



Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP ERLESTOKE

**For reporting year
1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021**

Published October 2021



Contents

Introductory sections 1 - 3	Page
1. Statutory role of the IMB	3
2. Description of establishment	4
3. Executive summary	5
Evidence sections 4 – 7	
4. Safety	9
5. Humane treatment	12
6. Health and wellbeing	18
7. Progression and resettlement	22
The work of the IMB	28
Applications to the IMB	29

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

2.1 HMP Erlestoke is an adult male category C predominately rehabilitation, closed programmes prison, now designated and moving towards a prison catering 50% for rehabilitation and 50% for resettlement. It is built in the grounds of the former Erlestoke Park House. It is the only prison in Wiltshire and is situated in a rural location, 21 miles from Salisbury, and 44 miles from Bristol and 26 miles from Swindon. The nearest railway station is in Westbury, some eight miles away.

2.2 Many prisoners at HMP Erlestoke are classified as indeterminate sentenced prisoners (ISP), serving life sentences and indeterminate sentences for public protection (IPP). Most of the remaining population are serving not less than four years although some prisoners with lesser sentences have been sent to HMP Erlestoke with the intention eventually to create a population where up to 50% of the prisoners are accepted on a resettlement basis. For the first time younger prisoners in the 18 – 24 age group make up 11% of the prison population and almost half the prisoners are under the age of 35.

2.3 There are eight residential units (wings); four are standard units. The remaining four are enhanced units one of which is being used to house the progression regime whose aim is to help ISP and IPP prisoners provide information and evidence to the Parole Board in favour of their release. The total operational capacity of the prison – previously 524 prisoners – was reduced at the beginning of lockdown to 494 and is now reduced to 424 following the closure of Kennet wing due to fire hazard concerns and the closure and demolition of Avebury Wing.

2.4 HMP Erlestoke focuses on intervention programmes to address drug and alcohol issues and prisoner past behaviours. Following successful completion of the programmes the aim is to return prisoners to their original prison, however there are times when the prison may refuse to take back a prisoner. During lockdown some prisoners sent to the prison for courses are still waiting for these to begin as the psychology department has been largely working from home during the year.

2.5 The drug recovery unit, dedicated to reducing drug dependence in motivated individuals, was opened last year but has not been fully functional due to Covid-19.

2.6 Healthcare services were previously provided by Inspire Better Health but Inspire was replaced on 1 April 2020 by Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership Trust who now hold the healthcare contract. Education is provided by Milton Keynes College.

2.7 HMP Erlestoke's good image in the community was soured by a noise issue which led to complaints from local residents and intervention by Wiltshire Council. However, a rigorous noise monitoring and abatement programme instituted by the Governor and his staff has successfully addressed the problem.

2.8 The Board is pleased to note that the charity "Friends of Erlestoke Prison" continues to work with the management team to provide services outside the scope of prison service budgets. The current project is to raise sufficient funds to build an

all-weather sports pitch for the prison. So far, an impressive £214,000 has been raised.

Executive summary

3.1 Background to the report

During the early part of lockdown, monitoring was carried out remotely with the result that there was less direct contact with prisoners and staff apart from regular meetings with the Governor. However, by June the segregation unit (CSU) was visited regularly in person by members who were not shielding. A serious outbreak of Covid-19 infection among prisoners curtailed visits to the wings but by the end of the reporting period face-to-face monitoring had been restored. Applications by prisoners were dealt with through correspondence.

3.2 Main judgements

How safe is the prison?

Ironically with Covid-19 restrictions keeping prisoners in their cells for up to 22 hours a day, many prisoners have felt safer than when there was an open regime. In general terms the Board is satisfied that prisoners at HMP Erlestoke remain relatively safe and has been pleased to note a significant decrease in incidents of violence (see 4.3.1) although self-harm has shown a troubling increase (see 4.2.1). A survey of prisoners was carried out by the Board at the end of the reporting year. A total of 77 prisoners responded to the survey, a response rate of 18%. 25% of prisoners said that they felt unsafe whilst 75% of prisoners reported feeling safe.

How fairly and humanely are prisoners treated?

At the beginning of the reporting period the social care needs of a number of elderly and infirm prisoners were neglected (see 6.4).

In early August 2020 conditions in the CSU fell well below acceptable standards of decency. A group of three particularly recalcitrant prisoners caused extensive damage to their cells, smashing their lavatories and washbasins. As a result of ineffectual efforts to repair the damage, prisoners were left without proper sanitation and running water for up to three weeks (see 5.2.4). However, the Board is satisfied that this particularly unfortunate episode does not characterise normal conditions on the CSU where prisoners are dealt with in a caring and professional way.

For the most part prisoners are treated humanely and senior management have taken steps to ease lockdown restrictions to the best of their ability, enhancing time out of cells in excess of the norm in other prisons.

How well are prisoners' health and wellbeing needs met?

Healthcare has faced serious challenges during lockdown and is to be particularly congratulated with the way that they managed a very serious outbreak of Covid-19 (see 6.1.1). In general terms healthcare has performed well in difficult times.

However, the Board have two concerns. First, a lack of IT capability means that patient safety is being put at risk at reception when newly arrived prisoners receive their healthcare screening and on the wings when nurses attend to patients, in each case through a lack of access to patients' healthcare records (see 6.1.3). Secondly, the Board is troubled by a relatively high turnover of healthcare staff.

How well are prisoners progressed towards successful resettlement?

With the Covid-induced cessation of programmes, training, education, employment and indeed any purposeful activity, it has been difficult for prisoners to progress their sentence causing understandable anger and frustration (see 7.3.1).

Nevertheless, resettlement planning has seen considerable improvement during the reporting year (see 7.5). However, many prisoners sent to Erlestoke in order to complete courses have effectively been marking time with no course work undertaken (see 7.5.2).

3.3 Main areas for development

TO THE MINISTER

For much of the reporting year a prisoner has languished in segregation. The prisoner in question has special needs, probably driven by autism, which means that he has been unwilling to be moved to a normal location. Although he resides in segregation of his own volition, his continued confinement is inhumane and derives from a lack of suitable accommodation within the prison system for prisoners who do not meet the criteria for a hospital order. Will the Minister consider providing more facilities to meet the needs of those within the autistic spectrum, unsuitable for location in a normal prison environment?

As is the case throughout the penal system, there are a number of IPP prisoners, most many years over their original sentence tariff. This has produced a cohort of men who are left without hope and are in danger of becoming institutionalised and dehumanised. Some are suffering from mental illness. What steps are proposed to alleviate this national tragedy?

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

Two residential units were closed during the year. Plans to replace the units appear to have faltered. Long-term planning for the prison cannot be undertaken until positive decisions are made with a timetable for implementation. When will the units be replaced?

A substantial number of prisoners place very considerable importance on the ability to carry out weight training. The existing weight training gym has been considerably

enhanced by the provision of new flooring and new equipment. However, all of this has been put in peril by a leaking roof which urgently requires replacement. Will funds be put in place to achieve this goal?

TO THE GOVERNOR

This is the second year in which improvements have been noted in the attendance of a healthcare representative at the first ACCT review (see 6.1.2). However, it is still the case that a healthcare representative is absent in 40% of cases. Will further efforts be made to ensure that firstly, prison staff liaise with healthcare staff to inform them of forthcoming reviews and secondly that better arrangements are made to schedule reviews for healthcare operating hours?

There is currently no clear communication with the IMB regarding prisoners segregated on their own location (see 5.2.3). Will this be rectified?

Prisoners and staff complain regularly over lack of consistency from management about the application of rules (see 5.2.4). Will action be taken to address this issue?

Function heads take scant part in diversity and inclusion meetings and monitoring equality and fairness requires a more robust regime with appropriate analysis of trends (see 5.4.1). This is a recurring theme and will action now be taken?

The complaints system lacks independence in terms of investigation (see 5.7). What steps do you intend to take to improve this situation?

To the Governor and Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership Trust: a lack of adequate wi-fi capability and suitable iPads means that patient healthcare records cannot be accessed at reception or on the wings thus putting patients at risk. Will steps be taken to enhance IT capabilities in this regard?

3.4 Progress since the last report

The Board notes with pleasure the reduction in incidences of violence (see 4.3.1).

The Board congratulates healthcare in their management of the Covid-19 outbreak (see 6.1.1).

The Board congratulates the Listener service for excellent work during difficult times (4.2.3).

The dissemination of quality distraction packs particularly within segregation, where unrest has now considerably diminished, is applauded (see 5.2.6).

The continued handling of lockdown by the Governor and his management team is acknowledged as are the efforts of physical education instructors maintaining gym sessions (6.5.2) and the library and education department (7.1.2).

The prison staff are particularly commended for their work during lockdown. At a time when numbers were significantly reduced through illness and shielding, they kept the prison functioning by working excessively long hours (including on occasion living in the prison). Unvaccinated, they escorted sick prisoners to hospital Covid wards with some thereafter contracting Covid-19 with a near fatal result in one case.

Finally, we are impressed with the patience shown by so many prisoners during an exceptionally long period of restricted regime.

Evidence sections 4 – 7

4. Safety

A complete change of staff in safer custody during the year meant strategic focus took time to re-establish, particularly with resourcing pressures brought about by the pandemic but the team now appears settled and committed.

Monthly safer custody meetings lapsed during the first quarter but resumed on a regular basis in September 2020 when a comprehensive safety review was carried out. Review of statistics takes place each month with a commitment to inform strategy and identify future actions. Weekly safety intervention meetings monitor those with complex needs.

4.1 Reception and induction

Reception: 186 prisoners arrived during the report year, with low numbers totalling 36 in the first six months, chiefly from HMP Winchester, using reverse cohorting. The remaining 150 arrived in the last six months, when lockdown had eased somewhat. The reception has had reduced staff down to 1 x prison officer equivalent from 2 x prison officers and 1 x operational support grade the previous year. It is hoped that computerisation will change the weight of paperwork management as the present system appears to duplicate effort and is an inefficient use of staff time. An inability of nurses carrying out reception health screens to access medical records is a cause for concern (see 6.1.3 healthcare).

Inductions have largely been suspended throughout the year. Education has sent 30-page forms to each arrival but only around 30% have responded. The full system that includes briefs from a variety of teams is still suspended, but staff in the arrivals wing (now Silbury B) have started basic briefs for arrivals. It is suggested that an overall review of the system takes place before it returns to its original format.

4.2 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody

4.2.1 Self-harm incidents rose significantly from 211 in 2019-2020 to 392 in 2020-2021, involving 93 individuals. This is an 86% increase and in direct contrast to the downward trend in national statistics. The increase in part is attributable to the restricted regime during lockdown. The number peaked with 63 in August when six individuals accounted for 56% of these incidents and has since been averaging 30 per month. Cutting accounted for a significant percentage of incidents and appeared particularly prevalent in the 30-39 age group.

4.2.2 Twenty-one assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) documents were open as at 31 March 2021 with 306 opened during 2020-2021, reflecting the existing complex prison population. This is an increase of 13.5% from 2019-2020 when 270 documents were opened. Of those prisoners on or having been on an ACCT, IMB survey results showed just over half felt cared for. Paperwork monitored by the Board was of variable quality although some improvement in care map plans had been noted by the Board. Although improved, healthcare participation in first ACCT reviews remains deficient (see 6.1.2 healthcare).

4.2.3 There was a substantial increase in workload for the active team of Listeners, with contacts peaking at a record 106 calls in January 2021, mainly due to some multiple contacts from a small number of individuals, but also linked to the change in

regime. The local Samaritan representative was highly complimentary about the comprehensive service that Listeners continued to provide during the pandemic as other establishments had either reduced the service or stopped providing it altogether. The Board commends the work of the Listeners in very challenging circumstances.

4.2.4 There were two deaths – the same as in the previous reporting year. One death in November 2020 appeared self-inflicted (the cause has yet to be confirmed) while the other in February 2021 was Covid-19 related. Both Prison and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) investigations and clinical reviews are on-going. PPO recommendations from the two deaths in 2019-2020 have either been implemented or are being followed up through action plans which are reviewed at safer custody meetings.

4.3 Violence and violence reduction, self-isolation

4.3.1 There were 108 assaults in 2020-2021 (44 prisoner on prisoner and 64 prisoner on staff) compared to 175 assaults in 2019-2020 – a 38% decrease, mirroring national statistics.

4.3.2. Bullying/victimisation, debt and retaliation were recorded as the most common reasons for prisoner assaults. This was validated by the IMB survey, with over half of prisoners having experienced some form of victimisation - an on-going issue. A quarter of prisoners in the survey reported feeling unsafe, the same noted in HMIP's survey of August 2020.

4.3.3. Violence reduction referrals totalled 404 – an increase of 54% from 262 in 2019-2020. This rise is predominately due to increased staff awareness of the purpose of such referrals and improved reporting procedures. Bullying, debt and assaults were the main reasons for violence. Some 25% of the referrals have resulted in challenge, support, and intervention plans (CSIPs) which support both victims and assist perpetrators to manage anger. This is an area requiring improvement; it is being addressed in part through staff training which includes the benefits of effective CSIPs.

4.3.4 Of the five serious incidents observed by IMB members, all were managed in a calm and professional manner.

4.3.5 There were six self-isolators as at 31 March 2021, with an average of seven prisoners per month throughout the year. This compares to an average of 12 self-isolators per month during 2019-2020 – the decrease in number possibly attributable to the change in regime.

4.4 Prisoners with specific vulnerabilities

4.4.1 Vulnerable prisoners numbered 28 as at 31 March 2021. Safeguarding concerns had been raised by HMIP in the Scrutiny Visit of August 2020 over lack of social care provision for those vulnerable prisoners with disabilities - 17 in total. Direct engagement with Wiltshire Adult Services has subsequently commenced and prisoner buddies are to be trained to offer peer support (see 6.4 Social Care).

4.5 Use of force

4.4.1 Force was used on 295 occasions – more than double the incidents of 2019-2020 with data indicating a significant number related to non-compliance with the

restricted regime. On several occasions these incidents involved multiple offenders with those in the 25 to 39 age group being the most prevalent.

4.5.2 Control and restraint training of staff was suspended because of the pandemic but recommenced in March 2021. There was no use of PAVA. Activating body worn cameras at incidents remains an issue either through reluctance or forgetfulness to switch on the cameras but has markedly improved during the last quarter.

4.5.3 A Board member attends use of force meetings which monitor levels and types of force. These meetings had unfortunately lapsed, then were notably inconsistent until resumption part way through the year. The meetings are now held monthly with a leadership committed to providing assurance and governance.

4.6 Substance misuse

4.6.1 Lockdown has seen a reduction of drugs finding their way into the prison. However large quantities of illegally brewed alcohol are regularly found and scrutiny of the wing observation books and daily management reports has shown a dramatic increase in incidences of alcohol intoxication. There remains a proportion of the prison population who regularly use drugs and in particular Psychoactive Substances although Class A drugs and cannabis are also abused. With reduced movements this year, there have been fewer “throw-overs”; current methods of entry are thought to include parcels, counterfeit lawyers’ letters and corrupt staff.

4.6.2 There has been a reduction of prisoners on an opiate substitution regime (down from 54 earlier in the year to 28). Inevitably there has been some diversion of the opiate substitution drugs for sale to others, especially buprenorphine. The wellbeing team hope for the introduction of espranor, a freeze-dried wafer containing buprenorphine which dissolves rapidly on the tongue or another form of opiate substitution injected fortnightly, both less prone to diversion.

5. Fair and humane treatment

5.1 Accommodation, clothing, food

5.1.1 Covid-19 has affected the delivery of repairs and replacement with related absences and the sad death of one Government Facilities Service Ltd (GFSL) member of staff.

5.1.2 The prison has many ageing and, in some cases, poor quality units and needs major investment to improve the standard of accommodation, with Avebury and Kennet wings scheduled for demolition. However, even the more modern wings such as Alfred and Wessex urgently require attention. On Alfred there are windows missing and the showers in both Alfred and Wessex are in an unacceptably poor state of repair, albeit shortly to be replaced. With consummate lack of planning, considerable sums were spent replacing the flooring of Kennet immediately prior to a decision to close the unit.

5.1.3 GFSL is starting to get to grips with routine maintenance and some improvement in the timeliness of routine repairs has been noted. Preventive maintenance is also beginning to take place. With GFSL understaffed in respect of four trades it may be a while before performance improvements are seen. However, in contrast to last year there is no backlog of works outstanding apart from 20 works orders from 2020. Current monthly works orders amount to between 600 and 700.

5.1.4 An improvement in the ability of GFSL to manage large contracts has been noted. Thus, projects earmarked for completion in the current year have begun, with the expectation that the need for bids for these to be resubmitted will be avoided. The Board identified failures by GFSL senior management as the principal reason for the previous poor performance of GFSL managing projects both large and small. However, with the appointment of a new site manager it is hoped that current improvements can be maintained.

5.1.5 The site manager has introduced new works systems and reorganised others. Overtime has also been authorised in order to keep up with the workload. The Board is pleased to note that a downward spiral of poor performance is being reversed although there is still some way to go before a properly efficient service is in place.

5.1.6 Deep cleans are no longer the issue that they were in previous years, with the service now contracted out but overseen by GFSL.

5.1.7 Painting is no longer restricted to an ongoing five-year programme but has been revised so as to meet the requirements set by the Governor. The programme is being efficiently managed by GFSL, with a plentiful supply of paint and a judicious use of prisoner painters. It is very noticeable how much better the units are looking as a result of this action, which can only benefit prisoner morale.

5.1.8 Two further issues have been addressed. First, broken glazing, including smashed observation panels, is being replaced within 24 hours and for the first time GFSL are holding one month's supply of stocks, meaning that cells that are deliberately damaged are typically back in action within two days.

5.1.9 There has been an improvement in cleanliness (a long-standing concern) with the employment of more cleaners and equipment. Prison management is to be congratulated in this respect. However, litter outside some of the units still persists.

5.1.10 Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, there have not been too many problems with the supply of food. Stock shortages are often an issue, but remain manageable. However, deliveries are starting to cause some issues, due to a shortage of drivers. The current daily allowance for food per prisoner is £2.10. Otherwise the kitchen staff and manager are to be congratulated on the continued smooth running of the food chain, which has been of great importance to the prisoners during the Covid-19 regime.

5.2 Segregation

5.2.1 The small care and separation unit (CSU) has 10 cells, a constant watch cell and a special accommodation cell. Over the year 203 prisoners were accommodated in the CSU (which includes 19 prisoners who had repeat admissions) – down 30 from the previous year. There are 16 prisoners who have been held over 42 days. The IMB is concerned about the growing number of prisoners with mental health issues and those in for their own protection; specifically, a prisoner with mental health needs who had been in the unit for 177 days at the end of the reporting period.

5.2.2 Reviews are carried out by the duty governor, adjudication reviews by a team of operational bands 7 and 8 and above, with the appropriate training, and the Governor visits the CSU to talk to all prisoners every Friday.

5.2.3 Over the reporting period special accommodation was used on 11 occasions. Special accommodation appears to be used sparingly and appropriately, however the IMB was not always informed when special accommodation was being used – this has been rectified – but this means procedures and paperwork have only been scrutinised in the last four months. There is currently no clear communication with the IMB regarding prisoners segregated on their own location. In the last reporting period this totalled 83 prisoners – some of whom may have been moved to the CSU after their adjudication.

5.2.4 Lack of leadership and oversight was a concern raised by the HMIP scrutiny visit in August. The staffing structure has been reviewed and staff changes made as a result of this. Staff however still do not have specific induction and training. Prisoners often say that they are not given a contract on their arrival.

Segregation monitoring and review group (SMARG) meetings have restarted and are scheduled quarterly.

Prisoners and staff complain regularly over lack of consistency from management about the application of rules.

5.2.5 Relationships between prisoners and staff have improved but the IMB still records occasions where de-escalation has not been employed effectively and when prisoners have not been treated with respect. An example of this was leaving prisoners without working toilets in cells which the IMB reported to governors but which was not acted on quickly. HMIP subsequently picked this up in its scrutiny visit.

5.2.6 70 prisoners were on an ACCT while in the CSU. 50 were already on an ACCT and 20 were opened whilst in the CSU. This is double the amount of the previous year. 74 prisoners self-harmed in the CSU – two years ago this was recorded as 14, last year no figures were available. The IMB recognises that

improved systems of training and recording have been introduced, in addition to the increasing issue of more prisoners self-harming.

5.2.7 Healthcare achieved 100% compliance for safety screening of new CSU prisoners within two hours.

5.2.8 A concern of the IMB for some years has been the lack of quality distraction packs. A grant this year has enabled better quality materials to engage prisoners in the CSU, in the form of 3D models, puzzles, painting by numbers and the like. This has led to a noticeable improvement in behaviour and has made a significant difference to the atmosphere/calmness.

5.2.9 Since the HMIP visit a substantial improvement in the infrastructure of the unit has been noted. Metal toilets and beds are in all but one cell and the cleanliness is much improved. Work is ongoing to continue improvements to the unit.

5.3 Staff-prisoner/detainee relationships, key workers

5.3.1 Due to restricted visits to the wings over the year it is only possible to give limited observational data in this area. The observations made suggest that there is for the most part a high level of professionalism and respect between staff and prisoners, although it is to be noted that our survey showed nearly 40% of those who responded saying that staff did not treat them with respect. There have been a small number of issues in the CSU, recorded on our rotas, where relationships have been observed to be less positive.

5.3.2 Where there have been issues with relationships and more unrest and violence on a wing (notably Wessex and Alfred), the Governor has reorganised staffing to provide more experienced staff which has alleviated the problem to some extent.

5.3.3 The senior leadership team have improved their use of the prisoner council over the year.

5.3.4 Our recent survey concluded that bullying/victimisation by other prisoners and staff remains an issue in the prison.

39% of prisoners who responded said that staff did not treat them with respect – this was 24% in the HMIP survey - and 36% of prisoners said there were no staff they could turn to if there was a problem (26% in HMIP survey).

61% said that staff had not talked to them in the last week about how they were getting on.

However, 52% of prisoners responding to the IMB survey said that there was no bullying or victimisation by staff.

5.4 Equality and diversity

5.4.1 The HMIP scrutiny visit of August 2020 concluded that equality was poorly promoted with few meetings. Although meetings are now a regular feature, function heads appear to give the issue of equality and diversity scant attention, some only rarely attending meetings.

5.4.2 During the year 86 discrimination incident report forms (DIRFs) were received of which 28 were considered to be, and dealt with as, general complaints. The

balance of 58 which fitted the criteria for a DIRF led to six complaints being upheld, four on the grounds of race and two on the grounds of religion, with one complaint on the grounds of race partially upheld and leading to an apology by a member of staff to a prisoner. One of the six upheld complaints on the grounds of race led to the instant dismissal of a member of staff.

DIRFs are now dealt with more expeditiously than hitherto. Nevertheless, only 19 met the target date of 5 days for completion with 39 being overdue.

5.4.3 The prison population at Erlestoke is racially and culturally diverse. In terms of religion, Christian and Muslim adherents account for 50% and 18% of the population respectively, with Sikhs, Buddhists, Hindus, Jews, Rastafarians, Mormons and Pagans also represented.

5.4.4 Statistics are collected so as to show the numbers of complaints and also adjudications are measured against ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, age and disability, with an analysis to show which groups are over or under represented in terms of their proportion of the general population. A similar exercise is carried out to measure the incentive policy framework (see 5.6) standard status against age, identifying over and under representation of age groups. However, for this and each of the preceding five years there has been no attempt to analyse the figures and determine the reasons behind the over representation of certain groups which has made the gathering of the statistics something of a sterile exercise.

5.5 Faith and pastoral support

5.5.1 The chaplaincy team is proactive and offers good support. There are two full-time posts and several part-time posts. The team are able to facilitate all prisoners with a leader of their own faith when necessary.

5.5.2 Although group work and services have had to stop, there has been some very positive work throughout the various lockdown stages and chaplaincy staff have maintained contact across all wings with all prisoners whether prisoners are of faith or not. There were some faith groups and group services from August to December when meetings were allowed.

5.5.3 The team has provided reading materials, leaflets and study material throughout the lockdown period. During the first lockdown the team were logging between 50 and 70 individual conversations with prisoners a week. Systems are in place to ensure that they see all prisoners regularly and they prioritise the under 21s and over 70s to ensure that they are seen monthly.

5.6 Incentives schemes (IP)

5.6.1 The incentive policy framework (IPF), was published in July 2019 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/incentives-policy-framework>) – formerly the incentives & earned privileges (IEP) scheme.

5.6.2 HMP Erlestoke is said to be committed to the fair implementation of the incentives policy framework. The objective of the IPF scheme is to encourage responsible and constructive behaviour from prisoners, whilst discouraging poor, disruptive and/or anti-social behaviour. IPF is designed to support the prison regime and other policies by contributing to the personal development of prisoners and

helping to provide an orderly, safe, and controlled environment for prisoners, staff, and visitors alike.

5.6.3 Implementation of this local policy provides prisoners with the opportunity to earn extra privileges by consistently displaying responsible and constructive behaviour whilst setting a positive example to others.

5.6.4 The IPF scheme has five privilege levels: basic, basic +, standard, enhanced and super enhanced. On the one hand a prisoner on the basic level will in normal times be deprived of a television set whilst an enhanced prisoner may expect extra visits and other privileges.

5.6.5 With the outbreak of Covid-19 and the first national lockdown, a directive was received from HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) that a downgrade to basic should only be used in exceptional circumstances and then for the shortest time possible and only as a last resort.

5.6.6 The Board has found that the directive has caused resentment among those prisoners enjoying enhanced status by demonstrating an exemplary attitude towards staff, engaging and co-operating with the prison regime and following orders. These prisoners perceive that bad behaviour is being rewarded, as no matter how badly prisoners misbehave by smashing cells, taking drugs or threatening staff, rarely are such prisoners reduced to basic, their televisions confiscated or their canteen limited. We sympathise with this view, albeit that these prisoners do not escape all sanctions since they are put on report, face adjudications and unfavourable entries in their CNomis records, all of which may have an adverse effect on parole and early release.

5.6.7 With prisoners on a restricted regime confined to their cells for up to 22 hours a day it is clearly wise not to confiscate means of distractions such as television sets. However, with the ability to penalise poor behaviour very considerably curtailed it will take an ending of the current restrictions before a judgement can be made on the success or otherwise of the new IPF regime.

5.7 Complaints

During the year 831 basic complaints (Comp1s) were received, along with 93 complaint appeals (Comp1As) and 90 confidential applications (Comp2s).

A Comp1 should be answered within five working days. At the beginning of the year response times were very poor and time limits rarely met. Currently the position is much improved. A highly effective member of staff has been put in charge of the complaints system and management now monitors performance. Delays in closure of complaints are mostly caused by the temporary absence or engagement elsewhere of the allocated member of staff. The Board is concerned that the investigation of a complaint is invariably given to a senior officer on the wing where the complaint arises. Although this has the advantage of an investigator who is likely to know the background to the complaint, it has the distinct disadvantage that complaint investigation either lacks independence or is perceived to do so. It is the Board's view that further improvements to the complaints system to enhance independence need to be put in place.

Complaints involving other establishments (mostly involving lost property) pose particular challenges in terms of timeliness in that the satisfactory completion of an

investigation rests in the hands of others outside the control of Erlestoke staff. One such complaint relating to property missing from HMP Winchester has been outstanding since December 2020.

5.8 Property

Applications complaining of lost property / clothing in another establishment or during a transfer to Erlestoke have reduced to 13, a reduction of 25% since the last report. Applications relating to lost property / clothing within the establishment have reduced to 11, a reduction of 30%.

These figures can only be viewed as a positive improvement within the system although once lockdown restrictions have been lifted and prisoner movements around the prison and the prison estate generally return to pre-lockdown levels it is feared that lost property issues will once again increase.

Health and wellbeing

6.1 Healthcare general

6.1.1 A major outbreak of Covid-19 infections put very considerable pressure on the healthcare department particularly in March 2021. There were 120 confirmed cases (more than a quarter of the prison population) and one prisoner sadly died. The response of the healthcare team was exceptional. Nurses worked a shift system and for a month remained at their posts until 9 or 10pm every night. Oxygen saturation monitoring ensured that those in difficulty were appropriately managed and sent out for secondary care where appropriate. However, during the year the exigencies of lockdown and the Covid-19 crisis had an impact on healthcare which became a largely reactive service without the ability to promote healthcare initiatives. Further, with prisoners confined to their wings, healthcare delivery became wing based as opposed to being managed from the healthcare centre. Lack of an effective IT system (see below) meant that nurses on the wings did not have access to their patients' records, putting patients at risk.

6.1.2 For the last two years the Board has expressed concern at the absence of a healthcare representative at first ACCT reviews despite such attendance being mandated. The situation has improved with healthcare now attending 60% of first reviews. Existing procedures call for Oscar 1 to inform healthcare staff of a forthcoming review but this only happened in 25% of cases. There is an urgent need to improve notification procedures and to ensure that wherever possible reviews are scheduled to take place during healthcare operational hours.

6.1.3 The safe provision of healthcare screening for newly arrived prisoners has improved with the refurbishment of a room at reception which is now dedicated for healthcare use. As a result, prisoners arriving at the prison for the first time are screened in a room adjoining the main reception area as opposed to remotely at the healthcare building. This ensures a better liaison between uniform and healthcare staff, for instance in the matter of alerts contained within person escort report (PER) documentation. However, a lack of IT connectivity means that healthcare records cannot be accessed remotely, a shortcoming that needs urgently to be addressed. In fact, poor WiFi reception throughout the prison undermines a potentially valuable initiative to provide iPads to nursing staff in order to enable access to medical records when visiting prisoners on the wings. Several attempts over the last year to improve the system have so far proved to be unsuccessful.

6.1.4 During the year the healthcare building was refurbished and remodelled providing improved facilities. However, the existing building is not fully fit for purpose providing less than adequate facilities for clinics and consulting rooms.

6.1.5 During lockdown GPs have not been visiting the segregation unit. However, the requirement to undertake such visits three times a week is to be reinstated.

6.1.6 The IMB prisoner survey revealed that 64% of prisoners found it difficult to arrange to see a doctor, with only 19% stating this to be easy. 50% of prisoners found it easy to see a nurse, whilst only 33% found it easy to see a mental health or substance misuse worker and 44% found this difficult.

6.2 Physical healthcare

6.2.1 A pharmacy technician and a physiotherapist were recruited during the year making good long-standing deficiencies. The nursing complement has by and large remained full although the Board has been concerned at what it regards as a higher than expected turnover of staff.

6.2.2 During the year there were two potentially serious dispensing errors. In one case a recommendation relating to insulin, issued by a hospital in respect of a patient being discharged back to the prison, was overlooked for 20 days. In the second case a prisoner was in error given two doses of his prescribed methadone instead of one. Neither prisoner suffered any harmful consequences and both incidents were properly investigated.

6.2.3 The waiting time to see a GP has increased to six weeks, partly as a result of the pandemic but also partly as a result of the reduction last year of GP sessions from five to four.

The waiting time for dental work has increased to six months due to the heightened precautions that are necessary to avoid Covid-19 transmission.

6.2.4 Escorted hospital visits were suspended for a time during lockdown. Although these have now resumed and technically could be maintained at the pre-lockdown level of 10 per week, the lack of availability of hospital appointments has meant that this capacity has not yet been reached.

6.2.5 139 complaints were received during the reporting period. These reached a peak in August but reduced significantly in the last two quarters. Throughout the period complaints were not responded to in a timely manner.

6.2.6 The out-of-hours service contracted to Medvivo has been less than satisfactory. Too often lack of a GP willing to attend a prisoner patient out of hours has led to an unnecessary ambulance call out and hospital attendance. It is to be hoped that when the healthcare contract comes up for renewal stricter standards are set for the out of hours service.

6.3 Mental health

6.3.1 A long-term vacancy for a registered mental health nurse remains unfilled with the position covered by a long-term temporary replacement.

6.3.2 The wellbeing team is an integrated mental health and substance misuse team. Other than the requirement for a permanent mental health nurse all other vacancies have been filled. However, the high incidence of mental health and drug misuse problems among prisoners means that the team is stretched and this is an area where higher staffing levels should be considered as a model when a new healthcare contract is put out for tender.

6.4 Social care

A highly critical report from HMIP showed this to be a neglected area both in terms of a failure on behalf of the prison to carry out its obligations in this regard and a failure on behalf of Wiltshire Council. The situation has improved albeit this is still an area of work in progress. Plans are near fruition to train a team of “buddies”. These will be specially selected prisoners who will assist disabled prisoners with items of non-personal care to include wheelchair assistance, cell cleaning and the like. A memorandum of understanding has been negotiated with Wiltshire Council and there have been an appropriate number of social care assessments undertaken.

6.5 Exercise, regime

6.5.1 The PE department is almost fully staffed, with three physical education instructors (PEIs) and one in training.

6.5.2 During the past year, the PEIs, unable to use the gym or the fitness suite, have been running exercise sessions outside the units. Each unit has been offered two two-hour long sessions per week. The take up by the prisoners has been about 20 men per session, but more when the weights were available. Sadly, this has been the only organised out of cell activity for prisoners during lockdown apart from the few prisoners lucky enough to secure jobs in the kitchen, work in farms and gardens keeping the grounds tidy and work as wing cleaners.

6.5.3 The fitness suite is in much better condition than as at this time last year. The renovation of the floor is almost complete and £24,000 worth of equipment has arrived and is ready to be installed – the new emphasis (as we noted last year) is to be on cardio-vascular fitness rather than on weights and body-building. Also £26,000 of new bikes have arrived which will enable prisoners to take part in the ‘Roadstarz’ programme which leads to a qualification as a trainer of cycling technique. However, the roof of the fitness suite leaks and this imperils both the new floor and the new equipment.

6.5.4 Plans for an astro-turf all-weather pitch are still progressing, and both Bath Rugby and Swindon Town FC are waiting and wanting to be involved with the prisoners; the former to concentrate on the psychology of sport, and the latter to offer Level 1 and 2 qualifications in football coaching. It cannot be emphasised enough (especially in view of the proposed expansion of HMP Erlestoke) that an outdoor playing facility would transform the lives of many of the prisoners.

6.6 Drug and alcohol rehabilitation

6.6.1 Marlborough drug rehabilitation unit (DRU) has run intermittently due to lockdown: the wing was also used for reverse cohorting arrivals during the first lockdown. It is hoped that this situation will improve in the next 12 months, with renewed focus on drug rehabilitation. Some members of senior management were initially sceptical as to the likelihood of successful outcomes but are now supportive.

6.6.2 Currently 45 prisoners are on the wing, of whom 30 are genuine DRU candidates; at one stage the remaining prisoners were reverse cohorting. Innovative training packs and courses were designed during the first six months of lockdown and introduced in September. The ‘Match’ package (12-step model, cognitive behaviour therapy and motive enhancement) was run twice, with 13 prisoners who completed it still on the wing; others have moved on. Ten prisoners have been

released with the means to stay off drugs if they wish to do so. Narcotics Anonymous group sessions and 1-2-1s have been run in parallel. Regrettably, renewed restrictions meant formal courses were stopped in January. Three peer mentors remain on the wing.

6.6.3 The lead DRU wellbeing manager left but has subsequently (late April) been re-employed as the head of a dedicated drug recovery team. She, senior wing staff and the peer mentors all seem highly motivated.

6.6.4 Ongoing problems:

- Wing prison officers have not yet received training on the purposes of the DRU, so are less committed to and effective in supporting wing management.
- The lack of mandatory and voluntary drug tests (MDT/VDT).
- Pressure on beds: there is a waiting list and there will be a need for prisoners who have gone through the training to move to other wings so they can try tactics they have been taught to avoid drugs.

6.7 Soft skills

Wider educational opportunities and soft skills have inevitably suffered. There was no literary festival (so successful in recent years), and sadly no cooperation with Salisbury Cathedral in celebrating its 800th anniversary. Yet some prisoners did continue with their origami; sales of the cards made with their work have reached £3,000 over the last year. Successful entries were made to the Koestler Awards with three prisoners achieving platinum awards. Also, three prisoners have been able to continue their cooperation with Bath Spa University, in the absence of any visiting students, because the tutors kindly re-wrote the degree module on 'Unlocking Criminology' to enable them to complete the work despite lockdown.

7. Progression and resettlement

7.1 Education, library

7.1.1 The department is fully staffed, apart from the recently appointed inclusion practitioner who has just withdrawn.

7.1.2. The education department is to be commended for its valiant efforts to continue to provide a service to the prisoners during Covid-19. Working in two teams, the tutors visited the units when the men were locked up, both to deliver work and to return marked assignments. This service has been appreciated beyond expectation. Against a target of 600 starts there have been 825, made by 204 distinct learners, with 725 completions, an 88% success rate, and only 12% withdrawals. Most of the educational courses have led to certification rather than qualification because the latter requires face-to-face teaching and the sitting of exams, which has not been possible. However, the prisoners should be ready to complete their qualifications once restrictions allow. Those doing vocational courses have been able to study only the theory component of their courses – the practical element not being a possibility. ‘Times 2’ and the literacy work of the Shannon Trust have not been able to operate as both involve face-to-face sessions with peer mentors.

7.1.3 The department has been in the forefront of the establishing of ‘WayOut TV’, which is now ready to go into operation, and which will enable information and teaching modules to be available to prisoners on their in-cell televisions. The department is also now recording all the prisoners’ educational and vocational efforts and achievements on the national database ‘Curious’, which should ensure that all the progress made by the prisoners is available to any other establishment to which they might be transferred.

7.1.4 The library has continued its service to the prisoners over the last year with bi-weekly visits to the units (Mondays and Thursdays) to distribute and collect books and CDs. They average 50 customers per session. The number of borrowers remains buoyant, in the high 300s, a decrease on last year only because of the contraction of the prison population due to the closure of two of the wings. The staff are to be commended for the service that they have provided in a difficult year.

7.1.5 Efforts have been made to enlarge the stock of material relevant to black and Traveller cultures.

7.1.6 The ‘Reading Ahead’ challenge and the Readers’ Group have both suffered from the inability to have any face-to-face contact with participants, but both have survived.

7.2 Vocational training, work

7.2.1 Of necessity, no purposeful activities have been possible in the workshops over the past year. The industries manager is currently recruiting two production instructors to be able to open fully when restrictions allow.

7.2.2. Altogether, there are about 110 jobs available in the workshops, of which about 50 lead to a recognised qualification. In the latter category are: waste recycling, bicycle maintenance (in cooperation with the Sue Ryder charity), fork lift truck driving, bricks and plastering, lawn mower and strimming in farms and gardens, a City and Guilds qualification in the kitchen, and a new venture (backed by Public Sector Prison Industries) in the form of a newly-equipped textiles workshop which will make curtains for the whole of the prison estate.

7.3 Offender management, progression

7.3.1 OMU (offender management unit)

Despite Covid restrictions and lockdowns during the reporting year, OMU staff, including seconded probation staff, remained in situ and worked throughout on site. This has impacted staff with long periods away from family and pressure on childcare, and their commitment is to be commended. As a result, there are fewer than 10 outstanding sentence plans and 90% of prisoners have had their reviews, though many of the latter were by telephone. The OMU did not visit the wings during restrictions.

At present the OMU is understaffed, and recruiting probation officers to work within the estate is proving extremely challenging. Caseloads for staff are therefore very high. In addition, expectations around probation staff involvement in the progression regime (PR), completing personal disorder screening, case planning for complex risk offenders and long term IPPs stretches the workload. These men are all subject to parole and the OMU has more than 15 parole hearings per month. In the Board's opinion, the allocation of probation staff at Erlestoke is too low. It is the engine room of the prison, and all prisoners would benefit from more engagement with the OMU which handles their journey through incarceration.

Key working ceased with the onset of restrictions, and this has had a big impact on the OMU, with a much greater volume of work to be addressed directly. With the cessation of programmes, training, face-to-face education, employment and indeed any purposeful activity, it has been difficult for prisoners to progress their sentence causing understandable anger and frustration amongst offenders. Reviews were sometimes heated and challenging.

During the pandemic, the OMU prioritised parole, public protection and resettlement work, including D cat progression. Finding solutions to outstanding sentence plan targets, without offending behaviour courses available, has been challenging, but some prisoners have gone on to open prison to progress through their sentence, and will then complete the thinking skills programme (TSP) and building better relationships (BBR) courses after release. This option is not possible for those awaiting Kaizen (for more violent offenders). This latter cohort face the frustration and anxiety of uncompleted courses before parole. Many came to Erlestoke for these courses, (the prison is a national resource for offending behaviour programmes) and are understandably disillusioned with the non-progression of their sentence.

7.3.2 Progression regime

During the reporting year, prisoner numbers on PR have risen from 30 to 65. Capacity remains at 80. Prisoners apply to the OMU via key workers to get onto the

regime. An article written in Inside Time in 2020 has helped market the positives of applying for PR. The probation staff shortage in the OMU, and the ensuing lack of time allowed for PR duties, is a cause for concern. Key working, which has a vital role in PR, has not been operating during the pandemic. With the closure of two wings at Erlestoke, PR members are spread around the estate, which does not create a working community feel and is therefore unsatisfactory.

During Covid-19 lockdowns, Enhanced behaviour meetings (EBMs) have not taken place, and PR prisoners have been encouraged to write up self-help diaries to record emotions, events and experiences.

Self-help and creative work books have been given to prisoners in the absence of key working sessions. One-to-one contact with staff has also taken place where necessary, but there is inevitable frustration at the perceived lack of progress during the reporting year. Promises of a working kitchen, which was built 18 months ago, but is still awaiting health and safety checks, and a small shop have not been realised. Gym equipment, a chess board, monopoly board, and other social games also seem valid requests but are absent.

Positive developments include a new working polytunnel with flowers and vegetables. PR continues to be sentence progression for those prisoners on IPP sentences, some many years over tariff, ISP prisoners and those who have failed D categorisation. Foreign national offenders, who will not be offered D categorisation, can also apply for PR.

Prisoners voiced frustration at the 'pause' in PR and there was a mixed response as to whether PR was a force for good, with a divide between those who felt 'not enough was done for them on PR' and those who enjoyed and benefitted from more one-to-one discussions with the PR staff, or that simply being on PR would help with parole. When restrictions are lifted, the probation officer in OMU should meet with PR members every four weeks, with EBM meetings every 12 weeks, involving psychology, key workers, wing officers and the OMU. The ultimate goal for these men is to prove to parole that PR has enabled them to engage and manage their own risks, and that they are ready for release into the community. With support, PR should be applauded and encouraged. At present, due to Covid-19 restrictions, it 'exists'.

7.4 Family contact

7.4.1 Family visits in person did not happen for most of the reporting year. During the period July-Sept 2020, visits were allowed, but with only seven families per session, to respect social distancing, compared to 26 families per session in normal times. Further visits were allowed leading up to Christmas, with the same restrictions in place.

7.4.2 No family days took place during the reporting year. Once Level 3 regime is returned, (planned for early May 2021) visits and family contact will be a priority at Erlestoke.

7.4.3 Purple Visits (PV) were introduced allowing internet based virtual family meetings. Two screens (with two more arrived and awaiting connection) allow virtual visits. This has had substantial teething problems, and the complaints are many. Applications for a visit are onerous, with risk assessment checks and compact forms

causing long delays. The software is poor, so that often visits are curtailed from 30 minutes to 5-6 minutes of quality time. The IT log on arrangements for families are complicated. Staff were not given training and the headphones are not fully compatible with the computers. As a result, only about a third of slots available are being taken up. In the digital age, it is vital that these problems are sorted as PV will become an important complement to visits in person – particularly for family and friends who find it difficult to travel, those with young children, or who cannot afford the time or the cost, and for foreign nationals, who rarely get visits.

7.4.4 During the reporting year, in-cell telephones were given the go-ahead at Erlestoke and cabling is in progress. Pressure on the wing phones will be relieved and the end of association time easier to manage without prisoner phone queues waiting in the wings. This will also allow more telephone time for prisoners, with more privacy.

7.4.5 During the pandemic, prisoners have been able to attend funerals remotely through Zoom. The chaplaincy staff noted that the computer software was erratic, and this experience was mixed. Between lockdowns, prisoners attended funerals if they could remain outside.

7.5 Resettlement planning

Erlestoke became a 50% resettlement prison in early 2020. Procedures for pre-release in the Bristol/Somerset/Gloucestershire/Wiltshire area remained the same, with the community rehabilitation company (CRC) provider Catch 22 delivering a service for release. Catch 22 staff were previously based at Guys Marsh, visiting Erlestoke one and a half times per week, but in early 2021 Catch 22 provided a full-time case worker five days a week, based at Erlestoke, who liaised directly with prisoners 10-12 weeks before release and earlier for more complicated cases. This was a big step forward for prisoner outcomes. Licence conditions were explained, exit and CV packs sent out and then typed up, plus information on interview techniques. Job vacancies were sent to the wings for the jobs board each week. Prisoners being released further afield previously had their needs met via a rate card requested from the area community offender manager (COM). This changed and Catch 22 provided a release service for all prisoners, without the need for a rate card.

7.5.1 Probation

Probation services will be re-unified in 2021 and Catch 22 personnel will be renamed resettlement officers, with release planning aimed to start earlier at 6-7 months pre-release. This is designed to allow more time for more input, and longer involvement from the community offender managers (COMs), so that release plans are more carefully made. Erlestoke has good relationships with local probation services, but further afield, contracting services to see to prisoner housing needs and employment will remain a challenge.

The Board is aware that preparing prisoners for re-entering society is crucial to prevent re-offending and recall. Securing employment, accommodation, access to bank accounts and universal credit is paramount. At present, useful statistics are difficult to access. Pulling together the Probation Service in 2021 is designed to have

a positive impact on the prospects of newly released prisoners and to enable more accurate reporting on the results. The Board will continue to monitor this journey, as the regime returns to normal.

7.5.2 Category D and offending behaviour programmes

A new directive allowing prisoners to progress to category D within three years of release (previously two years) is dependent on risk assessment and on NOMIS and wing reports. Some prisoners, whose programmes have been halted during the pandemic, but which could be done after release, were sent to category D establishments, which in itself is a progression in their sentence. Prisoners who needed to complete courses with violence reduction elements, due to violent or sexual crimes, were not included.

The Board notes that it is unsatisfactory for prisoners to arrive at Erlestoke for courses to be completed before parole and release, only to wait months to be assessed as suitable for a course (this should be done before they arrive), and some have waited in total two years before starting a programme. This has caused immense frustration as it inevitably has an adverse impact on sentence progression and release dates are postponed.

Despite the absence of offending behaviour programmes during Covid-19 restrictions, a small proportion of high intensity programmes have been delivered on a one-to-one basis, based on risk and need. This is being managed on a national level by intervention services.

Prisoner reviews have been interrupted during the reporting year but are still held on a case-by-case basis, again based on risk and need, and parole hearings have taken place via video link.

During the reporting year

- * 159 prisoners were released
- * 90 went to category D prisons
- * 52 were transferred to other category C establishments
- * 7 were re-categorised and transferred to category B status

The resettlement hub meetings did not take place for most of 2020, but information and guidance (IAG) staff remained at Erlestoke five days per week, the Department of Work and Pensions continued to provide a remote service, and New Future Networks (NFN) sent regular updates regarding employment opportunities upon release. The newly formed release management meeting addressed the needs of prisoners up to eight months before release and finance was provided to set up an employment hub. This service will be taken to the wings once Covid-19 restrictions are lifted, to make prisoners more aware of job opportunities on release.

7.5.3 IPP prisoners

The Board is concerned at the number of IPP prisoners being held at Erlestoke, some as much as 10 years over tariff. These men, with no determinate end to their sentence are left without hope and are in danger of becoming institutionalised and dehumanised. Some have developed serious mental health issues. Trauma counselling is needed, and a new release plan. Many are on the Progression Regime at Erlestoke but this in itself will not prepare them successfully for parole. Urgent action is needed.

8. The work of the IMB

Although due to the Covid-19 pandemic the number of visits to the prison dropped from 313 to 213, this was still able to provide a good level of direct visiting..

When Board members were unable to attend the prison in person they did so remotely. The Governor helped the Board keep track of developments by arranging for Board members to be sent the daily senior management reports.

Regular meetings with the Governor further enhanced the Board's ability to monitor life at the prison and the chaplaincy were particularly helpful in providing an independent view of prisoner wellbeing.

Applications during the height of the pandemic were dealt with by correspondence until Board members were able to return to the prison to deal with them personally. Although at one stage the number of applications reduced considerably, overall during the year the numbers increased from 114 during the previous year to 128 in the current year.

Board meetings were held remotely via Zoom at the height of the pandemic and at other times in a works board room where social distancing was possible.

Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	13
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	12
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	12
Total number of visits to the establishment	213
Total number of segregation reviews attended	12

Applications to the IMB

Code	Subject	Previous reporting year	Current reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	4	13
B	Discipline, including adjudications, IEP, sanctions	6	6
C	Equality	6	7
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	4	3
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection restrictions	7	7
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	6	6
F	Food and kitchens	0	2
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	9	19
H1	Property within this establishment	16	11
H2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	17	13
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	3	1
I	Sentence management, including HDC, release on temporary licence, parole, release dates, recategorisation	16	6
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	12	28
K	Transfers	5	1
L	Miscellaneous, including complaints system	3	5
	Total number of applications	114	128



This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications>

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at imb@justice.gov.uk.