



Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Warren Hill

**For reporting year
1 June 2021 – 31 May 2022**

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Introductory sections 1 – 3

1. Statutory role of the IMB

The Prison Act 1952 requires every prison to be monitored by an independent board appointed by the Secretary of State from members of the community in which the prison is situated.

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

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

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

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

2. Description of the establishment

Warren Hill is a category C adult male prison with a current occupational capacity of 267. The population is drawn from all parts of the country and the prison provides for three cohorts of prisoners, as set out below.

Progression regime

The progression regime was introduced in 2014 to enable prisoners who had failed in open conditions, or who were otherwise categorised as unsuitable for placement in open conditions, to demonstrate to the Parole Board that their risk to the public had reduced sufficiently to enable them to move to open conditions or to release on licence. This group of prisoners mainly comprises life-sentenced prisoners and those serving indeterminate sentences for public protection (IPP) or extended determinate sentences (EDS). Prisoners on the progression regime are housed in three residential units, one of which is for older prisoners and those with a range of health conditions which require additional support. In the last year a four-bed unit has been opened as on-site approved premises for prisoners who are waiting to move to external approved premises, a category D prison or release on licence.

Therapeutic community (TC)

This unit accommodates up to 40 prisoners and is designed to provide intensive group-based therapy for prisoners who have been assessed as being able to benefit from such a regime. The TC runs under the guidance of psychologists and trained officers and is conducted partly along democratic lines. Importantly, those who join the TC must agree to participate in the community. The group decides how the community operates and is involved in decisions about whether prisoners join the community and whether they can remain if they breach the community ethos. When not engaged in therapy, the prisoners work around the prison and participate in education programmes.

Psychologically informed planned environment (PIPE)

This unit accommodates up to 20 prisoners, primarily to offer transitional support for those who have completed therapy. Some of the prisoners transfer to the PIPE from Warren Hill TC and others apply from other prisons.

Services to the prison are provided by external agencies as follows:

- healthcare – Practice Plus Group
- education – PeoplePlus
- support for substance abuse – Phoenix Futures
- careers advice and guidance services – The Forward Trust, which also runs the IAPT service (improving access to psychological therapies).

Other agencies contracted to work in the prison include Britten Pears Arts, Ormiston Trust, Shannon Trust, Samaritans, New Futures Network, Fine Cell and the Red Rose Chain.

3. Executive summary

3.1 Background to the report

Throughout the reporting year, the prison has been constrained by the need to counter outbreaks of variants of Covid-19 both in the prison and in the community, and IMB members were also affected. The prison adopted robust measures to contain outbreaks. These were successful but led to reduced activity at some times of the year. At these periods the IMB visited less often but nevertheless was able to maintain regular contact.

3.2 Main judgements

How safe is the prison?

In the view of the IMB, Warren Hill is a prison that feels safe for both prisoners and staff. The prison has a zero-tolerance policy to violence and prisoners are aware of this. There are occasional reports of low-level bullying, and where intelligence is received the prison makes use of challenge, support and intervention plans (CSIPs) (*paragraph 4.2.1*). There were two deaths in custody, both of prisoners who had been ill for some time (*paragraph 4.2.2*).

How fairly and humanely are prisoners treated?

The IMB notes that prisoners are involved in decision making in many areas of the prison, with the prisoners' council raising issues of concern. Prisoners are encouraged to explore solutions to problems rather than simply complaining and there are many examples of useful interactions between staff and prisoners (*section 5.3*).

The IMB raises yet again concerns about the provision and quality of food provided by the Hollesley Bay kitchen. The IMB reiterates its view that the reinstatement of a kitchen at Warren Hill should be prioritised (*section 5.1*).

How well are prisoners' health and wellbeing needs met?

The standard of healthcare provision is generally similar to that in the community. The IMB has been impressed with the way that the roll-out of the Covid vaccination was handled, with 86% of prisoners receiving double doses (*paragraph 6.2.1*).

The increase in older prisoners and those with social care needs has resulted in more than 10% of the population having social care needs and more prisoners going to hospital for prolonged periods. This has cost and staffing implications for the prison (*paragraphs 6.2 and 6.4*).

How well are prisoners progressed towards successful resettlement?

The focus of Warren Hill remains on ensuring progression to successful resettlement. Success at parole hearings continues to be high, despite some disruptions in the process as a result of Covid. The recent decision by the Secretary of State to review Parole Board decisions to release life and IPP prisoners has caused some disquiet (*paragraph 7.3.3*).

The reintroduction of release on temporary licence (ROTL) was welcomed by the Board. The IMB very much regrets the decision by the Secretary of State to suspend this pilot and urges early reinstatement of the programme (*paragraph 7.3.2*).

3.3 Main areas for development

TO THE MINISTER

The Board urges that the recent decision to suspend the ROTL pilot be reviewed (*paragraph 7.3.2*).

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

Applications to the IMB about the movement of prisoners' property continue to cause issues. As this report is being completed (August 2022), the long-awaited review of the handling of prisoners' property has just been published and this Board hopes that this will at last provide some improvements (*paragraph 5.8*).

While the in-cell telephony has proved popular with residents and has reduced the cost of calls, the Board asks the Prison Service to investigate the difficulties in the system which mean that some prisoners are charged for a connection to a phone when they are unable to leave a message (*paragraph 7.4.3*).

In light of ongoing concerns about the provision of food from the Hollesley Bay kitchen, the Board asks again that consideration be given to reinstating the kitchens at Warren Hill (*paragraphs 5.1.5, 5.1.7*).

TO THE GOVERNOR

The prison has prioritised the need to ensure support for prisoners on release in order to reduce the recall rate (*section 7*). The IMB would like to see further development in this area, including the use of digital technologies which are so critical to successful functioning in the modern world (*paragraph 7.1.5*).

3.4 Progress since the last report

- Despite the stop-start nature of the work in the prison because of recurring Covid restrictions, the IMB notes that the management team has taken the opportunity to reorganise some aspects of the prison, notably ensuring that the regime for all prisoners is harmonised (*paragraph 5.6.2*). This has previously been the source of some friction.
- The establishment of the on-site approved premises has proved to be both popular and useful in preparing prisoners for release or movement to open conditions.

Evidence sections 4 – 7

4. Safety

4.1 Reception and induction

4.1.1 Before prisoners arrive at Warren Hill, a multidisciplinary case review meeting is held so that any concerns about specific vulnerabilities and risks are identified and staff are made aware. The IMB has not attended any of these meetings in the past year, but minutes have been circulated to members. Because of Covid-19, new arrivals have been located in a separate unit for a quarantine period before moving on to a residential unit. These restrictions were lifted in the middle of March 2022, though prisoners are asked to take a lateral flow test on arrival. Since the lifting of Covid restrictions a full induction programme has been re-established.

4.1.2 IMB members have commented on the friendly and courteous behaviour of reception staff towards new arrivals, an observation which is echoed by prisoners in conversations with the IMB. An induction orderly is based in reception and supports prisoners as they come into the prison.

4.2 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody

4.2.1 A snapshot of the population in May 2022 showed that 29% of prisoners in Warren Hill have some history of self-harm. In the year from June 2021 to May 2022 there were 26 incidents of self-harm involving 16 individuals. The prison has made appropriate use of both assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) documents and challenge, support and intervention plans (CSIPs) to ensure support is consistently offered. In the year January to December 2021 45 ACCT documents were opened, of which nine were for self-harm.

4.2.2 In the last year there were two deaths in custody. Both prisoners had been ill for some time. One died in hospital and the other in a hospice, having refused further treatment. One Prisons and Probation Ombudsman's report was published concerning the death of a prisoner in 2021. The issues identified in that report had already been acted on, in particular the need for staff to be reminded of the requirement to ensure a positive response from a prisoner at unlock. The IMB notes that the practice of reissuing the guidance every three months has continued. Wing representatives at safer custody meetings report on whether the guidance is acted on.

4.3 Violence and violence reduction, self-isolation

4.3.1 Warren Hill continues to be a prison where violence is extremely rare. In the period under review there were five assaults recorded, all minor in nature. The prison has a zero-tolerance policy on physical violence and in the last year two prisoners were moved to another prison for this reason. One prisoner was violent towards an officer. As he was suffering from mental illness he was removed to a secure hospital as soon as a place could be found for him, though this process took about two months.

4.3.2 IMB members hear periodic reports from prisoners about low-level intimidation, but identification of those carrying this out is hard to pinpoint. The prison makes use of intelligence and has used CSIPs to good effect in cases where bullying is suspected.

4.3.3 Self-isolation is not a major issue at Warren Hill. Both staff and the Listener team keep an eye on individuals who are not engaging with others on their wing and are available to offer support. There have been periods through the year when prisoners have been isolated because of Covid, but distraction packs have been made available to help prisoners to occupy themselves, and daily checks have been undertaken by staff.

4.4 Use of force

4.4.1 Officers at Warren Hill have been trained in the use of incapacitant spray. There have been no recorded uses during the reporting year. The Board has identified three cases of use of force. One was reported as 'nominal' in that hands were placed on a prisoner to prop him up. Two others involved a prisoner who was later removed to a secure mental hospital. There was planned use of force when a prisoner was resisting removal to another establishment, but officers used de-escalation techniques and force was not required.

4.4.2 Staff are encouraged to wear body-worn cameras. Footage from these is reviewed at the quarterly meetings of the segregation, monitoring and review group (SMARG) so that learning points can be identified.

4.5 Preventing illicit items

Warren Hill employs a range of procedures to prevent illicit items from being brought into the prison. There have been no incidents in the reporting year. Sniffer dogs are used regularly around the establishment and IMB members have observed the courteous and considerate way that family members arriving for visits are treated by the dog handlers while checks are made. Mobile phone detectors are deployed around the units, sometimes on a random basis and sometimes as a result of intelligence reports. In the year to the end of May 2022 one weapon was found and there were two finds of alcohol and seven of drugs. The prison took delivery of a body scanner this year and this is used in reception to scan new arrivals.

5. Fair and humane treatment

5.1 Accommodation, clothing, food

5.1.1 Prisoners are all housed in single cell accommodation. In the older units there are flush toilets in each cell and prisoners have access to communal showers. The accommodation for the TC and PIPE is more modern and prisoners have in-cell showers. Work on the provision of inundation points where hoses can be inserted in case of fire has been undertaken but concern remains about some cells where secondary inundation points are not possible. New cell doors are required but will not be fitted before 2025 and the issue remains on the prison's risk register.

5.1.2 After many delays the on-site approved premises to house four prisoners opened in September 2021. This self-contained unit allows prisoners who have had their parole hearing and are waiting either to be released or transferred to an open prison to manage their own cooking and cleaning and take responsibility for organising their work, domestic activity and communal arrangements.

5.1.3 The communal areas in all the units are clean and well maintained. Three of the five units have gardens attached and the other two have open air association areas with seating.

5.1.4 There have been intermittent reports of mice on the two main residential units and the prison has adopted measures to control these, including sealed waste bins and cleaning regimes.

5.1.5 Food for Warren Hill is prepared by the kitchen at HMP Hollesley Bay, about a mile away. The kitchen is housed in a temporary but well-equipped field kitchen, a vast improvement on the previous kitchen which was criticised by IMB members in the past. Nevertheless, complaints about food are a constant refrain during IMB visits, with quality, quantity, choice and temperature being the most common issues raised. The provision of additional hot trolleys for the transport of the food has improved the temperature of the food. During the late summer of last year food deliveries were disrupted for a period because one of the vans used to transport the food was out of action and until a new one was hired food was being delivered very early. Some food often fails to arrive on the units and replacement portions have to be requested from the Hollesley Bay kitchen. It is unclear where and how food goes missing. Officers spend a lot of time checking food deliveries at Hollesley Bay and at Warren Hill. The pressures on the Hollesley Bay kitchen will only grow with the planned increase of the population at that prison.

5.1.6 Requests for special diets, especially vegan diets, are carefully monitored, and prisoners who are found to be eating non-vegan food are removed from the list. The provision of special medical diets has also created difficulties with a lack of clarity over the role of healthcare in determining what diets are required. Prisoners often complain that the special diet packs they receive are incomplete or incorrect and an officer from Warren Hill now goes to the Hollesley Bay kitchen to check the packs.

5.1.7 IMB members are clear that the solution to many of these issues is the reinstatement of a kitchen on the Warren Hill site. This would provide valuable training and employment opportunities and would address many of the concerns

about the current provision, not least the lack of direct control over catering arrangements.

5.2 Segregation

There is no segregation unit at Warren Hill. Hollesley Bay prison now has two cells that it can use to hold prisoners but use of these is dependent on staffing, so the majority of Hollesley Bay prisoners who have been found to be in breach of rules are held on residential wings at Warren Hill pending adjudication and/or transfer. The IMB has some concerns about potential disruption but is satisfied that careful management by Warren Hill staff has prevented this.

5.3 Staff-prisoner relationships, key workers

5.3.1 Following key worker refresher training in May 2021 and the easing of lockdown restrictions at that point, key working began again. The therapeutic community began running small groups, but the large community group could not operate because there was no room large enough to accommodate it. Staff-prisoner relationships have generally been good, helped in no small measure by the involvement of prisoners in a range of meetings, including safer custody, reducing reoffending, the disability and inclusion action team (DIAT), SMARG (*paragraph 4.4.2*) and the residents' council, renamed the Warren Hill council following the Ministry of Justice directive in May that residents should be called prisoners.

5.3.2 In common with other prisons, Warren Hill has experienced significant changes in staff due to retirements and moves to other occupations. As a result there are large numbers of younger and relatively inexperienced staff. This gives rise on occasion to comments from prisoners that officers do not have the skills to deal with the issues facing them, but IMB members feel that the support given by managers is appropriate. Since the end of restrictions in March 2022, there has been a monthly training lockdown so that staff can complete refresher training on a range of topics, including key working skills.

5.4 Equality and diversity

5.4.1 An analysis of the population of Warren Hill in January 2022 showed just under 75% were White, 19.5% Black or minority ethnic and just under 6% from the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community.

5.4.2 In the year to the end of May 2022, 25 discrimination incident reporting forms (DIRFs) were submitted. Seventeen of these related to race discrimination: four were upheld and one partially upheld; five were not upheld; and five were withdrawn. The remaining two were outstanding at the end of the year. Five DIRFs related to religion. Of these, one was upheld, one partially upheld, one not upheld and two withdrawn. Two DIRFs related to disability, of which one was withdrawn and the other was not upheld. One DIRF relating to sexual orientation was not upheld.

5.4.3 IMB members have attended the DIAT meetings regularly through the year. These are attended by equality representatives from all units and by the community diversity officer from the Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Racial Equality. The IMB has been impressed by the opportunity prisoners have in these meetings to question managers on issues such as prisoner employment and the efforts made to recruit staff from ethnic minorities. The prisoners meet with a supervising officer beforehand to look at the data for the meeting and identify issues of concern.

5.4.4 Each month the prison aims to raise awareness of one of the groups identified as having protected characteristics. This involves staff and prisoner representatives working together to develop displays and events to mark the month. It was disappointing that the Black History Month events did not happen as planned when the planned speaker could not attend because of Covid.

5.5 Faith and pastoral support

5.5.1 The chaplaincy team has now reached full strength with chaplains covering Christian denominations, Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist and Jewish faiths and chaplains to support Jehovah's Witnesses and Pagans. Opportunities for communal worship have been curtailed for long periods during the year because of the need to restrict gatherings but the chaplaincy team has been active around the prison visiting individuals. The space offered by the multi-faith room has proved invaluable for meetings of a more general nature when social distancing has been recommended.

5.5.2 The IMB is pleased to note that nine prison visitors have been appointed under the approved prison visitors scheme and have begun to work with prisoners who otherwise receive no visits.

5.6 Incentives schemes

5.6.1 All new arrivals are classified as enhanced within the local incentives scheme, so they have an automatic entitlement to wear their own clothes and have a television set in their cell, among other things. Within the progression regime at Warren Hill a system of enhanced behaviour monitoring (EBM) largely replaces the incentives policy framework. This enables a prisoner to progress by providing evidence to an EBM board that he is addressing his risk factors. Central to this process is the role of the key worker, who meets the prisoner regularly to explore issues and to challenge negative behaviour. There are three EBM stages with additional rewards at stages 2 and 3, which might include access to the shop and barista, opportunities to opt out of evening meals and longer family visits. As the prison moved out of Covid restrictions in the summer of 2021, these processes recommenced, but through the winter restrictions were reimposed and were only fully lifted in March 2022.

5.6.2 There were reports that EBM boards were being delayed because of Covid. Since the lifting of restrictions the boards have been reinstated. An IMB member who sat in on an EBM stage 3 board commented on the thoroughness of the review and on the space and time given to the prisoner to present his case to the attending governor with the support of his key worker.

5.6.2 The prison used the return to stage 1 (unrestricted movement) in March 2022 to standardise the regime, which enabled TC and PIPE prisoners to access some of the enhancements available to those on the progression regime.

5.7 Complaints

In the year to the end of May 2022, the prison received 656 complaints from prisoners. The greatest number of complaints were concerned with offender management issues, but a significant number focused on property and on food. Property and food also figure prominently in the applications received by the IMB.

5.8 Property

As always, issues around property have been prominent in both complaints to the prison and applications to the IMB. The response from the Minister of State for Justice in January 2022 to this IMB's request for information about new guidelines on the movement of property stated that the revised framework would be published early in 2023.¹ This problem is clearly an intractable one as the issue has been raised by this Board for at least the last six years.

¹ The revised property framework was published in August 2022.

6. Health and wellbeing

6.1 Healthcare general

6.1.1 Healthcare is provided by Practice Plus in modern purpose-built accommodation and there is a full-time manager on site. The healthcare forum, which enables prisoner feedback, restarted early in 2022 but the IMB has not yet had the opportunity to attend. Healthcare staff meet new arrivals at reception and a healthcare questionnaire is completed. Feedback from prisoners indicates that long term healthcare concerns experienced by prisoners are identified at Warren Hill and referrals to specialist services are made appropriately.

6.1.2 The GP service is provided on a locum basis, which has occasionally led to shortages. With the easing of Covid restrictions, opticians and dentists have been able to attend and referrals are made for physiotherapy and podiatry. The IMB considers that the provision of healthcare services is on a par with that offered in the community.

6.1.3 Healthcare staff are in attendance from Monday to Friday between 7.30am and 7.30pm and from 7.30am to 5.30pm at weekends. Outside these hours the prison makes use of the NHS 111 service and where deemed necessary ambulances are called.

6.1.4 Following problems of congestion in healthcare at times when drugs were being dispensed, a new dispensing area was established on Oak unit in late 2021 which has reduced waiting times.

6.1.5 Prisoners have reported that there are occasional difficulties in receiving notification of healthcare appointments. This appears to relate to the fact that there are insufficient computer terminals in healthcare to enable direct notification, but there are plans to rectify this in the near future.

6.1.6 Attempts to make prisoners wear masks in more congested areas of the prison have continued through the year, though IMB members have noted that these attempts frequently fail.

6.2 Physical healthcare

6.2.1 Responses to the Covid pandemic have been consistently good. Vaccinations were rolled out as soon as they became available, and by February 2022 86% of prisoners had been double vaccinated and older prisoners had begun to receive booster vaccinations. If prisoners refused vaccinations, they were offered the opportunity to change their mind.

6.2.2 Since the vaccine rollout there have been intermittent outbreaks of Covid within the prison which have resulted in groups of prisoners being isolated and tested, but none have been severely ill.

6.2.3 Seventy percent of prisoners at Warren Hill are over 40, and ill health is more prevalent in older populations. On every weekday there are likely to be at least two prisoners going out for hospital appointments and bedwatches lasting many weeks have been a feature of this reporting year. Several prisoners have been diagnosed with cancer and end of life plans have been put in place where appropriate.

6.3 Mental health

6.3.1 It is estimated that about 80% of Warren Hill prisoners have some form of personality disorder and some of these also have mental health issues. There is a team comprising a mental health nurse, a learning disability nurse and a social worker specialising in mental health. The team works at Warren Hill and Hollesley Bay and is currently working with 44 prisoners who are in crisis. In addition IAPT (improving access to psychological therapies) is beginning to organise group sessions for prisoners who require support and is also planning to offer one-to-one sessions with a cognitive behaviour therapy specialist.

6.3.2 The prison has provided a half-day mental health awareness training course for 20 prisoners under the auspices of Student Life.

6.4 Social care

6.4.1 Social care support has expanded significantly in the last year. In December 2021 33 prisoners were on social care plans, which is more than 10% of the population. Prisoners can refer themselves for social care support or may be referred by staff, and assessments are made by an agency of Suffolk County Council where the occupational therapist may recommend what support is required to meet their needs. The regional office of the prison service allocated £20,000 for the purchase of stock items, such as grab rails and mattresses as well as five mobility scooters.

6.4.2 An issue of concern to the IMB is that there are discrepancies between local authorities when it comes to the funding of social care. Prisoners who come to the prison from, for example, Norfolk are unable to bring equipment with them, and funds and equipment must be reapplied for from Suffolk. This takes time and there is some evidence that Suffolk County Council has been unwilling to make funds available.

6.4.3 Personal care for prisoners who require it is also becoming an issue for prisoners with personal care needs resulting from physical or mental incapacity. The prison is planning a course for a group of officers and prisoners to train together on the provision of personal care.

6.5 Exercise, regime

6.5.1 While the prison has moved in and out of restrictions through the year it has been possible to maintain association time and exercise, though at times association has been restricted to wing cohorts. Since the middle of March 2022 the prison has returned to a full regime with all prisoners being unlocked for most of the day between 7.45am and 8.30pm. The working week is nine sessions, with Friday afternoons and weekends available for leisure and purposeful activity.

6.5.2 The prison has been able to maintain the provision of regular exercise throughout the year. A review in March 2022 showed that those using the gym were able to access it for over three hours a week, well in excess of the entitlement to one-and-a-half hours a week. The sports field has been well used, with prisoners making good use of the trim trail as well as participating in team sports. Some items of exercise equipment have been placed on Sycamore unit and a PE instructor attends the unit to work with the older prisoners. IMB members are pleased to note that Parkrun returned to the prison in April following the easing of restrictions.

6.5.3 In the last annual report IMB members expressed concern about the lack of purposeful activity for older prisoners on Sycamore unit. It is pleasing to note that this situation is much improved with the installation of gym equipment on the unit and a programme of social activities for over-50s.

6.6 Drug and alcohol rehabilitation

6.6.1 Phoenix Futures works with prisoners with a history of addictions. At the end of April 2022 42% of Warren Hill prisoners were receiving support from the organisation. Quite a high proportion of those receiving support are self-referrals.

6.6.2 The majority of prisoners at Warren Hill go to approved premises following parole decisions on release. A few of them are interested in going to residential rehabilitation and this is facilitated by Phoenix Futures.

6.7 Soft skills

6.7.1 For the second year the availability of activities which characterise Warren Hill has been seriously curtailed. However, with the return to normality in March, the IMB is pleased to note that Britten-Pears Arts has returned to the prison to run music sessions with prisoners and both art and book groups have restarted. Many prisoners produce artwork of considerable quality and the writer in residence supports prisoners who want to develop creative writing skills.

6.7.2 A snooker league has been established and a small group of prisoners are keen chess players.

6.7.3 The IMB commends the prison for its continuing commitment to the Enabling Environment. This accreditation from the Royal College of Psychiatrists recognises that Warren Hill provides a safe space where everyone can contribute to the environment in which people live and work. The accreditation has an annual paper review and will be subject to a full accreditation review in 2023. The Enabling Environment is at the forefront of prison's ethos.

7. Progression and resettlement

7.1 Education, library

7.1.1 PeoplePlus, the education provider, has struggled to deliver full services due to a combination of Covid restrictions and staff shortages. Staff absence or resignation has also contributed to its difficulties. IMB members have reported on several occasions that classes were not running or had few students because of the constraints of social distancing. Because of shortfalls in provision, a small percentage of funding was withheld from PeoplePlus.

7.1.2 Through the summer of 2021 when restrictions were eased, PeoplePlus ran four-week courses leading to a certificate in enterprise and an equality and diversity course, as well as restarting the citizenship course and the certificate in progression. Following the appointment of a new catering tutor a group of eight prisoners began a four-month catering course. The tutor worked closely with barista staff to enhance the offer to staff and prisoners who wished to purchase lunchtime food. Unfortunately the catering tutor resigned in December, and it was not possible to restart the course before the end of the reporting year.

7.1.3 The multi-skills workshop has continued to function through the year when restrictions have permitted.

7.1.4 The library continued its delivery service to units through most of the year, with orderlies taking orders for books and DVDs and ensuring materials were quarantined. Full service was reinstated in March with an immediate and dramatic rise in library use, with an increase of 85% in DVD borrowing and a 700% increase in book loans, certainly because browsing is an important factor in book choice, something which had not been possible for some time. Ninety-three percent of Warren Hill prisoners use the library.

7.1.5 There are computers in the library which prisoners can access to prepare CVs and letters, write reports and essays for coursework and poems and stories for creative writing. There are computers in the Virtual Village, but these are normally only accessible during education hours. The IMB would like to see more opportunities for prisoners to access new technology, which plays such an important role in daily life in the community. We note with regret that the prison did not secure the provision of in-cell laptops and hope that funding can be found for this initiative in the coming year.

7.2 Vocational training, work

7.2.1 The carpentry workshop produces work for prison contracts in two areas, wood machining, and assembly and paint. There are opportunities for prisoners to gain qualifications in woodwork. The secure outside area adjacent to the woodworking workshop has been used to run roofing and forklift truck driving courses, both of which have been fully subscribed.

7.2.2 IMB members visiting the welding workshop report that prisoners generally enjoy the work and can gain qualifications in welding, but there are ongoing difficulties in recruiting a welding instructor, so numbers attending are restricted.

7.2.3 The gardens provide employment for up to 20 prisoners at a time with opportunities to gain qualifications in horticulture. The raptor programme enables

prisoners to learn about the breeding and handling of birds of prey, and the IMB is always impressed by the knowledge and skill of prisoners who work in this area. The prison also funds qualifications for PE instructors.

7.2.4 Once the prison moved back to stage 1 in March 2022, the shop in the Virtual Village reverted to direct sales after several months of running a delivery service. A sewing workshop has also opened in the Virtual Village, where in addition to producing small items such as bags, clothing repairs and bespoke jobs are undertaken, for example a protective cover for a grand piano. The aim is that the sewing workshop should become self-financing. A barber shop is also available and there is employment in the coffee shop where prisoners and staff can purchase refreshments.

7.2.5 The clothing exchange service (CES) continues to offer laundry services for work clothes and for general laundry when unit orderlies are unable to carry out this work, for example when machines are out of order or if a wing or an individual is in quarantine. The IMB continues to have concerns that prisoners working in this area are somewhat underemployed.

7.2.6 Job vacancies are advertised through the activities hub, with a vacancy bulletin circulated weekly to all units, though some work opportunities are restricted to prisoners who have reached stage 2 or 3 in the EBM process. There are commonly grumbles about pay levels, which have tended to increase in the latter part of the reporting year as prisoners have become more aware of increasing costs of items they wish to purchase. There are sufficient jobs for everyone and those who choose not to work remain in their cells in working hours.

7.3 Offender management, progression

7.3.1 The offender management unit (OMU) is central to the work undertaken at Warren Hill. It assists with the selection of prisoners to all parts of the prison and ensures that risk assessments are properly done before prisoners arrive. OMU staff coordinate the EBM process and ensure that reports required for parole hearings are provided in good time. There have been some delays in psychological reports during the pandemic which resulted in a few parole hearings being deferred. The IMB has been assured by the head of the regional psychology service that these problems have been resolved.

7.3.2 In its report for 2019–20, the IMB expressed delight that stage 3 prisoners were being offered the opportunity to apply for release on temporary licence (ROTL) in order to gain awareness of the significant changes that have taken place in society in recent years. These are prisoners who may have been in prison for decades, and who are returning to a very different society. Due to Covid restrictions, ROTL visits were suspended in the last year and it was only in October 2021 that ROTL began again. A limited number of prisoners had the opportunity to go out for a day accompanied by an officer. One prisoner commented to an IMB member that it was a wonderful experience to go into a shop to look at and handle clothes on a rail and feel 'normal'. Written feedback from other prisoners spoke overwhelmingly about the help it gave in terms of increased awareness of the way the world has changed – such as different bank notes, and the use of credit/debit cards and phones to pay for items. Prisoners spoke of having conversations with members of staff about things other than prison matters and the realisation that prison officers have another identity. It felt extraordinary to talk to ordinary people doing ordinary things like

having a coffee, going into shops, getting something to eat and in one case participating in a mixed reading group. Plans were well under way to enable prisoners to go out to Sheldons café in the grounds of the prison and to undertake maintenance work in the outside areas, when the decision was taken by the policy lead for ROTL in HMPPS to suspend all ROTL activity at Warren Hill until a review was undertaken. This decision was made on the back of the new parole changes. The IMB very much regrets this decision and hopes that rapid steps will be taken to reverse it.

7.3.3 The recent decision by the Secretary of State to delay and in some cases prevent movement to category D conditions or to release following parole hearings is regrettable, as are the changes to the parole process which mean that professionals will be making assessments of risk but will no longer make recommendations as to suitability for release. Prisoners who have come to Warren Hill with the intention of demonstrating the ways in which they have changed and reduced their risk are being denied this opportunity and their progression may be hindered. The IMB has noted the loss of morale among prisoners approaching parole hearings.

7.4 Family contact

7.4.1 Ormiston Families works with prisoners to rebuild and maintain family links. At the start of the reporting period one-to-one work was done remotely but as soon as restrictions eased direct contact started again. Support was offered to those using secure social video calls, and for those prisoners receiving no social visits caseworkers offered options for alternative contacts. As family visits started again over Easter, Ormiston provided colouring and craft packs for children which they were then able to take home with them to maintain a link with the visit. The process of rebuilding broken family relationships can be sensitive, and Ormiston works with the chaplaincy to support visits where necessary.

7.4.2 After a shaky start with social video calls, which was reported in 2021, this service proved to be popular with prisoners, especially when their families live far away and are unable to make regular visits. It is with regret that the IMB notes that following the renegotiation of the contract for these calls in April, the new service has proved to be problematic, with many calls being paused or terminated because of the sensitivity of the inbuilt security system. The prison is working hard with the new provider to try to resolve these issues, though with only limited success thus far.

7.4.3 The in-cell telephony project was completed at the end of December 2021 and prisoners are now able to call approved numbers in the privacy of their cells and at times that suit them and their family, rather than in public areas. The service has proved both popular and helpful to family contact, though there have been complaints and applications to IMB about the introduction of the security message at the start of calls. The message itself is not the problem, but if the person being called is not able to take the call there is no opportunity to leave a message and the prisoner is charged 10p. An IMB member has checked this and found the assertion to be correct.

7.5 Resettlement planning

7.5.1 In June 2021 an employment hub was established at Warren Hill with funding from the New Futures Network, to support employment on release. Notifications about employment, particularly in the catering and construction sectors are regularly

received by the prison, and prisoners are informed about such opportunities and can if necessary gain training and experience.

7.5.2 The Forward Trust runs guidance and employment services for prisoners, assisting them with CV preparation and identification of training and employment opportunities both in the prison and post-release. Warren Hill takes prisoners from all over the UK, and it is important that staff can provide information about the national picture. The IMB has been impressed by the way that the Forward Trust has worked closely with other agencies and with staff within the prison to ensure that prisoners receive an integrated service.

7.5.3 As mentioned in paragraph 7.3.2 the IMB regrets the decision to suspend all aspects of ROTL, which is an integral part of resettlement planning within the prison.

The work of the IMB

As reported in last year's annual report, two new members were recruited in May 2021. One has now completed her training and is a valued member of the team. The other began her training but decided not to continue with the Board when she heard that there might be an opportunity for her to return to her previous voluntary work as a magistrate. One member is currently on sabbatical leave to support her family.

A local recruitment exercise was undertaken in April 2022 when two applicants were interviewed. One was not successful and at the time of writing the other is still awaiting security clearance.

The Board will lose one longstanding member at the end of this year as she will have completed her tenure, and the current chair is also leaving in December. This means that the numbers on the Board will fall significantly and support may be required from other IMBs.

Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	11
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	6
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	7
Total number of visits to the establishment	161
Total number of shifts on the 0800 telephone line*	Not applicable
Total number of segregation reviews attended	Not applicable

*if relevant

Applications to the IMB (including via the 0800 telephone line)

Code	Subject	Previous reporting year	Current reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	1	1
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives schemes, sanctions	2	
C	Equality	1	
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	0	4**
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection restrictions	4	4***
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	0	
F	Food and kitchens	6	6
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	8*	3†
H1	Property within this establishment	0	
H2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	4	6††
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	1	
I	Sentence management, including HDC, release on temporary licence, parole, release dates, recategorization	2	5
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	0	1
K	Transfers	0	1
L	Miscellaneous, including complaints system	2	
	Total number of applications	31	31

*Five applications referred to issues around Covid, three were from the same prisoner about the wearing of face coverings.

**Three applications from the same prisoner about the loss of his employment.

***Two applications from the same prisoner about problems with Phone a Prisoner.

†Two applications from the same prisoner about mental health of another prisoner.

††Two applications from the same prisoner about delays to transfer of property from another prison.



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