



# Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Stocken

**For reporting year  
1 May 2020 – 30 April 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 Board, appointed by the Secretary of State from members of the community in which the prison is situated.

Under the National Monitoring Framework agreed with ministers, the Board is required to:

- satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody within its prison and the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release
- inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom authority has been delegated as it judges appropriate, any concern it has
- report annually to the Secretary of State on how well the prison has met the standards and requirements placed on it, and what impact these have on those in its custody.

To enable the Board to carry out these duties effectively, its members have right of access to every prisoner and every part of the prison, and also to the prison's records.

The Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT) is an international human rights treaty designed to strengthen protection for people deprived of their liberty. The protocol recognises that such people are particularly vulnerable and aims to prevent their ill-treatment through establishing a system of visits or inspections to all places of detention. OPCAT requires that States designate a National Preventive Mechanism to carry out visits to places of detention, to monitor the treatment of and conditions for detainees and to make recommendations for the prevention of ill-treatment. The Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) is part of the United Kingdom's National Preventive Mechanism.

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

HMP Stocken is a category C male training prison with an operational capacity of 1,044. It is situated in a rural location close to the A1 in Rutland. Access to public transport is very limited; the nearest trains and buses are in Oakham (nine miles away).

Most prisoners serve medium- to long-term sentences (that is, of four years or longer) but the prison also holds a number of life-sentenced prisoners and those serving indeterminate sentences for public protection (IPP).

There are seven wings – four 'small', holding about 95–120 prisoners, and three 'large', holding nearly 200 each. There are 14 workshops and a substantial education section. There is a large and well-equipped gym, library, chapel and multi-faith room, which are, generally, very well attended, although less so during this reporting year.

Education is provided by PeoplePlus, and healthcare and mental health services are provided by the Practice Plus Group. Inclusion (drug rehabilitation) is part of Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust. Library services are provided by Rutland County Council. Voluntary services include the Samaritans, Lincolnshire Action Trust, the Prison Fellowship, the Shannon Trust and the Sycamore Trust.

### **3. Executive summary**

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

The Covid-19 outbreak has had a significant impact on the Board's ability to gather information and discuss the contents of this annual report. The Board has therefore tried to cover as much ground as it can in these difficult circumstances, but inevitably there is less detail and supporting evidence than usual. Ministers are aware of these constraints. Regular information is being collected specifically on the prison's response to the pandemic, and that is being collated nationally.

Throughout the reporting year, the Board held monthly meetings by Zoom (for the Board meeting) and teleconferencing (with the Governor). Monitoring was done remotely via Board members' areas of special interest, meetings with the Governor and, when safe, in-person monitoring.

The Board's triennial review took place at the end of calendar year 2020.

The Board was pleased that Stocken's outbreak of Covid-19 was formally closed by Public Health England (PHE) in April 2021, after having no positive Covid-19 cases within the prison for the previous 28 days. Procedures put in place at the start of the pandemic had kept Covid-19 out of the prison for 11 months, which is commendable. Vaccinations had been offered to all prisoners over 50 years of age by mid-April of the reporting year. Stocken was ranked second in the country (7% behind HMP Moorland) for overall vaccination rates.

#### **3.2 Main judgements**

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

We feel that HMP Stocken is a safe environment for prisoners and staff.

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

In general, prisoners are treated fairly and humanely. Reports of unprofessional attitudes from staff are taken very seriously and thoroughly investigated. There was a necessary extended lock-up period during Covid which undoubtedly impacted on freedom of movement and association is prisoners across the establishment. However, the Board is confident that the prison took all necessary steps to preserve the humane treatment of prisoners as far as was possible.

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

Physical health is well catered for. There are too many prisoners with mental health issues in the prison system as a whole, and Stocken is no exception. The mental health team do their best but we often have concerns about the mental health of some prisoners.

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

Training and education are excellent but were disrupted for most of the reporting year. As Stocken is not a resettlement prison, it is not funded to prepare those

released directly into the community as well as they would be in a resettlement prison, and the Board has some concerns about the impact of the 'offender flow' process (see 'Main areas for development' (to the Prison Service)).

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

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

In last year's annual report, we reported that there was a pressing need for increased capacity in category D (open) prisons. This situation still remains and there are a significant number of 'cat D' prisoners at Stocken.

Little has changed in the past year.

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

##### **Recategorisation**

There needs to be more active and prompt action in moving non-category C prisoners from Stocken. Prisoners who are recategorised from C to B should be moved within 72 hours but often are still in the segregation unit 42 days later. Those recategorised from C to D are also waiting too long to move to open conditions.

We raised this as an issue in last year's report and little has changed in the past year.

##### **Resettlement**

The 'prisoner flow' system is not working effectively at Stocken. It is not a resettlement prison and, is not, therefore, funded to prepare those released directly into the community. However, there are a significant number of prisoners at Stocken who should be in resettlement establishments but are released directly from Stocken without adequate support in place. In the reporting year, 245 prisoners were directly released from Stocken, either on conditional release or on parole. The Board feels that two options need to be considered:

- increased funding for Stocken to undertake resettlement work with prisoners who are released direct from Stocken
- more urgency in moving prisoners who meet the criteria for a resettlement prison from Stocken to a resettlement prison.

##### **Programmes**

The Board has grave concerns over the lack of access to programmes which can lead to a prisoner's inability to reduce their risk of reoffending and their progression to a category D establishment.

## ***TO THE GOVERNOR***

The prison had moved from Level 3 to Level 2 regime during the reporting year and we look forward to plans under Level 1 with the introduction of a more structured and purposeful regime as soon as is possible. However, The Board would like to commend the leadership of the Governor during the pandemic, and the way in which the staff have worked throughout the past year under such difficult and uncertain times. This has had a positive impact on the prisoners under their care and the way in which they have reacted to the, at times, very restricted regime.

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

It is difficult to assess progress, given the impact of Covid-19, with the whole reporting year being affected by Covid and different levels of lockdown in the prison

## **Evidence sections 4 – 7**

### **4 Safety**

The key focus on safety during this reporting year was keeping staff and prisoners safe from the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. The prison implemented many additional safety measures, such as restricting or stopping prisoner movement, revising the regime on the wings, establishing ‘bubbles’, testing to identify positive cases and isolating prisoners, offering lateral flow testing twice a week for staff, enhanced cleaning, scheduling vaccinations (from January of the reporting year) and issuing soap to all prisoners to enhance handwashing.

Aside from the effects of the pandemic, life at Stocken was fairly stable, with few serious incidents and a reduction in illegal drug use, violence and use of force.

The prison’s stability rating remained ‘low’ throughout most of the reporting year, occasionally moving to ‘amber’.

Staffing levels fluctuated throughout the reporting year – mostly related to staff having to self-isolate, particularly when regular Covid-19 testing for staff began. As was to be expected, staff morale also fluctuated, but the Board feels that the governing staff worked hard to put measures in place to maintain drive and optimism. Staff worked hard to maintain the morale of prisoners which also, obviously, fluctuated. ‘Covid reps’ were established to report prisoner concerns which not only eased pressure on staff but maintained peer interaction between prisoners.

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

Reception is a department which continues to work well. Interviews and testing are thorough and carried out respectfully and decently. Incomers have access to a small shop, which helps to avoid a build-up of debt while they are waiting to order their first canteen. They have two private interviews, one in reception and one following transfer to the induction wing, where they isolated for 10 days to stop the spread of Covid-19.

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

The Board is sorry to report that there were six deaths in custody in the reporting year but there have not yet been coroner’s reports on the cause of death with two self-inflicted.

During our reporting year, there were 349 self-harm incidents (last year: 386).

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

The Board considers that challenge, support and intervention plans (CSIPs) are working well. The daily number of prisoners on CSIPs varied throughout the reporting year, from as high as 28 to zero (in July 2021). There are regular meetings

to discuss violent and vulnerable prisoners, the most frequent and detailed being the weekly safety intervention meeting.

The statistics on violence which the Board feels are particularly key are (last year's figures in parentheses):

Prisoner-on-prisoner assaults: 64 (137), of which eight (20) were considered serious.

Prisoner assaults on staff: 45 (75), of which six (seven) were considered serious.

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

The prison is generally responsive to the fears of prisoners and is willing, if necessary, to hold them in the segregation unit (SU) for their own protection until a transfer to a safer environment is possible. There is some gang-related activity but any potentially serious problems are usually prevented through the prison acting swiftly when intelligence is received.

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

There were very few serious incidents during the reporting year. The Board was always informed of any incidents or in the event of a planned removal, and attended where possible.

#### **4.6 Substance misuse**

One of the most radical changes seen during the reporting year was the very sharp drop in the availability and use of drugs such as 'spice' in the establishment.

Lack of social visits and lockdown rules have resulted in reduced opportunity for drugs to enter the prison. Most finds of illicit substance misuse have been related to brewing 'hooch', which prison staff have been very effective in disrupting. Hooch dogs are deployed alongside cell searches, and the prison continues to reduce the availability of the raw materials for the brewing of hooch – in particular, fruit.

The prison also has a state-of-the-art X-ray machine, with equipment available to examine every item of property that comes into the prison and an X-ray body scanner, which means that it is almost impossible to conceal drugs, weapons or mobile phones, both on the person and internally.

By far the most likely sources of supply are transfers of prisoners from other prisons, but staff corruption is very occasionally discovered, and we believe that the Governor is fully committed to the identification and prosecution of the individuals identified.

All correspondence entering the prison is tested, including Rule 39 legal correspondence (but without contravening the regulations to respect its privacy and integrity). It should be noted that some 'legal' letters do not originate from law firms, but are sent in by others. Almost all opened correspondence is photocopied, and the photocopy given to the prisoner.

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

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

There are seven wings. F wing holds 90–100 prisoners; K wing holds 120–130 prisoners; H wing holds 100–120 prisoners, and some cells there are reserved for emergency occupation should cells in the segregation unit become unavailable.

I wing is reserved for those on drug or alcohol recovery pathways. There about 75 prisoners there, all of whom have in-cell showers. Prisoners continue to find its facilities, common purpose and calm atmosphere very helpful.

The three large wings – L, M and N – hold nearly 200 prisoners each, on two spurs. N wing is populated largely with enhanced status prisoners. One spur on L wing now houses new receptions, where they are held in reverse cohort for 10 days to ensure that they are not positive for Covid-19.

Given that in-person monitoring was not possible for most of the reporting year, it has been difficult for the Board to monitor accommodation. However, we raised some concerns about the cleanliness of one wing on our return to in-person monitoring, and the Governor responded to this appropriately.

Installation of in-cell telephony began during the reporting year and will be rolled out to all wings, including the SU, later this calendar year.

The Board still feels that the Prison Service should be doing its best to phase out shared cells where possible notwithstanding that it is beneficial for some prisoners to share a cell.

We continue to be impressed by the management and output of the kitchens. Special dietary requirements in respect of religious dietary requirements and for those individuals identifying as vegetarians, gluten-free, diabetics or vegans continue to be met.

### **5.2 Segregation, special accommodation**

Before lockdown, the ‘on-call’ Board member would visit the SU and speak to each prisoner, and attend Rule 45 reviews as a matter of course. However, this was not possible during this reporting year, but the Board was informed of all new arrivals on the unit and Rule 45 paperwork was sent electronically to the ‘on-call’ Board member for scrutiny and signing.

The unit contains 19 cells; a de-escalation cell, two dirty protest cells and a constant watch cell.

The SU has a compact which prisoners sign on arrival, and finding a pathway out of the SU and back to normal accommodation (or transfer to another prison) is a priority.

The SU has to serve other functions as well: for example, mentally disturbed prisoners who cannot be managed on the wing are sometimes housed there, sometimes requiring constant observation where there are concerns for their safety.

In addition, prisoners who are recategorised as category B (usually because of persistent violence towards staff or other prisoners) are held on the SU pending transfer to another prison. Lastly, some prisoners regard the SU as a route to transfer out of Stocken. To that end, they create incidents on the wings, leading to segregation, in the hope that the prison will ensure a swap with another establishment. Our observations are that staff constantly rise to the challenge with fairness and professionalism.

There have been some occasions when prisoners are held in the SU for more than 42 days, and permission to hold them for longer must be sought from the regional director.

There are too many instances where category B prisoners at Stocken are not transferred within 72 hours and wait for over 42 days for transfer. Some of these prisoners cause a great deal of trouble. It remains the view of the Board that Governors of category B prisons have far too much discretion in refusing to accept the very prisoners they were intended to accommodate. We are extremely disappointed that this is still the case, despite our raising it previously with the Prison Service.

The SU serves as the centre which deals with adjudications. These are usually routinely monitored by the Board as part of its rota schedule, but this has not been possible for most of the reporting year. However, the Board has not had cause to raise concerns about the adjudication process in the past.

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

Our frequent observations of staff/prisoner interaction suggest a high level of professionalism. Difficult prisoners are dealt with consistently and with the minimum of confrontation possible in the circumstances.

One huge contribution to maintaining good staff/prisoner relationships has been key work. Unfortunately, key work was suspended due to Covid-19 restrictions and staffing levels during the reporting year. However, welfare checks were carried out by safer custody and wing staff, and prisoners were asked to complete a 'Covid survey' about their views on safety, treatment by staff, impact of the regime, cleanliness and infection control processes. Most responses were positive (in the 'agree' or 'strongly agree' range). Key work recommenced in March for more prisoners to have opportunity to speak to their key workers and was expected to increase each week.

### **5.4 Equality and diversity**

The diversity and equality action team, which reports on use of force and discrimination incident report form (DIRF) activity, met monthly throughout the reporting year but, despite that, much of the equality work was put on hold. However, all equality-related complaints continued to be investigated; 43% of DIRFs submitted for investigation were upheld (December 2019 to 2020) – the same percentage as last year (December 2018 to 2019). The Board will resume monitoring equality and diversity more fully as an area of special interest as soon as physical monitoring is possible.

The equalities leader and equalities engagement officer oversee equality processes. Prior to lockdown, there were a number of successful initiatives to promote equality at Stocken and it is hoped some of these can resume in the near future.

At their reception, new arrivals are asked whether they feel they belong to any protected characteristic group. These are groups explicitly protected in law from discrimination. The ones most relevant to men's prisons are race, religion or belief, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership.

## **5.5 Faith and pastoral support**

The chaplaincy and multi-faith team ensures that all faiths are respected at the prison. During the past year, the team has worked very hard to ensure that all prisoners have access to the chaplaincy on the wing. The team is led by an Anglican priest. It is sometimes difficult to recruit suitable faith leaders. In our previous report, we reported that Friday afternoon prayers for the Muslim community was an area of pressing concern because the multi-faith room is inadequate to contain all those wishing to worship. The long-term plan was to use the vacated kitchen space to install gym equipment, and on Friday afternoons use the gym as a substitute for the multi-faith room, but this plan was suspended at the outbreak of Covid-19. Plans are now in place to expand the chaplaincy with the opening of a further house block in 2023. The Board hopes that this expansion will address our concerns regarding the size of the multi-faith room.

In general, the area of faith is one which gives rise to very few applications to the Board.

## **5.6 Incentives and earned privileges (IEP)**

The IEP framework was suspended during the pandemic and has now been replaced by the new Incentive Scheme

As the prison identified that the previous IEP framework had negative outcomes for younger prisoners (under 25 years of age) staff are looking at ways of improving outcomes for this group in custody, whom, the local and national picture suggests, have poorer outcomes in custody, are responsible for more violence, have higher levels of self-harm and have more adjudications. Unfortunately, the key initiative set up to improve outcomes for under-25s was suspended at the outset of the pandemic but will, it is hoped, resume soon.

## **5.7 Complaints**

Complaints are generally dealt with efficiently and the Board will return to monitoring this area during the next reporting year, when full monitoring is once again possible.

## **5.8 Property**

Aside from healthcare, the Board received more applications on property than on any other topic – primarily that property has not been received at Stocken when a prisoner is transferred from another establishment. In many of the cases about missing property there is a lack of cooperation from establishments when complaint forms are sent to them from Stocken. It appears that prisoners are ‘out of sight and out of mind’. In some establishments, there is little concern about volumetric control of the amount of property that a prisoner has, which can lead to his property not being able to be transferred on the van with him, which can then lead to loss.

All too often, we are forced to recommend that the prisoner claims compensation via the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman. Not only is this a bureaucratic and very slow process, but there are also many losses which cannot be fully compensated – personal memorabilia such as photographs and letters, for example, cannot always be replaced and no amount of money will make up for their loss. Furthermore, the cost to the Prison Service is considerable.

## **6. Health and wellbeing**

### **6.1 Physical healthcare**

Healthcare services, provided by the Practice Plus Group, seem to have been running well during the reporting year, despite the high number of health-related applications received by the Board and staff shortages for most of the reporting year.

Waiting times for dentistry, physiotherapy and ophthalmology are comparable with those experienced by the general public, and access to a GP is generally better than in the community. Emergencies receive appropriate attention, with more routine matters fitted in when possible. All requests are triaged.

The Covid-19 vaccination programme began during February 2021. By the end of the reporting year, approximately 200 prisoners had been vaccinated, with all prisoners aged 65 and over having been offered the vaccine, with prisoners aged 60–64 and those with underlying medical conditions being targeted.

The wait for specialties such as dentistry, physiotherapy and ophthalmology was typically six weeks or a little less, although waiting times had increased with the suspension of some services (such as dentistry) during the pandemic. Urgent cases are always prioritised. The introduction of remote consultations with a GP or a specialist has been fairly successful.

During the year, a very commendable 97% of prisoners were tested for hepatitis C.

Other non-clinical services were suspended because of the pandemic.

### **6.2 Mental healthcare**

Mental healthcare staffing was adequate throughout the reporting year, and a new mental health lead was appointed. There is a psychologist on the staff, and the psychiatrist visits twice weekly.

Some of the long-term problems related to mental health result from a lack of places at secure mental health facilities. This means that a small number of prisoners with severe mental health difficulties and those who self-harm severely need constant watch and, in a recent case, several emergency trips to hospitals. Prison is simply an inappropriate environment for them, and they necessitate a substantial commitment of scarce resources to try to keep them safe.

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

Most recreational activity was suspended throughout the reporting year and opportunities for prisoner association remained difficult, with prisoners locked down for 22¾ hours a day (in normal circumstances, prisoners get about 10 hours a day out of their cells), with only a daily telephone call, exercise and a shower. However, the prison took measures to alleviate the boredom and frustration. All prisoners had televisions, except in exceptional circumstances, in addition to books and distraction

packs. The PE instructors ran exercise activities on the yards, where possible, during lockdowns. The Hope Project used the government grant of £10 for each serving prisoner to improve and maintain mental health, to purchase canvas and paint for each prisoner to use in-cell. Over 1,000 canvasses and related materials were purchased. The resulting paintings were then judged, and some were exhibited and sold online.

Towards the end of the reporting year, the prison moved to the stage 3 regime, with more time out of cell, where possible, and more employment opportunities opening up. A 50/50 regime was planned, with prisoners working for half the day and having social unlock for 1¼ hours in the other period. The gym reopened and in-person social visits restarted, as well as the continuation of 'Purple Visits' (see section 7.4). Key work delivery also resumed where staffing levels allowed.

## **6.5 Drug rehabilitation**

Prisoners arriving at Stocken who are already addicted to drugs or alcohol are identified during the reception process. They are then strongly urged to cooperate with their detoxification programmes. Prisoners who show good progress are transferred, where possible, to I wing (the recovery wing). 'Inclusion' is the name given to the prison's programme to identify and help prisoners trying to lose their addictions. Inclusion is now part of Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust.

## **7. Progression and resettlement**

### **7.1 Education, library**

The education department is operated by PeoplePlus, which is also responsible for most of the workshops.

During the reporting year, additional money was assigned to the education department, providing much needed resources to put education at the heart of the prison, as is emphasised at Stocken, leading to the meaningful development of skills, ambitions and self-worth. However, during lockdown, much formal full-time educational placement and face-to-face educational work was suspended. Courses where face-to-face teaching or special equipment was needed (such as VT equipment) were particularly affected.

Covid-19 restrictions meant that PeoplePlus required its staff to only be on site part time, and in specific 'bubbles'. Alternative education and library provision was made, such as offering a limited library service that prioritised legal materials, including books and Prison Service Instructions; in addition, each wing has been issued with boxes of books and DVDs, which are being rotated.

The college worked swiftly to produce a range of materials for in-cell distraction and development. These included arts projects, distraction packs of puzzles and activities for level 1 plus, and mathematics and English, and also resources and workbooks specific to certain occupations, including catering, and construction and

employability workbooks. An internal audit held at the end of October rated the quality of the education packs as 'Good'.

Return rates (of prisoners returning completed education packs to education staff) varied. As learning from workbooks is very different to face-to-face teaching, the education department was monitoring carefully prisoners' engagement with the packs, understanding of the materials and readiness for assessment. In some cases, the lack of access to prisoners was seen by the education staff as a significant barrier to meaningful learning.

Prisoners were still encouraged to work for Open University (OU) qualifications where appropriate but, given the lack of access to information and communications technology (ICT), the college sent written work and resources to the prisoners in-cell before they were allowed to return to the ICT suite specifically for OU study. A full-time OU coordinator was also appointed.

A remote careers advice service, including workbooks and contact with an information, advice and guidance adviser, was offered. There is also a certificated 'Gateway' qualification relating to personal development.

The peer mentor scheme, whereby peer mentors are used to reinforce teaching and learning, has been effective in supporting success and retention rates, and ensures that learners with special educational needs and disabilities, and learning difficulties are supported appropriately. Unfortunately this was suspended for a time during reporting year but will resume as soon as possible. The prison has introduced a 'learning disability and learning challenges network' as a further source of support.

The library is a well-resourced facility and is well integrated into the education department's courses. It is hoped that all the activities associated with the library will resume once it is fully open again. A large volume of newspapers and magazines is processed every morning and distributed to the wings.

## **7.2 Vocational training, work**

Most vocational work was suspended for most of the reporting year, but several workshops continued to operate, albeit with reduced numbers because of social distancing requirements.

The workshops teach bicycle refurbishment; motor vehicle repair; plumbing and tiling; waste reclamation and management; bricklaying; painting and decorating; catering; motor vehicle repair; gardens and grounds; and laundry work. In addition, the private sector company, DHL, operates two workshops which assemble and pack the weekly canteen orders for Stocken and a large number of other establishments. There is also a workshop where prisoners make up breakfast packs. A small number of those in catering work in the Stockpot, the prison 'mess', giving them an opportunity to interact with all grades of staff in the prison. Almost all workshops offer qualifications of some kind – usually national vocational qualification levels 1 and 2, and several workshops (bricklaying, painting and motor vehicle repair as examples) offer level 3 qualifications requiring much study and substantial exams. Most of the workshops were closed during the reporting year with key areas such as

kitchens, DHL, laundry and breakfast packing remaining open employing prisoners and others (such as bicycle repair) remaining open staffed by instructors. Bicycle repair is one of a number of workshops that engages with society outside the prison. Finished bicycles distributed to charities and other worthy causes. Gardens and grounds produce hanging baskets and bird boxes for sale.

### **7.3 Offender management, progression**

The introduction of key workers (an integral part of the offender management in custody model) seems to have been highly successful but did not operate for most of the reporting year. Offender management unit (OMU) staffing has been incredibly tight throughout the reporting year. Apart from the day-to-day challenges, OMU staff are required to undertake a significant amount of extra work, completing offender assessment system (OASys) assessments for roughly half of the prisoners transferred to Stocken who have not had either the basic custody screening tool assessment or full OASys at their previous establishment. Most probation staff have between 60 and 90 prisoners to supervise, and as each OASys assessment can take between six and 10 hours, there is a lot of work to do. Other routine duties also impact on staff time and OASys work.

A number of prisoners are required to undertake courses as part of their sentence plan. The three most commonly run at Stocken are the Thinking Skills Programme, Kaizen (targeted at prisoners who are sentenced for violent or sexual offences, and who present a high risk to the public) and Resolve (aimed at violent offenders). Before the pandemic, most courses were delivered face to face, but they are now delivered in smaller groups, one to one, and sometimes by telephone or video contact. This means that the number of places provided is lower than previously. Places are prioritised based on closeness to release or tariff expiry, or level of risk.

The Board is not happy with the provision of these courses at Stocken, but this is a national problem and we have, along with other establishments across the East Midlands, escalated the issue to our regional representative and the IMB National Chair.

One of the Board's major concerns is the length of time it takes to transfer prisoners who have been recategorised, and also of great concern is the lack of capacity in the open prison sector of the estate, which radically delays the transfer of category D prisoners. There are currently 112 category D prisoners waiting for transfer to open establishments. Difficulties continue with finding places at Stocken's nearest category D establishments – North Sea Camp and Sudbury – and some prisoners refuse to go to either of these anyway. The shortage of places on offending behaviour programmes also means that it is likely that prisoners who might otherwise have been recategorised and moved to category D conditions cannot progress.

### **7.4 Family contact**

Virtual visits ('Purple Visits') were introduced in May 2020, given the suspension of in-person visits. The prison sourced 10 laptop computers for prisoners to use to talk

to their families. In-person visits resumed as the prison moved to the level 3 regime towards the end of the reporting year, with fewer virtual visits.

Stocken took part in the first church service ever to be broadcast from a prison. It was shown nationally on the national Church of England website, service and inside Prisons via 'Wayout TV' and National Prison Radio. This was an opportunity for prisoners' families to watch virtually with prisoners, facilitating important links between prisoners and their families and also providing an opportunity to increase knowledge and awareness of the ministry of chaplains in prisons.

## **7.5 Resettlement planning**

The 'prisoner flow' system is not working for establishments such as Stocken, which are not funded to prepare those released directly into the community. In theory, prisoners nearing release should have 26 weeks of preparation at a resettlement prison which is equipped and funded for that purpose, but throughout the year a number of prisoners have been released directly from Stocken. There are a significant number of prisoners at Stocken who should be in resettlement establishments but are released direct from Stocken without adequate support in place, despite the prison requesting resettlement spaces for all prisoners prior to release.

The Board feels two options need to be considered:

- Increased funding to undertake resettlement work with prisoners who are released direct from Stocken
- More urgency in moving prisoners who meet the criteria for a resettlement prison from Stocken to a resettlement prison.

## 8. The work of the IMB

### Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	20
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	16
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	12
Total number of visits to the establishment	47 (for most of the reporting year, remote monitoring only was possible)
Total number of segregation reviews attended	The Board attended a number of reviews until it became not possible and thereafter received all relevant paperwork electronically following each review

## Applications to the IMB

Code	Subject	Previous reporting year	Current reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>
B	Discipline, including adjudications, IEP, sanctions	<b>20</b>	<b>10</b>
C	Equality	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection restrictions	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>
F	Food and kitchens	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	<b>23</b>	<b>25</b>
H1	Property within this establishment	<b>29</b>	<b>23</b>
H2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	<b>72</b>	<b>6</b>
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
I	Sentence management, including home detention curfew, release on temporary licence, parole, release dates, recategorisation	<b>41</b>	<b>14</b>
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	<b>31</b>	<b>38</b>
K	Transfers	<b>42</b>	<b>16</b>
L	Miscellaneous, including complaints system	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	Total number of applications	<b>329</b>	<b>186</b>



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