



Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP/YOI Hindley

**For reporting year
1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021**

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Introductory sections 1 – 3

1. Statutory role of the IMB

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

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

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

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

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

2. Description of the establishment

2.1 The secure site at HMP/YOI Hindley was originally opened in 1961 as a borstal and was re-rolled in 2015 as a resettlement prison for category C prisoners and young adults aged 18 to 21 years.

2.2 The prison has eight residential wings, including the pre-psychologically informed planned environment (pre-PIPE) 10-bed unit and a separate care and separation unit (CSU). The pre-PIPE unit is externally funded and a national resource, receiving prisoners from across the country who meet the strict entry criteria.

2.3 For the majority of the year there was one residential wing dedicated to those aged under 21 years. In November 2021, the decision was made to disperse the young adults across the prison, resulting in approximately 30% of each wing's population being young adults. This did not apply to the pre-PIPE unit, where a maximum of three spaces were occupied by young adults in accordance with contract requirements.

2.4 The operational capacity is 590 and the certified normal capacity is 607. The pressure on category C beds in the northwest has put additional pressure on bed availability with a consequential increase in the prison population of around 10% in the year.

2.5 The establishment houses category C adult men who have less than four years of their sentence to serve, and young adults who are serving sentences of over 12 months and up to four years. However, pressures regionally on category C space meant that some men were transferred to Hindley with longer sentences (including life) or indeterminate sentences for public protection (IPP).

2.6 There is a large sports hall, marked out for football, badminton, and volleyball; two fully equipped weightlifting areas; a cardiovascular area; a remedial room; good showering and changing facilities; two 'Astroturf' football pitches; and a grass sports field. Covid-19 restrictions limited the use of sports facilities throughout the year.

2.7 The prison has two multi-faith centres, which normally provide a full programme of services, groups, and support for all faiths and none. These have been substantially curtailed by the Covid-19 restrictions, and for the majority of the year groups were unable to meet. The chapel was used for a range of meetings after being fully risk assessed and limits on occupancy set.

2.8 For the first three months of 2021, primary healthcare was provided by Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, with mental health services being provided by Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust (GMMH). From the beginning of April, staff in both services were employed and managed by GMMH and the contract for future healthcare services (from April 2022) was subject to a full tendering process.

2.9 The healthcare centre is purpose built and houses daily GP and twice-weekly dental surgeries, immunisation sessions and a variety of nurse-led specialist healthcare and wellbeing clinics. During 2021, because of Covid-19, some services

were suspended, and healthcare staff (including doctors) visited prisoners on the wing or used in-cell telephony for consultations.

2.10 The education services are provided by Novus. Covid-19 restrictions on prisoners and Novus staff meant that education was restricted to in-cell activities for most of the year, packs and, of necessity, non-accredited qualifications.

2.11 Maintenance of the estate is provided by Amey. There are positive relationships between the prison and on-site managers, but there are continuing concerns about some delays in completing work, which has been further hindered by the social distancing requirements and the understandable wariness of the maintenance staff to mix freely with prisoners. The pressure on category C accommodation in the region has increased the pressure on finding a timely solution to out-of-commission cells.

2.12 Until June 2021, the resettlement team was part of the Greater Manchester Community Rehabilitation Company and worked in partnership with Shelter to provide resettlement services. Staff then transitioned to the National Probation Service. Seetec was the contracted provider for the northwest from June and Shelter was the interim provider for a further four months for Greater Manchester until Ingeus took over from 1 November. These different providers added complexity, challenge and confusion, as referral processes and responsibilities differ across probation areas.

3. Executive summary

3.1 Background to the report

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

3.1.2 Throughout the year, the prison has been subject to a range of restricted regimes as management tried to maximise out of cell opportunities for the men whilst protecting them and the staff from further Covid-19 outbreaks. A rigorous, accessible testing regime, led by enthusiastic and committed staff, and clear guidance from management on the necessary precautions to be taken have helped minimise the number of positive cases amongst prisoners and staff.

3.1.3 The prison was classified as stage 3 at the commencement of the year, moving to stage 2 in August and was approved to move to stage 1 in December; however, the Omicron variant and the increased infection rates meant that the majority of prisons reverted to stage 3, much to the frustration and disappointment of prisoners and staff.

3.1.4 These regime changes and rigorous testing have undoubtedly kept the prisoners safe, and the vast majority accepted the need for them and were appreciative of the efforts taken on their behalf. As in the wider community, patience was wearing thin by the end of the year and the reintroduction of tighter controls because of the Omicron outbreak and resultant staff shortages led to some frustrations amongst prisoners. There have been two occasions when the prison was declared as an outbreak site by Public Health England (PHE). 114 men tested positive in the year, which is around 11% of the total number of prisoners held at the prison during the year.

3.1.5 A new Governor took up post in September 2020 and introduced a range of management changes, new appointments, and a restructure of responsibilities during 2021. These have still to have the full impact on operations, as Covid-19 continues to dominate daily decision making, restrict possible changes to the regime and hinder the introduction of new activities.

3.1.6 During the year the prison received a positive security audit, a good living standards audit, a good fire safety inspection and positive feedback from Ofsted on the progress of the education team.

3.1.7 HMP/YOI Hindley, as a resettlement prison, serves the wider northwest community, incorporating both Greater Manchester and the Liverpool City region. This produces its own challenges, with prisoners' home and gang allegiances creating tensions, and the necessity of liaising with a wide range of community partners with varying degrees of coverage and inconsistency of provision.

3.2 Main judgements

How safe is the prison?

The Board considers HMP/YOI Hindley to be overall a safe environment for prisoners. However, there has been a concerning increase in violence and self-harm, notably amongst those under 25 years old. (Reference: 4.2.4, 4.2.6, 4.2.7, 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.4, 4.3.6, 4.4.4, 4.4.6, 5.1.2, 5.2.6, 5.4.1.)

How fairly and humanely are prisoners treated?

The Board considers that prisoners are treated with a high level of fairness and humanity. Positive and constructive staff/prisoner relationships are evident across the prison and there is a strong emphasis on fairness and decency. The increased lockdown was handled sensitively, but the impact of the Omicron variant at the end of the year, with the necessary reintroduction of tighter restrictions and a lockdown of up to 23 hours per day, was unwelcome and if operated for a protracted period could impact negatively on the wellbeing of prisoners. (Reference: 4.2.6, 4.3.3, 5.1.4, 5.2.4, 5.3.5, 5.3.6, 5.3.7, 5.5.1, 5.5.2, 5.8.1.)

The original living accommodation (wings A to D) and kitchens are cramped and no longer fit for purpose. (Reference: 5.1.4, 5.1.12.)

How well are prisoners' health and wellbeing needs met?

The Board believes that the prisoners' health and wellbeing needs are met satisfactorily. (Reference: 4.1.4, 6.1.3, 6.2.4, 6.2.13, 6.3.4, 6.3.10, 6.5.1, 6.5.5, 7.3.9.)

The Covid-19 testing team were particularly dedicated and committed to ensuring there was widespread, timely testing of all who attended the site, and the prisoners were encouraged to be vaccinated, despite many being reluctant to take up the offer of vaccination. (Reference: 6.2.2.)

How well are prisoners progressed towards successful resettlement?

As identified in last year's report, resettlement services have adapted working practice in response to the changing pandemic restrictions imposed, however the Board continued to have concerns regarding the robustness of systems and their application to support transition on the release of prisoners. (Reference: 7.3.2, 7.5.9, 7.5.10, 7.3.4, 7.3.5, 7.3.6, 7.5.2, 7.5.3, 7.5.4, 7.5.5, 7.5.7, 7.5.8).

3.3 Main areas for development

TO THE MINISTER

The Board welcomes the announcement that HMP/YOI Hindley is to be expanded, subject to planning permission being granted. It is important that the funding is fully secured to complete the full project in a timely way.

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

The Board continues to be very concerned about the amount of property lost within the system, and the negative impact on prisoners' wellbeing and the disproportionate amount of time spent on resolving matters by staff and the Board.

TO THE GOVERNOR

As raised last year, Covid-19 and the introduction of new contracts have had a negative impact on the information advice and guidance available to men prior to and on release. Resolving this now needs to be a priority to ensure prisoners receive comprehensive support at this time of potential vulnerability.

Whilst the Board recognises the need to prevent the spread of Covid-19, it wishes to register ongoing concerns about the men being locked in their cells for 23 out of 24 hours, and on occasions longer. This is not conducive to their long-term rehabilitation or wellbeing.

The ongoing problem with litter outside F wing and behind window grilles across the prison is not only an eyesore but also a health, safety, and security risk. The Board urges the Governor to ensure that further action is taken to resolve this matter.

3.4 Progress since the last report

Issue raised	Response given	Action taken
The condition, size and adequacy of the older accommodation.	Applications are being made for additional funding to support improvements to the existing estate under fire safety, although it is unlikely to be able to change double cells to single ones because of the national shortage of category C accommodation.	Additional funding has been secured, plans are being drawn up for new residential blocks to increase the capacity of Hindley and provide a new kitchen, workshops, and gym facilities. Additional funding to renovate J block, closed in 2019, and to rectify some health and safety issues in existing accommodation has been secured. Work to commence in 2022.
The condition and design of the windows which allowed unacceptable levels of litter, aided the passing of contraband between cells, were a health & safety risk to individuals and the fabric of the building.	Application for funding was being made.	Approval has been received and work is to commence in 2022. In the meantime, the issues and excessive levels of litter outside F wing have remained.
The lack of consistency and availability of information, advice &	Impacted by the pandemic and the necessity for staff to work	The changes in regime as the prison moved from stage 3 to stage 2 meant

Issue raised	Response given	Action taken
guidance prior to release. The commissioning of a new contract provider with limited experience, reduced staffing and less if any attendance in prison has not improved the situation.	from home and the inability to hold face to face interviews as stated in the HMPS guidelines.	more staff could be based in prison and some multi-agency meetings did occur, but this was reversed with the move back to stage 3 in December. A successful bid for a pilot employment hub resulted in this opening in the autumn, but the full impact has not been felt, as face-to-face interviews could not be held and men were unable to attend in person as was originally planned.
The lack of implementation of an updated, understandable IEP as highlighted in the last 2 IMB annual reports.	This was in hand but is now subject to a full rewrite not just an update.	This has not yet been published.
A regular update on progress against these issues and the timescales involved were requested.	Agreed.	Governor has updated the Board at the monthly Board meetings.

3.4.1 The decency and chaplaincy teams have continued to reward good behaviour, support individuals, promote fundraising and provide a range of in-cell activities and off-wing diversions for the most vulnerable. With reduced resources, increasing demands on their time and rising prisoner numbers needing support, the Board recognises and commends their efforts.

3.4.2 During the two outbreaks of Covid-19, the staff worked well with and have been commended by the NHS and PHE. Learning the lessons from the first outbreak, the second was efficiently and effectively managed with minimum positive cases.

3.4.3 The prison has received funding for a significant expansion of the prison to nearly double the capacity, to help meet the demand for category C places nationally. Plans were drawn up ready for submission to planning, incorporating additional bed spaces, workshops, gymnasium, and kitchen. The fire safety improvement project continues, with ongoing discussions on the refurbishment of J wing.

Evidence sections 4 – 7

4. Safety

The safer custody team met four times during the year and is responsible for overseeing the safety of prisoners. The group reviews incidents of self-harm and violence and a detailed analysis is provided. The Board attends the majority of meetings and was concerned when two meetings were cancelled and not therefore receiving in the Board's view, appropriate priority by senior management.

4.1 Reception and induction

4.1.1 There have been, on average, 18 prisoners admitted each week. This was reduced as, whilst the prison was classified as an outbreak site, no prisoner transfers occurred.

4.1.2 During the heights of Covid-19 and whilst at stage 3, prisoners were taken directly to the reverse cohort unit (RCU) with an overnight bag, their property being sent to reception for searching, normally by dogs. There was a significant increase in attempts to bring illicit items into the prison via this route and a consequential increase in successful finds.

4.1.3 Board members observed the use of ad-hoc sticky labels on property bags and were concerned that they would easily fall off and contribute to the growing problems of lost property on transfer.

4.1.4 Whilst in reception or the RCU a medical assessment was carried out within 24 hours to promptly identify prisoner's immediate medical needs and any risks that staff should be aware of.

4.1.5 During their time on the induction wing, men receive 1:1 induction from staff and the opportunity to meet a peer mentor.

4.1.6 Board members were concerned about the lack of knowledge of the role and work of the IMB amongst prisoners. Although time constraints and the high numbers of men arriving weekly make it impossible to deliver 1:1 induction about the IMB, a diagrammatic leaflet was produced as part of a wider induction programme which was well received and was given to all men and used as part of the administration staff induction.

4.1.7 With each cell equipped with a telephone, all prisoners can make a phone call home on their first night.

4.2 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody

4.2.1 There was one death in custody, apparently self-inflicted, in January from a recent arrival (10 days at HMP/YOI Hindley) on the induction wing. The inquest is still awaited, along with that of the previous death in 2019. These long delays are unacceptable, putting significant strain on the family and staff directly involved, who are unable to find closure.

4.2.2 All parties, including the IMB, were notified promptly and appropriately about the death in custody and the support provided to staff involved.

4.2.3 As a result of the death in custody, first night arrangements were enhanced, and more regular specific night checks introduced for a period of time.

4.2.4 There was a concerning increase in the incidents of self-harm, rising by 19% (2020: 302, 2021:375). Of these incidents, over half (193) were carried out by just 11 prisoners; the most prolific carried out 50 (13.3%).

4.2.5 Concerned about this increase the programmes staff carried out a survey and visited the men who had self-harmed in the previous two months. Twenty-three men were visited and 15 agreed to take part in a detailed face to face interview. Seven were care leavers, an identified vulnerable group.

4.2.6 Twelve of the men felt that the support from staff was at least good, with eight rating it 10/10. The underlying reasons conflicted with previous presumptions, with none stating that it was debt-related. The most significant reason was emotional: stress, bereavement, frustration, or a cry for help. The Board was fully supportive of this initiative and looks forward to the further actions taken to support this vulnerable group.

4.2.7 The majority of self-harm occurred amongst the younger prison population, where 38% of the population initiated 55% of the incidents.

Age group	Self-harm incidents by age range 2021							
	Non-prolific		Prolific		Number of prolific prisoners	Total		
		%		%			Percentage of self-harm incidents	Proportion of the population
18-25 years	96	47%	109	53%	4	205	55%	38%
26-35 years	70	46%	84	54%	7	154	41%	33%
36+ years	16	100%	0	0%	0	16	4%	29%
TOTAL	182	49%	193	51%	11	375		

4.2.8 An analysis of the eight wings shows that 20% occurred on E wing (RCU) and 19% on the young adults' wing.

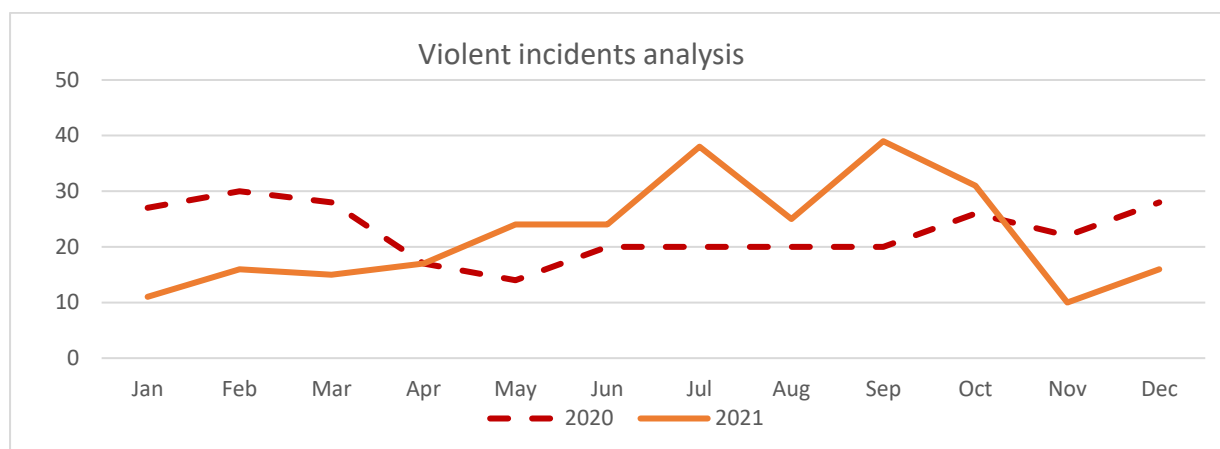
4.2.9 The number of ACCTs opened has remained constant: 292 in 2021 and 300 in 2020. With the higher level of incidents of self-harm amongst the younger population, a consequential higher rate of ACCTs were opened, 43% between January and April.

4.2.10 The prison trained additional Listeners during the year to significantly increase the number available to support their peers (increased from three to 10 at the end of the year). This is always a challenge to a resettlement prison like HMP/YOI Hindley where prisoner turnover is high, and men are released or move to category D after relatively short stays.

4.3 Violence and violence reduction, self-isolation

4.3.1 There was a concerning upward trend in violent incidents from January to September, which continued to rise despite a range of initiatives, external and mentoring support to staff, and a focus on anti-violence. The majority of incidents were on F wing, the young adults wing. The decision was made to disperse the younger population across the estate with around 30% of young adults on each wing. After full consultation, and with incentives to the older prisoners to be the first to relocate, a phased dispersal took place from November.

4.3.2 The following graph shows the annual monthly data and the impact on the level of violence of the dispersal of F wing.



4.3.3 An analysis of the perpetrators of the violence shows that the 18-21 year olds previously housed on F wing, 31% of the prison population, caused 69% of the violence.

Analysis by age of perpetrator(s)	18-21 years		21-25 years		26-35 years		36+ years		Total	
	'20	'21	'20	'21	'20	'21	'20	'21	'20	'21
% of population	31%	31%	11%	11%	35%	35%	23%	23%		
% of violence	61%	69%	9%	12%	22%	14%	8%	5%		
No of individuals	248	273	38	48	90	54	32	22	408	397

4.3.4 Violence against staff has further fallen slightly to 60 incidents, 15.2%, at the same level as 2020 (2019: 87, 2020: 63 and 2021: 60). Although the trend was upward from January reaching a peak in September with 13 assaults in the month. Direct action, a focus on reducing violence and the dispersal of the younger prisoners across the prison in November has seen a marked reduction since then. In October there were 2 incidents, in November 4, and December 4.

4.3.5 The prison covers the whole of the northwest and some of the issues of violence surround external gang allegiances and particularly the challenges between

gangs from Liverpool and Manchester. Gangs and community links were believed to be behind 11.4% of all violent incidents.

4.3.6 Challenge, support and intervention plans (CSIPs) have had increasing usage towards the end of the year, with a focus on their value.

4.3.7 Overall the Board believes that the men at Hindley feel safe, but there has been an increase in the number of men being admitted to CSU for 'their own safety'.

4.3.8 There was one serious incident when the command suite was opened for a man who had gone onto the netting. The IMB were informed promptly and attended for the duration of the event.

4.3.9 There were 34 prisoners choosing to self-isolate and remain in their cells. The Board, concerned about the increase, regularly visited them. The most common reasons given were the prisoners wanting to avoid trouble as their parole/category D was approaching.

4.4 Use of force

4.4.1 The use of force team met regularly throughout the year, under the chairmanship of the head of safety, kindness and decency. Meetings were well attended, with representatives of senior management, staff trainers, healthcare, IMB and chaplaincy. The papers provided were comprehensive, with good data analysis and accurate minutes.

4.4.2 The meeting reviewed CCTV and body-worn camera (BWC) evidence of the incidents, feeding back to the staff involved on the quality of paperwork, the actions taken and any good practice or areas for improvement.

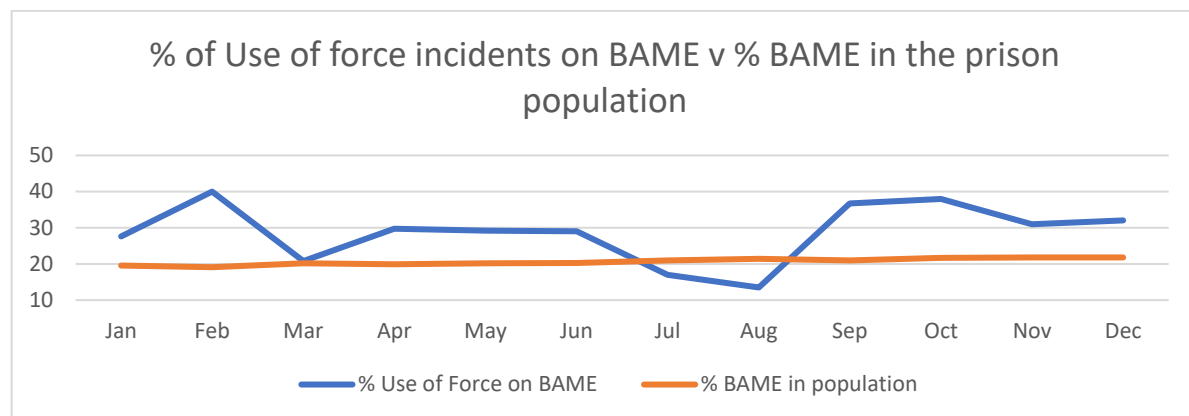
4.4.3 In the middle of the year the Board was concerned about the reliability and availability of BWC. A major drive since has seen an increase in the number and take up of the cameras, but the technology is outdated and unreliable. Unfortunately, the prison has so far been unsuccessful in securing the much-needed upgrade. Over the year, only 59% of incidents were captured on BWC.

4.4.4 There was a 21% increase in incidents involving force since 2020. The most prolific use was on the young adults' wing, which correlates with the number of violent incidents.

	2021	2020	2019	Variance from 2020	% Variance from 2020
Number of incidents	449	372	378	77	21%
Number of staff involved	1108	987	1109	121	12%

4.4.5 The majority of incidents were carried out on the under 25s, where 77% of the incidents were carried out by 36% of the population. The Board raised concerns in the previous report on the disproportionate number of actions taken against the younger prisoners and has monitored this more closely this year. The Board is satisfied that the high level of violence amongst this cohort has warranted the level of force used.

4.4.6 Around 21% of the total prison population are classified as black, Asian or minority ethnic (BAME), although this increases to around 50% of the under 25 year olds. 29% of the total incidents where force was used involved BAME prisoners, reflecting the proportion of the younger population who are BAME.



4.4.7 For the first ten months of the year, F wing housed exclusively young adults who represented around 30% of the prison population. There were increasing levels of violence, particularly in young adults, despite a range of initiatives, so the decision was taken to disperse the young adults across the prison, removing the dedicated facility.

4.4.8 The dispersal of the young adults from F wing in November saw a dramatic fall in the use of force on F wing in December, falling from 26 in November to three in December. However, there was an increase of nine across the other wings. The effectiveness of this dispersal will need to be reviewed when more time has elapsed, but the Board is encouraged by these early findings.

4.4.9 The end of year data compares favourably to other similar prisons.

4.4.10 There was limited use of PAVA (seven) or batons (three) and all incidents were reviewed. The Board did not have concerns that this was excessive or over-enthusiastic use.

4.5 Preventing illicit items

4.5.1 Cannabis, psychoactive substances (PS) and 'home brewed' alcohol (hooch) have been the most available illicit substances used by prisoners during the year.

4.5.2 It is thought that many prisoners have illicit mobile phones, which they say they use primarily to keep in contact with family as the cost of using the in-cell phones is felt to be prohibitively high.

4.5.3 Regular cell fabric checks and intelligence-informed target searches utilising the northwest search dogs were reintroduced during the year, which led to the successful identification of considerable amounts of illicit items.

4.5.4 The northwest search team provided up to 60 hours per week to the prison.

4.5.5 Prisoner mail volumes were high due to the lack of direct visits. The management of incoming mail to prisoners has continued to be strict, with the regular use of sniffer dogs and only photocopied versions being given to prisoners.

4.5.6 The correspondence team are aware of the use of unique reference numbers for rule 39 mail (legal correspondence). They are progressing with the first stage (recording letters which test positive and the names of solicitors who regularly send mail to clients in Hindley). This is part of a 'pilot' in stopping rule 39 mail being exploited as a drug conveyance route.

4.5.7 There have been several attempts via drones to pass illicit items into the prison during the year, but many were intercepted by staff.

4.5.8 Measures were taken to monitor the amount of fruit and bread stored and Marmite was removed from the canteen sheet, to remove a source of yeast for 'hooch'.

4.5.9 High levels of litter outside F wing made the passing of contraband easier, as illegal parcels could be hidden amongst the debris to be collected by an accomplice.

4.5.10 The monitoring of social distancing during face to face visits and fewer visits meant that opportunities for passing illicit items during visits reduced.

4.5.11 The security department maintain efforts, including unannounced searches, to deter staff and visitors from trying to take illicit items into the prison. However, the lack of space within the existing staff gate means that regular scanning/searching is difficult, and the Board is concerned that this is an obvious illicit route into prison.

4.5.12 A new CCTV system was installed in the kitchens to monitor activity, reduce theft and the passing of contraband, and provide evidence of any incidents. This enabled the successful identification and removal from the kitchen of men caught stealing and passing drugs.

5. Fair and humane treatment

5.1 Accommodation, clothing, food

5.1.1 Accommodation was located over eight wings, including the CSU and pre-PIPE unit for 10 prisoners. RCUs for prisoners arriving at the prison were in both E wing (category C) and F wing (young adults).

5.1.2 The prison has very limited access facilities for those with a physical disability, which has the potential to impact all those who access the estate. Towards the end of the year a prisoner in a wheelchair was transferred to HMP/YOI Hindley and special arrangements were made to accommodate him on E wing.

5.1.3 The cleanliness and hygiene standards on the wings were, on the whole, maintained. However, the age of the estate, together with cramped conditions on the older wings and the previous lack of investment, means that the plumbing and heating systems are outdated, lack efficient methods of control and are subject to breakdown, leaving the men without running water, heating, or hot water on occasion. No amount of cleaning, redecoration or maintenance work will bring the cramped cells up to an acceptable standard. This has been particularly noticeable during the restricted regime introduced to combat the spread of Covid-19, when men spent up to 23 hours per day locked in a very small space.

5.1.4 The high demand for category C accommodation nationally meant that the normal occupancy rates rose by up to 50 men, and there was pressure to complete maintenance work quicker and ensure the maximum number of beds were available for occupation.

5.1.5 An art project was utilised to introduce brightly coloured murals to corridors and areas of the prison with a high footfall. These have brightened some dark areas and raised the spirits of prisoners and staff.

5.1.6 Externally the gardens and grounds have benefitted from additional planting and work to maintain the general appearance, so that the estate is neat and tidy, with the men taking pride in their work. Unfortunately, this is overshadowed by an issue over the levels of litter outside F wing. This has been highlighted in IMB reports and questions to the Governor throughout the year but despite further initiatives to resolve the matter and additional working parties, it has yet to be fully resolved.

5.1.7 There have no reported cases of vermin within the prison.

5.1.8 The enhanced unit on B wing was relaunched during the year. It provides 20 spaces (six double and eight single cells) with less restrictions, a more relaxed atmosphere, opportunities for independent living and extended periods of unlock.

5.1.9 In-cell telephones and the additional phone credit granted during the Covid-19 restrictions continue to be popular with the men, enabling them to maintain contact with families and friends important when face-to-face visiting was prohibited.

5.1.10 Some bedding and clothing received from central stores was damp when distributed, which was unacceptable. This was caused by the unsuitability of the central stores for the storage of clothing and bedlinen, because of leaks within the fabric of the building and the additional space required to house the personal protective equipment (PPE) required during the pandemic putting pressure on the available space. Overall, however, stores are well managed, organised, and clean.

5.1.11 The kitchen, although old, cramped and of a poor design, was maintained to a high standard, with good levels of cleanliness, professionalism and positive attitude. The plans for expansion include the long-awaited new kitchen to cater for the full prison.

5.1.12 Kitchen staff worked hard to provide a variety of nutritious, tasty meals within a limited budget. This was confirmed by Board members sample testing and the low level of complaints (5.6%) or applications, where only three (1.8% of all applications) were about food and none were about the quality, but rather the availability of special diets.

5.1.13 A survey carried out in November provided a response from 143 prisoners, around 25% of the population. Of these, 71% were at least satisfied with the food provided and 10% were very happy. The questionnaire confirmed the preferred times for the main meal of the day and suggested menu options to be considered.

5.1.14 At the height of the second lockdown the prison had to resort to pre-prepared meals for a short period as men were unable to attend the kitchens for work and staff shortages meant that it was impossible to prepare the normal meal.

5.1.15 The bulk of the laundry is sent to HMP Wymott. Personal laundry was carried out on the wings in an efficient manner.

5.2 Segregation

5.2.1 There are 13 cells available on the unit, including one sterile and one gated cell. The average number of occupants over the year was six across the age spectrum, with just under half being young adults. This high level reflects the higher incidence of violence and a reluctance of some to leave the dedicated young adults block when the dispersal occurred.

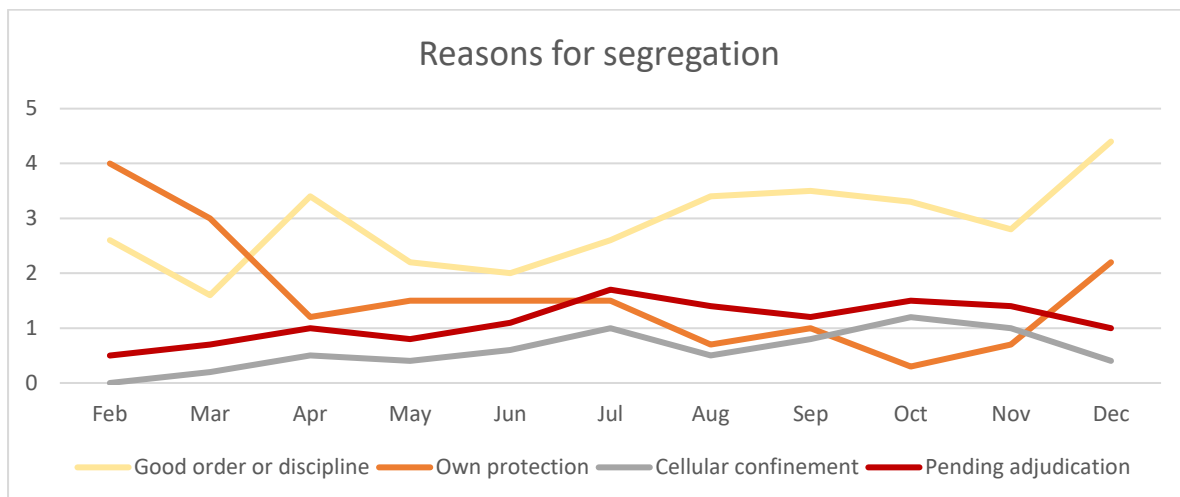
5.2.2 On average 24% of those relocated to the CSU were of BAME heritage, compared with around 21% of the population.

5.2.3 The cells were judged by the Board to be in a satisfactory state of repair and decoration, with cleanliness at an acceptable level. However, there was an issue with cleanliness of the in-cell toilets, which was highlighted to staff.

5.2.4 The Board continues to be impressed with the professionalism and care provided to prisoners detained on the CSU. There have been several complex, demanding, and violent men and young adults during the year, some with mental health needs, and they have been treated with fairness and respect.

5.2.5 35 ACCTs were opened from February on the men in the CSU on 31 different prisoners. Although self-harm or the threat of self-harm is an indication of mental distress, a number have said they have resorted to this behaviour when other methods have failed to attempt to secure a benefit; when this failed, they withdrew the threat, and the ACCT was closed. However, there were several cases which required more extensive support from the mental health team.

5.2.6 The most significant reason for transferring to CSU was to maintain good order or impose discipline. The Board is concerned about the increasing number who were entering for their own protection at the end of the year. Further analysis of the December data shows that this concerned three prisoners, all of whom had mental health issues.



5.2.7 The reviews are held three times a week, chaired by a Governor and in the vast majority of cases attended by the prisoner. The understanding of the prisoner was ensured, and his views sought; decisions were clearly explained and, on most occasions, agreed. Overall attendance by healthcare and chaplaincy personnel has been excellent and after the second lockdown IMB members attended more regularly.

5.2.8 There were numerous dirty protests. Each was handled in accordance with best practice, in accordance with procedure and with the correct PPE.

5.2.9 One prisoner remained in the CSU for his own safety for over 42 days because of outstanding debt on the wing. He instigated several dirty protests and was on and off an ACCT during his stay. All procedures were followed, and approval received.

5.2.10 No prisoners were removed from CSU on the grounds of safety or against medical advice.

5.3 Staff-prisoner relationships, key workers

5.3.1 The culture throughout the prison is to establish and maintain good communication between wing staff and prisoners. However, communication between departments has deteriorated during the year, possibly because of less face-to-face opportunities for discussion, with meetings held by conference call, and the increasing numbers of new officers working on the wings.

5.3.2 During the restricted regime key work has been targeted and monitored for the most vulnerable priority groups, who should be seen a minimum of 45 minutes per week. At the end of the year, 41 prisoners were classified as priority: 11 high risk, 11 clinically vulnerable and 19 subject to an ACCT (current or recently closed). Non-priority prisoners should be seen at a minimum monthly, but Board members found that this was not always the case because of the competing demands on staff time whilst the prison experienced high levels of staff absence though sickness.

5.3.3 Relationships between staff and prisoners are generally good and the Board has witnessed many examples of staff going the 'extra mile' to support prisoners.

5.3.4 One consequence of the extended periods of lockdown and the restricted regime along with the promotion, resignation, retirement and transfer of experienced staff, is that many of the wing officers are new and have no experience of a 'normal' prison working day with all the movement that entails and increased time out on the

wing. They have been unable to establish cross-prison networks and communication channels, which has resulted in a more disjointed service to prisoners.

5.3.5 Despite this, the positive atmosphere across the prison was strengthened by consistency of wing staff, visibility of managers, including governors, and the work of the decency team, which continued to reward positive behaviour.

5.3.6 The management responsibility for safety was combined with the role of head of decency during the year and the Board believes that this has the potential to impact negatively on decency. However, the team have continued to deliver themed events celebrating diversity, rewarding periods without violence on a wing and raising money for charities or targeted individuals within and outside the prison. The decency representatives amongst the men have been the key link and 'prisoner voice'.

5.3.7 The Board was impressed by the depth of knowledge about individual prisoners by staff and the rapport, respect and good humour normally evident despite the very challenging year.

5.3.8 A 'hub of hope' was introduced as a base in the centre of the prison for an increased number of trusted prisoners: 'red bands'.

5.4 Equality and diversity

5.4.1 The Board monitored any disadvantages related to protected characteristics primarily through applications, checks on discrimination incident report forms (DIRFs), attendance at meetings, reviews of minutes and analysis of data provided. The equality forums did not take place because of the Covid-19 restrictions. The most significant area of concern was the disproportionate level of violence and self-harm amongst younger prisoners and use of force against BAME prisoners (see paragraph 4.4.7).

5.4.2 New senior management champions were announced in October after a year where some areas were not covered because of staff leaving and/or structural changes.

5.4.3 The further analysis of equality data has not been re-established following the diversion of resources to meet the needs of Covid-19 and the departure of key personnel within the equality team.

5.4.4 There were 41 DIRFs received, 25 from prisoners and 16 from staff.

	2021		2020		Variance since 2020	
No. of DIRFs received	41		48		-7	-14.6%
Race	26	63.4%	38	79.1%	-12	
Disability	1	2.4%	2	4.2%	-1	
Sexual Orientation	8	19.5%	7	14.6%	1	
Gender Reassignment	2	4.9%	0	0%	+2	
Age	1	2.4%	0	0%	+1	
Religion	3	7.3%	1	2.1%	+2	

5.4.5 The prison has continued to hold specific themed events celebrating diversity. LGBTQ+ events were notably successful utilising real-life experiences from staff and prisoners.

5.5 Faith and pastoral support

5.5.1 The Board observed that the chaplaincy team continued to provide an excellent service to the prisoners of any or no faith. Despite a very challenging year, the absence of volunteer members for much of the year, the cancelling of group work to ensure social distancing and increasing demands on their services, the team have provided individualised, targeted support to many prisoners.

5.5.2 The chaplaincy made a significant impact on individuals, reunited estranged members of families, provided bereavement support, and assisted with release arrangements and time away from the wing for some of the most vulnerable in the expanded community garden and small animal centre.

5.5.3 Multifaith services were held outside for significant events such as remembrance and carol services. A full prison celebration of Eid was included in the calendar and held in the gym.

5.5.4. The chaplaincy sources and provides a range of family support, CDs, prayer cards, craft activities and books, which have been particularly invaluable during periods of extended lockdown and a restricted regime.

5.6 Incentives schemes

5.6.1 In the last two reports, the Board identified that the IEP scheme was too complex and lacked clarity and was consequently not understood by prisoners or staff. Despite this, no replacement has been issued, although a total revision is expected. This lack of clarity means that prisoners do not have a clear understanding of the actions necessary to raise their status or the impact of poor behaviour. However, during the pandemic it was only used infrequently, as changes to the regime and the additional allowances to the prisoners to mitigate these meant it had limited relevance and was not a management priority.

5.7 Complaints

5.7.1 The Board believes that the complaints and applications system was working well, despite the administration staff being stretched. The timeliness of handling of complaints is reported to the prison management during the daily meeting and has improved slightly from 85% within five working days to 87%. Further improvements were hindered by the higher level of staff absences during the year.

5.7.2 The table below illustrates the top three areas for complaints and the comparative analysis for Board applications for 2020 and 2021.

	Prison complaints system				IMB applications			
	2021		2020		2021		2020	
Property	370	23.3%	263	15.2%	46	28.0%	22	18.8%
Residential	276	17.4%	297	17.2%	23*	14.0%	11	9.4%
OMU	189	11.9%	264	15.3%	31	18.9%	23	19.7%
Total received	1586		1731		164		117	

*Board applications about residential were distorted by about half being received following the non-availability of running water on A wing for two days. If this were to be counted as one application, residential applications would be 7.8% of the total.

5.7.3 Overall complaints to the prison have fallen since 2020, but applications have risen to similar levels as 2018.

5.7.4 The prison appears to be handling prisoner complaints effectively, with the Board receiving just 10.3% of the complaints as applications.

5.8 Property

5.8.1. The control, tracking and loss of prisoner property has taken a disproportionate amount of the Board's time: 28% (46) of all applications were for property related matters. Personal property, and in particular irreplaceable, personal items, are a high priority for prisoners and their loss can have a significant impact on the prisoner, reportedly leading to instances of self-harm, some serious.

5.8.2. The transfer of property between prisons, with bags of property either lost or significantly delayed (for several weeks), causes stress/tension on the wing and delays a prisoner 'settling in'.

5.8.3. This issue is not unique to HMP/YOI Hindley and although a new national scheme has been long promised, no solution has been launched and the situation worsens annually. The Board had a 109% increase in property-related matters during the year, 70% relating to the loss of property during transfer from another prison.

6. Health and wellbeing

6.1 Healthcare general

6.1.1 There was no Care Quality Commission assessment of the service in the prison during 2021 and there are no outstanding actions from previous inspections. There were regular positive communications with Public Health England (PHE) throughout the year over Covid-19.

6.1.2 Both the primary and mental health teams appear to have appropriate staffing levels for the size of the prison population, composed primarily of nurses. The Board has had concerns about the turnover of permanent staff, particularly within the primary care team, with overtime and agency staff covering any shortfall.

6.1.3 However, there have been some instances where the daily dispensing of medication has been delayed because of the shortage of staff with the resultant impact on prisoners. Overall, a reasonable level of service was maintained which was comparable to that in the wider community.

6.2 Physical healthcare

6.2.1 Early in the year, the presence of a nurse on site 24/7 ceased, but the replacement 'on call' service has rarely been required. If the officer is concerned, they will call an ambulance immediately; if not urgent the officer speaks to the 111 service or the healthcare on-call manager. The Board has not received any applications from prisoners over this change.

6.2.2 Prevention of Covid-19 has been a major priority for the prison, with a most vigilant small team of two prison staff carrying out the tests tirelessly for both men and staff, often using 'opportunistic' measures to keep the testing levels relatively high and promoting the advantages of vaccination.

6.2.3 Levels of vaccination amongst men who had received their first vaccine reached 56% by the end of the year, with only 27.3% being triple vaccinated. With a high percentage of the men being aged under 30 years, this overall level was impacted by younger people being less likely to take up the vaccinations, as in the wider community.

6.2.4 The regime restrictions resulting from the Covid-19 prevention measures meant that very few prisoner health forum meetings were held. However, men appear to be generally satisfied with access to and the quality of service received. Any concerns often highlight a change in prescribed medication, or a lack of prisoner-held medications. e.g. paracetamol.

6.2.5 All new arrivals at the prison received a primary healthcare assessment within 24 hours of their arrival, most usually whilst in the reception area or, when restrictions required, within an hour of men arriving in the RCUs.

6.2.6 There has been evidence of good links between the healthcare managers and prison managers, with healthcare staff regularly attending the morning management meetings.

6.2.7 There have been shortfalls in the communication between the residential wing staff and the primary healthcare clinics leading to men not attending specialist clinics on occasion and the difficulties of managing the safe attendance of men from one wing at a time, as opposed to clinical priorities, continue.

6.2.8 During the year there were 76 informal complaints recorded by the healthcare service. A third concerned information about hospital appointments, e.g. whether they had been made and when they would be. Men were assured that appointments had been made but the details could not be shared in advance for security reasons.

6.2.9 Operational challenges have continued, with both staff turnover and the increased demands of managing the pandemic. However, daily GP and regular dental clinics (at least weekly and usually up to three times per week) have been provided.

6.2.10 On the whole, waiting times have been kept to under six weeks. The exceptions have been dental appointments, often because of specifically required procedures, and podiatry, because of less frequent clinics provided in the prison.

6.2.11 The waiting time for a GP appointment is 20 days, but if an urgent appointment is required the GP will see the patient the next day. The GP sees men accommodated within the CSU daily.

6.2.12 With the prison operating a stage 3 regime for much of the year, healthcare services were delivered on the residential wings. This led to a reduction in non-attended appointments (DNAs), but this rose to 10% for primary care when men were required to attend the healthcare clinic.

6.2.13 The success of holding vaccination and phlebotomy clinics on the residential wings, resulting in a reduction of DNAs for vaccinations, led to the decision that these clinics would continue being delivered there even after other services revert to the healthcare centre.

6.2.14 Health promotion advice was offered to men at opportunistic times, e.g. clinic appointments or medication administration. Health promotion messages were advertised on the wings and in healthcare via notice boards.

6.3 Mental health

6.3.1 The mental health team comprises 12 staff, most of whom are experienced nurses who have contact with about 20% of the prison population.

6.3.2 All prisoners undertake mental health screening on admission and the mental health team saw between 12 and 52 men a month as a result.

6.3.3 Most interventions in the past year were offered to men on their residential wing, and one man was transferred to hospital under the prison personality disorder pathway following an extended stay on the CSU.

6.3.4 Both staff and prisoners appreciated access to the staff on their wing and more referrals resulted.

6.3.5 During the stage 2 regime, prisoners were able to attend for clinic appointments and a very limited amount of group activity was undertaken.

6.3.6 The team prioritised attendance at ACCT and CSU reviews.

6.3.7 The pre-PIPE unit was operational for the full year, still managing to run group sessions following risk assessment and additional precautions. At its peak it was full for a short period, but closed the year with eight men.

6.3.8 It held a maximum of three young adults at any one time and did work at capacity for a while. This was challenging, as the younger prisoners provided greater challenge to the wider group.

6.3.9 There are currently four men serving a life sentence, and it is believed that those serving IPP sentences will be successful in securing a place in the pre-PIPE in the future.

6.3.10 The mental health nurses have worked as an integral part of the overall healthcare team, assisting prison colleagues as required. The Board has been impressed by the level of commitment and support provided to prisoners.

6.3.11 A member of the mental health team attended all ACCT reviews and priority is put on ensuring that a member of the mental health team attends the CSU reviews.

6.4 Social care

6.4.1 Formal links with the local authority social care department were maintained through meetings of the Local Delivery Board, which met regularly during 2021.

6.4.2 There was one referral for an assessment towards the end of the year which was awaiting completion at the end of 2021.

6.5 Exercise, regime

6.5.1 All men were offered the opportunity for out of cell exercise daily. This was a challenge at times due to Covid-19 restrictions and when men are self-isolating.

6.5.2 Whilst the prison was operating under a stage 3 regime, the use of the gym and sports hall was organised on a rotational wing basis. On average, this allowed all men who wanted to attend a 45 minute session at least once, but up to four times, per week. The class sizes were a maximum of nine in each gym area.

6.5.3 In the summer, when the prison moved into a stage 2 regime, class numbers increased to 14 and more sessions could be offered, especially to men with jobs outside of their residential wing. These were early morning and teatime sessions.

6.5.4 With the prison reverting to a stage 3 regime just before Christmas 2021, gym users continued to be offered at least one session of 30–40 minutes up to four times per week. Evening P.E. sessions on a rota basis also continued, allowing men to access badminton as well as weights and cardiovascular training.

6.5.5 An enthusiastic sports team of officers have done much to promote positive activities and support the Covid-19 vaccination campaigns.

6.6 Drug and alcohol rehabilitation

6.6.1 The substance misuse drug and alcohol psychosocial team is provided by Phoenix Futures. It had six full-time equivalent posts, which offered both individual and some small group work to men throughout the prison.

6.6.2 The recovery unit reopened in September with a maximum of 24 single cells. At the year-end it housed 14 prisoners, with a waiting list of 17. The unit ran afternoon-only sessions for a maximum of six men, including the recovery programme, wellbeing sessions, enrichment, drop ins and peer mentor-led coffee mornings.

6.6.3 In November, the enrichment was a week long opportunity to work with White Water Writers which concluded with the production of a book, scheduled for publication in early 2022.

6.6.4 The 'enhanced unit' on B wing also operates as an incentivised substance free living unit within the prison, as identified by the drug diagnostic team. This received additional funding for voluntary drug testing, undertaken by trained staff.

6.6.5 During the pandemic, staff were requested to limit their face-to-face contact and resorted to a range of alternatives to keep the prisoners engaged: in-cell workbooks with certificates for completion, and use of in-cell phones to maintain contact, make immediate contact on their arrival, allocate a key worker, attend healthcare reviews for those prescribed a substitute, attend ACCT reviews, make referrals for supported accommodation and complete release plans.

6.6.6 Work continued to support the reduction in supply and demand of psychoactive substances. This included 1:1 support for those found under the influence, production of a new workbook, new psychosocial intervention, adjudications pathway, in-house training for peer mentors, posters, and a new first night harm reduction booklet.

6.6.7 Maintaining a 'drug free' environment is difficult when there is no lockable gate between this residential area and the remainder of the wing. The Board has been advised that this is because no permanent location has been decided for the recovery unit and once decided the necessary modifications will be made. The work that both the team and the men do is commendable despite these challenges.

6.6.8 Rehabilitation groups are held in residential areas and a programme of outside speakers (e.g. Acorn, supported housing, and Achieve, support in Greater Manchester) restarted in September 2021 enabling men to learn more about the support available in the community.

6.7 Soft skills

6.7.1 During the year the chaplaincy team further developed the fenced area surrounding the chaplaincy centre with the introduction of beehives and a fishpond. Prisoners take responsibility for the care of the garden, birds, and animals and regard it as a privilege to do so. One man told an IMB member 'it is the one place where you forget that you are in prison.' This is despite being surrounded by prison buildings and on the main pedestrian route through the estate.

6.7.2 The number of peer supporters increased. They play a key role in promoting literacy and substance misuse programmes. There are two in programmes and one with red band status, and both received training and were mentored with regular supervision. They spoke with arrivals, checked in with service users and facilitated the coffee mornings on the recovery wing.

7. Progression and resettlement

7.1 Education, library

7.1.1 Education courses and library services, provided by Novus, were resumed as Covid-19 restrictions were eased. They were, however, limited, with men being released on a wing-by-wing basis for courses, resulting in a significant reduction in the overall number of men being provided opportunities for learning.

7.1.2 The library book lending service was enabled by men making a written request, with books then being delivered to the wings, which provided a service for the more literate prisoners but did not encourage those who were more reticent or who may not be confident placing requests in writing. Without physical access to the library stock, men were unaware of what was available to them, contributing to the low take-up.

7.1.3 The library inventory and loans were managed on a paper-based system contributing to the loss of books as men were moved from cell to cell, to other wings or other prisons, taking the books with them and library staff lost track of the books' locations.

7.1.4 The library space was utilised for small groups such as the guitar group and some of the few individuals using it for study towards their Open University (OU) courses.

7.1.5 As in the previous year, Covid-19 restrictions have limited the opportunities for learning. However, there has been continued use of in-house learning and skills staff, who have been proactive and produced in-cell learning packs.

7.1.6 There was an Ofsted progress monitoring visit in July, while the prison was in stage 3. Overall, the prison was judged as making 'reasonable progress' in ensuring that staff teach a full curriculum and provide support to meet prisoners' needs.

7.1.7 As in the previous year, it was disappointing that some learning had to be non-accredited, as no satisfactory way was created to enable prisoners to take examinations. Ofsted recommended that leaders must ensure that prisoners sit examinations on a timely basis to accredit knowledge and skills learnt through in-cell learning or prison workshops.

7.1.8 A wide range of 'diversion packs' continued to be delivered by the decency and chaplaincy teams, which included not only puzzles but also drawing and writing materials and playing cards, which were greatly appreciated by the men.

7.2 Vocational training, work

7.2.1 The usual mandatory requirement for men to achieve level 1 in maths and English before they are allowed to work was waived during the Covid-19 restrictions. This will be reviewed as the prison progresses to stage 1.

7.2.2 There was a gradual reopening of the workshops, such as bricklaying and joinery (in October), which aim to result in certificates of competency to help the men get future employment in construction. Similarly, recycling, biosecurity, catering, and barbering provided opportunities for the men to gain qualifications whilst at work.

7.2.3 The Novus team gradually restarted vocational course delivery from August. Some courses resumed with lower numbers attending, keeping groups from the same wing together to help manage the spread of the Covid-19 infection.

7.2.4 A computer repair shop, up-cycling shop and a computer/digital equipment dismantling and recycling facility opened. A new partnership with a recycling computer company based in Manchester supported men to develop skills in this area.

7.2.5 The biosecurity team continued throughout the lockdown period, providing essential cleaning across the site; a diversion for the prisoners involved and a potential qualification. This continues to give men useful work and is an essential service to the prison.

7.2.6 Paid activities were reviewed and where possible, full-time positions split into part-time roles to maximise the opportunities available to the most prisoners. This changed as the prison adjusted to each stage of the restrictions. The table below identifies the number of paid work opportunities (including education) available for morning (AM), afternoon (PM) and full time (FT) and the impact of moving to stage 2. The prison was approved to move to stage 1 in December 2021 when the Omicron variant struck. Under stage 1 there was a work or educational space planned for each prisoner.

Date from	Date to	Stage	AM vacancies	PM vacancies	FT vacancies	Total vacancies
01/01/21	22/08/21	3	14	11	142	167
23/08/21	19/12/21	2	53	51	185	289
20/12/21	31/12/21	3	15	10	137	162

7.2.7 The previous employer-led workshops, OSCO Homes and Heyrod, remained suspended throughout the year, with the restrictions preventing the restarting of activities.

7.2.8 Attendance at activities and education, when available, was poor with only one month (March) having all places allocated and all attending. As others on the wing were paid to remain in their cells, the incentive to attend activity was partly lost and DNA increased, with the lowest attendance in August at 67.6%.

7.2.9 Considerable work has been undertaken to prepare for the post-Covid19 world, with activities or education for all. Revised tiered payscales and a new role of mentor was introduced. The Board is hopeful that these will help the prisoners to become ready for work and improve employability.

7.3 Offender management, progression

7.3.1 Staffing of the offender management unit (OMU), which leads on offender progression, has been maintained throughout the pandemic restrictions. There were occasions when OMU staff were redeployed to the residential wings to cover absence.

7.3.2 Prisoners were supported by their prison offender manager (POM) and progression to open conditions continued where appropriate. However, there was increased frustration for prisoners at their inability to meet requirements for

recategorising, delays in transfer, the lack of appropriate and realistic information given to prisoners and the demands of reverse cohorting.

7.3.3 Since the introduction of the digital recategorisation tool during the year, the prison was better able to track prisoners. There were 211 categorisation reviews; of these, six young adults moved to category C, 27 men were reassessed as category D and the rest remained as category C.

7.3.4 As a resettlement prison, HMP/YOI Hindley has a very transient population, and there continued to be a problem of prisoners arriving without a complete record on the offender assessment system (OASys) which covers sentence planning. For example, in October 2021 86 prisoners transferred to HMP/YOI Hindley and of those only 33 (38%) had a complete OASys. During the same month, 43 were released and 39 transferred out. The uncompleted paperwork, delays in completing it and demands on staff time, many new in post, meant that there was frustration amongst the men and the staff, unfinished release plans and uncertainty, which caused friction.

7.3.5 The number of applications to the Board concerning the OMU rose during the year from 23 to 31, many concerning the frustration at delays and the inability to meet resettlement services face to face. Although the absolute number rose, the percentage of total applications remained comparable.

7.3.6 Resettlement services, including probation, have suffered during the pandemic restrictions, with staff working remotely and few attending prison and meeting prisoners. There has been a challenge in recruiting suitably qualified and experienced probation staff, so supervision meetings with individuals have slipped to once every two months, which is insufficient to meet their needs in many cases.

7.3.7 Formal programme groups (Thinking Skills or RESOLVE) were not able to run, but 127 men assessed as suitable for these offending behaviour programmes were issued with pre-course motivational workbooks. An additional 125 men who applied but were deemed as not suitable at this time were given self-help books. This was in addition to a range of other workbooks, where around 100 were distributed monthly and over half completed and returned.

7.4 Family contact

7.4.1 The pandemic restrictions impacted significantly upon the usual visit/family contact services; visits did resume in October 2021, however the take up was low.

7.4.2 There continued to be issues of access for families, with ongoing restrictions proving to be prohibitive to working family members and school pupils as weekend and evening visits were not available.

7.4.3 Social distancing requirements limited physical contact, and as the prison moved back to stage 3 in December the shop within the visits hall was closed. As an alternative, 'goodie bags' could be purchased by family members for the prisoner.

7.4.4 The take up of Purple (video) Visits was spasmodic, although the issues regarding the availability of laptops and private space from the previous year had improved. Staff availability to oversee the visit was a challenge and not always successfully overcome. Bookings are made directly through an app, and the limited capacity of visit slots and the technological capability of family members restricted take up.

7.4.5 The help with in-cell phones, phone credit (up until September and recommenced in December) and ease of using the mail continued from last year.

7.4.6 The chaplaincy service continued to play a major role in encouraging and supporting the men to maintain family contact. This was particularly pertinent where family bereavement had occurred.

7.4.7 Partners of Prisoners (POPs) gradually resumed their service, providing information and support for prisoners' families from their earliest contact with the criminal justice system through to release and beyond. Their role has changed significantly because of the restrictions, with greater use of social media, a need for greater flexibility and higher staff turnover. They have tried, where possible, to offer a service on the wings and are part of the prisoner induction programme.

7.4.8 The only family days during the year were held in December, when five opportunities were diarised to allow family members to meet face to face. These were restricted and did not provide the normal refreshment shop because of Covid-19 restrictions.

7.5 Resettlement planning

7.5.1 Resettlement planning was expected to be completed for all men during their last 12 weeks of sentence. In 2021, 470 cases were allocated to the resettlement team, 259 from Greater Manchester, 191 from the northwest and 19 wider afield.

7.5.2 Prisoners from Greater Manchester are the responsibility of Ingeus staff, who still have a presence at the prison. They work closely with resettlement staff, who support the pre-release arrangements with the local authority.

7.5.3 Prisoners from the remainder of the northwest are the responsibility of Seetec, who are not based at the prison and as a result provide a less comprehensive service.

7.5.4 Multi-agency meetings have not taken place this year, which resulted in less effective communication and no clear, universal vision on the way forward for an individual prisoner, and the risk of conflicting or missing elements of the release plan.

7.5.5 The Board continues to be concerned about the number of men released to no fixed abode, around 12%. Releasing prisoners to appropriate accommodation is vital for successful rehabilitation and to reduce reoffending.

7.5.6 Community accommodation service Tier 3 (CAS-3) is a pilot to provide transitional accommodation across the region and is available for those of no fixed abode but not assessed by the local authority as a priority. Accommodation is provided for up to 12 weeks

7.5.7 The resettlement team identified and worked with 147 individuals who met the criteria for CAS-3: 80 from Greater Manchester, 61 from the northwest and six out of area. Even after this intervention, 34 remained identified as NFA for their first night.

7.5.8 The biggest challenge is that men are asked to report to the local authority on the day of release for assessment; if deemed not a priority, they will not be allocated accommodation on their first night. The resettlement team is working with local authorities to facilitate telephone assessments prior to release, however not all will engage with the process. Without a decision, a referral to CAS-3 cannot be made and the opportunity is potentially lost for a smooth transition to the community.

7.5.9 The 'integrated through the gate' (ITTG) team have remained fully staffed, but with a limited number of personnel attending the prison daily.

7.5.10 The service provided by the Department for Work and Pensions has an individual working back in the prison. The service has been assisted by using in-cell telephones and some face-to-face discussions with individuals on their wings. There have been no larger group meetings, as were traditionally provided as part of the preparation for release.

The work of the IMB

8.1 The national restrictions impacted on the work of the Board and necessitated changes in procedure, some remote monitoring and a reduction in direct prisoner contact. Members were concerned about servicing Board applications during the lockdown and encouraged prisoners to use the national 0800 application line. Of the total 164 applications received during the year, 20 were received via the telephone application line.

8.2 The impact of the pandemic on the work of the IMB continued throughout the year, with two members continuing to monitor from a distance and not visiting the prison until November. Whilst in prison, the other members accessed areas dependent on their risk-assessed status.

8.3 The number of applications during the year increased from 117 to 174, an increase of 48.7%, returning to slightly less than pre-Covid-19 days, as the prisoners settled into Covid normality.

8.4 The 174 applications were received from 96 different prisoners, with 20 applications from one man on the pre-PIPE unit on a range of matters. He made use of both the telephone and paper routes to the Board.

8.5 Visits to the prison increased by 12.3% (228 from 203) and attendance at segregation reviews by 30.7%, reflecting that more members were able to attend throughout the year.

8.6 The Board was stable, with one member leaving in March, one returning from an extended leave of absence in September and two monitoring from a distance until November. One retired in December, having completed their tenure of 15 years.

8.7 While retaining its independence, the Board has had an open and honest relationship with the Governor and the management team during the year, with excellent communication despite the challenges.

8.8 The Governor (or deputy governor) has continued to attend every Board meeting regardless of the method used and to liaise with the Board chair as necessary.

Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	13
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	13
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	12
Total number of visits to the establishment	228
Total number of segregation reviews attended	93

Applications to the IMB

Code	Subject	Previous reporting year	Current reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	11	23*
B	Discipline, including adjudications, IEP, sanctions	8	4
C	Equality	4	4
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	1	10
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection restrictions	1	6
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	3	1
F	Food and kitchens	9	3
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	15	24
H1	Property within this establishment	11	14
H2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	11	32
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	6	2
I	Sentence management, including HDC, release on temporary licence, parole, release dates, recategorisation	23	31
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	13	10
K	Transfers	1	0
L	Miscellaneous, including complaints system	0	0
	Total number of applications	117	164

*11 of the applications on accommodation concerned the same issue, lack of running water on A wing for two days.



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