are seen at the newly established primary mental health psychiatric clinic.
- Ensure that systems and processes effectively monitor service quality and particularly recent service improvements. This should include, initial health screening, and access to a psychiatrist.

Because of the constraints on the Board this year we have been unable to monitor progress on this.

### **6.1 Healthcare: general**

The Healthcare unit consists of 10 cells, 1 observation cell, and 2 wards which can hold up to 4 beds. The unit treats both physical and mental health needs.

On arrival at the establishment the prisoner receives an initial health screen which is completed by a registered mental health nurse from the primary mental health team. A secondary health screen is completed by a registered general nurse from the primary health care team within seven days of a prisoner's arrival at the prison.

### **6.2 Physical healthcare.**

A new in-house pharmacy project has commenced for HMP Forest Bank. The project of moving to a nurse prescribing model is also now underway. Environmental improvements to the waiting room and the healthcare department have been completed. Further work is required but Covid restrictions has delayed contract work. Micro-elimination status for hepatitis C eradication was achieved prior to Covid-19.

Triage processes required improvement as a result of users' feedback. The team are now working through the trial of a new triage process. It is difficult to comment on service improvements as so many, either, have not been in place

since Covid-19 or have been managed as limited service provision. The main focus currently is the recovery and restoration of all healthcare services to the levels achieved pre-Covid 19. Those that carry the highest risk are being recovered as a priority.

Unfortunately, the waiting list for the dentist has increased because of the Covid-19 restrictions, as it has in the wider community.

The board continue to receive applications regarding Healthcare which are dealt with accordingly. Staff are always helpful and respectful offering information whilst observing patient confidentiality.

### **6.3 Mental healthcare**

The primary mental health uplift in partnership with Greater Manchester Mental Health took place in March 2018. This included the introduction of a Psychological well-being service and counsellor. The primary mental health team continue to offer assessment and support to residents with common mental health disorders and the secondary mental health team (In-reach) continue to offer a service to address severe and enduring mental health needs. The In-reach service now include the provision of case management for Learning disabilities and other vulnerabilities (i.e., Autism spectrum disorder, ADHD, acquired brain injury). There has recently been an increase in psychiatric provision to meet these additional service needs. The service is working well and the increase in service delivery and what can be provided to the residents has been well received. The primary mental health team are involved in a lot of operational processes to ensure compliance in ACCT review attendance, CSU safety assessments, contribution to Rule 45 good order reviews along with providing urgent assessment of high-risk mental health needs for example for those residents in crisis and who may self-injure.

The mental health team also have responded to the Covid pandemic by adapting service delivery. Use of in-cell telephony has increased and its availability to staff has proved helpful. Routine primary mental health triage appointments are now conducted this way, and this has allowed nursing staff to provide support to a larger number of residents. They have seen an increase in the need for low level support brought about by more restrictive lock up times as well as movement restrictions within the prison. They have responded to general requests by providing self-help packs developed by the psychological wellbeing practitioner team which incorporate self-help material, and which is generic to general mental health and well-being. They also continue to process referrals to the PWP team which focuses on specific clinical need following assessment by the primary mental health nurses.

The Covid pandemic has impacted referrals to hospital for those identified as requiring transfer under the Mental Health Act because of the service's inability to conduct face to face assessments. This has resulted in an increase of clinical information needed by the receiving service so they can conduct file reviews rather than face to face assessments. Demand on bed availability in

mental health hospitals has also been affected due to lack of movement between care provider settings.

## **6.4 Social care**

Social care has been successfully delivered prior to and through Covid due to the in-house model that is supplied as part of the integrated primary care team role.

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

Prior to March, the prison ran normally and provided exercise out of cell and gym sessions as per the normal regime.

However, during COVID-19 restrictions, exercise out of cell has been strictly limited to 30 minutes a day, 15 prisoners at a time. Residents also receive 30 minutes regime (for showers, kiosk, cell cleaning etc) and where in cell telephones are not available, use of the wing telephones.

During this time, prisoners can use the exercise yard, take a shower, and access the CMS console and where in-cell phones are not available they can use the wing phones. These severe restrictions for prisoners have been both challenging and frustrating as their opportunities for education, work and association have been significantly reduced.

The gym has been closed throughout the lockdown period but staff have provided prisoners with in-cell workouts.

## **6.6 Drug rehabilitation**

In terms of delivery against the agreed Drug strategy, and the current pandemic, over the past 12 months the prison has delivered the following key elements of the service for clients within the ISMS Service.

- All new receptions are seen by the ISMS team inclusive of first night prescribing.
- All new substance misuse residents receive twice daily observations during stabilisation period by a nurse to ensure safety.
- All Substance misuse residents are reviewed on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> day during their sentence by a clinical and psychosocial ISMS team member to enable staff to update care plans.
- Prescribed substance misuse clients are located on the substance misuse wings for continuation of care.
- All residents on the ISMS Case load have a 1-1 with a member of the Psychosocial team every four weeks to address their needs and work on their care plan objectives.

- All residents on the ISMS case load are provided with in-cell work if required as per care plan objective.
- Joint working continues and is based on the individual's needs.
- Each of the four ISMS wings have a named ISMS HCA for a single point of contact.
- Any residents that have a positive mandatory drug test (MDT) or is reported as under the influence on the Daily Occurrence Log are seen by the ISMS Duty worker/ or sent a referral letter for the service.
- In possession medication amounts are increased to those who have been risk assessed and deemed suitable.
- Mental Health Nurses within the ISMS team support those with complex care needs.
- Smoking cessation support is offered by the team.
- GPSI (a specialist Doctor reviews all Substance misuse residents at the 13-week point.)
- Nurse led clinics (MH, Phlebotomy, alcohol clinics running when staff allow (due to pandemic) via in-cell telephony/face to face.
- Case load work – via in cell telephony/face to face.
- Wound Care for all Substance misuse residents as required.
- GPSI service 1 x weekly
- All ISMS residents are release planned 6 weeks prior to release and then provided with release appointments for continuity of care upon release, this also includes non- prescribed clients.

## **6.7 Soft skills**

The staff within the healthcare department work hard to provide a caring, empathic atmosphere. Residents who are under medical care are encouraged to partake in various activities. Under normal circumstances, daily activities are undertaken in small groups led by a skilled mentor who tries to develop social skills with colouring, reading, puzzles and such like, in a relaxed furnished area adjoining the healthcare suite. The healthcare staff are well supported by the education staff who also tailor specific therapeutic activities to individuals and groups while they are in the department, for example they have completed projects on Aboriginal art and the Pyramids.

## **7. Progression and resettlement**

### **7.1 Education, library**

Prior to lockdown in March, the Education team was successfully undergoing a transition geared to dealing with the change of focus required with the move to a reception prison.

With lockdown, a whole new set of challenges arrived, and the department had to quickly adapt to providing ongoing support to residents who spent more and more time in their cells. The wing mentors also provided useful support.

The Board is pleased to report that this has been a success story with lots of in-cell education activity, bingo and other games and the addition of Wayout TV. Teachers are now also delivering lessons directly on the wings to learners in their cells.

Learners have access to excellent resources that have been adapted with more narrative for in-cell learning. They are given further support to complete their tasks over the in-cell phones, if they require it.

The men have had restricted access to the full education curriculum during the lockdown, (with the exception of IT) including maths, English, Citizenship, Mentoring, Art, Preparation for Work, ESOL, Healthy Lifestyles, Budgeting, Effective Communications, Cleaning Principles, Health and Safety, and Recycling.

They can request library books on the kiosk, the librarian also attends the meetings with the wing mentors and takes additional requests for books. The education department is now working on filming lessons that can be shown on the in-cell TVs.

Despite all the challenges that they have been working under the Education department have maintained high numbers ranging up to 360. There are currently 233 residents participating in education. 130 are completing maths and English courses, 49 are on personal, social, health and economic courses, 7 are in cleaning, 18 ESOL, 9 are in recycling and we there are 20 residents participating in the art course. Art supplies are provided by education, but we it is limited in what it can provide.

There are currently approximately 60 residents accessing books and around another 20 residents using the other services the library provides.

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

At the beginning of the period there were a total of nine workshops available. These were employing more than 220 men per session across a wide range of occupations. However, things have changed considerably as the role of the prison has changed along with the effect of the pandemic.

The workshop capacity has been reduced and new customer start ups have been delayed due to COVID restrictions. There are currently six Commercial customers available for opportunities when restrictions end.

Empty units have been utilised by the shop/canteen, the training department, for packing comfort packs for residents and one workshop has been converted for the “Through the gate department”

All the workshops have benefited from refurbishment during the restrictions but currently only around 30-60 men are being offered sessions, on a daily basis.

### 7.3 Offender management, progression

Core Offender Management has continued with Basic Custody Screening assessments completed within the 72 hours prescribed timescale. Prison Offender Managers conduct face to face or in-cell phone checks with new residents which have proved beneficial. The Public Protection team continues to work with external multi agencies to monitor residents and where issues are identified – for examples residents who are subject to restrictions, they ensure that residents are aware of them and understand what they mean and the implications.

Ongoing issues are the continued need to transfer residents out to other prisons as part of the transition to a reception prison however the Board understands that this is being hampered by the ongoing pandemic. Of the sentenced population only 40% fit Forest Banks resettlement criteria with the other 60% requiring transfer to more suitable establishments. If the average roll count is 1390, this equates to approximately 500 residents in custody who do not fit the establishments profile. The figures for those serving less than 12 months is 13.9 %, 193 residents.

### 7.4 Family contact

The table below illustrates the number of visits by category during the period. Local and national lockdowns have had a significant effect on the figures. Like other prisons during the pandemic, prisoners have been given extra phone credit to help to compensate for lack of face-to-face contact and the prison have at the beginning of December 2020 implemented “purple visits” where face to face contact can be established remotely.

Month	Social	Legal	Total	Security issues	Visitors
Nov 2019	2670	753	3423	2	5463
Dec 2019	2730	571	3301	19	5740
Jan 2020	2699	821	3520	0	6060

Feb 2020	2911	894	3805	0	5646
March 2020	1936	495	2431	0	4176
April 2020	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	0	0
May 2020	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	0	0
June 2020	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	0	0
July 2020	359	CLOSED	359	0	592
Aug 2020	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	0	0
Sep 2020	528	78	606	1	832
Oct 2020	294	236	530	0	555
Totals :	14127	3848	16975	22	26064

## 7.5 Resettlement planning

The prison is currently unable to facilitate Shelter face to face access to residents. So rather than being completed in wing surgeries, the system has had to adapt to suit the circumstances, using the self-assessment forms provided to every resident on arrival and by use of in-cell phones.

Issues such as tenancy, bank cards, direct debits and court fines are dealt with during the 12 weeks prior to release and Shelter help to facilitate these requirements by liaising with partner agencies and responsible officers within the community.

If a resident expects to be homeless on release, Shelter liaises with the responsible officer around any accommodation expectations they may have (for example: approved premises referral or exclusion zones). If necessary, (and upon consent) Shelter send a Duty to Refer to the relevant local authority and submit appropriate accommodation referrals, pre-release. This is based on address history and intentions disclosed.

To progress a homeless application with the local authority, a telephone assessment is required. It is difficult to facilitate these pre-release applications at present due to the restricted regime. Whenever possible, Shelter will arrange a phone assessment for the day of release.

Shelter liaise with residents and partner agencies to evidence (if possible) any history, diagnosis or other support needs that might support a 'priority need' homelessness assessment outcome.

If Shelter do not anticipate a resident will achieve 'priority need' status and an offer of S188 accommodation is made upon completion of homelessness

assessment, Shelter notify the responsible officer and request that a Homeless Prevention Taskforce (HPT) referral is submitted at the earliest opportunity. HPT funding can be used to book a hotel room or provide a bond for a tenancy.

The Board believes that every effort is being made in trying circumstances to deliver an effective “Through the gate service”

## 8.The work of the IMB

This has been an exceedingly challenging period for the Board due to the ongoing pandemic. 8 of the 12 months reviewed have been affected by both the national and the more severe local lockdowns. This has restricted the number of visits by members and has made the induction and training of new members difficult. Throughout the period the Board has managed to hold physical Board meetings or virtual ones by conference call, all of these have been joined and supported by the Director or Deputy Director who have proactively engaged with the Board at all times. The Board has also been involved in pioneering the 0800 phone call scheme during the lockdown and has contributed members time to help roll out this national package of support for men.

### Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	17
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	8
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	10* (8)
Total number of visits to the establishment	200
Total number of segregation reviews attended	14

\*Very sadly the Board has to report that immediately following the end of the period under review it lost two members to Covid-19.

Joe Walker had been on the Board for many years and had served as both Chair and Vice Chair. He worked tirelessly in the prison and became ill only three days after his last visit. Having contracted the virus, he passed away four days later.

John Kerfoot joined the Board from HMP Manchester, where he also remained a member. He had requested a sabbatical during lockdown as he

had underlying health issues but unfortunately contracted the virus whilst in hospital.

The Board would like to acknowledge their commitment and hard work and would like to extend their condolences to both their families.

## **Applications to the IMB**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Previous reporting year</b>	<b>Current reporting year</b>
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>
B	Discipline, including adjudications, IEP, sanctions	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>
C	Equality	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection restrictions	<b>22</b>	<b>17</b>
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>
F	Food and kitchens	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	<b>34</b>	<b>35</b>
H1	Property within this establishment	<b>25</b>	<b>12</b>
H2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	<b>12</b>	<b>22</b>
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>
I	Sentence management, including HDC, release on temporary licence, parole, release dates, recategorisation	<b>30</b>	<b>4</b>
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	<b>52</b>	<b>33</b>
K	Transfers	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>
L	Miscellaneous, including complaints system	<b>127</b>	<b>31</b>
	Total number of applications	<b>347</b>	<b>193</b>

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