



Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at Thameside

**For reporting year
1 July 2020 – 30 June 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 to the prison's records.

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

2. Description of the establishment

HMP Thameside is a privately operated local prison for adult male prisoners in south-east London. It opened in 2012 as a category B/C prison with an operational capacity of 900. In 2015, two new wings, intended primarily for resettlement prisoners, increased operational capacity to 1,232. Throughout the reporting year, the prison has been occupied close to its operational capacity.

In September 2020 it became a reception and resettlement prison under the reconfiguration strategy of Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS). This has entailed transitioning the previous diverse mix of prisoners into an establishment holding two-thirds prisoners on remand awaiting a court hearing and one-third category C resettlement prisoners near the end of their sentence. Prisoner transfers have increased as a result, and the average stay in Thameside remains short.

In support of the reconfiguration strategy, a video-conference centre opened during the reporting year providing ten court rooms, a parole room and facilities for police interviews, probation reviews, immigration hearings and legal visits. It is well used.

Most prisoners are held in two-bed cells. All have integrated toilets and showers, a telephone and an in-cell computer management system (CMS). Prisoners use the CMS to request activities including gym, social visits, healthcare appointments, meal options and canteen. Eligible prisoners can pay for access to a limited number of television channels.

There is a well-equipped gym (including two outdoor areas), a well-stocked library, an education centre and a multi-faith centre. The care and separation unit (CSU) has 18 cells, and a healthcare centre runs surgeries for outpatients and an 18-cell inpatient unit.

The prison is managed under contract by Serco Group plc. It has two partner agencies: Catch 22 (focusing on offender management, gangs and rehabilitation) and Turning Point (focusing on issues arising from drug and alcohol misuse). A separate division of Serco (Serco FM) provides the facilities management services.

A number of centrally contracted organisations provide other services. Education provision is contracted to Novus; healthcare services are provided by the Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust ('Oxleas'); and Change Grow Live delivers social care. In the reporting year the community rehabilitation company (CRC) was MTCNovo, who sub-contracted resettlement and housing to Catch-22, St Mungo's and De Paul. The CRC became part of the new unified Probation Service on 28 June 2021.

3. Executive summary

3.1 Background to the report

Throughout the reporting year HMP Thameside has operated to a Covid-19 exceptional delivery model (EDM) regime set by HMPPS. In April 2021 it received HMPPS permission to move from EDM stage 4 (lockdown regime) into EDM stage 3 (restricted regime), the first London prison to do so.

This move allowed for some limited easing of the prisoner regime including an increase from 30 to 60 minutes' daily outdoor exercise and the reintroduction of social visits and outdoor gym in controlled groups. In early September 2021 the prison received permission to move from EDM stage 3 to a stage 2 regime, providing further incremental regime easing.

While this positive direction of travel in returning to regime normalisation is welcome, in the period covered by this annual report ending 30 June 2021 the daily norm for most prisoners has been to spend 23 hours or more in a shared cell.

Board members have visited the prison throughout the year, though with less frequency and presence on the wings than in past years. Staff from important functions in the prisoner resettlement area including education, probation and housing for prisoners on release withdrew from the prison for several months. These factors have affected the level of monitoring evidence available to the Board in finalising some areas of this annual report.

3.2 Main judgements

How safe is the prison?

The prison has taken effective measures to contain and prevent the spread of Covid-19 in challenging circumstances. The majority of confirmed cases of the virus at Thameside were brought in by prisoners arriving at reception from other prisons or the outside community. Testing of staff was introduced once testing kits became available. No prisoners have died from the virus, but sadly one staff member died from Covid-19 during the reporting year.

Several initiatives aimed at more active and pre-emptive prisoner safety management and monitoring have been introduced this year including more targeted use of the challenge, support and intervention plan (CSIP) to tackle violence and a revised approach to gang members. A more active focus on assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) and self-harming has been introduced. The Board welcomes these positive developments though it is difficult to judge their effectiveness until the prison emerges more fully from extended lockdown. No mandatory drug testing was carried out this year. Reliable data to assess the extent and nature of the continuing problem of prisoner drug use has therefore been unavailable.

How fairly and humanely are prisoners treated?

The lockdown measures taken to keep prisoners safe during the pandemic have unfortunately come at a cost to acceptable norms of humane treatment. The Board has considerable concerns at the longer-term impact on the mental and physical health and wellbeing of prisoners who have endured prolonged periods of confinement and lack of socialisation. An IMB survey of prisoners found that overall the prison was felt to have handled the lockdown fairly, though there was perceived favouritism in the allocation of

jobs. The majority of staff interactions with prisoners are observed by the Board to be positive and professional.

There has been a welcome drive to tackle long standing facilities management failings affecting the residential wings. Complaints to prison managers about accommodation issues increased by 59% this year. Management of the lengths of stay in the care and separation unit has improved; the Board would like to see evidence from body-worn video cameras being available in adjudications. Committed support by the chaplaincy team has been provided on the residential wings throughout the year to prisoners of all faiths and none. The prison's processes for investigating allegations of bullying and assault by staff referred by the IMB have made some improvement but remain disappointing overall.

How well are prisoners' health and wellbeing needs met?

The incremental steps taken to ease daily regimes and provide prisoners with more out of cell time are welcomed, though the IMB regrets the frequent cancellation of gym activities since they restarted. In the prisoner survey about the prison's handling of lockdown, overwhelmingly those who responded wanted more gym and exercise classes above anything else. There has been a concerning low take-up of Covid-19 vaccines by the prisoner population.

The Board again reports the unacceptable delays in the transfer of severely mentally ill patients to secure establishments with more suitable facilities. While this is not within the healthcare provider's control, the daily dispensing of medication is, and there have been serious lapses in this regard reported to the IMB. One is the subject of an independent investigation by the NHS Commissioner. The IMB receives more applications about healthcare matters than any other issue, and considers improvement is needed by the healthcare provider in handling complaints.

How well are prisoners progressed towards successful resettlement?

Progression towards successful resettlement was compromised in several areas by the extended lockdown and the absence from the prison of key staff, notably in education. However, positive developments included the introduction of Purple Visits that enable prisoners to meet their families by video link, innovative work by the library staff and the overdue transfer from Thameside of life sentenced and category D prisoners to more suitable establishments. The Board is unable to comment on the help given to prisoners this year to secure accommodation and employment on release due to the unavailability of information.

3.3 Main areas for development

TO THE MINISTER

The Board has considerable concerns at the longer-term impact on the mental and physical health and wellbeing, and potentially the future behaviours, of prisoners who have endured prolonged periods of confinement and lack of socialisation.

While staff employed by the prison operator and the healthcare provider have worked ceaselessly throughout the pandemic in the interest of prisoners, staff employed in important prisoner resettlement activities have operated remotely with varying degrees of actual engagement. The education contractor, Novus, provided almost no service to

prisoners. Foreign national prisoners, and especially those subject to IS91, have suffered from an absence of Home Office immigration staff visiting the prison and progression of their cases. Many prisoners have been released from Thameside this year with far less resettlement support on accommodation and other matters than they would have received prior to the pandemic.

Delays in transferring severely mentally ill prisoners to secure establishments that provide more specialist treatment have been a longstanding concern of the Board. While the government's positive response to Sir Simon Wessely's mental health review is noted, transfer wait times for these vulnerable individuals have remained this year overall in excess of NHS England guidelines.

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

The Board was concerned at the number of prisoners arriving at HMP Thameside on transfer from other prisons with Covid-19 symptoms. Some developed into confirmed cases. While all arrivals were subject to the prison's reverse cohorting procedures, these transfers placed other prisoners and Thameside staff at risk.

HMPPS is understood to be reviewing lessons learnt from the lockdown for post-Covid prison regimes. The Board stresses to HMPPS the importance of all prisoners having the opportunity to engage in regular purposeful out of cell activities and jobs. However there are insufficient such opportunities at present in Thameside for a prison of 1200 men. To make up this deficiency will require investment. Out of cell socialisation time (association), appropriately managed, is also essential for the welfare of prisoners, and should not be seen as optional.

TO THE DIRECTOR

The Board welcomes the Director's strong, top-down authoritative leadership focused on positive change initiatives (such as in the management of prison safety) and reinforcing the responsibilities and accountabilities of managers and staff. Important areas of the core prison regime are now more tightly and purposefully managed, as detailed in the main evidence sections (especially in section 4).

The Board would like to see the same concentrated focus on improving the quality of the daily lives of prisoners where these can be influenced by the actions of staff, especially in the residential areas. IMB members regularly observe how poor communication between managers can stifle improved outcomes for prisoners, and how lack of empathy or thought can rob them of legitimate entitlements. Examples are contained in the report's main evidence sections.

3.4 Progress since the last report

Positive developments noted by the Board during the year include:

- A significant shift in approach towards more active and pre-emptive management and monitoring of safety within the prison, including management of the ACCT process (see introduction to section 4 and section 4.2).
- A radical change to housing gang members in the prison (see section 4.3).
- More collection and analysis of data and trends affecting prison safety (see introduction to section 4 and sections 4.2/4.3).

- Staff refresher instruction and upskilling in the use of force, and insistence on timely and accurate completion of use of force paperwork (see section 4.5).
- Enforcing the wearing and use of body-worn video cameras, though evidence from them remained unavailable for prisoner adjudications (see section 4.5).
- Decline in drugs finds, though the absence this year of data from mandatory drug testing has obscured the extent of drug availability (see section 4.6).
- Reduced average lengths of stay in the CSU through better management in the unit (see section 5.2).
- Investment in a new in-cell computer system (CMS) in place of existing legacy equipment (see section 5.1).
- More focused and responsive facilities management efforts to repair damaged residential wing facilities and equipment and overhaul fire safety systems (see section 5.1).
- Decline in complaints about property going missing within the prison, suggesting an improvement in cell clearance procedures (see 5.7 and 5.8).
- Introduction of Purple Visits providing prisoners and their families/friends the opportunity of virtual social visits (see section 7.4).
- Thameside was the first London prison to receive permission to move out of a lockdown regime based on detailed plans submitted to HMPPS and effective control of Covid-19 (see section 3.1).
- Widening the attendance at the Director's morning meetings to all senior managers including the heads of the non-custodial and external agency teams has encouraged a more joined-up approach across the prison (see section 8).
- Opening of the new video conference centre providing virtual courts. Completed to a high standard and managed with efficiency and pride, it has reduced the need for prisoner escorts to and from outside courts (see section 2).

Evidence sections 4 – 7

4. Safety

During the year the Director has instituted a significant shift in approach towards more active management and monitoring of safety within the prison, with greater emphasis on pre-emptive interventions. In addition to the existing multi-disciplinary weekly meetings of the safeguarding board (the review of vulnerable prisoners) and the safety intervention meeting (monitoring of violence), a new monthly safer prisons meeting now reviews data and trends.

The approach to placing prisoners on an ACCT (assessment, care in custody and teamwork) has been modified with the aim of managing fewer ACCTs, focused on those at greatest risk, therefore giving staff more time to interact with these vulnerable individuals and reduce incidents of self-harm. This approach includes an active focus on closing ACCTs at first review where appropriate. At the same time greater use of CSIP interventions has been encouraged so that violence reduction efforts can be more proactive. More emphasis is also being given by the prison on monitoring the effect of these changes.

The Board views these approaches as potentially positive in improving the physical safety of prisoners. The drivers to self-harm and violence can be complex, and it is hard this year to assess how much levels of self-harm and violence may have been influenced by the severe and continuous Covid-19 lockdown regime. The longer-term impact that very long periods of confinement could have on the future mental health and behaviours of prisoners is also unknown and causing the Board concern.

4.1 Reception and induction

The number of prisoners received into, and transferred from, HMP Thameside has increased since it became a reception and resettlement prison in September 2020. In May 2021 there were 382 admissions and 87 transfers to other establishments. The prison now draws from a wider catchment area of courts and police stations, which has led to a significant increase in delayed evening arrivals of prisoner escort vans by the prisoner escort contractor. The Board's concern at the unfair impact on prisoners was passed to the Lay Observers, who monitor the prisoner escort services.

Reception processes and screenings work efficiently, though pinch points with healthcare screening have sometimes occurred. Prisoners move first to the early days centre where effective reverse cohorting arrangements have been in place to contain Covid-19 prior to their transfer to a main wing. Most confirmed cases of coronavirus were from prisoners arriving at reception as transfers from other prisons or from the outside community.

Delivery of induction in the training rooms ceased at the start of lockdown. This diminished the quality and depth of induction received by new prisoners. However the Board has observed the Insiders adapting well and continuing to deliver induction basics through cell doors.

4.2 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody

Last year's IMB annual report reported a worrying upward trend in levels of self-harm. Total self-harm incidents rose further during the reporting year to 570 against 482 last year, though there was a positive reducing trend of 347 incidents in the first six months and 223 in the second six months. Some part of the decline in the trend of self-harm can probably

be attributed to fewer prolific self-harmers residing in the prison, but it would seem to cautiously support the in-year introduction of the revised focus on ACCT interventions.

The number of ACCTs opened has been stable at around 190 each quarter period, with more of these now being closed at first review (26% in June 2021). Overall the number of ACCTs opened during the reporting year rose from 664 in 2019/20 to 758 in 2020/21.

IMB members have continued to be impressed by the care and concern that the small, committed safer custody team shows to prisoners who are referred to it (sometimes directly by the IMB), and which is evident at the weekly safeguarding board. More work has been carried out into understanding the triggers of self-harm.

At the end of the reporting year the prison was getting ready to introduce the new ACCT documentation (V6). This will hopefully address some of the shortfalls the Board has noted in its monitoring reports to the Director, such as the absence of meaningful handovers.

During the year the number of Samaritan-trained Listeners declined substantially. This was caused by a combination of these prisoners being released or transferred and difficulties in arranging external training during the lockdown. Samaritan training for new Listeners has now restarted.

There were two deaths in custody during the reporting year. Neither are apparently suicide or Covid-related and will be investigated in the normal way by the Prison and Probation Ombudsman (PPO). No investigations into earlier deaths in custody at Thameside have been published by the PPO in the past year, and their reports are now sadly considerably in arrears meaning that relevant lessons are not being learned in a timely fashion.

4.3 Violence and violence reduction, self-isolation

Levels of serious assaults as categorised by prison data increased from 47 in 2019/20 to 59 this year. Of these, 35 were prisoner-on-prisoner assaults and 24 prisoner-on-staff assaults. However the number of serious assaults remains below those recorded in 2018/19 and 2017/18.

Assaults categorised by the prison as 'minor' increased from 293 last year to 346 this year. Of these, 145 were prisoner-on-prisoner and 201 prisoner-on-staff. The latter number includes a gratuitous and unpleasant trend for staff to be spat at. These incidents are always reported to the police.

Given the exceptional prison conditions created by the extended Covid-19 lockdown, an increase in violence this year is not perhaps surprising. These incidents have almost all taken place in the narrow time window that prisoners have been out of their cells. All acts of violence are now recorded by reason and location in the prison, graded by the level of violence, and compared with other London prisons. Thameside appears towards the top of the list for all types of violence, with Wandsworth and Pentonville.

The number of prisoners on CSIP has increased through the year in line with the focus on more active intervention in tackling violent behaviours. At the end of the reporting year, there were 16 CSIPs open, an increase from ten in September 2020. The Board's ability to monitor the quality of the intervention meetings has been hampered by limited access to the NOMIS system.

A small team of forensic psychologists support the work to reduce violence and encourage more pro-social behaviours. One initiative this year was an equine project in which 12 young adult prisoners worked with horses brought into the prison.

As a London reception prison taking from the surrounding community, there is a significant cohort of prisoners from local gangs. At the year end, Thameside held 160 prisoners with a known gang membership from 67 separate gangs. The prison draws on effective knowledge and intelligence concerning these gangs from the police and employs a dedicated gangs team.

There has been a radical change in approach introduced by the Director this year in the housing and treatment of gang members. In place of locating those with potential conflicts on separate wings, it is explained to them on arrival that they will not be separated and will be expected to put aside their conflicts and gang culture whilst in Thameside. They are encouraged to manage their own conflicts and develop more prosocial behaviour rather than passing responsibility to the prison. If they still revert to violence or serious anti-social behaviour, the prison takes appropriate action.

It is pleasing to note that this new approach to gangs appears to be working, with the percentage of violence attributed to gang members falling from 15% in the three month period July to September 2020 to 11% in the three month period April to June 2021.

4.4 Prisoners with specific vulnerabilities

Vulnerable prisoners are selectively housed throughout the prison on appropriate wings. This practice appears to work satisfactorily. In the small number of cases where the Board was aware of a prisoner concerned for his safety due to the nature of his offence, the prison was quick to address the issue.

There are an increasing number of prisoners with physical mobility issues subject to personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) monitoring - 16 at year end compared to nine at the start of the year. They are mainly housed on ground floors.

4.5 Use of force

There has been a drive to improve the awareness and confidence of custodial staff in the appropriate use of force, and the importance of timely completion of the use of force forms. Greater emphasis has been given to control and restraint (C&R) training and refresher sessions. This appears to have led in the second half of the reporting year to an increase in the use of C&R and a decrease in the use of precautionary cuffing. Data on the nature of usage is reviewed at the regular use of force committee meetings.

Prison data shows that planned use of force has not been excessive, declining from 22 incidents in the first three months of the reporting year to 12 in the last three months. Most planned use of force has been to escort potentially violent prisoners to the CSU and onto prisoner escort vans for a court attendance or prison transfer. Planned use of force witnessed by the IMB was carried out appropriately.

Spontaneous use of force has been stable throughout the year at just below 200 incidents every quarter period (777 incidents in whole year). This is around twice the number the Board reported for the whole of the previous year (393), though in that year it increased steadily through the 12-month period, rather than remaining stable. It is unclear to the Board the extent to which this large year-on-year increase is due to more rigorous completion of use of force paperwork or to growing prisoner frustration at lockdown regime restrictions.

A significant effort was made over the year to require custodial staff to use body-worn video cameras (BWVCs). This has led to substantially more incident evidence being collected,

though disappointingly facilities do not exist for showing BWVC evidence at prisoner adjudications (section 5.2). A new type of camera, as worn by the police, has recently been introduced, which is believed to be proving more reliable.

Last year the Board noted its concern at the unreasonable length of time taken by the prison to undertake processes for investigating claims made by prisoners to the IMB that they had been assaulted by staff. This remains largely the case (section 5.7).

4.6 Substance misuse

Prisoners arriving at Thameside are screened during the reception process for possession of drugs and alcohol and for a substance misuse history. The most serious cases are moved to the integrated drug treatment service (IDTS) wing. Many are returners to the wing and known to the staff.

The number of drug finds declined sharply during the year, from 109 in the first half of the year to 49 in the second half. Whether this means drugs are being squeezed out of the prison or prisoners are more successful at concealment is always an unknown, though the prison believes the former to be the case. A new body scanner at reception has cut down a key entry route and for most of the year there were no social visits. Staff caught bringing drugs into the prison have been successfully prosecuted, and detection in the post room is effective. A concerning trend has been the detection of spice by sniffer dogs in rule 39 legal letters purporting to come from solicitors; these are referred to the police.

New psychoactive substances (NPS) appear to be the most common drug taken by prisoners when this is detected (generally through their behavioural change). No mandatory drug tests have been conducted this year due to covid precautions and other staff priorities. Regrettably no reliable data therefore exists currently on drugs use across the prison.

5. Fair and humane treatment

5.1 Accommodation, clothing, food

Accommodation is a good standard and includes in-cell toilets, showers and a phone. This has given rise during the extended lockdown to a marked reluctance by some prisoners to be transferred from Thameside to prisons lacking such facilities.

Nevertheless prisoner complaints about residential issues increased by 59% this reporting year (see section 5.7) and this was the most complained about subject. A frequent complaint has been from prisoners moving into a cell with inoperable or damaged equipment. The in-cell CMS system is unreliable and deliberate damage of cell equipment and furnishings is common. Longstanding facilities management weaknesses – cited by the Board in past annual reports – have now been recognised by senior management and are being tackled with greater vigour.

A new in-cell CMS system is being installed and increased priority has been given to repairing or replacing other cell equipment, repairing damaged cells, conducting accommodation fabric checks and overhauling fire systems. Broken servery hot plates – some out of use for several months – have been repaired or replaced. Other servery equipment still needs attention and the IMB has reported concerns in some wing serveries with hygiene and rodent droppings. The lifts on which key activities depend still regularly break down. This causes the unsafe ferrying of hot food by prisoners up flights of stairs and has discriminated against mobility impaired prisoners unable to climb stairs to access a booked Purple Visit (video call with family/ friends) or their video court hearing.

Prison data showed 12% of prisoner emergency cell bells went unanswered for more than five minutes in a sample week in May 2021. An IT problem still prevents the IMB accessing cell bell data for individual cells to help prisoners who raise concerns at the slowness of cell bell responses. The Board reported this issue in last year's report.

Prisoners alerted the IMB that they were being overcharged for using the in-cell phones. The prison confirmed that it had failed to implement a lower schedule of phone charges introduced across the prison estate in 2019. This was rectified and the overcharges placed in the prisoner amenities fund.

Continued Covid-19 restrictions on clothing hand-ins has been a regular source of complaint, but few issues have been raised with the Board about food.

5.2 Care and separation unit

The CSU has 18 cells with an average occupancy this year of 11 (the same as last year). The cells are adequate and there are two outdoor exercise yards. Prisoners have a radio and may qualify for a TV. The use of special accommodation has not been excessive. Faith centre staff visit daily and a doctor three times a week. A nurse administers medications daily and checks on welfare.

The CSU can present a challenging environment and has been staffed by a largely consistent group of officers who display patience and professionalism in their work. Most prisoners return to the main wing within seven to ten days. Better management of lengths of stay have led to a significant reduction in the number of 42-day reviews this year (three in place of 15). Three 84-day reviews have been held (one last year) and one prisoner remained in the CSU for 186 days.

Some lapses have occurred in the attendance of suitably briefed healthcare staff at good order or discipline (GOOD) reviews. This can, on occasion, arise from a late change of review time. Prison data for April to March 2021 shows a total of eight prisoners in the CSU on an ACCT and 12 on a CSIP.

Adjudications: A total of 3,723 adjudication hearings were held, an increase from 3,005 last year. In the three months April to June 2021, 62 cases were referred to the police including a worrying number where staff had been spat at or assaulted.

With one exception, IMB members have observed adjudications to be conducted fairly and with respect for the prisoner. In the case of this one exception, the adjudication was overturned on procedural grounds when the prisoner appealed it to the Ministry of Justice.

Just over half of all adjudications were proven (56%). Despite management efforts to improve the adjudications process, many were still postponed or dismissed through poor paperwork, lack of evidence or non-attendance by reporting officers.

CCTV evidence has been available in hearings at the discretion of the adjudicator. Despite greater use by staff of body-worn video cameras (BWVCs), facilities to show video evidence in adjudication hearings from BWVCs have regrettably not been installed. Independent adjudicator hearings have not taken place; restarting them by video link is being examined.

5.3 Staff-prisoner/detainee relationships, key workers

Staffing. Staffing to deliver the prison regime has often been tight due to high staff turnover and sickness. Twenty six percent of all Serco staff at reporting year end had joined Thameside since the start of lockdown in March 2020, of whom 19% were prison custody officers. Many custodial staff have only known a lockdown regime where fewer opportunities have existed to develop the skills and experience in managing prisoners and building relationships that the return to a more open regime will require.

The Board is concerned that ongoing staff recruitment and retention difficulties will hinder the full return to more acceptable and humane conditions for prisoners after 16 months of permanent lockdown. The prison is taking active steps to address the situation and was unable for many months to recruit in sufficient numbers by Covid-19 limits on the size of induction training courses for new custodial officers. Despite an increase in recruitment once these limits were relaxed, the current growth in often better paid jobs in the external workforce has led to further job losses. Cancellation of gym sessions soon after their reintroduction has unfortunately been one sign of the staffing shortage.

Staff-prisoner relationships. Prisoners made 175 complaints against staff, and 85 applications to the IMB about staff-prisoner concerns including bullying. Both were a slight drop on last year. Most staff interactions with prisoners observed by the IMB have been positive and professional.

Key work sessions increased through the second half of the year. Useful guidance was given to staff on what each session should aim to focus on and achieve. At the year-end the prison was below the target of 800 per week to fully deliver key work. The Board has had limited visibility of the quality and outcomes of these sessions and prisoners rarely mention having spoken with their key worker in applications to the IMB. The Board discovered through speaking with prisoners, and subsequently verified, that some key work sessions had been recorded as completed on NOMIS when they had not taken place.

Prisoner forum. A valuable prisoner information and communication (PIAC) forum meets weekly between prisoner representatives, staff and managers to share information and concerns, and to make suggestions. It has been disappointing to note that over a period of 40 weeks, the PIAC forum met only 13 times, and sometimes with a gap of up to eight weeks. The Board also found that most issues raised, and actions agreed, in meetings were not followed up by staff or managers, and hence reappeared repeatedly in forum minutes. These concerns were discussed with the Director, and a plan subsequently drawn up to improve arrangements for the PIAC forum.

IMB prisoner survey on COVID-19. Over four weeks in February 2021, the IMB conducted a survey of all prisoners on how they perceived the prison's handling of the Covid lockdown, and what more the prison could provide. This was carried out on the prison's in-cell CMS system and received 285 responses (24% of the prison's population). The main findings of the survey were:

- The prison was not perceived to be doing well at keeping prisoners informed about the effects of Covid-19 in the community nor the reasons for the changing regime in the prison. It was perceived more favourably in keeping prisoners safe.
- Overall the prison was felt to be handling the lockdown fairly, although there were some complaints about perceived favouritism in the allocation of jobs.
- The provision of learning and education packs and library services was heavily criticised – with the worst scores attributed to the provision of distraction packs.
- Asked what additional activities could be provided, overwhelmingly the most popular was gym and fitness exercises.
- The majority of prisoners did not experience difficulty in accessing their PIAC representative and knew who their wing Listener was.

The survey results were shared with the Director.

5.4 Equality and diversity

Equalities and diversity issues are monitored and managed by a small team and through meetings of the diversity and equalities action team (DEAT). The IMB has observed the latter to be well attended and address a broad agenda.

Prisoners submitted 106 discrimination incident reporting forms (DIRFs) this year, compared to 40 last year. There were 36 in the first six months and 70 in the second half. Eleven were upheld, compared to eight last year. Data on the eleven DIRFs upheld shows:

- Protected characteristic: race 8; race/age 1; religion/belief 1; disability 1
- DIRF type: prisoner on staff 7; prisoner on prisoner 2; other 2 (inappropriate photo on a wing wall, and a broken lift preventing access to a Purple Visit).

The large increase in DIRFs in the first six months of 2021 may in part reflect a combination of increasing prisoner frustration at the extended lockdown regime, and the more visible availability of DIRF forms and boxes which have been moved inside wings. The Board has not observed overt racial discrimination, but the upholding of eight DIRFs alleging racial discrimination suggests lessons to be learned.

The prison monitors the ethnicity of occupants of the CSU. In the six months January to June 2021, the average percentages compared to the total prison population were:

- Black prisoners: 48% in CSU compared to 39% in prison as a whole
- White prisoners: 31% in CSU compared to 40% in prison as a whole

- Mixed race and Asian prisoners: 17% in CSU compared to 16% in prison as a whole

The Board would welcome ethnicity analysis being extended to prisoners placed on adjudication and subject to use of force procedures. Adjudication ethnicity data is collected, but it is not totalled up or analysed.

The ethnicity of staff employed by the prison contractor Serco is 49% white, 40% from the black, Asian and minority ethnic community, and the remainder are undisclosed.

Foreign nationals comprise around 20% of the prisoner population. They are mostly housed in one wing. Facilities for language translation are available, and the prison is considering the introduction of an electronic translation tool. Some staff volunteer their language skills support. Genesis Advantage, a company specialising in immigration issues, continued to visit foreign nationals during the whole year to provide support and advice.

The number of foreign nationals held under immigration procedures (IS91) beyond their sentence expiry nearly doubled between April and June 2021 (from 19 to 35). They have been visited by Genesis Advantage during Covid-19, but the absence of visits from Home Office immigration staff during Covid-19 has hindered progression of cases which is an injustice for those prisoners affected.

5.5 Faith and pastoral support

No faith services or classes have been held this reporting year in the faith centre. However the multi-faith chaplaincy team has maintained a much-welcomed presence on all wings, talking and praying with prisoners, providing pastoral support, and distributing printed material for the suspended weekly faith services and study courses, as well as faith-based activity packs. Faith team staff produced DVDs covering the major religious festivals which were played on the prisoner DVD channel.

While overall the dietary needs of different religions and festivals are well managed, the Board was concerned to learn from faith centre imams that halal food on some wing serveries was being cross contaminated with non-halal food by incorrect use of utensils, inadequate equipment and a misunderstanding of the requirements. This had been a concern raised with senior managers on a number of previous occasions. This poor practice is disrespectful and should not be happening.

Bereavement support and counselling has been given to all prisoners who have suffered a bereavement during lockdown. Some prisoners have been able to watch funerals from the faith centre on a tablet, but no temporary releases to attend funerals have been permitted by the prison.

5.6 Incentives schemes (IEP)

The prison reintroduced the basic level of IEP in July 2020 for serious incidents such as assaults on staff or other prisoners, and refusal to attend court. Around 35 prisoners on average have been on basic IEP through the year (2%-3%). The Board has verified the entries in the defensible decisions log. Around 90% of prisoners are standard IEP, and some 7%-8% enhanced IEP.

The Board hopes to conduct more analysis on the use of the IEP system to positively manage prisoner behaviour and minimise adjudication or segregation.

5.7 Complaints

Prisoners submitted 1,677 formal complaints to prison managers during the reporting year (last year 1,820). The three largest causes for complaint were:

- Residential – 342. Last year 215. Increase of 59%
- Property – 285. Last year 383. Reduction of 26%
- Complaints about staff – 175. Last year 191. Reduction of 8%

Similar trends were evident from prisoner applications to the IMB:

- Residential – 29. Last year 19. Increase of 53%
- Property – 39. Last year 76. Reduction of 49%
- Staff/ prisoner concerns – 85. Last year 93. Reduction of 9%

Prison data shows the timeliness of responses to prisoners has improved, achieving around 85%-90% answered on time (generally, within five working days) in most months. This percentage includes interim replies sent within the required timeframe, which is allowed by HMPPS. However the Board still finds cases of the subsequent substantive responses taking up to several weeks to reach the prisoner; and yet it will have been counted in the official data as on time.

Overall the Board considers that the quality of responses has improved and sees many which are considerate and deal well with the issues raised. It still sees some which are dismissive and unhelpful.

Following concerns raised last year by the IMB about the process and transparency of investigations into confidential complaints alleging assault or bullying by staff, there is now a central log for all Comp2 complaints, including those referred by the IMB for investigation by prison management. Visibility to the IMB of Comp2 investigation processes and outcomes has made some improvement, but responses are often significantly outside the response limit and have needed regular chasing by the IMB.

5.8 Property

Two hundred and eighty-five complaints were submitted to prison managers about property matters – mostly missing property – during the year. This is a reduction on last year. IMB application statistics also show a significant fall in prisoners contacting the Board about property going missing within the prison.

The greatest problem prisoners face remains securing the return of property that has remained behind in their previous establishment or went missing in transit between establishments. IMB Boards continue to advocate investment by HMPPS in an electronic property recording system. Meanwhile, too many property complaints never get resolved and unnecessarily impact a prisoner's mood and wellbeing.

6. Health and wellbeing

6.1 Healthcare: Covid-19

Prison managers and healthcare staff have worked successfully to keep cases of Covid-19 at very low levels, notably through effective induction screening and reverse cohorting in the early days centre. No prisoners died of the virus since its onset in March 2020.

Covid vaccinations became available to prisoners on the same age and clinical vulnerability criteria as the outside community. Fifty one percent of those eligible at the end of April 2021 had been vaccinated and 26% had declined. As more groups became eligible, the percentage take-up fell and the percentage of prisoners declining increased. In mid-August 2021, when vaccines had been on offer to all age groups, take-up was 35% and the remaining 65% had either declined or not been vaccinated.

While continued efforts are being made to promote vaccine take-up, the level of take-up by the prisoner population is disappointing given the risks that they and staff face in a prison environment. Prisoners have also been almost universally reluctant to wear the face masks they are given. Board members have observed little enforcement of mask wearing by custodial staff, many of whom have not set an example themselves.

6.2 Physical healthcare

Some 20% of the prison population receive treatment for physical health conditions. Significant improvement in attendance at GP, advanced practitioner nurse (APN) and substance misuse appointments was made this year following the relocation of clinics from the healthcare centre to the wings. According to data supplied by healthcare staff, average waiting times for appointments vary between seven days for a dentist or optician, and 16 days for substance misuse. Non-attendance varies between 2% for substance misuse, 6% for a GP/APN, and 33% for physiotherapy.

The Board is pleased to note that the difficulties reported in previous years in meeting the custodial staffing need for hospital escorts have been very largely overcome. The main reason this year for prisoners not attending routine hospital appointments lay with a cancellation decision by the hospital. The need to escort prisoners for urgent and emergency hospital appointments has been met.

The on-site facilities of X-ray and aortic abdominal aneurysm (AAA) screening continued during the year, though with interruptions. X-ray has been available since August 2020; out of 175 appointments offered, 107 prisoners attended. Clinics for AAA, available for men aged 65 and over, ran between August and November 2020 and restarted in March 2021; out of 13 appointments offered, seven prisoners attended. Bowel cancer screening for older prisoners has been available by post and was offered to four prisoners in the year.

The Board had planned to conduct a survey of all prisoners on key healthcare matters including their experience of waiting times, receiving notification of appointments, and being unlocked to attend them. Unfortunately, the IMB survey is yet to take place pending resolution of software difficulties with the digital survey tool available in the prison.

6.3 Mental healthcare

Some eight percent of prisoners receive treatment for severe mental illness, some of whom are housed in the prison's 18-bed inpatient unit (IPU). A further 29% have a diagnosed depressive condition, a slight increase on last year. Two percent of prisoners have a dual diagnosis of mental health issues and substance misuse or are deemed to be complex cases. Oxleas employ a dual diagnosis nurse to deal with cases of substance misuse and mental health issues. It seems a missed opportunity that there is no joint working on these cases with Turning Point, the team working with prisoners with drug and alcohol problems who frequently also have complex health needs (see section 6.6).

Although face-to-face sessions with prisoners have had to be cancelled during lockdown, in-cell packs for managing mental health have continued to be distributed. Atrium, a counselling service, continued to conduct sessions by phone.

In line with previous years the Board has been concerned at the length of time taken for prisoners to receive an initial mental health assessment. According to data provided by healthcare staff, the average waiting time for the mental health clinic is 14 days. However, throughout the year, the Board has received applications from prisoners who claim to have been waiting far longer for a mental health assessment. The majority of cells in the inpatient unit are occupied by mental health cases.

During the reporting year, 52 prisoners from Thameside were transferred to a secure psychiatric hospital. The Board remains concerned at the length of time prisoners who have been additionally assessed, and accepted as requiring treatment in an establishment with specialist mental health facilities, have had to wait for a transfer – a concern that has been raised by the Board since the prison opened in 2012. During this reporting year, only 30% of these transfers were within the NHS England guidelines of 14 days from initial assessment. Nearly half waited longer than four weeks and one patient more than 12 weeks. This is distressing for these vulnerable individuals and inhumane.

6.4 Dispensing of medication

A much-needed enlarged pharmacy opened in September 2020. More than a third of prisoners receive daily medication at the hatches situated in the houseblocks. This can be challenging to manage for both the practitioners issuing the medication and the wing staff supervising the prisoners.

The Board has received applications about the sudden unavailability of regular prescribed medication at the hatches because prescriptions were not renewed in time by healthcare staff. Others have concerned communication and interpersonal difficulties between healthcare staff and prisoners attending the hatch. With such applications, the head of healthcare has been asked to investigate. The Board would like to see more attention paid to the quality of interactions by healthcare staff with prisoners at the medication hatches.

The dispensing of incorrect medication at the hatch was brought to the Board's attention in January 2021. It was reported immediately to the head of healthcare. In the first instance the prisoner recognised the error and handed the medication back. The Board subsequently learned of at least ten similar incidents, most witnessed by prison staff. The Board continued to express serious concerns to healthcare managers and the risk of

potentially fatal consequences from such mistakes. Regrettably in May 2021 a prisoner was hospitalised after taking incorrect medication issued by healthcare staff. This triggered an independent investigation – a root cause analysis – set up by the NHS Commissioner, the results of which have yet to be released.

Some medication issues that prisoners raise with the IMB arise from differing prescribing practices and use of specific medication brands between community GPs and those working in the prison system. Sometimes previous access to a drug is no longer an option on medical grounds. In these cases, the Board makes clear to prisoners that it is not able to challenge clinical decisions taken by medical practitioners.

6.5 Healthcare complaints

The Board received 95 applications from prisoners complaining about healthcare issues. This was more than any other issue about which prisoners contacted the IMB. They ranged from issues about medication, waiting times for appointments, delays in receiving test results and response times to complaints submitted to the healthcare provider, Oxleas.

Oxleas has its own prisoner complaints system. The Board has a number of concerns about how it operates:

- Prisoners who submit healthcare complaint forms receive an interim reply stating their complaint will be answered within 30 working days. This six week period is approximately the average prisoner length of stay in Thameside.
- Although many prisoners receive responses in less than six weeks, some do not and some will have left before they do.
- As a consequence, some prisoners choose to bring their concerns direct to the IMB first, rather than using the healthcare complaints system.
- A number of responses to healthcare complaints seen by the IMB:
 - are not dated.
 - do not address the issue raised.
 - lack a reference number linking the response to the complaint, making it difficult for prisoners to know which complaint the response refers to if they have submitted others.
 - do not identify which member of staff has responded as the written signature is illegible.

The Board believes that a formal 30-working-day response window is wholly inappropriate to the operational reality of Thameside prison, the prison environment in general, and that it sends a poor message to prisoners concerned about their treatment.

6.6 Social care

Social care assessment is carried out by the Royal Borough of Greenwich, who work with subcontractor Change Grow Live (CGL) to develop approved care plans. At the end of the reporting year, there were 27 prisoners requiring social care. This number is rising. Domestic care support is provided by ten trained prison orderlies and more specialist care by CGL staff. Social care support has continued where needed throughout lockdown. The Board has not any received complaints about this service, and has seen active involvement from the outside providers at the relevant prison review meetings.

6.7 Exercise, regime, association, time out of cell

Covid-19 regime restrictions – necessary to contain the virus and keep prisoners safe – have drastically reduced out of cell time. The great majority of prisoners have been confined to their cells for at least 23 hours every day since the pandemic began in March 2020. No association, education classes or faith services took place all year. Prison jobs were reduced to the minimum necessary, such as kitchen, laundry and waste collection.

The IMB has been concerned at the effect on the mental and physical wellbeing of prisoners subject to such a prolonged period of confinement and lack of socialisation with others. Exercise in the outdoor yards began to be increased to 60 minutes a day in the spring of 2021, and social visits and outdoor gym were re-introduced around that time. Disappointingly the outdoor gym classes – for which there was a large pent-up demand – have often been cancelled. There were cancellations in three of the last five weeks of the reporting year, one of which was for the entire week. Two days were cancelled in each of the other two weeks.

As prisoners have seen restrictions ending in the community, they have increasingly asked IMB members when association and other out of cell activities will return to pre-pandemic norms. Although members were unable to provide them with definitive answers, the Director has made the Board aware of intended changes from pre-pandemic management of association and time out of cell. The future regime for all out of cell time will be structured around prisoner activities that are purposeful, and there will not be a return to large groups of prisoners out of their cells at the same time with limited supervision.

The changes this will bring in the lives of prisoners will be a key focus for the Board's monitoring next year (from July 2021). The Board questions whether sufficient purposeful activities and jobs exist for a prison of 1200 men (see comments to the Prison Service). A return to acceptable levels of out of cell time will also depend on an adequate level of custodial staffing where the prison is encountering difficulties (see section 5.3).

6.8 Drug and alcohol rehabilitation

Turning Point, a social enterprise group, provides support and treatment programmes for prisoners with drug and alcohol problems. Approximately 32% of the prison population has a substance misuse problem, and the team's caseload is usually between 370 and 400 prisoners. Most are identified on arrival to the prison. Those with the most serious drug dependency problems are stabilised initially on the integrated drug treatment service (IDTS) wing. During June 2021, 416 induction sessions with new prisoners were carried out and the team received a further 84 referrals, some from the primary care nursing team.

For the first nine months of the reporting year, Turning Point staff were unable to see prisoners face to face due to Covid-19 restrictions. In-cell packs were issued instead. Face-to-face rehabilitation work recommenced in April 2021 and during the month of June, a total of 281 sessions were carried out by Turning Point staff. They work closely with the London Boroughs of Tower Hamlets and Hackney to ensure that prisoners on the day of their release attend community based appointments.

The Board has received no applications from prisoners regarding the support and treatment offered by Turning Point staff.

7. Progression and resettlement

7.1 Education, library

Education. All face-to-face education classes remained suspended throughout the year. The staff from the main educational provider, Novus, were absent for the first six months and began a re-entry to the prison in the early months of 2021. In-cell packs for learners were distributed but the Board has little information on the marking of course work and feedback given.

The distance learning provider, Prospects, remained working and carried out good work enabling prisoners to sign up for education courses delivered virtually.

Library. The prison has a well-stocked library and in past years offered a variety of interesting and lively activities to supplement its primary function. Covid-19 restrictions meant that none of these could take place face to face during the reporting year. The Prison Reading Group reported in its most recent annual review report: *'When lockdown first hit, prison libraries were closed and as non-essential, library staff were not allowed on site.'*

In contrast, the Board is pleased to note that the library at Thameside has continued to operate a limited service to prisoners for most of the lockdown. Through the request and deliver service, books and a selection of magazines and newspapers have been available for library purchase and delivered to cells. The prisoner DVD channel has continued to offer a variety of DVDs. Other regular activities have been made available on DVD by the committed and enthusiastic librarian, such as art therapy sessions supplemented by art materials delivered to cells. Other activities offered remotely have included Book Club, Reading Ahead (which encourages prisoners to read a set number of books to win a prize) and Story Writing facilitated by a creative writing tutor.

7.2 Vocational training, work

Last year's annual report reported a total of 686 job opportunities across the prison, and that the imposition of lockdown measures in March 2020 had led to an immediate loss of many of these as activities such as gym and education closed. Throughout this reporting year ending on 30 June 2021, prisoner jobs were available at the minimum necessary level to keep the prison functioning and prevent the spread of Covid-19. The prison's several good vocational training opportunities also ceased.

In the week ending 11 June 2021, there were 134 job opportunities across the prison. At any one time the maximum number of prisoners out of their cells completing work across the prison was 106. On-wing work continued in cleaning and servery roles. Essential off-wing roles continued in the laundry, recycling/waste management, bag and tag, kitchens and the CSU.

Sentenced prisoners have more priority in work allocations than remand prisoners, and the rapid turnover of the prisoner population has helped to spread the severely reduced number of job roles. Off-wing jobs are allocated by the labour board. On-wing jobs are allocated by the wing managers. The Board received a number of complaints about favouritism and lack of transparency in the allocation of on-wing work.

Opportunities have continued for prisoners to become Insiders, and towards the end of the year Samaritan training for new Listeners restarted.

7.3 Offender management, progression

The offender management unit continued to operate effectively during the pandemic. The work of reconfiguring the prisoner population to match Thameside's redesignation as a reception and resettlement prison had been largely achieved by the end of the reporting year. The target of two-thirds remand (reception) prisoners had been met and most of the remaining one-third are now category C resettlement prisoners approaching their release. The number of category D resettlement prisoners, who should not be held in a category B/C prison, has reduced steadily; four remained in May 2021. The number of life sentenced and indeterminate sentenced prisoners, for whom the prison has never had appropriate facilities, has also fallen; those not transferred are mostly in a parole window. The Board welcomes these long overdue changes for these two groups of prisoners.

The processing of applications during the pandemic for eligible prisoners to be released on temporary licence (ROTL) and home detention curfew (HDC) has been significantly impacted by delays in necessary checks by the police and probation staff.

7.4 Family contact

Prisoners have been able to maintain regular contact with their families during lockdown with their in-cell phones. In the absence of social visits for much of the year, the Families First team was unable to offer its usual range of activities. However a prisoner and family support initiative called FACT (Families/Friends at the Centre of Throughcare) has been developed providing an individualised programme for prisoners and their families that draws on various services available in the prison (for example employment, resettlement and healthcare) and gives direct access to the FACT coordinator. Managed currently by one member of staff, the programmes at year-end had a caseload of 20 prisoners with 15 more on the waiting list.

Social visits restarted in April 2021. The initial take-up by prisoners and their families was modest. The reasons seemed to be a combination of Covid-19 concerns and the restrictions imposed on physical contact, including between a prisoner and his children. The introduction of Purple Visits, which enable a prisoner to meet his family virtually via a tablet device, has however been popular. They have had an additional benefit for prisoners whose families lived a long distance from the prison or overseas. The prison took the opportunity during lockdown to upgrade the visits hall with new seating and a reading zone for prisoners to spend time sharing a book with their children or grandchildren.

7.5 Resettlement planning

Approximately 250 prisoners are released from Thameside into the community every month. The Board has been unable to obtain information for this annual report on measures to assist prisoners secure accommodation and employment on release. The incorporation of the CRC and its subcontractors into the unified Probation Service on 28 June 2021 appears to have resulted in this loss of corporate knowledge.

The new probation contracts are understood to downgrade the amount of help prisoners can expect in the housing area. This seems short-sighted given the recognised importance of suitable accommodation in the community in preventing reoffending.

8. The work of the IMB

The Board was able to carry out monitoring work throughout the year both remotely and by a reduced number of visits to the prison than in previous years. It continued to phone in to the Director's daily morning meetings with senior staff from across the prison. From its office in the prison it has been able to speak to prisoners on their in-cell phones to assist in dealing with their applications.

Six Board meetings took place in the prison, with some members joining by teleconference. Six others were held entirely by teleconference. The Director or his deputy joined these when available to update members on developments.

The Chair and Vice-Chair have held valuable monthly meetings with the Director, and IMB members have enjoyed constructive relations and co-operation with senior managers and staff across the prison. A Board member has continued to accept the prison's invitation to brief new custodial officers on the role of the IMB.

The number of active Board members further reduced during the year to five at year-end. Four members left the Board. At the year-end two other members were on sabbatical, one long term. One had not visited the prison all year.

At the end of the year four new IMB members were appointed by the Minister and are now in their induction/ mentoring period. The Board was glad to welcome a new IMB clerk after a lengthy period without one.

Board statistics

| | |
|--|-----|
| Recommended complement of Board members | 16 |
| Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period | 14 |
| Of whom members on sabbatical or probation | 6 |
| Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period | 12 |
| Of whom members on sabbatical or probation | 6 |
| Total number of visits to the establishment this year | 166 |
| Total number of visits to establishment last year | 304 |

Applications to the IMB

| Code | Subject | Previous reporting year (19/20) | Current reporting year (20/21) |
|------|--|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| A | Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions | 19 | 29 |
| B | Discipline, including adjudications, IEP, sanctions | 3 | 16 |
| C | Equality | 4 | 4 |
| D | Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell | 20 | 19 |
| E1 | Letters, visits, telephones, public protection restrictions | 10 | 25 |
| E2 | Finance, including pay, private monies, spends | 12 | 10 |
| F | Food and kitchens | 4 | 4 |
| G | Health, including physical, mental, social care | 74 | 95 |
| H1 | Property within this establishment | 52 | 17 |
| H2 | Property during transfer or in another establishment or location | 24 | 22 |
| H3 | Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s) | 13 | 3 |
| I | Sentence management, including HDC, release on temporary licence, parole, release dates, re-categorisation | 37 | 29 |
| J | Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying and complaints system | 93 | 85 |
| K | Transfers | 5 | 2 |
| L | Miscellaneous | 19 | 15 |
| | Total number of applications | 389 | 375 |

48% of prisoner applications to the IMB concerned two issues: healthcare and staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying and complaints responses. There was a 53% increase in applications about accommodation and a 49% reduction in those about property issues within the establishment.

Glossary of prison terms

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| ACCT | assessment, care in custody and teamwork (case management for prisoners at risk of suicide or self-harm). (Also, assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) case management documents or reviews) |
| association | time when prisoners can mix with each other outside their cells |
| BCST | basic custody screening tool – which determines a prisoners' immediate offending-related needs |
| BWVC | body-worn video camera worn by custodial officers |
| canteen | process where prisoners can order goods |
| category B | prisoners for whom the highest conditions of security are not necessary but for whom escape must be made very difficult |
| category C | prisoners who cannot be trusted in open conditions who do not have the will or resources to make a determined escape attempt |
| cell bell/call bell | a button in cells enabling prisoners to summon staff in an emergency |
| CRCs | community rehabilitation companies, which provide probation and resettlement services |
| CSIP | challenge, support and intervention plan – to help prisoners at risk of being violent change their behaviours |
| CSU | care and separation unit – also known as segregation |
| DNA | did not attend – non-attendance at healthcare appointments |
| DIRF | discrimination incident reporting form – which prisoners use to submit complaints about discrimination |
| GOOD | good order and/or discipline – rule under which a prisoner can be segregated |
| HDC | home detention curfew – early release 'tagging' |
| HMIP | Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prison |
| HMPPS | Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service |
| IDTS | integrated drug treatment system – which aims to improve substance use treatment for prisoners |
| IEP | incentives and earned privileges – a scheme designed to promote good behaviour and challenge misbehaviour |
| IMB | Independent Monitoring Board |
| induction | a programme all prisoners should undergo when they enter prison |
| Insiders | prisoners who introduce new arrivals to prison life |
| IPP | indeterminate sentence for public protection |

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| IS91 | prisoner who has completed his sentence, but remains in prison under immigration procedures |
| key worker | prison officer given responsibility for supporting a small number of prisoners under the OMiC scheme |
| Listeners | prisoners trained by the Samaritans to provide confidential emotional support to fellow prisoners |
| MDT | mandatory drug testing |
| NPS | National Probation Service |
| NPM | National Preventive Mechanism – a UK body that strengthens the protection of people in detention through independent monitoring |
| NVQ | National Vocational Qualification |
| OASys | offender assessment system – which assesses a prisoner’s likelihood of reoffending and their risk of harm to others |
| OBP | offending behaviour programme – designed to address prisoners’ offending behaviour |
| OMiC | offender management in custody, which involves providing prisoners with key workers |
| OMU | offender management unit |
| PIAC | prisoner information and communication forum |
| P-Nomis | database used in prisons for the management of prisoners |
| PPO | Prisons and Probation Ombudsman – a body that carries out independent investigations into deaths and complaints in custody |
| Purple Visit | A social meeting by video conference between a prisoner and his family/ friends |
| Restorative Justice | a programme where offenders consider the impact of their offending on victims and offer an apology or reparation |
| Storybook Dads/Mums | where prisoners record a story for their children to listen to at home |
| Sycamore Tree | a victim awareness course |
| ‘through the gate’ services | services to help prisoners resettle in the community on their release |
| Turning Pages | a reading programme for adults delivered by peer mentors |
| trigger | an event that might cause a prisoner to self-harm |
| virtual campus | internet access to community education, training and employment opportunities |
| VPU | vulnerable prisoner unit |



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