



Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP North Sea Camp

**For reporting year
1 March 2020 – 28 February 2021**

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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 monitoring board (IMB) 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 IMB 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 IMB 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

2.1 HMP North Sea Camp is an open category D male resettlement prison with a certified normal accommodation (CNA) of 420 (346 on roll at the end of February 2021). Some of the double occupancy accommodation only has one occupant to accommodate prisoners with medical needs. HMP North Sea Camp opened in 1935 as a Borstal and became an adult male prison in 1988. HMP North Sea Camp is six miles east of Boston and borders the North Sea.

2.2 HMP North Sea Camp often has a number of prisoners who identify as transgender. The report may refer to a single prisoner as "he" for simplicity, but this is in no way meant to cause offence to those prisoners who do not regard themselves as male. It is for ease of reading only.

2.3 HMP North Sea Camp holds a highly complex group of prisoners, a good number of whom are subject to multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA). It carefully manages the risk associated with such prisoners being held in an open prison, with comprehensive risk assessment being a core part of management.

2.4 The accommodation comprises seven residential units (Harrison, Llewelin, North, Selby, South 1, South 2 and Jubilee 1) within the main prison and several self-catering rehabilitation houses offering 60 places most of which are a quarter of a mile outside the main prison (the Jubilee Project – Jubilee 1 – was self-catering but is now not so, as it was needed for the quarantining of transferred in prisoners during the Covid-19 pandemic). Within HMP North Sea Camp there is a kitchen and dining room, a modern healthcare unit, a well-equipped gymnasium, a chapel, a multifaith room, a library, a visitor centre and café, a large working farm with livestock and horticulture (including capacity for 50 polytunnels) and several workshops. The large playing field is used by prisoners for football and outdoor sporting activities and can be accessed by them during association periods in the summer months (up to 8pm). During the reporting year, to increase single cell occupation due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Selby unit was added, comprising single occupancy pods sited between Harrison and the sports field. These additional facilities meant that the dormitories on South 2 could be taken out of service as multi-occupancy and used by two prisoners only. There is a small portable office for officers.

2.5 HMP North Sea Camp has the following contractors/agencies delivering services:

- Healthcare is provided by Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust
- Education and training is provided by People Plus
- Family services are provided by LAT (Lincolnshire Action Trust)
- “We are with you” (formerly Addaction) provides drug/alcohol support and counselling
- Probation service
- Library Service (provided by Greenwich Leisure Ltd on behalf of Lincolnshire County Council)
- AMEY are the facilities management contract provider (delivering maintenance and stores facilities)
- Purple Futures Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) subcontract to Shelter for Through the Gate (TTG) services
- Voluntary organisations providing assistance to prisoners include Community Links, Samaritans, The Royal British Legion, Soldiers, Sailors & Airmen's Families Association (SSAFA), Alcoholics Anonymous, local church groups, Macmillan, Marie Curie, St Barnabas hospice and Early Prevention of Cancer (EPOC), Just Lincolnshire (working with the prison on equalities)

3 Executive summary

3.1 Background to the report

3.1.1 The Covid-19 outbreak and subsequent national lockdowns has had a significant impact on the IMB's ability to gather information to inform the writing of the annual report. Some members of the IMB were over 70 years old and as a result had to shield. The IMB tried to cover as much ground as it could in these difficult circumstances, but inevitably there is less detail and supporting evidence than usual. Ministers are aware of these constraints. Regular information is being collected specifically on the prison's response to the pandemic, and that is being collated by the IMB nationally. From late March 2020 onwards, the prison was in lockdown with gradual movement towards a careful loosening of restrictions stalled by the second national wave of infections. In writing this report the IMB notes that the prison was subject to directions from both Gold and Silver Command and was required to follow Public Health England (PHE) guidance. This meant that some of the issues raised by prisoners and as a result the IMB were not issues that the prison could address without permission from other parts of the Prison Service or PHE England.

3.1.2 Limited face-to-face monitoring by the IMB took place throughout the year save for three weeks in late March/early April 2020 and between late November 2020 and early January 2021. The latter break was caused by the first outbreak of Covid-19 in the prison. Regular face-to-face monitoring took place from the beginning of July to the middle of November. Throughout the year the IMB has monitored via the telephone, with IMB members phoning healthcare twice a week and listening in to one virtual morning briefing in addition to any live visits. This process has been supplemented by the IMB Chair visiting periodically to deal with prisoner applications. The IMB boxes were emptied by the IMB clerk and any applications emailed to the IMB member on rota or dealt with by the IMB Chair when on a visit.

3.1.3 Most incoming prisoners were isolated in the Jubilee 1 houses (reverse cohorting units) near the prison gates prior to moving into the main prison units. (Those who had isolated at the prison they came from went straight to the main units at HMP North Sea Camp.) Any prisoners showing symptoms of Covid-19 and those who tested positive or became ill remained in the reverse cohorting units until they had a negative test result at which point, they were moved. Prisoners were confined to their accommodation units, with exercise on the sports field at designated times (see paragraph 4.1.4).

3.1.4 Due to the pandemic, regime changes have meant that education, release on temporary licence (ROTL) and workshops, with the exception of lobster pots and recycling, did not fully function. Group religious activities did not take place. Family visits to prisoners were stopped at times, but prisoners were able to use video calling (Purple Visits) to maintain contact with their families.

3.1.5 The IMB at HMP North Sea Camp is satisfied that HMP North Sea Camp

- normally provides prisoners with humane and just treatment. However, the confinement of prisoners to their rooms (some were two to a small room often without a table or a chair) and their unit for most of the day during parts of the reporting year led to prisoner frustration.

One of the issues faced by the prison was that the R rate in Boston and the surrounding area was in the top five in the country for much of the reporting period. As a result, prisoner movement both within and outside the prison was limited. This was deemed necessary by the prison management to try to avoid a catastrophic outbreak of the Covid-19 virus in the early stages of lockdown.

- normally provides a wide ranging and adequate level of programmes preparing prisoners for release. This has been severely impacted by the lockdowns due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- ensured core tasks were completed by the offender management unit (OMU) and other departments albeit often more slowly than normal. However, direct contact with prisoners especially by OMU was too limited. With the open space available at HMP North Sea Camp urgent face-to-face contact could have been maintained. All this has adversely impacted their progress towards release.

3.1.6 Budgets continue to be tight and HMP North Sea Camp has had to juggle priorities during the reporting year. As reported in last year's report, work has continued on the refurbishment of some disused staff housing, to add these premises to the Jubilee self-catering housing project. This work is now due for completion in early 2022 (some delay has been caused by a colony of bats). Due to the extra provision of single accommodation created by the Selby unit it has been possible to decommission the dormitories as multi-occupancy rooms. Two only share a dormitory at present. In the past four or six prisoners could be sharing a dormitory. However, this will change if the prison returns to certified normal accommodation. The healthcare extension (to enable the mental health team to work within the main healthcare building) and the staff changing facility are nearing completion.

3.1.7 The rehabilitative culture at HMP North Sea Camp continues to work well with a polite and calm atmosphere being created. There are very few violent incidents.

3.1.8 The staff at HMP North Sea Camp continue to create an environment which welcomes and integrates all, no matter what their offence or protected characteristic.

3.1.9 The recycling activity undertaken by prisoners and staff both in the prison and in the community is helping to reduce the amount of rubbish that has to be consigned to landfill. The employment opportunities generated in this area enable prisoners to obtain qualifications which will help them find employment when they leave the prison.

3.1.10 The IMB remains of the view that the healthcare provision at HMP North Sea Camp, at the end of the reporting year, is good, however, as in the community, healthcare did not function normally during the pandemic. The following services suffered disruption: dental care, optician and physiotherapy. There was provision to deal with emergencies.

3.1.11 There are however areas of concern at HMP North Sea Camp which the IMB feel should be addressed. The concerns relating to humane and just treatment are:

3.1.11.1 HMP North Sea Camp has, at the time of reporting, an aging population. Inevitably, many of them suffer from a range of medical conditions – some of them very serious. Currently, there is no facility within HMP North Sea Camp where prisoners can be suitably cared for during an end-of-life period; there are no on-site residential healthcare facilities. This means that prisoners who have chronic and other serious health issues stay on the units within the prison, surrounded by the other prisoners and the usual activities of everyday prison life. This has a very upsetting effect on those prisoners living alongside.

3.1.11.2 With the exception of the Selby units, all accommodation has been in service for several decades and in many cases requires more than the periodic repairs which the prison undertakes.

3.1.11.3 The size of the double rooms in all the main accommodation units is not adequate in that it is often impossible to put a chair or table, let alone two of each, into a room. The cramped accommodation means that the accommodation listed does not comply with the Prison Service Instruction (PSI) when used by two prisoners.

3.1.11.4 Prisoners who use wheelchairs can experience difficulties travelling to and getting overnight accommodation at approved premises (APs) when going on resettlement overnight release (ROR), which can delay their ROTL programme and have a significant delaying effect on their sentence plan and parole board hearings.

3.1.11.5 Prisoners said they had issues with the offender management unit (OMU) Although attitudes among staff in the OMU have improved since last year's report, prisoners said that they felt the OMU were slow to respond to requests and there was no face-to-face contact even in the outside during the lockdowns. In the IMB prisoner survey, 50% (of the 99 who responded) felt that they had been inadequately prepared for release. For further specific information see Appendix 1.2.

Additional comments: A new Governor and Deputy Governor took up their posts in early April 2021 and there have already been many changes, with the opening up of services such as the prisoner advice centre (PAC) and prisoners now being allowed more freedom across the prison site. More prisoners are at work. The 2020-2021 IMB report on HMP North Sea Camp covers an exceptionally difficult year when England was in the grip of the Covid-19 pandemic and it is expected that next year's IMB report will be very different.

3.2 Main judgements

3.2.1 How safe is the prison?

The IMB is satisfied that HMP North Sea Camp provides a safe environment for all prisoners (see paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3).

3.2.2 How fairly and humanely are prisoners treated?

Due to the limited opportunities to interact with the prisoners the Board sent a questionnaire to all the prisoners. 340 were sent out and 99 were returned (29%). The results showed that in many areas the needs of the prisoners were addressed well during the pandemic. However, the survey did flag up the fact that the OMU were slow to respond and that the lack of face-to-face interaction during parts of the year had a detrimental effect on progress (see table at App 1.1 and App 1.2).

The restrictions on leaving cells due to the Covid-19 lockdown meant that for a large proportion of the reporting year prisoners were confined to their cells for most of the day. Many prisoners felt this was unfair and inhumane as cells are small, some had to be shared by two prisoners and HMP North Sea Camp is an open prison with a large amount of land accessible to prisoners. The IMB survey had many prisoner comments on this (see App 1.3).

As more information became available to the IMB from other open prisons, it became apparent that some open prisons had done things differently during the lockdowns. The open space at HMP North Sea Camp could probably have been better utilised to give prisoners more time out of their rooms, but the fear of a serious outbreak of Covid-19 with many deaths would have been the most important item staff considered and would have stopped staff doing anything but follow advice received from the Prison Service (see 3.1.1). Throughout the pandemic the Boston Borough Council Area had high levels of Covid-19 deaths in comparison with other parts of Lincolnshire.

There were a number of staff who were on long-term temporary promotion for the whole of the reporting year. Temporary promotion may have made staff hesitant to question if something mandated by the Prison Service could have been adapted to make better use of the open spaces at HMP North Sea Camp.

Even when prisoners were unable to work due to the Covid-19 restrictions they were still paid their full wages which was extremely welcome to the prisoners.

3.2.3 How well are prisoners' health and wellbeing needs met?

During the reporting year, there has been a reduction in healthcare services offered, however this has generally been in line with what was available to those living in the community. As and when possible, facilities were reopened, as the establishment progressed through the various phases of lockdown. With the last national lockdown some services at HMP North Sea Camp suffered again (see paragraphs 6.2.1 and 6.2.2).

The mental and physical healthcare teams are to be praised for the way they continued to look after the health of the prisoners during the pandemic.

3.2.4 How well are prisoners progressed towards successful resettlement?

The IMB is concerned that the OMU were slow to respond to prisoner queries and face-to-face contact was not adequately maintained, thus severely impacting progress towards release (see table at App1.1 and App1.2).

Education stopped for part of the year and prisoners then did guided self-learning. Many prisoners will struggle to get the qualifications they need before they are released into the community.

Voluntary and paid outside work opportunities were severely curtailed due to the lockdown, which will disadvantage those due for release who rely on such opportunities to gain valuable experience of the workplace and also means they cannot demonstrate to prospective employers that they can be trusted in a community working environment.

3.3 Main areas for development TO THE MINISTER

The IMB is concerned by the time taken to complete routine maintenance jobs, and the issues around the transfer of prisoners' property. These are issues that are provided by contracted out services and the Board is concerned that contract failures do not result in penalties to encourage compliance.

Specific examples include the maintenance contractor claiming machines that need expensive repairs which they are contracted to pay for need replacing (where the cost will be met by the prison).

With property the contractor seems to use the smallest vehicles they can which means that prisoners with a large amount of property face a long wait for their property to come and often it does not arrive at all.

The quality of some of the accommodation is poor and the space allocated to prisoners sharing rooms is close to being inhumane. The other benefits of being in an open prison would mitigate this in a normal year but this year over half of the prisoners have had to eat, sleep and live in a shared room where there is no room for a chair and a table for even one person. Although pods were sent to the prison some prisoners still had to share rooms.

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

Opportunities should be taken to return to a regime where prisoners can have more time away from their accommodation and resume their resettlement plans.

Offender managers in the probation service often take a long time to update their part of an offender assessment system (OASys) and to complete the paperwork to enable prisoners to sit ROTL boards. This can mean prisoners having to postpone Parole Board hearings as they have not done the required ROTLs and means prisoners may spend more time in prison than strictly necessary. Timescales for return of paperwork would be helpful.

There are some areas of the prison inaccessible to prisoners with physical disabilities, especially those who use wheelchairs (see paragraphs 5.4.2 and 6.2.8). Although improvements have been made, budget needs to be allocated so that all areas are accessible to those who use wheelchairs, especially bariatric wheelchairs. This issue is also of concern to the Governor, but more budget from central resources needs to be allocated for improvements.

In order to ensure that no prisoner is asked to share with more than one other person, budget needs to be allocated to convert the current dormitories to smaller

rooms so that, when HMP North Sea Camp is at full capacity, no prisoners will have to share with more than one other person.

TO THE GOVERNOR

Prisoners say that the OMU do not respond in a timely manner or keep appointments and that at times OMU staff could be more courteous (paragraph 7.3.2). This needs addressing and maybe the rollout of offender management in custody (OMiC) will help with this.

There are some areas of the prison inaccessible to prisoners with physical disabilities, especially those who use wheelchairs (paragraphs 5.4.2 and 6.2.8).

To ensure that work continues on the further extension of Jubilee self-catering housing.

3.4 Progress since the last report

Attributable to the Covid-19 pandemic, the dormitories on South 1 and 2 are no longer in use as multi-occupancy dormitories, with a maximum of 2 prisoners in any dormitory (paragraph 2.4). The phasing out of the multi-occupancy of dormitories is something the IMB has advocated for many years. However, once the prison returns to normal operating conditions, it will be necessary to allocate four prisoners to every dormitory. The current Governor has submitted a bid for the funding required to convert the dormitories to smaller two-person rooms. This is an issue the IMB has raised in previous reports expressing concerns about the need to use dormitories.

At the very beginning of the reporting year before lockdown, all healthcare clinics and services including dental treatment were functioning well.

Evidence sections 4 – 7

4 Safety

4.1 Safety in general

4.1.1 The IMB is satisfied that HMP North Sea Camp provides a safe and decent environment for all prisoners.

4.1.2 HMP North Sea Camp has a very proactive and busy safer community team consisting of both staff and prisoners, led by a governor. In normal times they would stage regular events to enhance prisoner and staff safety and promote the wellbeing of prisoners. This reporting year this has not been possible because of lockdown.

4.1.3 On arrival, prisoners receive a talk on their first night by the unit officer regarding emergency procedures to ensure they understand how to react in an emergency. More in-depth general health and safety information (devised by the health and safety department) is given by the induction orderlies during the prisoners' induction course.

4.1.4 Around a third of the prisoners have continued to work in essential jobs during lockdown. The work areas are responsible for giving prisoners all the necessary information about health and safety (endorsed by the health and safety department) and what precautions to take with regards Covid-19.

4.2 Reception and induction

4.2.1 HMP North Sea Camp aims to provide a safe and decent environment for all prisoners. At reception, all new prisoners are assessed by healthcare before they go to accommodation allocated for newly arrived prisoners. On the first night in the prison, prisoners are seen by a safer custody representative who will be available to address any fears or concerns they may have. New arrivals spend at least the first week on the reception wings, before being moved, and whilst there they undertake a comprehensive induction course covering all aspects of the prison regime, what is expected of them and the systems in operation. This year reverse cohorting has taken place due to Covid-19 with new arrivals held in quarantine in Jubilee 1 before being allocated to a permanent room on an accommodation unit (see paragraph 4.2.4).

4.2.2 The induction process and paperwork has been streamlined. In January 2021, new documents with branding to identify them as being part of the induction process were launched. Compacts and booklets were brought together into one document that required one signature. The induction information booklets (a complete collection of all documentation and departmental information) were laminated and one put in each induction room for repeated use. The reception booklet is kept in the reception waiting area to give arrivals a brief overview of the induction process and life at HMP North Sea Camp. Twenty-eight pages were reduced to 15 pages thus lessening the environmental impact.

4.2.3 Prisoners arrived in small numbers and so it was possible to make sure the reception process was not rushed. Prisoners were given individual attention. Because of the Covid-19 restrictions, new arrivals were interviewed on a one-to-one basis. This helped the new arrivals to openly express any fears they may have to reception staff.

4.2.4 During the first few months of Covid-19 restrictions last year, all new receptions into the prison had to stay in Jubilee 1 and isolate for 14 days (known as reverse cohorting) unless they had already isolated in the prison they came from, in which case they could go straight to a main accommodation unit. The core records of newly arrived prisoners were checked in reception and the prisoners were then taken off the transport vehicle one at a time and identified. The prisoners then took the property they had brought with them into Jubilee 1, where they were seen by healthcare and induction.

After the 14-day isolation the prisoner's property was processed through reception and they were allocated a room in one of the main units. As national restrictions changed, the isolation time decreased to 10 days and it is now the case that a prisoner in Jubilee 1 must provide two negative tests before leaving Jubilee.

As prisons adjusted to the regimes Covid-19 imposed, some new receptions had already been cohorted at their prisons prior to arriving at HMP North Sea Camp meaning they could go on normal location at HMP North Sea Camp.

Jubilee 1 was always deep cleaned in between prisoners leaving and new ones arriving. At times, due to the number of receptions, the isolation time for some was longer than 14 days as the 14-day time had to restart from when the newest arrival entered Jubilee 1.

4.2.5 A bookcase with a selection of books was put onto the induction landing for the sole use of the newly arrived prisoners.

4.3 Suicide and self-harm and deaths in custody

There were four deaths in custody during the reporting year, all due to natural causes. The IMB was informed as required. Correct paperwork was completed in all cases. The investigations into the deaths by the Prison and Probation Ombudsman were sent to the IMB. In one case there were some recommendations that the prison is still investigating and changes may be made as a result.

Self-harm incidents rose from four last year to eight this reporting year. All incidents were of low severity. The impact of the Covid-19 lockdown and isolation restrictions may have contributed to the increase.

As part of rota visits, IMB members normally inspect any open assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) documents.

There were 25 ACCTs opened in the reporting year, a slight increase from the previous year in which 22 were opened.

5.7.2 Assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) documents were opened on 25 (22 in 2019-20) occasions during the year.

When able to visit the prison IMB members inspect the ACCT documents, and found them to be correctly completed with staff engaging with prisoners on an ACCT.

The Listeners continue their valuable work and have responded to 47 requests for support during the reporting year.

4.4 Violence and violence reduction, self-isolation

The safety of staff and prisoners is helped by use of the challenge, support and intervention plan (CSIP) approach whereby prisoners who display challenging, aggressive, bullying and other unacceptable behaviours are managed and supported on a plan with individualised targets and regular reviews. Only if there is no improvement in their behaviour are prisoners returned to closed conditions. There were no violent incidents reported during the reporting year.

4.5 Use of force

4.6.1 During the reporting year there were only two use of force incidents which were due to prisoners refusing direct orders and resisting being returned to closed conditions. The use of force was judged appropriate. No staff or prisoners were injured during the two use of force incidents. All the necessary paperwork was completed

4.6.2 No batons were drawn during the reporting period.

4.6.3 Ratchet cuffs can be used as a de-escalation technique when escorting prisoners to reception for return to closed conditions. Ratchet handcuffs are collected by staff prior to the event. There was one incident of ratchet cuff use during the reporting period.

4.6.4 Of the staff at the prison 67 require to be trained in control and restraint. All had in date training.

5 Fair and humane treatment

5.1 Accommodation, clothing, food

5.1.1 Prisoners residing within the main prison are accommodated in two two-story units (Harrison and Llewelin) and three one-story units (North, South 1 and South 2) as well as two multi-occupancy houses (Jubilee 1) used during the pandemic as a reverse cohort unit (RCU) where newly arrived prisoners are held in quarantine for 14 days. The establishment also has a series of self-catering houses, situated a short walk from the prison's main gate (Jubilee 2, 3, 4, 5, 6). The opening of Jubilee 6, which was the last unit to be opened, generated ten bed spaces which, together with the 66 single occupancy pods the prison received in May 2020, allowed the prison to stop using dormitories. The pods were used to house prisoners on the list for single accommodation but some prisoners felt they should have been used to house those shielding during the lockdown as the pods have ensuite facilities which would mean anyone shielding would not have to use communal facilities (see App 1.3).

5.1.2 Accommodation units have a microwave enabling prisoners to warm up soups and other food snacks. The microwaves have been extensively used during lockdowns as prisoners no longer attended the dining hall three times a day. Faults have been common. Amey is responsible for replacing faulty microwaves and have not done so swiftly. Board games are available from the wing offices. As prisoners have had to spend a long time in their rooms this year distraction packs were also available.

5.1.3 The kitchen laundry (workwear, tea towels etc.) and prison-issued clothing and bedding all go through stores and are externally laundered at HMP Whatton. The prisoners' personal clothing (non-prison issue) and special washes for medical purposes are done in the onsite laundry.

5.1.4 There are adequate supplies of appropriate clothing, bedding and towels for every prisoner. Staff and stores orderlies work together to ensure there is a good stock of clean items. However, staff have had to work alone most of the year due to the restrictions on what work prisoners were allowed to do.

5.1.5 Due to Covid-19 restrictions prisoners' ability to purchase clothing from the charity HIS market, which rebrands new clothes given to the charity by firms, HM Revenue & Customs and Trading Standards, is limited. Prisoners have had to order items from a catalogue organised by the equal opportunities business administrator.

5.1.6 During the Covid-19 pandemic prisoners continued to attend the dining hall for a hot meal at midday unless they were unwell, in which case meals were taken to their rooms by support workers. The prisoners are given their evening meal and breakfast packs when they attend for their midday meal.

5.1.7 The seating arrangements in the dining hall varied during the pandemic according to lockdown regulations.

5.1.8 Despite the challenges the year has brought, the catering facilities at HMP North Sea Camp are of a high standard. The catering audit remains at green. The kitchen holds a 5-star food hygiene rating from the Food Standards Agency. The food is sampled daily by the Governor or a member of the senior management team. Special food is prepared for religious festivals and events as agreed with the managing chaplain, Covid-19 regulations permitting.

5.1.9 Of the 99 prisoners who responded to the IMB questionnaire, 72% were happy with the quality of the food provided and 78% were happy with the way it was served. There were however some adverse comments about the packs the prisoners received for breakfast and tea (see App 1.6). Prisoners welcomed being able to attend the dining hall at midday as it meant more time out of their rooms during lockdown. When the IMB was able to visit, Board members were able to talk to the prisoners at a safe distance as they were leaving the dining hall.

5.1.10 The tuck shop to enable new arrivals to purchase goods to tide them over until their canteen sheet has now been relocated downstairs in reception and opened to the whole prison to enable purchase of goods once each week to top up canteen orders. Prisoners had some issues about what is available through the tuck shop but the principle of the scheme is valued by the prisoners.

5.2 Segregation

HMP North Sea Camp is a Category D Open Prison. There is no segregation unit.

The IMB periodically attend adjudications and have found them to be conducted fairly and in accordance with procedure.

5.3 Staff-prisoner relationships

5.3.1 Relationships between staff and prisoners are generally positive and supportive. On arrival, prisoners are allocated a personal officer, an offender supervisor (OS) and a case administrator and in addition can speak to the unit officers who are approachable and can advise and assist prisoners. However, prisoners were very unhappy with the way OMU staff interacted with them and commented on the fact that staff were not consistent in the way they applied rules and administered punishment (see App 1.2, App 1.3).

5.3.2 Prisoners are given advice on where to find information about their legal rights as part of the induction process. This information can also be obtained from staff members, such as their personal officers, wing officers, other supervisors etc. Under normal operating conditions, information is accessible in the library, in the prisoner advice centre (PAC) or via the application system. During the lockdowns, prisoners wishing to read a prison service instruction (PSI) could request to do so and the librarian would bring a copy to their room.

5.3.3 In non-pandemic times the many peers and mentors help fellow prisoners to cope with and make the best of prison life.

5.4 Equality and diversity

5.4.1 The IMB is satisfied that prisoners are treated equally, and that any disadvantages resulting from protected characteristics are addressed appropriately.

5.4.2 The IMB is satisfied that most of the prisoners of HMP North Sea Camp are able to access regimes and facilities equally although those who use bariatric wheelchairs and large mobility scooters to mobilise have trouble accessing all locations in the prison. There are continuing efforts to meet prisoners' special needs including the internal bus service around the camp and the purchase of and installation of additional mobility aids such as grab rails. Some mobility scooters have also been purchased.

5.4.3 Prisoners normally have access to information they require on equality and diversity issues via displays on notice boards and the relevant PSIs are available in the library. During the lockdowns prisoners wishing to read a prison service instruction (PSI) could request to do so and the librarian would bring a copy to their room.

In normal circumstances prisoners who struggle to read or write can get help from the prisoner advice centre (PAC). The PAC has not been open much of the reporting year, but the chaplaincy, unit officers and personal officers (POs) have helped as needed.

5.4.4 Prisoners are advised how to complain about prison matters; the complaint forms and procedures are fully explained during the induction process – these include Comp 1, Comp 1A and Comp 2, governor complaint forms and discrimination incident reporting forms (DIRFs). DIRFs continued to be submitted and dealt with during the reporting year.

5.4.5 In a normal operational year HMP North Sea Camp has a prisoner-run equalities hub. Three full-time equality orderlies and two full-time safer custody orderlies are based there. The equal opportunities officer holds regular equality action team meetings. Orderlies from across the prison attend these meetings. During the pandemic the equal opportunities officer has provided a continuing service to prisoners who require it. In addition, the equal opportunities officer has organised the distribution of distraction packs (containing crosswords, sudoku, quizzes etc). In normal times there would be events for Black Lives Matter, Holocaust Memorial Day and other relevant events.

5.4.6 In the year to 28 February 2021, the equalities officer dealt directly with all prisoners' enquiries as the prisoner-run equalities hub was not operational.

5.4.7 The prison has a diverse ethnic breakdown. At 28 February 2021 the breakdown was as follows:

Ethnic Codes		
A1,2,3,9	Asian/Asian British	20
B1,2,9	Black/Black British	30
M1,2,9	Mixed	14
O9	Other	1
W1,2,3,9	White	275

5.4.8 No protected characteristics forums took place due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

5.5 Faith and pastoral support

5.5.1 The chaplaincy department at HMP North Sea Camp provides pastoral support to all prisoners and staff, irrespective of their faith. In a normal year the chaplaincy would facilitate corporate worship and religious study for many faiths, and provide several secular activities, such as a weekly quiz night, an art group, a band and a choir.

The chaplaincy consists of one full-time managing chaplain, one deputy chaplain and, if the Covid-19 restrictions were not in place, eight regular sessional chaplains and two official prison visitors. This reporting year only one sessional chaplain has visited on a regular basis.

Some members of the chaplaincy team were elderly and encouraged to self-isolate by the government during periods of the reporting year. Other members of the chaplaincy team who are responsible for visiting several different prisons saw their workload increase exponentially during the reporting year, making the normal visiting schedule impossible to adhere to.

The managing chaplain and his staff continued to work with prisoners by way of pastoral visits and support. The chaplaincy team also provided support when relatives and friends died as ROTL was not possible for funerals. Some live streams of funerals were facilitated.

There are some negative comments on the prisoner questionnaire (Reply 42 – not seen his faith chaplain for a year, Reply 59 - No support from Chaplaincy for minority faiths – just Christians being supported) about chaplaincy support, but the IMB feel that the managing chaplain did the best he could in the very difficult circumstances.

5.5.2. There are currently 18 distinct faiths or denominations represented in the establishment population. Two percent of prisoners class themselves as atheists or agnostics and 27% have indicated they follow no religion. The largest group of prisoners who profess a religion, 25%, class themselves as Church of England.

5.6 Incentives schemes

5.6.1 A rewritten incentives and earned privileges (IEP) scheme, fully adhering to the national PSI, was introduced during the reporting year. It is much easier for prisoners to understand.

5.6.2 The IEP scheme involves warnings being issued for negative behaviours. Too many IEP warnings trigger an IEP review which might result in loss of privileges and downgrading to a lower IEP level. Ninety-eight percent of the prisoners were on the enhanced IEP level at the end of the reporting year.

5.6.3 On arrival at HMP North Sea Camp, prisoners are placed on enhanced IEP status. Most prisoners at HMP North Sea Camp remain on enhanced status. Those who have had their IEP level reduced are helped to work towards a return to enhanced status. An average of six prisoners were on standard status at any one time during the reporting year.

5.6.4 A breach of prison rules or breaching the terms of an ROTL licence can lead to three different sanctions: an adjudication with, if found guilty, a loss of privileges (e.g., less to spend on canteen), an IEP scheme review with a possible downgrading, or a review of what ROTL a prisoner is allowed, which may result in not being allowed out on ROTL for a period (a lie down). Some prisoners struggle to understand why they can have three punishments for one breach but this mirrors life outside prison when, for example, a drink driving offence can have many different consequences. The sanction of return to closed is used where serious breaches of prison rules, violence or absconds have occurred. In the prisoners survey there were allegations from respondents that threats to ship have been made by staff in inappropriate circumstances. These has been flagged up by the Board with the Governor.

5.6.5 The Board was largely monitoring remotely during the reporting year and so was not able to attend many adjudications. Those attended were carried out according to procedure. Adjudications from March to August 2020 averaged 11 a month and between September 2020 and February 2021 averaged 21 a month. The highest number of adjudications took place in November (40) and the lowest in May (6). The latter part of the year saw prisoners transferred in from prisons which do not normally send prisoners to HMP North Sea Camp. Some of these prisoners were prisoners with fixed short-term sentences who are often not as compliant with prison rules as those who are serving long sentences and have worked hard to get to a category D prison and have a lot to lose if they break rules etc. Breaches of the strict

Covid-19 regulations when cases of Covid-19 among prisoners rose also had an effect on the number of adjudications.

5.7 Complaints

During the 12 months to February 2021, the prison handled an average of 44 (36 in 2019-20) requests/complaints per month from prisoners.

5.8 Property

5.8.1 Reception staff undertake thorough property checks when prisoners arrive. Unclear property cards from other establishments are re-written with the old ones retained for cross reference purposes. New prisoners often arrive with large amounts of belongings. Having spent many years in prison, they can have accumulated a lot of property that has been in store at the prison they came from as well as property they have had in their rooms (in possession property). However, some transferring are told that they can only bring three bags plus legal papers plus one oversized item with them on the transport. On arrival at HMP North Sea Camp, those prisoners with a lot of property are given time to select their most needed items before the remainder are stored on their behalf either in the prison or at Branston, the central prison storage facility.

5.8.2 The IMB received very few applications this year. Applications concerning property not arriving from other establishments were 25% (24% in 2019-20) of total applications received. In the IMB prisoner questionnaire Reply 24 said "Problems with transfer of property".

6 Health and wellbeing

6.1 Healthcare general

6.1.1 Healthcare at HMP North Sea Camp is provided by Nottinghamshire NHS Foundation Trust. Provision is made for healthcare forums, but this has not operated over the last year because of Covid-19 restrictions, though the systems are in place to be activated when the prison returns to normal operation.

6.1.2 There were 23 health complaints over the reporting period, all of which were dealt with by the medical staff to the complainants' satisfaction.

There is no in-patient healthcare provision at HMP North Sea Camp. Prisoners who require 24-hour nursing care or operations would be admitted to whichever NHS hospital is best suited to deal with their medical problems.

6.2 Physical healthcare

6.2.1 Most medical issues are resolved at HMP North Sea Camp with all prescribed medicines issued on site. Those who need more complex treatment are treated at local hospitals and dental surgeries. During lockdown urgent medical appointments continued to be made for prisoners at the local hospitals.

Up until November 2020 a mobile dentist van visited twice a week, but this facility was suspended because of Covid-19 restrictions.

6.2.2 Initially the Covid-19 pandemic had a severe effect on facilities at HMP North Sea Camp. At the start of the Covid-19 restrictions HMP North Sea Camp adopted a strict regime to minimise any infections. There were only urgent hospital appointments, urgent emergency dental treatment, no optical appointments and no smoking cessation therapy. As time progressed these facilities were gradually re-introduced as services in the community opened up.

6.2.3 Mass testing for Covid-19 could have been done at HMP North Sea Camp whenever required. The testing of prisoners for Covid-19 is done under the guidance of healthcare following Public Health England instructions. Covid-19 testing for staff and prisoners who had come into contact with those who tested positive for Covid-19 or who presented with symptoms was undertaken. Following the Covid-19 outbreak in November 2020, there was regular testing until the outbreak was contained. Any prisoners testing positive were allocated Covid-19 isolation accommodation in Jubilee 1. In the latter part of the year, staff were being tested two to three times a week using the lateral flow test method. Prisoners at high risk were allocated isolation accommodation in South 2.

6.2.4 Covid-19 vaccinations commenced on 18 February 2021, according to Government guidelines and were given within the establishment.

6.2.5 Those visiting external medical establishments were tested for Covid-19 at HMP North Sea Camp before their appointments at A&E or outpatients at Pilgrim Hospital Boston. Waiting times for prisoners needing to see hospital consultants were between 3 and 6 weeks – considerably less than for those in the community.

6.2.6 There were few appointment non-attenders (did not attend or DNAs) and of these, most were due to communication errors within the prison system. Sometimes the appointment is sent by the health centre and allegedly not received by the prisoner. In some work places the Tannoy system used to remind prisoners about their appointments cannot be heard which exacerbates the problem of non-attendance.

6.2.7 Emergency dental extraction is done at the Johnson Hospital in Spalding. However, if other urgent treatment is required there is an established system for accessing local dentists.

6.2.8 The site is not easy to negotiate for those with disabilities and it is often necessary for another prisoner to be willing and then trained to assist. Over the period of this report the number of prisoners requiring a personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP), whereby another prisoner is detailed to assist them to reach safety if any emergency arises, has averaged 24.

6.2.9 During the Covid-19 lockdown prisoners were given exercise sheets to use once a physiotherapist had determined what exercises were needed. GPs ran surgeries on three days a week but there were fewer appointments. The nurse practitioner was able to deal with some issues that in the past would have needed to be dealt with by a doctor so the lack of GP appointments has not adversely affected prisoners.

6.2.10 Despite the Covid-19 pandemic affecting the whole of the reporting year the IMB remains convinced that in these exceptional circumstances, healthcare remains good at HMP North Sea Camp. The staff count is: seven trained nurses, two healthcare support workers, two pharmacy technicians, and four mental health nurses.

6.2.11 Previously, there were concerns about the increasing age of the prison population, however, this year has seen a small reduction in the percentage of prisoners over 50 years of age.

In February 2020 it was 49% (source - equalities department, HMP North Sea Camp).

In February 2021 it was 45% (source health centre, HMP North Sea Camp).

6.2.12 The number of prisoners at HMP North Sea Camp who suffer from serious health conditions has remained roughly the same despite the population at HMP North Sea Camp reducing this year due to Covid-19 restrictions on sharing and the number of over 50-year-old prisoners also being slightly less. The IMB will monitor these figures to ensure healthcare continues to be appropriately resourced to assist these prisoners.

	Cancer	COPD	Diabetes	Stroke	Reg. Disabled
End 02/2021	5	21	39	10	3
End 02/2020	5	23	34	11	8

Source – NHS healthcare manager – HMP North Sea Camp

6.2.13 Covid-19 situation at HMP North Sea Camp during the reporting year

Prisoners tested positive for Covid-19	175
Hospitalised	5
Covid-19 related deaths	0

6.2.14 The number of prisoners with moderate disabilities is as shown below.

	2020	2021
Hearing Impairment (not profoundly deaf)	57	48
Reduced Mobility	56	44
Learning Difficulties	52	47
Mental Illness	39	10
Visual Impairment (not severely sight impaired)	26	28

Source – NHS healthcare manager, HMP North Sea Camp

6.2.15 There is no dedicated palliative care unit at HMP North Sea Camp. However, if prisoners have a terminal diagnosis, they are cared for by the prison healthcare team. Where such a prisoner is sharing a double room, he will be transferred to a single room. If a prisoner were to require 24-hour healthcare and/or complex pain relief he would be found a bed in a local hospital or hospice.

6.3 Mental health

6.3.1 The mental health team has increased to four full-time nurses from two last year. A new mental health clinic is planned, as an extension to the medical centre and is expected to become operational in June 2021. Identification of prisoner mental health issues is mainly done by self-referral but prison officers occasionally contact the mental health team if they that feel intervention may be necessary.

6.3.2 Changes were made to the operation of mental health appointments during the pandemic, with members of the mental health team walking beside prisoners on exercise. Some appointments took place in the waiting room of the mental health block. As a result of the mental health team's flexible approach to working hours, cover was maintained.

6.3.3 There has been a small rise in the number of prisoners suffering from anxiety and depression due to lockdown.

6.3.4 Last year the IMB were concerned about an ageing population at HMP North Sea Camp and a possible rise in dementia cases. However, at the end of the reporting year there were no new prisoners diagnosed with dementia at HMP North Sea Camp.

6.4 Social care

6.4.1 Social care is overseen by Lincolnshire County Council & Boston Borough Council who visit to conduct mobility assessments and then provide any necessary special equipment. They also liaise with Probation regarding those being released from prison. This year the service has been at a minimum, due to the pandemic.

6.4.2 Because of the age of some prisoners at HMP North Sea Camp the establishment works closely with Lincolnshire County Council and Boston Borough Council and their staff attend and complete assessments on individuals who may require additional items in rooms to support them, such as pull up rails, a hospital bed, perhaps additional walking sticks etc. These staff members have been pivotal in finding a prisoner with advanced dementia sheltered accommodation. This allowed the prisoner to be released safely into the community. During the Covid-19 restrictions staff have been out talking with prisoners and explaining that distraction packs (containing crosswords, sudoku etc) can be delivered if requested.

6.5 Exercise

During the Covid-19 pandemic there was, at times, limited opportunity for prisoners to exercise. There was a timed programme to allow prisoners to exercise on the sports field. The gymnasium has remained closed during Covid-19 restrictions.

Prisoners were not happy about the exercise regime during the pandemic and wanted more time out of their cells. HMP North Sea Camp has a lot of space for outside exercise. In the IMB prisoner questionnaire two prisoners commented as follows:

R34 Lack of external exercise – Smokers get more

R36 NSC has not followed PHE guidance re access to fresh air – again smokers get better access

6.6 Drug and alcohol rehabilitation

No mandatory drug testing (MDT) took place at HMP North Sea Camp during the Covid-19 lockdowns. The lack of ROTL gave less opportunity for prisoners to obtain drugs and alcohol. During normal operating conditions, testing would reveal some drug and alcohol use at HMP North Sea Camp. Some prisoners testing positive are returned to closed conditions but others may be allowed to stay in open conditions and work with “We are with you” to stop abusing alcohol or drugs.

“We are with you” (formerly Addaction) provides a service for substance misusers (drugs or alcohol) or any prisoner who has substance related concerns. The professional team provide clinical treatment, group work, and one to one psycho-social support. The department’s objectives are to provide clinical support and reduce the risks of substance related harm whilst in custody and upon release, and support in avoiding problematic drug use and to increase awareness of substance-related issues. On release prisoners are referred into the community so they can continue with their engagement. Services have been reduced during the Covid-19 pandemic.

6.7 Soft skills

6.7.1 Prisoners were kept informed about what was happening and what facilities were available in the prison via newsletters, notices and prison officers. The equalities and safer custody teams organised in-room quizzes and puzzles for the prisoners. Many of the support groups such as those supporting veterans were unable to run due to the lockdowns.

6.7.2 The citizenship scheme recommenced during the reporting year but was done remotely. The usual format was a presentation to each prisoner who had achieved the 3, 6, 12 and 18 months good behaviour targets. Each prisoner receives a certificate. Those achieving the 6 months target receive a £2 pin credit, 12 months receive a £5 pin credit and 18 months receive a £7.50 credit on their spending money. Those nominated for a meal in the staff mess now receive a goody bag. This scheme was reintroduced to bolster morale.

6.7.3 The education department has been asked to organise a competition, asking for paintings that would represent each department. The idea for the competition was proposed after it became apparent that prisoners with dementia often could no

longer read and struggled to find their way round the establishment and understand where they were.

7 Progression and resettlement

7.1 Education and library

7.1.1 The aim of the education service is to prepare prisoners for the world outside prison and enable them to be in a position to successfully apply for work once they leave prison.

7.1.2 People Plus provides the offenders' learning and skills service (OLASS) education provision. Their funding is based upon attendance at classes and learning outcomes. This year has been a particularly challenging year for education – there was no provision at all in the early part of lockdown. However, matters improved following intervention by the prison, and distance learning was offered to 168 prisoners. The learning materials in the early period of the pandemic caused some concerns but following intervention by the prison management the quality improved significantly.

The IMB undertook a survey of prisoners prior to completing the annual report. In that survey 47% of the 99 prisoners who replied had undertaken a course of education. 80% of those prisoners thought the learning materials they received were of a good standard.

One prisoner said education tried to insist he did functional skills despite having a BSc and MSc. The prisoner said he declined the course but did the assessment and made the point that he believes that he was bullied to do it so that the provider could draw down extra cash.

The IMB has received complaints in previous years that prisoners feel they are forced to do courses even if they already have qualifications way beyond the course. There were, however, some issues concerning education.

Prisoners commented on the lack of support for those doing degrees, and how difficult it is to study without a table and chair in the room.

Some prisoners say they feel pressured to do Level 2 when they do not feel they could cope with Level 2. Prisoners often do not want their issues brought to the attention of education as they worry about being punished for complaining. There are allegations by prisoners that this has included threats to ship if they do not comply. 7.1.3 As well as working with People Plus, HMP North Sea Camp has in the past engaged and worked with a range of additional providers offering training in Street-works and barista skills (coffee house work) and courses leading to qualifications from the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) and the National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health (NEBOSH). These courses stopped during the Covid-19 pandemic.

7.1.4 In a normal year when prisoners arrive at HMP North Sea Camp they are

assessed by the education department and a training plan is drawn up that takes into consideration their sentence plan and future employment possibilities. For part of the year this did not take place as education staff were not in attendance to do it when new prisoners transferred in. As with the development of in-cell learning materials this was addressed by the prison.

7.1.5 The Shannon Trust scheme which also successfully operated in the prison was suspended.

7.1.6 The library is well run and support for the prisoners by the library staff supported by other staff has been well received by the prisoners during the various iterations of lockdown. The librarian had to stop working at the start of the pandemic on the instructions of his employer but returned as a volunteer to keep a service for prisoners. Apart from continuing to provide general interest books and novels and supporting education and learning where prisoners have been able to access it, the library has lent out CDs, DVDs and jigsaws to prisoners to help occupy the large amount of time they have been spending in their own rooms. In the IMB prisoners' survey, 80% of prisoners who responded said that they had received a high level of support from the library during the pandemic.

7.2 Vocational training and work

7.2.1 During the reporting year a small number of prisoners worked for an external employer for part of the year. Prisoners worked as cleaners, in the kitchen, in the staff mess, in recycling (numbers were reduced in recycling) and in land-based activities which continued to be resource intensive. Vegetables continued to be grown and were supplied to the kitchens and farm shop, which was open for Jubilee prisoners as well as staff and any external visitors when permitted.

Even when prisoners were unable to work due to the Covid-19 restrictions they were still paid their full wages which was extremely welcome to them.

7.3 Offender management and progression

7.3.1 On arrival at HMP North Sea Camp prisoners do not necessarily have an updated offender assessment system (OASys) report which assesses the prisoner's risk of reoffending, risk posed to the public etc. Sixty percent arrive without their OASys being fully updated. Prisoners serving a determinate sentence do not need to have an up dated OASys in order to move to a category D prison.

The OASys is updated by HMP North Sea Camp with input from outside agencies such as offender managers (OMs) and is reviewed at regular intervals. This enables HMP North Sea Camp staff and the probation service (via the OMs) to assess how a prisoner is progressing with regards to their risk of reoffending.

An up-to-date OASys is necessary before prisoners can be considered for ROTL. In order for an OASys to be updated both the prisoner's offender supervisor (OS) at HMP North Sea Camp and their OM in the community need to complete paperwork. OMs have a huge caseload which can lead to delays in returning paperwork.

During the lockdowns the OMs worked from home, which added even more delay to any paperwork they needed to complete and meant it was virtually impossible for prisoners to talk directly to their OM.

The survey carried out by the IMB with prisoners for this report revealed that 70% of the 99 respondents felt that they had not been supported and prepared for release. As an example, during the last week of this reporting year, 34 OASys were showing as late with 17 due and 293 in date.

7.3.2 There have been some management changes in the OMU at a senior level and although things started to improve, there was a marked deterioration during lockdown. In the IMB survey only 50% of the 99 who responded felt that they had been adequately prepared for release. Some prisoners described a severe lack of responsiveness by the OMU staff that were dealing with them. The list of comments that show how dire the situation was during the pandemic with regard to the OMU can be read in the summary of the responses to the IMB questionnaire (see App 1.2).

7.3.3 The offender management in custody (OMiC) model is soon to be rolled out. A new senior probation officer and head of OMU have been appointed and the results of the IMB questionnaire have been shared with the Governor of HMP North Sea Camp. As a result, the IMB hopes that the ongoing problems experienced with OMU services will be addressed.

7.3.4 The number of prisoners who have been sentenced to imprisonment for public protection (IPP) and who are serving indeterminate sentences is normally around 24% of the prison population. Typically, 25% of prisoners at HMP North Sea Camp are serving a life sentence. This provides a challenge to the support services provided by the prison. However, all these prisoners are able to access the full range of activities offered at HMP North Sea Camp. Some prisoners find it difficult to obtain work in the community (voluntary or paid) because of the nature of their offences.

7.3.5 Parole boards have been taking place throughout the pandemic. In the first place these were conducted using BT MeetMe. This moved later in the year to using Cloud Video Platform (CVP). Between March 2020 and February 2021 there were 89 successful parole applications from a total of 228 boards that took place.

7.3.6 ROTL is a big part of a prisoner's progress towards release and delays of any sort, either actual or perceived, are always a cause of concern to prisoners. This is because they know that if they do not achieve what has been asked of them at a Parole Board hearing it may well cause them to spend years longer in prison. Prisoners with sentences of imprisonment for public protection (IPP) who form 24% of the prison's population get particularly anxious about delays in their ROTL process as many are years over tariff.

In the 2019-2020 reporting year there were between 1200 to 1400 ROTLs per month (approx. 14,000 to 16,800 per annum). The following table shows how severely ROTL was affected due to the lockdowns. Many of the ROTLs that did take place were for medical reasons. March 2020 was a relatively normal month with lockdown affecting the very end of the month only.

TOTAL number of periods of ROTLs March 2020 to February 2021 = 3062

Mar-20	974
Apr-20	133
May-20	31
Jun-20	44
Jul-20	95
Aug-20	240
Sep-20	222
Oct-20	529
Nov-20	305
Dec-20	125
Jan-21	175
Feb-21	189

7.3.7 The few releases under home detention curfew (HDC) had been completed in a timely manner.

7.3.8 There have only been five absconds over the reporting year.

7.3.9 Risk management meetings are held on a frequent basis, and result in a number of returns to closed conditions.

7.4 Family contact

7.4.1 At the beginning of the pandemic the prison increased phone credits for prisoners and provided a further top-up to the nationally funded one. With prisoners having to remain within their accommodation units for most of the day, the prison ensured that regular phone access was provided for prisoners in the new Selby unit.

7.4.2 Visits recommenced in July and took place until the prison became a Covid-19 outbreak site in November. When visits took place, they were well managed at HMP North Sea Camp. The visits area, which had been refurbished with new furniture in the previous year, was used for visits. Visitors had to obey strict Covid-19 precautions. The facility was well used. In addition, the prison provided visits for some prisoners through Purple Visits which in some ways was better for some visitors who have to travel a very long way for what is a short time. For a short period between national lockdowns accompanied ROTLs into Boston and ROTLs for home visits took place.

7.5 Resettlement planning

7.5.1 All prisoners at HMP North Sea Camp eventually go out on ROTL, resettlement day release (RDR) and resettlement overnight release (ROR) in preparation for release back into the community. With the exception of a month in the late summer/early autumn all ROTLs except for special purpose licence (SPL) and workers in lobster pots stopped. The prisoners who were working for East Coast Creels were located in a bubble in one of the Jubilee houses and when the prison

was declared an outbreak site that work also stopped but restarted on January 14 2021.

7.5.2 Probation staff have been working during the whole of the pandemic but provided very limited face-to-face interventions. Prisoners who had to contact their external probation officers had to do so by phone, using up PIN credits, or via e-mails sent by OMU staff in the prison. Probation officers mostly worked from home during the pandemic and so it was very difficult for prisoners to phone them. The face-to-face that took place was virtual and limited to the final interview. This took place using the video conferencing facility in OMU.

7.5.3 Prisoners are given a plan to work to during their time at HMP North Sea Camp. Prisoners are asked to choose a pathway and then they consult with their OS who will either support the pathway or advise on a more appropriate route. This continued during lockdown albeit the sentence planning meetings were conducted remotely. The education department and the prisoners then devised an education programme. The aim is to prepare prisoners for getting a job on release. For their part the education department reviewed the curriculum offered to provide accredited qualifications that best met prisoners' needs.

7.5.4 There is a major focus on MAPPA at HMP North Sea Camp, with 255 prisoners on MAPPA Level 1, 46 on Level 2 and 7 on Level 3, which is 90% of the prison population. This means that even in a normal year there is a considerable amount of work that needs to be done to prepare paperwork to enable such prisoners to sit ROTL boards.

7.5.5 Because of a lack of ROTL in the reporting year it was very difficult for prisoners due for release to complete important pre-release tasks like setting up bank accounts. There were also difficulties in finding appropriate accommodation for all those who were being released due to restrictions as a result of Covid-19. Four prisoners were released as homeless. They were referred to organisations in the community who could help them. The Homelessness Intervention Fund helped to keep this figure to a minimum but eight other prisoners were released into short-term accommodation.

8 The work of the IMB

8.1 Overview

8.1.1 The IMB has six Board members. The IMB carried out a recruitment campaign in Autumn 2020 and a recommendation to appoint one new member was sent to the IMB Secretariat.

8.1.2 Board members contacted the prison by phone three times a week during lockdown. This includes listening in to the daily briefing at least once a week.

In addition, there was one actual visit during all but six weeks of lockdown (the first two being in April as clarification was sought on whether physical visits were permissible and then for four weeks when the site had an outbreak of Covid-19).

Prisoner applications continued to be taken via the IMB boxes. When the IMB was not permitted to go into the accommodation blocks the applications were taken out of the boxes by the IMB clerk or a duly appointed staff member. Applications were dealt with either remotely or in person on the weekly physical visit. The number of applications fell from 123 last year to 40 in the current reporting year.

8.1.3 IMB members completed a weekly report on their remote/live rota visits, copies of which were sent to the Governor via email. The Governor responds directly on issues raised or sends the report to an appropriate staff member for comment.

Board meetings are held once a month when the Governor or a member of the senior management team attends to deliver a statistical report and to discuss current issues and respond to Board members' questions on matters of concern or interest. All but three of this year's meetings were held via BT MeetMe or Zoom. The IMB will consider using Zoom for some of its meetings once lockdown ends if it makes it easier for members to participate, especially any members who are in paid work.

8.1.4 Board members monitor some of the adjudications arising and attend some of the establishment's management meetings. Adjudications are fairly run and the procedures carefully explained to prisoners.

8.1.5 The Governor, senior managers and staff are cooperative and supportive of the Board's presence and activities. Members benefit from the support of a conscientious and helpful IMB Board clerk with additional support provided where necessary by the business hub.

8.2 Training

All Board members contributed to the annual team performance review at which Board members had a chance to say what improvements they wanted with regard to monitoring and team working. A number of the Board members have attended the virtual training sessions provided by the IMB training team.

8.3 Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	10
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	8
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	5
Total number of visits to the establishment	135 (see table below)
Total number of segregation reviews attended	N/A

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Total
Board Live	8					6	6	6					26
Board Virtual		8	8	8	7				5	5	5	5	51
Rota Live	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4		1	2	4	39
Rota Virtual									4	4	3		11
Other Visits	2			1	1	1	1	1				1	8

8.4 Applications to the IMB

Code	Subject	Previous reporting year	Current reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	5	1
B	Discipline, including adjudications, IEP, sanctions	9	2
C	Equality	1	0
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	15	4
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection restrictions	0	0
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	10	0
F	Food and kitchens	2	0
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	20	6
H1	Property within this establishment	8	4
H2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	14	5
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	8	1
I	Sentence management, including HDC, release on temporary licence, parole, release dates, re-categorisation	17	11
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	5	3
K	Transfers	1	0
L	Miscellaneous, including complaints system	8	3
	Total number of applications	123	40

Appendix 1 IMB Prisoner Survey for Annual Report 2020/21

App 1.1 Table of responses

As a result of the lockdowns and restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the IMB were not able to have much face-to-face contact prisoners. A questionnaire was therefore sent out to prisoners. 340 questionnaires were sent out, with 99 returned, giving a return of 29% from the prison population as a whole.

There are some disparities in the number of answers, due to the respondents either not answering all of the questions or replying with a comment that could not be attributed to a yes or no answer.

	Yes	No
Have you tested positive for Covid-19 whilst at HMP North Sea Camp?	52	47
Have you been offered a Covid-19 test regularly?	15	77
At any time did you have to “shield” as a person highly vulnerable due to underlying medical conditions?	17	82
If you need to shield, did you consider the shielding measures were effective?	8	9
Have you needed the help of the prison healthcare/dental services during this pandemic?	79	20
If you have needed these services, were they well organised and delivered quickly to you?	43	34
During the pandemic, did you have a room to yourself?	34	61
Has the standard of cleanliness in living quarters, corridors, showers, toilets and outside areas been OK?	67	30
Have you been able to keep yourself and your clothes clean?	91	7
Have you had access to regular showers and laundry service?	96	2
During the pandemic, the service of meals has been altered. Do you consider the meals to have been of a good standard?	71	27
Was the system for collecting meals OK?	77	20
Have you been able to keep yourself occupied with library books, puzzles, jigsaws, colouring books and TV?	79	19
Have you been following a course of education during the pandemic?	45	54
If yes, were the educational materials delivered to you of a good standard?	36	9
If you have needed help and advice from Officers, have you been able to get it, when you have needed it?	65	32
Have you been given the opportunity to take regular exercise?	89	8
Have you been preparing for release during this period, or for an appearance before the Parole Board?	49	49
If so and bearing in mind the national Covid-19 restrictions in force, have you felt as supported and prepared as you could reasonably have been for release or for the Parole Board?	13	36

Prisoners were encouraged not to just answer the yes or no questions on the survey but also to make comments. Some of the comments are reproduced below in order to evidence the IMB report. The replies are numbered eg R5 is reply number five

Main areas of concern were:

App 1.2 OMU

The actual comments of the prisoners are reproduced as it is felt that they more clearly explain the problems with OMU than any summary could do.

- R3 OMU has been missing and is still – you ask to speak to them and get nowhere
- R7 Regarding release I am due to be released in May and have had no ROTLs because of COVID. I need a bank account and when I raised this with OMU all I got was “You’ll have to go into a bank after your release”
- R9 There is no support for re settlement in the prison – you can’t see your OS even at a 2 metre distance
- R10 OMU should reflect on effect of lack of ROTL which has meant that parole boards which require this have been postponed – Suggests that Report writers could “reflect how well people who have coped with this setback – just an idea”
- R14 OMU non existent
- R15 Probation don’t keep in contact I put apps in don’t get a reply
Probation needs sorting out
Family wrote to No 1 Gov 3 times to date no reply
- R17 Fails to see why OMU staff could not come onto units or just outside to visit prisoners – perhaps operate in the same way Mental Health and Health staff did
- R21 Access to OMU is terrible – going through parole and not met Offender Supervisor in 7 months
- R22 Lack of Communication
Even if you put in general apps there is no response
If there is a response it will be very late including probation and OMU
- R32 OMU poor
- R33 Due for release in 7 weeks and no contact with OMU/Probation
- R38 OMU terrible – have not seen or heard from my OS since arrived
Apps do not get answered

Worst OMU in 7 prisons

R42 OMU apps not responded to 4 in 3 months no reply

OMU staff make appointments and then don't turn up

R44 No support in preparation for Parole – Not met anyone in OMU – They failed to send paperwork to solicitor on time

R59 Updated reports/dossier not being prepared for parole boards despite specific directive from parole board that this should happen

App 1.3 Handling of the Covid-19 pandemic

Comments reflected a perceived lack of consistency among staff in the application of rules. There were some positive comments about the prison's handling of the pandemic but on the whole prisoners were unhappy about how lockdowns were managed.

Prisoners thought staff had different rules to them and did not understand why so thought it was unfair.

Prisoners wanted to have more time out of their cells.

Prisoners wanted tables and chairs in their rooms as they had to spend so much time there and also eat and study there. Without tables and chairs a lot of time was spent sitting and lying on the bed.

IMB comment: Over the last few years there have been repeated comments from prisoners about the lack of tables and chairs in their rooms. Under normal operating conditions the prisoners can find places to sit and write letters etc outside their rooms and some folding chairs have also been provided by the prison, but during lockdown the lack of tables and chairs in some of the small shared rooms was problematic especially as prisoners were also required, at times to eat breakfast and tea in their rooms.

Prisoners thought that HMP North Sea Camp were slow to come out of restricted regimes and did not make enough use of the wide-open spaces of the open prison to offer more time in the fresh air.

Non-smokers felt smokers were advantaged and got more time out of their rooms than they did which they deemed unfair.

The indoor gym was slow to open after lockdown and prisoners cannot understand why.

Prisoners claim that when prisoners are moved from room to room no testing takes place. One prisoner wonders why rooms had to be painted which meant prisoners had to move round to accommodate this.

There were only three phones and no legal calls can be made without officers listening in.

R27 Pods were given for the purpose of isolation but given to inmates on the singles list

R50 Shielding should have been in pods – As a shielder I had to share showers/WC with non shielders

However, some prisoners thought that HMP North Sea Camp had handled the pandemic well but that prisoners themselves were at fault: “NSC has handled COVID best as they could it’s certain people what’s the problem who won’t adhere to rules.”

There were some positive comments but nowhere near as many as negative comments

R8 Personally I believe that they have done the best of what they could given the situation

R5 As a whole I think NSC has managed Covid Extremely well

App 1.4 Issues concerning education

The comments below reflect lack of support for those doing degrees, how difficult it is to study without a table and chair in the room, the insistence from education on doing courses even when prisoners have higher educational qualifications or are anxious

R10 Attempts by Education to insist he did functional skills despite having a BSC and MSC – Declined the course but did the assessment. Makes the point that he believes that he was bullied to do it so provider could draw down extra cash

IMB comment – the IMB has received complaints in previous years that prisoners feel they are forced to do courses even if they already have qualifications way beyond the course being offered and some prisoners say they feel pressured to do level 2 when they do not feel they could cope with Level 2. Prisoners often do not want their issues brought to the attention of education as they worry about being punished for complaining.

R17 Education not fit for purpose and roll out of materials inadequate

R38 Staying in cell so long without chair inhumane – points out it’s against PSI

Raised issue with Education as an OU student and got no help

Comments that at another prison he knows of university students have specially equipped cells

R40 Not been able to complete the education course – no table/desk in my room. A chair would help

App 1.5 Fear of Complaining

Some prisoners seemed to have a fear that if they complained they would be punished in some way.

This was an issue in previous years. Due to IMB face-to-face contact with prisoners being restricted during the reporting year it was difficult to tell how widespread the issue was.

R55 Mental health should be important but at NSC if you speak your mind you are targeted for ship out

R60 PS I could have put in a Comp 1 many times but as my parole is coming up its best not to do so.

App 1.6 Food

Under normal operating conditions prisoners at HMP North Sea Camp visit the dining hall for a cooked breakfast, lunch (hot soup and a choice of rolls or hot snacks) and a cooked tea. It is rare to get a complaint about the food. However, during the lockdowns due to Covid-19 prisoners visited the dining hall at midday only for a cooked meal and received a pack for breakfast and one for tea-time.

This change is probably the reason why 27 of the 99 prisoners who answered the questionnaire said that they did not think the meals had been of a good standard.

There were some comments about the food:

R14 1 square meal a day topped up with crisps and sugar

R30 Food Ok but nothing to help people who are told to eat healthy

R34 Food delivery unhygienic and no table to place food when handing out sometimes no gloves used

Dinner sometimes delivered 10.30 am far too early

Need more milk as more time in rooms – don't need water that can be got from tap

R44 Issues as a Diabetic supposed to eat at regular times has had to wait till 3 sometimes condition worsened

R46 Taking the microwave away means we cannot re heat our evening meals – just because 1 or 2 people have abused the system

Close to 70% of respondents had said that the quality of food was good and 77% were happy with how it was distributed.

R10 Catering excellent – deserve recognition

Some positives were noted from the questionnaires.

App 1.7 Visits

Some prisoners found it hard not to see family and friends but one prisoner found Purple Visits helpful and praised two officers in particular for helping facilitate his use of Purple Visits

R4 A positive is purple visits with a massive thank you to officer xxxx and xxxx for their efforts

App 1.8 Library

The library was mentioned a few times

R21 Library has been excellent

R54 Been more difficult to get library materials

IMB comment: this last remark is true but the librarian came in as a volunteer when the service he worked for said he was to stay at home. Reading material was delivered to wings on a regular basis but prisoners were not allowed into the library to choose their own books/DVDs, puzzles etc for a large part of the reporting year

App 1.9 Good comments on staff

Some prisoners praised the healthcare teams

R10 Note 1 Healthcare excellent apart from dental

R35 Healthcare excellent

R38 Mental health nurses are also very good

Other staff were also praised for their helpfulness

R41 Many of the staff here are very good (you can't like everyone) that makes a great difference

R32 Officers xxxx, xxxx, xxxx and xxxx have enabled a safe positive and purposeful environment while observing Covid rests

R32 Thanks xxxx, xxxx and xxxx for efficient delivery of Farm Shop orders and canteen

R38 Gym staff an asset to the prisons very encouraging and motivating

R10 Unit staff have done a good job

App 1.10 Cleaning

There were mixed comments about cleaning.

30 of the 99 prisoners who returned questionnaires said "No" to the question "Has the standard of cleanliness in living quarters, corridors, showers, toilets and outside areas been OK?"

R54 Poor cleaning of washrooms in his unit, Floors resemble skating rinks when cleaned, Sooner or later we will have a serious slip

R18 Poor cleaning on North

R17 Cleaners have been brilliant

R10 North and Harrison Poor Cleaning – Llewelin excellent

Appendix 2 - Abbreviations and Glossary of terms

ACCT - Assessment, Care in Custody & Teamwork

AP – Approved Premises

CSIP - Challenge, Support and Intervention Plan

CNA - Certified Normal Accommodation – the total of all rooms in a prison that can be routinely used to house long stay prisoners

COPD – Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

Covid-19 - the disease caused by SARS-CoV-2, the coronavirus that emerged in Dec 2019

CRC - Community Rehabilitation Company

CVP – Cloud Video Platform

DIRF - Discrimination Incident Reporting Form

EPOC – Early Prevention of Cancer

HDC – Home Detention Curfew

HMP - Her Majesty's Prison

IEP – Incentive and Earned Privileges

IMB – Independent Monitoring Board

IPP – Imprisonment for Public Protection

LAT - Lincolnshire Action Trust

MAPPA - Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements

MDT – mandatory drug testing

OASys - Offender Assessment System - identifies risk

OLASS - Offenders' Learning and Skills Service

OM – Offender Managers

OMiC - Offender Management in Custody

OMU - Offender Management Unit

OS – Offender Supervisor

OU – Open University

PAC – Prisoner Advice Centre

PEEP - Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan

PHE - Public Health England

PIN phone – personal identification phone - phone allowing calls to be made to agreed telephone numbers once a code has been input

PO – Personal Officer

PSI - Prison Service Instructions

RDR - Resettlement Day Release

Reverse cohorting – holding newly arrived prisoners in a special unit where they can be in quarantine for 14 days

ROR - Resettlement Overnight Release

ROTL - Release on Temporary Licence

Shielding – ensuring that those vulnerable to infection are kept apart from others for at least 12 weeks

SPL – special purpose licence to leave the prison for an appointment, an event

SSAFA (Soldiers', Sailors' & Airmen's Families Association)

TTG – Through the Gate



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