



Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP High Down

**For reporting year
1 January 2020 to 31 December 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 IMB is part of the United Kingdom's National Preventive Mechanism.

2. Description of the establishment

High Down is designated as a category B local prison that also holds category C, D and remand prisoners. It serves the Crown Courts of Croydon, Guildford and their surrounding Magistrates' Courts. The operating capacity of the prison at the beginning of the year was 1,203, which reduced to 1,153 during the pandemic to enable the prison to establish reverse cohorting, protective isolation and shielding units.

High Down is to be recategorised as a category C prison and will then no longer serve local courts. This has, unfortunately, been postponed several times which has created uncertainty in the establishment. Work has begun to prepare for the recategorisation, and High Down has not been taking men from the Bromley and Croydon courts since September 2020. At the end of the reporting year there was a very high proportion of category C and category D prisoners being held in High Down. The classification of prisoners held at the end of the reporting period:

Category	2020	2019
B	58	125
C	737	545
D	39	39
YO	82	55
Detainees	14	14

High Down needs to increase the number of activity spaces in order to successfully function as a category C prison. The Waste Management Industry Training and Advisory Board (WAMITAB) workshop is being refurbished and a further unit is being built in the workshop area which will provide activity spaces for 38 men. Initial surveys have been completed for the building of a proposed new workshop which would provide a further 90 activity spaces. It is clear that these additional spaces will be insufficient to provide activity to all men when High Down becomes a category C prison. The prison is currently investigating the possibility of introducing part-time working, which would double the number of activities on offer, but halve the time each prisoner spends on an activity.

Services were provided and managed by the following partners:

Service provider	Services
Central North West London NHS Trust (CNWL)	Healthcare: In- and outpatients, medical care for residential areas, pharmacy and dental care
CNWL – In Reach	Mental healthcare
Achor Healthcare	GP
Substance misuse	The Forward Trust
Social care	Surrey County Council
Education and training	Novus
Maintenance and repair	Gov. Facility Services Ltd. (GFSL)
London CRC (MTCNovo)	London releases
Kent, Surrey & Sussex CRC	Kent, Surrey & Sussex Releases

3. Executive summary

3.1 Background to the report

High Down began 2020 with an acting Governor who acted as Governor until a permanent Governor was appointed in August 2020.

The Covid-19 pandemic and its consequences have dominated life in HMP High Down for the majority of this reporting year and the year ended with the prison regime still very different from pre-pandemic normality.

The Board has upheld its independent monitoring role to the best of its ability during a period when most members have been unable to make visits to the prison in person. The Board's capacity to hear directly from prisoners about their experience has been greatly reduced. As explained in section 8, during this period of remote monitoring the Board needed enhanced cooperation from prison senior managers and other staff and we are grateful for their time and helpful attitude.

High Down had its first positive staff case of Covid-19 in March 2020, and we believe it was the first prison in England and Wales to have a positive case confirmed. The prison worked closely with Public Health England (PHE) to develop and implement measures of best practice to reduce the risk of transmission.

A Covid-19 hub with a dedicated team of staff was established, which is responsible for ensuring that guidance is followed and that any changes are implemented. They continue to work closely with PHE and the health and safety team.

The pandemic has impacted on staffing throughout the period from March 2020 because of self-isolation and shielding (although some were able to continue working from home), and a number of staff have tested positive for the virus.

A small number of prisoners tested positive in the first few months of the pandemic and in December 2020 there was a larger outbreak in the prison, with both prisoners and staff testing positive. The prison was then classified as an outbreak site.

At one point staff absences were in excess of 100 and over 400 prisoners were held in isolation. Prisoners only had access to a weekly shower whilst held in isolation. This outbreak continued into 2021. Staff absences have, on occasion, impacted on the already limited regime the prison has been able to deliver. The Board was pleased to note that a significant outbreak within the prison population has so far been avoided and the vast majority of men who had to spend a period in isolation remained asymptomatic.

The Board received a number of applications from prisoners about their concerns that staff did not wear masks. The use of fluid resistant surgical masks for staff and face coverings for prisoners was mandated from 5 November 2020. There are a small number of staff and prisoners who are medically exempt from wearing a mask but have chosen instead to wear a face shield.

New arrivals at High Down are placed onto a reverse cohorting unit for 14 days. This unit is separate from the rest of the establishment and prisoners only associate with other new arrivals. This limits possible transmission from the community to the existing prison population.

Upon arrival at High Down all prisoners are offered a Covid-19 test as part of their initial health screening. Following a period of 14 days each prisoner is seen by a member of healthcare to ensure that they are symptom free before being moved to the wider population.

Each house block was risk assessed by the health and safety team to assess the floor space available and calculate how many people can be unlocked at any one time whilst allowing for two metre social distancing.

3.2 Main judgements

How safe is the prison?

We are pleased to note that since last year there has been a 13% reduction in the level of prisoner-on-prisoner assaults but concerned at the 23% increase in assaults against members of staff.

We are concerned that there are insufficient body worn video cameras (BWVCs) for all staff, and that those that are available are not always worn or turned on.

There have been a number of new initiatives introduced during the reporting period to disrupt the flow of illicit items entering the prison, and so contribute to safety (section 4.6), including photocopying of social mail, a body scanner in reception and enhanced gate security.

How fairly and humanely are prisoners treated?

The extreme and prolonged lockdown of prisons due to the pandemic has meant that a large proportion of the men at High Down have spent in excess of 23 hours each day locked in their cells from mid-March 2020 until the end of the reporting period, and this has clearly been at the expense of fair and humane treatment. The lockdown has highlighted the cramped conditions for many men, as High Down has 400 single cells used for double occupancy, many of which have a toilet in the cell rather than in a separate alcove.

A large number of category C and D prisoners are now held in High Down in preparation for the recategorisation (776 at the end of the reporting period). Until category C facilities are available at High Down it is understandable that many men who have earned category C status feel aggrieved at being held at High Down (which was built to category A standards).

Limited time out of cell for many months has inevitably impacted on the prison's ability to treat the men fairly and humanely. High Down is fortunate to have in-cell

telephony but access to showers, exercise and domestic facilities have all been severely curtailed.

We are pleased to note that regular meetings of the community information orderlies (CIOs) have continued, which has given them the opportunity to raise issues of wider concern. Board members have attended a number of these meetings by telephone conference and in person. The ongoing issues with the television aerial and heating on some house blocks (see section 5.1 below) are of concern to the Board.

We have also been pleased to receive positive feedback from prisoners about some helpful and supportive staff during this difficult time.

Immigration detainees have been held in prison conditions for too long (see section 5.4).

How well are prisoners' health and wellbeing needs met?

The Board is concerned about the effect of the pandemic on the mental health and wellbeing of the men, although we have not seen a significant increase in the number of referrals to the mental health in-reach team. We would, however, anticipate that the months of solitude and lack of exercise will have a widespread impact on wellbeing which may not reach the threshold required for a referral for treatment. We anticipate that the impact will be felt for a considerable period of time to come.

The lack of non-urgent appointments with the dentist, optician, physiotherapist, chiropodist etc has impacted on the health and wellbeing of prisoners.

The chaplaincy team has proactively provided regular support throughout the year, providing access to faith services and support with family contact (see section 5.5).

How well are prisoners progressed towards successful resettlement?

The lack of courses to address offending behaviour is of particular concern. We are also concerned that the lack of availability of progressive transfers for most men during the pandemic has had, and will continue to have, a significant impact on sentence progression. We are concerned that the backlog of transfers across the estate will take a considerable period of time to be cleared.

The cessation of social visits in March 2020 has undoubtedly made it more difficult for many men to maintain family ties. Purple Visits are not without issue but have generally been welcomed, particularly by those with family overseas or who are otherwise unable to visit. The prison has taken steps to make the Purple Visit rooms more conducive to relaxed visits.

The additional funding for telephone calls and additional letters have been welcome initiatives to help prisoners maintain vital contact with the outside world.

In-cell phones in High Down enabled the offender management unit and education tutors to make calls to prisoners.

The Board is concerned about the lack of activity spaces which will be available once the prison recategorises to a category C establishment (see section 2 above).

The number of prisoners released without accommodation has reduced during the reporting period, and this is, at least in part, due to the availability of additional funding from the Ministry of Justice for accommodation during the pandemic.

3.3 Main areas for development

TO THE MINISTER

- What help will be provided nationally to support the additional wellbeing and mental health needs of prisoners arising as a consequence of the pandemic?
- What help will be provided nationally in order to alleviate the negative consequences of the pandemic on the ability of prisoners to make progress in their sentences? This is important both in terms of applications for parole and also their ability to successfully resettle into the community.
- When is the Minister going to address the problem of prisoners serving IPP sentences? (See section 5.4).

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

- What steps does the Prison Service intend to take to ensure there are sufficient body worn video cameras and that they are worn by all officers who have contact with prisoners, and used in accordance with PSI 04/2017? (See section 4.5).
- What steps does the Prison Service intend to take in order to ensure that prisoners who require transfer to an outside secure mental health unit are assessed and transferred without delay? (See section 6.3).
- What plans does the Prison Service have to ensure that the backlog of progressive transfers is cleared as quickly as possible once current restrictions allow?
- In view of the projected increase in the prison population nationally, does the Prison Service remain of the view that the recategorisation of High Down to a category C establishment is the best use of resources?
- How will the Prison Service ensure that sufficient activity and education spaces, and behavioural programmes are available when High Down becomes a category C prison?
- What steps can the Prison Service take in order to tackle the issue of loss of property, both when moving cells within the establishment and being transferred to or from High Down? (See section 5.8).

TO THE GOVERNOR

- What actions does the governor intend to take to ensure that welfare checks are done in a timely manner and are adequately recorded? (See section 4).
- When does the governor anticipate being in a position to find a permanent and long-term solution to the inadequate heating, particularly on house block 6?

- What is the solution for the overheating of cells in the summer months, particularly in the south-facing sections of house blocks five and six? This is a recurring issue every summer at High Down (See section 5.1).
- What action can be taken to tackle the growing levels of assaults on staff during use of force incidents? (See section 4.5).
- How can more staff be encouraged to wear and use body worn video cameras? (See section 4.5).
- When will the broken CCTV units in the healthcare centre be fixed? (See section 4.5).
- Can the prison develop a more efficient process for handling prisoners' property, particularly in relation to cell clearances for moves between house blocks? (See section 5.8).

3.4 Progress since the last report

We are pleased to note that work has begun on the long overdue shower refurbishment and that some showers have now been fully refurbished. However, the majority of showering facilities remain unsanitary and require urgent remedial work.

Communal areas would appear to be generally cleaner, which is perhaps a consequence of less time out of cell due to the pandemic and we have had limited opportunity to see this for ourselves. We are pleased to note that exercise yard cleaners are now employed, but we still receive applications mentioning dirty yards and we continue to see that some areas remain unclean.

There is an ongoing issue with the window grilles, many of which are broken, rusting and filled with rubbish. This is both unsightly and a health and safety issue.

The standard of the accommodation in the segregation unit has improved. Damaged floors have been replaced, cells have been freshly painted by a category D prisoner, sinks and toilets have been deep cleaned, graffiti has been removed from the exercise yard and the hot plate has been replaced. (See section 5.2).

With regard to the complaints system the prison has made progress in terms of record keeping and is making efforts to get complaints resolved in a timely manner. The quality of replies remains, at times, low. Prisoners report that they do not find the system helpful in addressing their complaints as replies are often overdue and do not address their issues.

Evidence sections 4 – 7

4. Safety

The number of applications made to the IMB concerning safety account for 11.3% of the total received. The main concerns during the second half of the year have been in connection with cell sharing, bullying, Covid safety and mental health.

If the Board receives an application from a prisoner with an immediate safeguarding issue, we refer this to safer custody so that it can be followed up with a welfare check. We would like to thank staff who have followed up these safety concerns, although it is unclear who does the welfare checks and how and where they are recorded.

We received an increased number of letters from worried relatives, and the Governor has reported to us that she has also received an increase in the number of letters from relatives. This may be a consequence of increased anxiety about prison conditions during the pandemic but may also be in part caused by a lack of face-to-face induction and insufficient information for families.

4.1 Reception and induction

First night in prison (FNIP)

The Board usually reports on the number of new arrivals to High Down who do not spend their first nights in custody on the designated induction house block. However, during the pandemic the process for dealing with new arrivals has substantially changed due to the need to isolate them from the rest of the prison population (see section 5.1).

Induction

A paper-based induction programme was introduced as a result of the pandemic. This replaced face-to-face induction sessions and has been translated into a number of languages.

Towards the end of the reporting period the prison introduced an induction video which is shown to all new arrivals. This is particularly helpful for those with poor literacy skills, as information is more accessible, and it includes a visual tour of the establishment to aid familiarisation whilst reducing concerns regarding spreading the virus. The prison has plans to provide induction for all new arrivals on portable DVD players, and this will include what is contained in the paper-based version.

4.2 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody

The Board expresses regret at all deaths in custody and is sorry to report the following deaths at High Down:

2020	2019	2018
4 (2 from natural causes)	2 (1 from natural causes)	7 (5 from natural causes)

Inquests have not concluded for the deaths reported during 2020.

Two incidents recorded by the prison as 'near miss' incidents occurred in 2020, the same as in 2019.

Assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT)

Assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) is the care planning process for prisoners identified as being at risk of suicide or self-harm. The ACCT process requires that certain actions are taken to ensure that the risks of suicide and self-harm are reduced.

The number of ACCTs opened in 2020 was 795, a very slight increase on the 788 opened in 2019. Monthly figures are as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2019	59	53	55	85	53	53	72	81	77	63	76	74
2020	69	87	63	52	66	75	66	58	52	49	85	73

The Board remains concerned that ACCT reviews are not always multi-disciplinary and that it remains problematic that a member of the healthcare team does not always attend ACCT reviews. We have previously been concerned as to the quality of ACCT paperwork and the adequate recording of observations, although we have not been physically present in the prison to comment about this in the current year.

Self-harm incidents

A total of 577 self-harm incidents have been recorded in 2020, compared with 573 the previous year. Cutting remains the main method of self-harm (67% of all recorded incidents).

The number of ligature attempts and overdoses have both reduced, but the number of head-banging and wound aggravation incidents have increased. It is hard to draw conclusions from these figures although we are aware of the impact that such a limited regime may have had on the mental health of many prisoners.

4.3 Violence and violence reduction, self-isolation

Assaults	2020	2019
Prisoner on Prisoner	269	352
Prisoner on Staff	133	116

From the table above it can be seen that there was a significant reduction in the level of prisoner-on-prisoner assaults during 2020. This may in part may be due to the impact of the Covid-19 regime restrictions.

However, there was an increase in assaults against members of staff which, in some cases, led to physical injury necessitating hospital treatment. It is unclear to the Board why prisoner on staff incidents have increased. We understand there has

been a greater emphasis on the importance of recording such incidents, but it may also be due to the impact of the very limited regime and increasing frustrations.

It would appear that a growing number of prisoner-on-prisoner incidents are gang related and becoming more difficult for the prison to manage. The Board has received a number of applications from prisoners with concerns over gang related safety issues. There is concern that gang related violence may increase as the restricted regime is relaxed, as there may be scores to settle. This will have to be carefully managed and monitored.

The challenge, support and intervention plan (CSIP) was introduced at High Down in February 2019. This is a multi-disciplinary approach to managing prisoners, focusing on those who pose an increased risk of being violent. A total of 99 prisoners were assigned to individual case managers in 2020.

The Board appreciates that it has been difficult for CSIP caseworkers to maintain contact with prisoners during the current restrictions. As the Board has undertaken limited monitoring in person during the reporting period, we have no first-hand knowledge of the effectiveness of CSIP case management.

4.4 Vulnerable prisoners, safeguarding

Men convicted of sexual offences and vulnerable prisoners are housed on house block 6. Jobs in the textile workshops have been created specifically for them. The workshops were closed temporarily for the first few weeks of the pandemic but have been largely open since then.

4.5 Use of force

In addition to the monthly use of force meeting a weekly development meeting has been introduced. This meeting is well managed and focuses on observing camera footage where there are concerns about an incident. It provides an opportunity to:

- observe how staff have handled the incident and give feedback
- arrange further training as necessary
- observe and share good practice, especially skills in de-escalating situations
- highlight hot spots where there are more incidents and areas in the prison with limited CCTV

It appears to the Board that body worn video cameras (BWVCs) are being worn more often but there are no figures available for comparison with previous years. On average in this reporting period 58 BWVCs have been drawn each day, the number of staff on duty daily being between 50 and 80.

As there are not enough BWVCs for every member of staff there have been occasions where staff come on late shift and are unable to take one.

The Board continues to be concerned that BWVCs are not always turned on during unplanned use of force incidents. Prisoners have informed the Board that BWVCs

are not always worn and that their requests for cameras to be switched on are refused.

Prisoners have told us that CCTV is not working in certain areas, and it is of concern to the Board that the CCTV cameras in the healthcare centre have not been working for some time and remained broken at the end of the year.

Key points:

- The total number of use of force incidents increased by 23.26%.
- Injuries were sustained by 58 staff and 73 prisoners during incidents.
- The number of planned incidents increased by 185% compared to 2019, although the 2019 figure was not consistent with the two preceding years. We therefore query the accuracy of the 2019 figure. The increase in 2020 may also be due in part to improved reporting.
- Unplanned incidents increased by 10.6%. Refusal to return to cell accounted for 27% of the unplanned incidents in June and 30% in August.
- Rigid bar cuffs were introduced this year.
- Batons were drawn on 12 occasions (and used on two of those occasions).
- PAVA (Pelargonic Acid Vanillyamide - an irritant spray dispensed from a handheld canister) was issued to three control and restraint instructors at High Down in May 2020. PAVA has been drawn (but not used) on one occasion.

Use of Force	2020	2019	2018	2017
Unplanned	666 (increase of 10.6%)	602	617	357
Planned	134 (increase of 185%)	47	110	105
TOTAL	800 (increase of 23.2%)	649	727	462

4.6 Substance misuse

High Down takes a zero-tolerance approach to the supplying of illegal substances, recognising the effect of the supply of illegal substances on the safety and stability of the establishment. The monthly drug strategy meeting focuses on restricting supply, reducing demand and building recovery.

A number of initiatives have been introduced this year to disrupt the flow of illicit items entering the prison. Although items are clearly still getting through, the prison should be congratulated for its determined efforts to detect the sources of importation.

Photocopying of social mail started towards the end of 2020 in an attempt to close a route of drug transmission into the prison. In the last quarter of the reporting period a total of 6481 items were discovered in the mail.

A body scanner was installed in reception in November 2020 for new arrivals to High Down and there were 67 positive indications in the first 326 times it was used (20%).

Enhanced gate security was introduced at the end of 2020 to improve detection of illicit items being brought into the prison. Additional x-ray machines are on order and staff searching policies and procedures are also being reviewed.

High Down is working with the police to restrict the supply of throw-overs. Joint work with Surrey Police identified a group of prisoners and members of the public attempting to traffic illicit items via the perimeter wall. Eighteen illicit items were found near the perimeter wall in 2020. As a result of this work a number of prisoners and members of the public were charged with offences in July 2020.

There has been an increase of illicitly brewed alcohol (hooch) found in the establishment, partly due to better mail monitoring and intelligence gathering. Security worked with the London dog section and searches were carried out between October and December to identify where hooch was being brewed and stored.

Drugs & Mobile Finds Reported	2020	2019	2018
Drugs	699	750	446
Mobile Phones	135	301	310

Mandatory drug testing (MDT) was only available during the first three months of 2020 and has been suspended for the last nine months.

In the first three months 134 MDT tests had been completed and of those 26 were confirmed positive (34.8%), an increase on the previous year of 24.2%.

Cell searches take place regularly to look for illicit items. Although fewer of these were able to take place in 2020, they resulted in an 84% discovery rate.

Mobile phone finds have decreased by 55% and drug finds by 8%, which may be a consequence of the new initiatives introduced but may also be due to the stopping of social visits and less drug testing and cell searching.

Finds of illicit items	2020	2019
Number of cell searches	404	836
Number of illicit items found in cell searches	341(84% of total cell searches)	776 (92% of total cell searches)
Number of illicit items found within the perimeter fence area	18	5

Intelligence reports indicated that a number of prisoners have been attempting to divert their medication and training has been given to staff on how to identify diversion behaviour.

We are advised that there has been limited intelligence received by the prison regarding prisoners being in debt over drugs. However, the impact it can have on prisoners is significant and the security department continue to work with the safety team to highlight any concerns and to ensure they receive any support they require.

Prisoners identified as misusing drugs are referred to the Forward Trust who offer a variety of interventions at High Down (see section 6.6).

5. Fair and humane treatment

5.1 Accommodation, clothing, food

In the 2019 report the Board noted a number of improvements needed to bring all areas of accommodation up to acceptable standards. We are advised that, in spite of the pandemic, progress has been made to address some of these shortcomings. As we have not been able to visit the prison regularly, we are more reliant on reports from staff and the head of residence about the progress that has been made.

Although the head of residence has not received an excessive number of complaints about accommodation during the year, the Board has received an increase of 180% in applications about accommodation problems during 2020 as compared to 2019 (67 compared to 24). However, much of the increase can be attributed to the high number of applications we received about the heating on house block 6 (see below).

Communal areas

In the communal areas the prison has focused on creating an environment more in line with a category C prison which High Down will soon become. The introduction of communal furniture on induction units was a welcome addition and, prior to the pandemic, created an area for the prisoners to interact socially.

A mural artist was engaged to work on house block 4 but this is on hold due to the pandemic.

The long-awaited work to refurbish the showers has been started on two house blocks and will be rolled out to the remaining older house blocks.

Our limited visits this year would suggest to us that there have been improvements to the outside grounds. Gardens and flower beds continue to be well maintained and refreshed regularly by the garden manager and his team of prisoner gardeners.

New yard cleaners have been recruited and have made a noticeable difference to the cleanliness of the exercise yards.

Cohorting units

Changes to the types of prisoner being held on the house blocks had to be introduced, and in accordance with guidance both nationally and from PHE the prison established the following units:

- Reverse cohorting unit (new receptions or transfers in for 14 days to detect any cases before they enter the general population of the prison)
- Protective isolation unit (known or probable Covid-19 cases in single cells)
- Shielding units (to protect the most vulnerable with enhanced levels of bio security, including dedicated staff)

Cells

The living standards assessment surveys conducted during the pandemic have identified in-cell cleanliness as an issue. Staff and prisoners report prioritising their very limited time out of cell for kiosk time, showers and exercise over cell cleaning.

In-cell cleaning packs have been provided but staff say the uptake is sporadic.

'Room ready reps' have been recruited to ensure cells are ready for new prisoners, and we have received positive feedback from prisoners about this.

During the summer months, the south-facing sections of house blocks five and six are exceptionally hot. This is a recurring issue every summer at High Down and we received several complaints from prisoners about it.

In the colder months, heating problems on some house blocks have prompted large numbers of complaints to the Board, mainly from house block 6. This houses a higher proportion of elderly prisoners who are perhaps more likely to feel the cold. Work to rectify the heating problem was ongoing at the end of the year and we were pleased to note that hot water bottles and extra blankets had been provided.

There is an additional heating issue when the fire suppression system triggers, as this cuts off the gas supply to the boiler and shuts down the heating. There is no date for improvements or replacement of this system. The head of residence has issued notices to the prisoners explaining the situation and advising them not to smoke illicitly or to use kettles for cooking as this can trigger the system.

The Board was very concerned that there were problems with the television aerial system servicing the prison over the latter months of the year, meaning that some house blocks lost access to some channels. Interim solutions were implemented but we received a large number of applications about this issue and would note that access to television is very important for the men at the current time when so many remain locked up for the majority of the time. The issue was ongoing at the end of the year.

'TV helps us cope with the long hours banged up with nothing else to do.'

5.2 Segregation, special accommodation

The segregation unit is housed in a dedicated and self-contained spur on two levels. There are 22 single cells and two basic special accommodation cells.

The segregation unit is managed by two governors and a team of specially trained staff who can offer these prisoners the appropriate level of care and support.

Everything is recorded in each prisoner's personal history file and the Board has access to all the information. The Board is grateful to the staff for all the help and support they have given us during a difficult year.

The Board notes that the segregation unit staff demonstrate excellent team working skills, and support the prisoners being held in the unit. |For example, we received

direct feedback from a prisoner who had been in the segregation unit for several weeks who told us how helpful and supportive staff had been to manage his move back to a house block.

The segregation unit staff dealt with one particularly distressing incident during the year which involved a significant and potentially life-threatening case of self-harm. One of the other residents in the segregation unit and his family were so impressed with the swift actions of the staff involved in this incident that they recommended the team for a Butler Trust award. This case demonstrates the commitment and dedication of the team to their work and how they will go the extra mile when circumstances require it.

Areas/issues of note (including progress reports from the 2019 report)

The Board is pleased to note that the standard of the accommodation in the segregation unit has improved. Damaged floors have been replaced, cells have been painted by a category D prisoner, sinks and toilets have been deep cleaned, graffiti has been removed from the exercise yard and the hot plate has been replaced. Further work is required to bring all the cell floors up to standard, and we understand that funding is available for this work to be completed.

The fundamental problems with the functioning of the showers remain as funding is required to bring these up to standard and improve ventilation. A business plan has been drawn up for this work.

There is still no gym equipment on the exercise yards, but they are much cleaner.

All prisoners in the segregation unit have access to a daily regime. This has remained unchanged since the pandemic. The regime includes use of the kiosk, telephone calls, exercise and three showers a week.

During the Covid outbreak in the segregation unit all the prisoners were isolated on the upper level and the one new arrival was located on the lower level. Those in isolation were allowed showers which were bio-cleaned between uses.

By the end of the year prisoners started to collect their meals themselves from the segregation unit kitchen servery.

The regime could be more purposeful in offering other activities apart from the dedicated library, sudoku and crosswords. There are still no visits from education although in-cell education packs are now available.

Listeners (prisoners trained by Samaritans to provide emotional support to other prisoners) have not attended the segregation unit for several years but residents continued to have access to Samaritan phones. The Board understands that there are plans to reintroduce Listeners to the segregation unit in 2021 and we would welcome this change.

A total of 32 prisoners were held for in excess of 42 days during the year, with the longest being held for 165 days before he was transferred out of the prison.

The number of prisoners in segregation fluctuated over the course of the year. It was operating near to capacity over summer and into the third quarter but by the end of the year there were six prisoners and only one who had been held for over 21 days.

Around 30 prisoners were subject to a multi-unlock regime with officers in PPE during the course of the year. However, some of these were for very short periods (maybe only a day). Multi-unlock cases are reviewed daily.

During the pandemic, transfers to other prisons became more difficult as this was managed centrally. Vacancies in the high security estate were fewer as moves out of the estate became stagnant. However, by the autumn more vacancies became available.

As has been the case for a number of years a significant number of prisoners were long stayers because of their refusal to return to normal location. One such individual returned to the house blocks on several occasions but was quickly moved back because his behaviour in normal location was disruptive to other prisoners. Segregation staff supported him well, and as he was a foreign national the governor arranged for a translator to be present at his reviews.

Rule 45 reviews and the new electronic recording system

The two segregation governors managed the running of the Rule 45 reviews for men who are held in the segregation unit for good order and discipline (GOOD) or OI (for their own interest). There were approximately 300 reviews in 2020.

The Board attended most of the reviews earlier in the year but due to the pandemic did not attend any from the end of March until August. Over the reporting period we attended only 82 as compared to 299 in 2019. The Board was able to keep abreast of developments in the individual reviews through regular phone and email contact with staff and to raise any concerns with the governors. The Board is conscious of the additional workload this has created and appreciates the assistance provided by staff and management.

An electronic recording system (specific to High Down) for the reviews was introduced in June. This has provided a more efficient system for completing the forms and saving individual records, with ease of storage and retrieval of the official documents required under PSO 1700. To comply with the requirements of the PSO, copies of all the review documents are printed off and filed in the individual prisoner's segregation record. In the Board's view this electronic system has the potential to be adapted for use across other prisons with segregation units.

The Board considers that the only negative aspect of the electronic system is that the official paperwork is not always available in hard copy for the Board member present at the review to sign before they leave the prison. The Board does however keep separate records of all reviews attended.

At the end of October, the arrangements for managing reviews changed to allow for more flexibility. Instead of the reviews being undertaken by the two segregation governors, the adjudicating governor (who changes daily) now chairs the reviews,

and we understand this change is working well and allows more governors the experience of managing reviews.

Segregation management review group (SMARG) meetings changed to quarterly from bi-monthly this year and are followed by the adjudication standardisation meetings. They are well attended by staff at all levels from the various prison disciplines. The Board is invited to attend both meetings and receives the minutes.

Special accommodation

As was noted in last year's report, the use of special accommodation has declined from an all time high in 2018 to only one use during the early part of 2020. It is still the case that one of the special accommodation cells is sometimes used to search new arrivals in the segregation unit. However, the door remains open, and the prisoner is only held there for a short period of time while formalities are completed. In these circumstances the formal PSO 1700 paperwork is not completed.

Adjudications

Adjudications	2020	2019
Number proven	1061(43% of total)	1421(46% of total)
Outstanding	362(15% of total)	1140(37% of total)
Total	2451	3042

The Board is pleased to note a significant reduction in adjudications by 591 compared to 2019. Much of the reduction is, however, due to the pandemic as staff were advised not to pursue charges except in the most serious instances. The following also had an effect on reducing the number of adjudications:

- The independent adjudicator continued to hear cases remotely.
- The police liaison officer (PLO) referred more cases to the police for potential prosecution. Only if the police did not proceed with charges would the case be referred back to the prison for further action.
- The prison took the decision not to proceed with some cases which had been delayed due to the pandemic
- To keep the numbers in segregation down, towards the end of the year, adjudicating governors were advised not to award cellular confinement except in the most serious cases.

5.3 Staff-prisoner/detainee relationships, key workers

Fewer visits to the prison this year have resulted in the Board having less face-to-face contact with prisoners. We have been reliant on applications received from prisoners, calls to in-cell phones, and more limited contact with a smaller number of prisoners to obtain information about staff-prisoner relationships.

Staff-prisoner relationships appear generally good within the prison, but problems can arise when there are differences in expectation over what can reasonably be achieved. Prisoners told us that certain members of staff are difficult to deal with.

The Board received 107 regular applications about staff-prisoner relationships, 12% of the total in 2020. Confidential access applications to the Board concerning staff-prisoner relations amounted to half of the 52 we received. This is a substantial increase from the previous year (from 34% to 50%). Both confidential and non-confidential applications involved staff-prisoner relationships with allegations of bullying, threatening behaviour or assault.

'Don't like to be fobbed off, prefer to know what's really happening. Some staff say they will follow it up and never get back to you.'
'Staff seem ok here.'
'Some staff are confrontational.'
'They're doing their best to be fair.'

CIO verbal feedback at the meetings we attended was useful:

- better for staff to say they do not know the answer than to raise expectations with the wrong one
- lack of information at the start of the lockdown about other agencies not coming in so prisoners were frustrated when they tried to contact them
- prisoners are more likely to read information which is put under cell doors
- catalogue ordering and delays in receiving items caused frustrations
- concerns about cleanliness

Prisoner on house block 3:
'A little kindness and time makes a huge difference, officers on HB3 over the last few days actually asked "are you ok" and didn't slam doors.'

5.4 Equality and diversity

Towards the end of 2019 we understood that the diversity and inclusion post would not be continued due to funding issues, but we are pleased to note that this is no longer the case. Recruitment was planned for prisoners to take on the role of mental health and equalities peers but unfortunately is on hold due to ongoing Covid restrictions.

There are plans to work with the Zahid Mubarek Trust to introduce a prisoner advocate role for the diversity and inclusion team and, once restrictions are lifted, for the Zahid Mubarek Trust to assist the diversity and inclusion adviser with prisoner focus groups.

Prisoners with learning disabilities

The learning disability nurse collates information about prisoners with learning difficulties or disabilities. Prisoners can also self-declare a learning disability on the equalities questionnaire which is provided with the induction pack. The latest report for 2020 (October) showed that 12 prisoners self-declared a learning disability, compared with an average of 15 in the previous year. We believe that the figures are always likely to be lower than the true figure as people can be reluctant to self-declare.

We are concerned as to how the needs of prisoners with learning difficulties or disabilities have been met during the pandemic. Distraction packs have been widely

distributed but of limited value to those with learning difficulties or those with limited literacy or English language skills. It is questionable how effective communications with prisoners were for this group, particularly in the early days of the pandemic.

Older Prisoners

The Board has received a number of applications which suggest the restricted regime imposed as a result of the pandemic has disproportionately impacted on older prisoners, and those with limited mobility. Limited time out of cell can be particularly difficult for these men, who may have insufficient time to shower or use the kiosk and get some fresh air. The kiosk is an electronic device available on the wings from which men can order canteen, make applications to various departments and do a variety of administrative tasks. The kiosk is accessed via a fingerprint identification system. Prisoner information notices are added to the kiosk as a means of disseminating information to the prisoners.

Older prisoners:

'I haven't got time to get to the shower, so I use the sink instead.'

'I can't get to the kiosk in time and there is always a long queue.'

'It's all a bit rushed for us older people.'

It is also likely that older prisoners have been disproportionately impacted by the issues with the heating system towards the end of the reporting period. We have received a considerable number of applications on this issue from older prisoners (see section 5.1).

Diversity and inclusion meetings

At the beginning of the reporting period meetings were due to be held on a quarterly basis. A meeting took place in February but restrictions due to the pandemic resulted in further meetings being suspended. A meeting was planned for November but was unfortunately cancelled due to compassionate leave.

Population Profile

The breakdown of the population at end of the reporting period:

Age	% of Population
18-21	7%
22-29	32%
30-39	33%
40-49	17%
50-59	8%
60-69	2%
70 and over	1%

Ethnicity	% of Population
Asian	6%
Black	23%
Mixed	8%

Other	2%
White British	46%
White Irish	1%
GRT	4%
White Other	10%

Religion	% of Population
Buddhist	2%
Christian	8%
Church of England	18%
Muslim	20%
No Religion	21%
Roman Catholic	20%
Other	11%

Diversity events

Despite significant restrictions to regime due to the Covid pandemic it is worthy of note that the diversity and inclusion adviser was able to carry out a comprehensive range of awareness events mainly through displays, email, and the internal Way-Out tv.

These recognised a wide spectrum of diversity and included Holocaust Memorial Day, LGBT History Month, Stephen Lawrence Day, Deaf Awareness Week, Gypsy Roma and Traveller Month, Windrush Day, National Inclusion Week, World Suicide Prevention Day, Black History Month and Dyslexia Awareness Month, amongst others.

In August the 'Let's Talk' initiative was launched, part of a national initiative designed to encourage open and honest conversations with staff and prisoners concerning discrimination and diversity.

Discrimination incident reporting form (DIRF)

23 DIRFs were submitted and five were upheld. This is a significant reduction in comparison to 2019.

DIRFs by protected characteristic	2020	2019
Ethnicity	18	33
Disability	0	4
Age	1	1
Religion	2	3
Sexual orientation	1	3
Multiple issues	1	0
Total	23	44

Foreign national prisoners (FNOs) and detainees

As with all areas of High Down this has been a tough year for the foreign national clerks with staff shortages and numbers of people working from home or shielding. In addition, the foreign national clerks have to liaise with the Home Office (HO) as the department responsible for immigration matters. HO staff have been working

under similar circumstances with staff shortages and home working. This has made liaison in certain individual cases difficult between the two departments.

FNOs are supported by the Home Office Immigration Enforcement Directorate. Under normal circumstances immigration staff visit the prison twice weekly to run clinics for the FNOs to discuss the progress of their cases. However, due to the pandemic the immigration officers from HMP Wandsworth stopped attending at the end of March. The visits were restarted in December but after four attendances were again discontinued. Although the foreign national clerks have Home Office contacts to call this is not the same as the FNOs/detainees being able to talk directly to immigration staff. Not surprisingly, the FNOs have been very frustrated with this lack of direct contact during the large part of the year with no change in sight. Moves of detainees (time served prisoners held under immigration powers) to immigration removal centres (IRCs) had been discontinued altogether by the end of the year.

The Board has been very concerned with the length of time one detainee has continued to be held at High Down, well beyond his conditional release date in the spring and his sentence expiry date in the autumn. Despite him being approved for early release in January 2020, he remained at High Down at the end of the reporting period due to a number of cancelled flights because of Covid. The Board has been so concerned about his case that representations were made for him to be moved to an IRC where conditions are much more relaxed. However, the Home Office refused the request, and he remains in High Down. The Board is continuing to monitor his case closely.

During the pandemic, FNOs and detainees have received an additional £5 per week, in line with the policy in IRCs, to enable them to maintain regular contact with their families abroad (over and above the additional £5 per week given to all prisoners).

The telephone translation service (Big Word) is available for non English-speaking prisoners to help with all aspects of the prison regime, rules and regulations etc in addition to enabling them to contact their solicitors and other agencies to help with their cases. It appears to us that Big Word is now being used more.

Foreign National Prisoners	2020	2019	2018
Average number held	152	175	170

Key points:

- The average number of FNOs was 152 per month, down by approximately 20 from 2018 and 2019.
- The top three nationalities in the FNO population were Albanians 28 (20%), Poles 12 (%) and Romanians 11 (8%).
- The number of detainees at the end of the reporting year was 14.
- A total of 20 prisoners were deported/removed at the end of their sentence whilst approximately 14 were moved to IRCs.
- Eighteen were deported under the early removal scheme (ERS) before the end of their sentence.

Indeterminate sentenced prisoners

Indeterminate sentenced prisoners	2020	2019	2018
IPP	26	27	27
Lifers	45	41	25

We continue to question why such large numbers of prisoners with life sentences or indeterminate sentences for public protection (IPPs) are held in a local prison which is unsuitable for their needs.

5.5 Faith and pastoral support

The chaplaincy team has performed an important role over the course of the pandemic, and we commend the team for their dedication during this difficult time, particularly as a number of volunteers have been unable to attend the establishment.

Handouts arrive from the chaplaincy on a weekly basis and are distributed to the men. Chaplaincy staff are able to visit most house blocks and distribute handouts and information about relevant broadcasts on the internal Wayout TV.

The chaplaincy team runs a system by which men can apply to have time in the chapel with an iPad in order to connect them with family. This has been used for those with family in hospital, including the arrival of babies, and for attending virtual funeral services. It is to be hoped that after the lifting or easing of the restrictions, the chaplaincy will continue to be able to use this technology in order to play a positive role in enabling prisoners to maintain closer family ties.

5.6 Incentives and earned privileges (IEP)

The use of IEP was discontinued towards the end of March. Enhanced prisoners were allowed to retain their status but all other prisoners, including those in the segregation unit, were put on standard. As far as we are aware basic has not been used during the pandemic.

In terms of managing anti-social behaviour, guidance was given to staff advising that anti-social behaviour should be verbally challenged, and a prisoner's regime might then be curtailed for the rest of that day (on the authority of the duty governor), but the IEP level should not be altered.

Prisoners should not have their television taken away unless they have committed an act of physical violence or are inciting others and this has to be authorised by the duty governor. This can be for a period of 72 hours with the television being returned immediately following this. With the exception of the segregation unit, all prisoners have access to a television (unless removed as above).

Staff are encouraged to look for reasons for prisoners to gain enhanced status. To progress, a prisoner needs to evidence that they are adhering to the behaviour outline in the incentives policy.

In terms of privileges the prison is able to offer enhanced prisoners relatively little other than access to games consoles and additional money from their spending account.

5.7 Complaints

The formal prison complaints system is the usual means by which prisoners make complaints about issues of concern to them. Comp forms are available on all residential areas. Once completed the prisoners place them in specific locked boxes on their house block. These boxes are emptied regularly, and complaints are logged and sent to individual members of staff for reply within seven days.

- 14% fewer complaints were received by the prison in 2020 (2,958 compared to 3,473 in 2019).
- The five most common subjects of complaint were reception, property, finance, residential and mail (property and residential were also high on the list of applications to the Board).
- At the end of the year 63 complaints remained outstanding and were carried over to 2021.

The Board is pleased to note that there have been fewer applications about the complaints system itself in 2020: 2% compared to 5% of the total applications in 2019.

If a complaint is about a particularly sensitive matter a prisoner can submit a confidential access complaint using a Comp 2 form. These can be addressed to the governor, the prison group director (PGD) or the chair of the IMB. In 2020 there were a total of 499 complaints sent under confidential access, 52 of which were addressed to the IMB.

Complaints about healthcare are dealt with under a separate complaints process.

5.8 Property

Missing or damaged property continues to be an issue at High Down. We always receive a large number of applications about property issues and received 127 in 2020 (approximately 14% of the total). Seventy-two of those related to property issues arising within High Down and 55 on transfer from other establishments.

Every six months men are allowed a kit change, where fresh clothes can be sent into the prison. Due to the pandemic these parcels were suspended which meant some men waited nearly a year for new clothes.

From September everyone was allowed a care package which could include shoes and clothing. Usually, prisoners are only allowed a certain number of clothing items in their possession, but we understand this has been generally suspended allowing men to keep this clothing in their cells rather than store it or send it out. Underclothes can always be sent in and in cases of hardship (such as transfer from a secure hospital or after surgery) exceptions are made.

There have been issues during the pandemic with men having the opportunity to order items such as DVD players, hair clippers, books and other items from Argos or GEMA records, with items being out of stock, delayed deliveries and refunds, and times when it has not been possible to place orders.

6. Health and wellbeing

6.1 Healthcare: general

The NHS England healthcare within the prison is provided by Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL). It is responsible for all primary care and mental health services apart from dentistry (NHS) and substance misuse (the Forward Trust). GP services are provided by Achor Health.

We have been concerned about a lack of consistent leadership in healthcare and the impact that this has had on the management of the unit.

CNWL operates a prisoner complaints system separately from the prison complaint system. During 2020 CNWL received 189 applications of which five were recorded as 'complaints of a serious nature' requiring escalation and 184 as 'concerns' which are dealt with at a local level. The majority of the applications related to medication, accessing care and care quality. Application response times were not accurately recorded, and we have received a number of applications about delays in complaints being dealt with by healthcare.

IMB applications during lockdown included 163* medical complaints representing 18% of all applications.

IMB Applications – Category G

Month	Physical Health	Mental Health	Medication	GP	TOTAL
Jan-Mar	7	6	11	3	27
Apr-Dec	47	39	31	9	126
TOTAL	54	45	42	12	153

**Note: Overall total of 163 includes 10 indeterminate applications excluded from above analysis*

Regular medication reviews and vigilance during administration has sought to identify those misusing prescribed medication and those using prescribed drugs with no clinical indication. This has contributed to the applications related to medication.

Physical and mental health applications have been driven to some extent by Covid restrictions and prisoners assuming these are prison rather than government guidelines.

All new arrivals are given a primary health screening. A total of 1,288 were referred for secondary screening which can result in a referral to clinical or mental health services. On average this is 107 per month.

A member of healthcare is required to attend all segregation reviews.

No record is available showing healthcare attendance at ACCT reviews; however it is anticipated that changes to ACCT procedures towards the end of the year should

result in higher attendance rates. A member of the Forward Trust team attends some ACCT reviews.

Although our visits to the establishment have been limited, we have noted that the appointment of a new healthcare governor and custodial manager mid-year resulted in a visible improvement in the running of the in-patient facility. Staff appeared more engaged with patients and there was a noticeable improvement in the cleanliness of the unit.

6.2 Physical healthcare

Outpatients

A wide range of primary healthcare services are available within the prison. In addition to GP services, dentistry and optical, more specialised services are offered by external consultants visiting the prison.

The number of GP and nurse-led appointments booked have increased considerably and nurse triage sessions reduced by over 50%.

The number of 'did not attends' (DNA) for GP appointments, nurse led clinics and dentistry pre Covid-19 restrictions ranged from 8% to 49%, which is an overall increase compared to the previous year. DNAs at mental health, substance misuse and triage appointments decreased compared to the previous year both pre- and during Covid-19 restrictions.

Appointments	2020 Booked	Finished	DNA (%)	2019 Booked	Finished	DNA (%)
GP	2,989	2,560	14	1,979	1,613	10
Nurse-led	10,510	10,004	5	7,439	5,089	28
Dental	1,097	880	20	2,118	1,340	27
Substance Misuse	6,591	6,543	2	9,392	8,994	4
Mental health	9,548	9,369	2	8,498	7,414	7
Nurse Triage	11,438	11,355	1	24,911	24,787	0

Data supplied by CNWL

1. DNA cohort included in finished appointments

2. Booked appointments include cancellations and appointments where patient unavailable to attend

3. Substance misuse clinics include medication collection

GP waiting times have remained consistent at one week. GP appointments took place mainly by cell phone and in-cell visits during lockdown which facilitated more 'on the day' appointments as movement slips were not required.

Dentistry, optical and physiotherapy waiting times have increased. Some of these services were paused during lockdown. Emergencies were dealt with in hospital.

Waiting Times (weeks)	2020	2019	2018
GP	1	1	1
Dentist	18	13	15
Optician	9	2	17
Physiotherapy	7	3	
Podiatry	9	11	

Data supplied by CNWL

Prisoners requiring hospital treatment are escorted to a number of local hospitals. Attendance is by appointment or as an emergency. Where a prisoner is kept in overnight, staff are assigned bed watch duties. At times during the reporting year there has been a higher than usual number of bed watches and appointments which has caused additional pressures on staffing.

	January - March	April - December	Total
Appointments	295	845	1,140
Emergencies	77	315	392
Bedwatches	5	33	42

Data supplied by CNWL

Pharmacy services for general medical care are run by CNWL and the Forward Trust administer drugs related to substance addiction. There were 14,597 prescriptions during the reporting year (no previous data available).

Inpatients

The prison has a 23-bed inpatient unit managed directly by the prison:

- Patients in the unit may have physical and/or mental health conditions.
- There is one gated cell to facilitate patients requiring constant watch.
- The unit is staffed 24/7 by a team of nurses and prison officers.
- All cells are single occupancy.
- On average two or three cells are out of action awaiting repair at any one time.
- There are provisions for patients with mobility issues.
- Patients have access to a dedicated outdoor area with seating and fitness equipment and a day room with a billiards table and television.

Occupancy of the unit has been extremely high throughout the year. This has been increased by patients waiting for transfer to outside secure mental health units and by 'lodgers' (men discharged from healthcare awaiting location on a house block).

Length of stay (days)	2020	2019	2018
1-19*	200	239	114
20-49	38	44	33
50+	25	14	16

Data supplied by CNWL

*Some of the short stays were temporary lodgers awaiting transfer to a house block.

The number of short stays has reduced since last year however there has been a noticeable increase in the number of men staying over 50 days. At year end there were three patients with long-term health issues who had been resident for 1069, 146 and 84 days respectively.

The unit is, by its nature, a particularly challenging environment in which to work. At any one time there will be a disproportionately high number of prisoners on ACCTs compared with the rest of the prison. There are frequently multiple regimes, prisoners on multi-unlocks, prisoners noted as presenting a danger to staff/females and sometimes dirty protests. There is considerable movement of prisoners between in-patients and the segregation unit which can be disruptive to both prisoners and staff in both units.

Concerns were raised during the year that a lack of GP continuity meant that medical discharges back to a house block were delayed and beds occupied unnecessarily.

6.3 Mental healthcare

The mental health in-reach service is made up of a team including psychiatrists and psychiatric nurses.

Approximately 70 men are looked after under the care programme approach (CPA) which is an NHS service available to those in the wider community with mental health issues.

Group therapy, wellbeing sessions, cognitive behaviour therapy and various psychological interventions are run in the prison. During lockdown no group psychology sessions have taken place. There is a limited amount of one-to-one work and the waiting list at the end of the year was significant due to staff shortages through illness and self-isolation

During 2020 a total of 1,687 men were referred for mental health services compared to 1,655 in 2019. Of these the majority were signed up for psychiatric care and 224 were referred to other services. A total of 9,548 appointments were booked, of which 9,369 were attended, giving a DNA rate of just 2%. This compares to 8,498 appointments booked in 2019 with a DNA rate of 7%.

Prisoners with behavioural problems are not managed by the mental health in-reach team, which can mean that their issues go unaddressed and can therefore be disruptive and take up a disproportionate amount of uniformed staff's time.

Prisoners with serious mental health concerns can be referred for external assessment with a view to transferring to an outside secure mental health facility. The number identified for assessment and subsequent transfer has reduced compared to last year.

Concerns were raised mid-year that the psychiatrists were taking a considerable time to assess patients, delaying their transfer to outside secure units.

We remain concerned about the average length of time between assessment and transfer.

	2020	2019	2018
Identified for external assessment	44	67	42
Actual transfers	30	51	25
Average time between assessment and transfer (days)	19	17	18
Longest wait time (days)	Not known	136	125

Data supplied by CNWL

6.4 Social care

There is a memorandum of understanding between Surrey County Council and High Down regarding social care provision. On average 10-15 prisoners are receiving social care from Surrey CC. Services include cell cleaning, change of bedding and provision of specialised equipment.

Prior to Covid restrictions, peer supporters (social care reps) were able to provide additional support for elderly prisoners. The reps have not operated during the pandemic and will restart once restrictions are lifted.

Multi-disciplinary team meetings are held weekly to discuss the social care plan for individuals with physical health issues. The meetings are attended by representatives from safety, primary care, Surrey Social Services and a family liaison officer (FLO). Prison staff are encouraged to make prisoner referrals to the meeting.

In the event of a prisoner requiring palliative or end-of-life care efforts are made to relocate the prisoner to a hospice or to grant release on temporary licence (ROTL).

A number of senior staff are assigned as FLOs and liaise with the families of deceased prisoners.

6.5 Exercise, time out of cell

Core day regime

Pre-Covid: for men in education or work the normal core day allowed for a total of approximately eight hours out of cell to attend education/work and also to facilitate domestics, medication collection, visits, and association. Those who were not in education or work were unlocked for association, domestics, visits etc, and would spend approximately 22 hours a day locked in their cells.

Lockdown and recovery phase: The lockdown regime which was imposed in March 2020 allowed for 30 minutes exercise and 10 minutes kiosk/showers. Over the summer the prison moved into the recovery phase which allowed for 30 minutes exercise and 30 minutes for domestics. Meals and medication were collected under controlled conditions, with a smaller number of prisoners allowed out at any one time to allow for social distancing.

'Not enough time out of cell for a shower, kiosk and exercise. You have to choose which one to do.'

Regime delivery

We have been provided with data for the final quarter of the year showing the delivery of the regime compared to what was planned.

Wing regime (time out of cell each day for a shower, exercise and time on the kiosk) is generally close to 100% of plan.

The delivery of activities like education, gym, paid work, social visits and other programmes has been severely impacted by covid restrictions, staff shortages due to illness and self-isolation.

The prison has a large gym with plenty of exercise equipment and two full time personal trainers. Prior to lockdown an average of 1,712 sessions were run per month. The gym was closed on 23 March 2020 under lockdown restrictions and only opened again briefly in November. From June to December an average of 453 exercise sessions were held each month on the outside astro turf.

6.6 Drug rehabilitation

The Forward Trust offers clinical and social support services to prisoners based on an assessment of their needs. Men can refer themselves or be referred by their key worker or by the resettlement team. Some men are referred following a positive mandatory drug test result. Reception staff can refer new arrivals although attendance is not compulsory for social support.

Up to one third of prisoners are receiving clinical or social support from the Forward Trust at any one time. The majority of the men are located in a dedicated rehabilitation house block. On average there are around 20 who are held on other house blocks, either waiting for a suitable cell or because they have non-association issues with other prisoners. There is no finite number of prisoners who can be offered support – where demand is high there is particular focus on new arrivals and those close to their release date. On release, support can be transferred to community-based teams.

Clinical support to manage and reduce drug dependence was prescribed to over 100 men per month in the reporting period.

Social support is given to an average of almost 200 men per month and includes a wide variety of group work sessions and courses, one-to-one and in-cell work. Nearly half of this support is provided by Alcoholics, Cocaine and Narcotics Anonymous.

Much of the group work was withdrawn during lockdown and gradually reinstated as restrictions were eased. The sessions are well attended.

Number of men receiving support from the Forward Trust (2020)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Clinical Support	167	125	141	132	124	79	57	118	71	110	128	102
Social Support	164	245	208	197	188	233	255	174	150	135	180	206
TOTAL	331	370	349	329	312	312	312	292	221	235	308	308
Group work	170	179	116	0	0	0	0	0	65	54	54	30

Data supplied by Forward Trust

The Forward Trust has 36 full-time equivalent staff based in High Down including clinical staff and practitioners. There is one peer mentor on the rehabilitation house block and there are plans to recruit another.

The Board is pleased to note that the monthly drug strategy meetings were reinstated in August 2020 (prior to that the last one was held in April 2019) and are attended by the governor and members of the senior management team. Work is being done to implement a longer-term drug strategy involving restricting supply, reducing demand and building recovery (see section 4.6).

We are also pleased to note the various initiatives to improve the experience of prisoners on the rehabilitation unit, including:

- separation of those on detox medication from other prisoners to reduce bullying
- staff training to spot medication diverters
- art competitions
- displays and posters advertising Forward Trust services.

6.7 Soft skills

Soft skill classes such as yoga, mindfulness and parenting are not currently offered but can be purchased via the dynamic purchasing system should the prison wish to.

7. Progression and resettlement

7.1 Education, library

Education

The pandemic has had a significant impact on the delivery of education within High Down. Before lockdown was announced approximately 1,500 education spaces were available each week (approximately 800 morning and 700 afternoon spaces per week).

Education staff did not attend the prison from March until August 2020, adapting their delivery to cope with lockdown and working from home to produce resources for in-cell learning. We are told that from June 2020 they provided packs on key areas of study which were non-accredited but aligned to qualifications. The aim was that these could be used as foundation studies when face-to-face teaching recommences.

In-cell learning materials were provided from August 2020 and learners were contacted via in-cell phones and the kiosk. We are advised that on average tutors make 300 calls to in-cell phones each week to discuss education opportunities and to provide feedback and support.

We are advised that all packs are quality assured, internally and externally to achieve and maintain a consistent high quality of delivery. Packs are marked, assessed and returned to students. However, we have received several applications and comments from prisoners expressing frustration about issues with regard to the marking of their work and the provision of packs. The prison is aware of the low numbers of packs being returned for marking and has taken steps to improve this.

No accredited or exam-based courses have been able to be delivered but 15 students were able to continue their Open University distance learning courses.

In-cell learning was restricted to certain courses, as follows:

Courses available as in-cell pack	Courses unavailable as in-cell pack
Health and Safety	Painting and decorating
Barbering	Bricklaying
English levels 1&2	Multi-skills
English entry levels	IT
ESOL	First Aid
Maths levels 1&2	Business Admin
Maths entry level	Waste management
Business enterprise	
Catering & food safety (food safety only)	
Customer services	
Street works	

Prison admin staff in the activities hub took responsibility for completion of basic skills assessments when education was offsite. Education resumed that role in August 2020.

A total of 786 English assessments and 786 maths assessments were completed between August and December.

London CRC offer the following as in-cell learning packs:

- Finance
- Debt and benefits
- Getting Right – Responsible Thinking
- Change Plan and Relapse Prevention

Library

Library staff did not attend the prison from March until July 2020. As well as delivering books, prison service instructions (PSIs) and distraction packs they have also provided photocopies of legal cases on request.

Each house block has a table with donated books on it which is refreshed each week. Staff donated a large number of books to the prison at the beginning of the pandemic which was a welcome initiative.

Book club has continued, and librarians have encouraged prisoners to enter writing competitions organised by outside charities.

'I didn't read much before this but it has kept me sane.'

7.2 Vocational training, work

Before the pandemic, 573 activity spaces were available. Of these, 44 were newly created spaces, including a barista course, Clink gardeners, equalities and mental health peers, Railtrack, woodland services and electrical courses.

Since the national lockdown activity spaces have been made available when it was deemed safe to do so. The first activities that were made available were those important to the running of the prison. By June 2020 there were 190 men working in kitchens, laundry, recycling, textiles, as orderlies and in farms and gardens.

Laundry workers have also been packing the additional snack packs that have been provided for prisoners during lockdown.

By December 353 activity spaces were available, all of which were filled.

We were pleased that the prison was able to provide men with work making personal protective equipment for frontline NHS workers during the early stages of the pandemic, and the men were pleased to have the opportunity to take part in the

national effort to tackle the crisis. This initiative was recognised in the local press.¹ Once this initiative drew to a close, they returned to making essential items such as sheets, pillowcases etc.

The Clink charity

The first Clink training restaurant opened at High Down in June 2009. It delivers courses including: City and Guilds national vocational qualifications; food and beverage service; food preparation and cookery; barista; and food safety. In addition, support is provided to students as they prepare for release.

In 2020 it trained 32 learners compared to the previous year's 59 as the restaurant was closed for nine months due to the pandemic.

From October 2020 the restaurant prepared takeaway lunches for staff and in November introduced Clink & Collect, a chilled meal service for staff. It was closed again in December.

The Board were pleased to hear about the Clink graduate Covid emergency support fund which has provided emergency grocery vouchers to graduates of the Clink who have struggled financially in the pandemic.

7.3 Offender management, progression

One of the key challenges the offender management unit (OMU) has faced in the pandemic has been staffing as a number of staff either took unpaid leave when the pandemic first broke out or have since been shielding. Some staff have worked from home and some overtime was offered to remaining staff.

We understand from our discussions with the OMU that despite the challenges they have been prioritising prisoner sentences (so as to minimise direct impact on prisoners). We have also been informed that the new categorisation system tool has greatly helped to reduce backlogs.

Home detention curfew (HDC) allows some prisoners to be released early but subject to a curfew which requires them to be at home for a certain number of hours each day. This was perceived as being very successful during 2020 by the OMU, on the basis that very few prisoners had been refused it. We also note that a greater percentage of men were released on time than in 2019.

Home Detention Curfew	2020	2019
Eligible	184	239
Refused	2	13
Released on time	96	95
Not released on time	53 (35.57% of total released)	64 (40.25% of total released)

The offender assessment system (OASys) is a tool used to assess the likelihood of further offending and the risks posed by a prisoner. The sentence plan and the

¹ <https://www.mylondon.news/news/south-london-news/london-coronavirus-prisoners-suttons-hmp-18176637>

OASys assessment should be reviewed and updated periodically throughout the sentence. In December 2020 the OASys backlog sat at 60, which we are advised was a significant improvement from earlier in the year (although we do not have access to the statistics at the time of writing to verify this).

7.4 Family contact

Social visits

Visits are an essential part of maintaining family and community ties. Prior to lockdown there were around 1,500 social visits per month.

Virtual visits

In line with national guidelines all social visits ceased on 23 March 2020. Five family days had been planned throughout 2020, but none of them were able to take place.

Family conferencing (Purple Visits) was introduced in May 2020.

Month	Number of virtual visits
May	175
June	603
July	431
August	260
September	199
October	236
November	485
December	431
Total	2,820

Purple Visits have largely been welcomed by prisoners, although there have been technical challenges, and they do not replace face-to-face contact. Some prisoners did not wish the family to take the risk of travelling for a social visit, which is evidenced by the fact that there remained a reasonable demand for Purple Visits even when limited face-to-face visits were taking place from August to October 2020.

'Good to see my family in India ... should keep them after the pandemic.'

'My elderly dad had a problem with his ID.'

'Unlocked 10 mins late for the 30 min visit, reception was bad and only got a 17 min. Gov reviewed the footage and agreed additional visit!'

In-cell telephony

An additional phone credit of £5 per week has been issued to all prisoners throughout the pandemic. Many prisoners have mentioned to the IMB the enormous difference this has made in being able to maintain family ties while there have been no social visits.

In-cell phones, which were installed in High Down in 2017, have made it easier for prisoners to contact their families during the pandemic.

There is a list of organisations offering support and advice which prisoners can call free of charge.

There has been a significant increase in the number of calls made.

Calls made by prisoners * (landing and in-cell phones)	2020 Jan-Dec	2019 Jan- Apr	2018 Jan-May	2017 Jan-April
Totals	1,048,750	139,837	91,113	45,000

* Comparable figures for 2019 are not available, and so we have included those statistics that are available as an indication of usage over time.

Prisoners have also been able to send additional free letters on a weekly basis and the email a prisoner service has been used by family members to keep in touch.

Prisoners with children have been supplied with child friendly writing packs. The Prison Advice and Care Trust (PACT) has developed a series of in-cell learning packs and can provide telephone support to those who request the packs. Packs include:

- Dads Reconnected
- Good Relationships
- Communication
- Dealing with conflict – anger and stress in relationships and going home

7.5 Resettlement planning

Two community rehabilitation companies (CRCs) operate at High Down: Kent, Surrey and Sussex CRC (KSS, the lead host) and London CRC. Both have teams based in High Down. During the pandemic, both have been operating on a delivery model approved by the Ministry of Justice.

It is difficult to make a meaningful comparison with previous years, or to identify systemic issues that would apply outside the period of the pandemic. From discussions with resettlement, while there have been challenges, staff have found it easier to be in contact with prisoners as they are spending more time in their cells. It had been noted that sessions (pre-Covid) were often poorly attended.

We have received feedback that the departure of partnership agencies, including CRCs, from the prison so quickly when the pandemic started created challenges. While it is appreciated that their respective organisations had instructed them to do this, and remote working was put in place, it inevitably had a detrimental impact on service delivery. Prisoners reported to us that they had not been informed that some agencies were no longer coming into the prison and they found this frustrating.

CRC	2020		2018
KSS Released	531	553 (April – Dec 2019)	2,357
KSS % seen before release	Not available*	70.88%	99%

KSS % released to no fixed abode	17%	22.6%	25.1%
London released	668	645	830
London % seen before release	86%	60.77%	89.43%
London % released to no fixed abode	6.39%	28.99%	45.54%

* KSS data is not available as basic custody screening tool (BCST) 3 data is not pulling through for all prisoners due to issues with the completion of BCST1 (which is the prison's responsibility, and we are advised is being rectified).

In previous years we have expressed concern about the number of prisoners being released with no fixed abode (NFA). This has improved in the current reporting period, due in large part to the homelessness prevention team (HPT) funding from the Ministry of Justice for accommodation which has been available for two periods in the pandemic (from May to August, and from October to beyond the end of the reporting period). This has considerably reduced the number of NFAs for the 2020 period.

The London CRC referred a total of 22 prisoners to the HPT team, which resulted in 18 men receiving funding for one or more night's accommodation upon their release. Three were rejected by the scheme as their release dates fell outside the eligibility dates and one was rejected as his needs were too complex, making hotel accommodation unsuitable.

The breakdown of housing outcomes on release are only those who had an accommodation need identified in their resettlement plan, and not all discharges. There are instances where someone might be released homeless but has refused assistance or said they have accommodation at point of review, so no referral is made.

Prisoners who did not have a mobile phone were provided with a basic mobile phone (for incoming calls only) upon release, to ensure that CRC and probation staff could remain in touch throughout the period of their licence.

The early release scheme

The early release scheme, had it proceeded as expected, would have reduced the prison population which might have allowed more time out of cell for more men, and better access to additional regime. Despite a large amount of work being done to make release preparations for the men identified as meeting the criteria, only three men were released under this scheme from High Down. This placed an additional administrative burden upon staff at a time when they were already overstretched and created false hope for some prisoners.

8. The work of the IMB

Board statistics	
Recommended complement of Board members	16
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	16
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	12
Total number of visits to the establishment	162 (90 pre-lockdown and 72 since July 2020)
Total number of segregation reviews attended	82 (56 pre-lockdown, 26 since September 2020)

The number of visits has significantly reduced this year due to the pandemic. In 2019 we made 551 visits to the establishment and attended 299 segregation reviews. We have had far less contact with prisoners since March 2020. We would usually expect to be in the prison at least three times per week and have much more direct contact with prisoners.

A substantial amount of our monitoring during the reporting period was carried out remotely, by phone and email. In addition to speaking to staff, we have used the in-cell phones to speak to prisoners and attended prisoner meetings via conference calls. High Down was one of the pilot prisons for the 0800 IMB application line, and a number of our members have volunteered as call handlers.

The number of regular applications sent to the Board has remained much the same as previous years due to the 0800 number being available for prisoners to access via their in-cell phones. We think the 0800 number has provided an invaluable service to many prisoners, particularly those with literacy issues.

The number of confidential applications received by the Board has been substantially lower (52 in 2020 compared to 126 in 2019).

The reduction in the numbers of paper applications (both regular and confidential) may be because prisoners were aware that we were not attending regularly. Prisoners were also spending significantly less time out of their cells and so had limited access to the applications forms.

Applications to the IMB

Code	Category	2020			Total	2019
		Pre-lockdown Paper Apps	Post Lockdown Paper Apps	Post Lockdown 0800 Apps		
A	Accommodation	4	22	40	66	24
B	Adjudication	4	5	16	25	17
C	Equality & Diversity (inc. Religion)	1	7	5	13	15
D	Education, Employment & Training (inc. IEP)	10	18	15	43	51
E1	Family, Visits, Mail & Phone	2	20	26	48	66
E2	Finance & Pay	4	17	22	43	38
F	Food & Kitchen	1	6	9	16	17
G	Health	25	41	97	163	102
H1	Property (High Down)	23	26	23	72	81
H2	Property (Transfers & other establishments)	8	24	23	55	59
H3	Canteen, facilities, catalogue shopping & Argos	12	7	7	26	23
I	Sentence rel. (HDC, ROTL, Parole, Release, Re-cat)	24	27	81	132	91
J	Staff, Prisoner & Detainee concerns (inc. bullying)	21	24	62	107	110
	<i>Category J as % of total Apps</i>	<i>12.8%</i>	<i>8.7%</i>	<i>12.9%</i>	<i>11.6%</i>	<i>12.7%</i>
K	Transfers	6	5	9	20	34
L	Miscellaneous	8	8	33	49	57
L1	Complaints system	6	10	3	19	62
L2	Regime	5	3	1	9	15
Covid	Covid Related	0	5	9	14	0
	General Applications	164	275	481	920	862
	Confidential Applications to Chair				52	126
	<i>Cat J as % of total Confidential Apps</i>				<i>40.4%</i>	<i>34.1%</i>
	Total				972	988



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