



# **Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Wayland**

**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**

At the start of the reporting year HMP Wayland was still designated as a category C male training prison. At the end of the reporting year, the reality of the situation was belatedly recognised by HMPPS and it was announced that the prison would revert to its previous designation as a category C male training and resettlement prison. We make comment about the need, and the hopes, for this change in section 7 of this report.

The prison is 13.2 miles from the nearest rail station and three miles from the nearest bus stop, which makes visiting both difficult and expensive as around only 15% of the prisoners are from Norfolk and Suffolk, and almost all the rest are from London and the south east of England.

The prison's certified normal accommodation was 765 at the end of the reporting year. At the start of the reporting year the capacity was 914, down from its previous capacity of 1,003, as we reported last year, following a fire inspection of the prison when two units were declared unsafe and by then had been demolished. Additionally, however, towards the end of this reporting year the dire conditions of all units in the original 1985-built structure meant that the worst two of the five units involved were closed for extensive repair, refurbishment and upgrading. The Board comments further on the prisoner accommodation conditions in section four of this report.

The original prison, built over 35 years ago, comprises:

- four large H-blocks, mainly single cells with integral w/c and wash basin but with communal shower rooms (one of which is now closed for refurbishment as explained above)
- a further smaller two-storey unit (which is also closed for extensive refurbishment)
- the segregation unit (locally named the reintegration unit)
- a healthcare unit
- the main kitchen
- the main stores
- a large workshop/activity complex
- the prison's reception and visiting areas
- the main administration and entry building

There have since been five expansions since the original units were built, and after the closure of F and H wings:

- five short-life, ready-to-use units of 60 prisoners each, all cells double cells with full integral sanitation including showers
- an individually-designed two-wing accommodation unit of 60 single cells all with integral sanitation
- a first night centre

- a second kitchen
- a large education centre
- a further administration building
- a new robust segregation unit, originally due to open at the end of 2021 but remaining unfinished at the end of this reporting year in May 2022

The general design and placement of units and activity spaces has resulted in a very spread out site with difficult-to-manage cellular accommodation in the old buildings, with complicated and extensive movement pathways, all of which contribute to a regime which is demanding for staff to manage.

Finally, the Board has been informed that it is planned to construct a four-wing unit of 120 prisoners in the north quadrant of the site with an expected completion date of mid- to end- 2023. Final details of the design are not yet available to the Board.

### 3. Executive summary

#### 3.1 Background to the report

As might be expected, the challenges for the IMB of the continued effects on the Board and the prison of the Covid pandemic has had a significant impact on the Board's ability to monitor systematically and consistently throughout the reporting year. The Board has, nevertheless, tried to cover as much ground as it can in these difficult circumstances, and also managed to survey prisoners' attitudes using a suitably-adapted repeat of its previous survey which has allowed it to make some key comparisons between this year's findings and those of the two previous years. Despite this, however, inevitably there is less detail and supporting evidence than in previous annual reports. Ministers are aware of these constraints.

Nevertheless, we would respectfully remind the Minister of Justice that in 2016 the then Secretary of State, Liz Truss, published the white paper *Prison Safety and Reform*. On the first page of the Introduction, item 8 says this: *'Frontline staff will be given the time and the tools they need to supervise and support offenders so they can turn our prisons into places of safety and reform.'* Six years later this stirring, and welcome, statement has not been delivered; far from it, as we describe within.

In this context, it is the opinion of the Wayland Board, based on a further year's monitoring of the prison, that what is both shocking and depressing about HMP Wayland is that, in any direction one cares to look, the prison has been, and is still being, failed by the Prison Service, and that failure is ultimately that of the government. Put bluntly, this inevitably means that the general public is being failed in its expectation that those committed to custody for their crimes are provided with the incentives, and the means, to address their offending behaviours. This is not the fault of those who are working, and trying to manage, the actual prison.

This situation is neither new nor should be unexpected. In our 2019-2020 report we included what we thought was a trenchant summary of the situation when we said:

*'The Board therefore believes that the prison, and its Governor, is being failed by the policies of HMPPS and of Ministry of Justice funding which have resulted in these outcomes. In these circumstances, it is to the credit of the Governor that she – and her team – has been able to make the significant improvements they have in many areas described in this section of the report. The Governor has achieved this by her determination to drive improvements through; but there is still much work to do, and the further development of the progress made needs more support in staff training and in staffing provision and deployment; absent these, she is being required to make too many bricks without straw.'*

In our next report to the Minister for 2020-2021 we were more insistent that the treatment of prisoners would fail to reach the standards expected of a civilised nation and cited the main drivers of this failure:

*'The Board, however, is increasingly concerned that any improvement in the treatment of prisoners, as the world, and the Prison Service, comes out of the pandemic, will be threatened by two serious issues. First, the already low staffing*

*numbers are threatening the recovery. Second, a very high proportion of prison officers have almost no experience of the challenging management of prisoners outside of a tightly controlled pandemic-restricted environment. The Board has been informed that the number of prison officer grade staff available for duty is often as low as two-thirds of the agreed staffing profile... even if, however, the staff numbers are brought up to the current agreed level, it is the Board's view, from its monitoring observations, that this is significantly fewer than would be needed to create a properly profiled organisation, committed to the rehabilitation of its prisoners. Prisoners are not in the equivalent of an Amazon warehouse, just waiting for workers to move them to the delivery vans, they are complex human beings with more than averagely complex needs. As such, there needs to be an adequate number of staff, adequately trained, to deliver on the Prison Service's commitment to rehabilitation, as well as security. In the Board's view, therefore, the Prison Service should not only review the total number of staff available in Wayland, but also ensure that they are adequately trained to carry out their demanding roles, and that their pay is such as will ensure their retention.'*

We regret that this year's report sees no real improvement in any of the above concerns; prisoners at Wayland are still being failed by the Prison Service in its continued inability to manage its infrastructure of buildings and maintenance competently, and in its continued failure to provide the means and support (including adequate initial and development training) for staff to do their demanding and, for the safety of the general public, critical, job. Our comments and views are not merely opinions, they are the result of careful monitoring on a weekly basis of the actuality of Wayland prisoners' experiences and of their responses to our repeated surveys of what prisoners at Wayland experience on a daily basis. We have also been advised by many staff that they are frustrated that they cannot do the job they signed up for and want to do.

While this report was in compilation the latest HMIP report on Wayland was published. We have not used the details of its findings in this report but we do note that it identifies similar, or identical, issues and conclusions to those we have reached during our year's monitoring.

We do note, however, that of the 68 recommendations made in the 2017 inspection report, there were 41 noted in the latest inspection as 'not achieved'. It is not the IMB's place to identify why these had not been implemented but, from discussion with governing staff over the reporting year we have been advised, when we have questioned the non-achievement of a number of recommendations, that Wayland has insufficient resources to achieve them.

During this reporting year Wayland had a six-month period when there was no substantive Governor with the deputy governor as caretaker before the current Governor's arrival at the close of 2021. Therefore the new Governor has had little time for her stated vision and her priorities for the prison to take effect.

## **3.2 Main judgements**

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

The Board accepts that the total number of assaults, and their seriousness, has declined over the past four years by around 50%. Some of this decline will have been due to the very restricted regime practised during the pandemic and even after, into the current reporting year. But it is not the numbers but the feeling of safety that dominates prisoners' minds. We refer to the Board's survey, and to the HMIP supporting survey, results in section 4 of this report.

Over the year members have heard from individual prisoners, mostly, but not always, as asides, illustrations of the world they have to live in, when we have asked them their opinions on what is then happening in the prison. Some of these occasions have followed use of force by staff, others have begun as a general complaint about lack of medical or other care which they feel makes them unsafe, sometimes following the forced reduction of the dosages of their methadone replacement therapy, or similar medications, which meant, they told us, that they could not 'hold it together' and could react badly to minor irritations. Others mentioned their perceived lack of safety from other prisoners due to the prevalence of gangs and the need to be ultra-careful in how they acted, reacted, or managed their interactions with these powerful groups and individuals. Where this becomes intolerable, perhaps through drug-purchase debts which they, or their families, could not repay, many have sought refuge in self-isolation. We have highlighted this challenging behaviour in previous reports but, this time, can report that prison management carry out frequent checks on these prisoners' welfare and the Board no longer has to report in detail on the lack of attention paid to this small, and changing, group. For these prisoners, their safety has improved, if only through their own actions and the resulting attention by staff.

But the self-reported feelings of safety or, rather, lack of it, have got worse for many prisoners after reception and following their experience of the prison. More prisoners this year reported they felt more unsafe after 18 months in the establishment than they did on arrival, by a significant margin, despite this period including many months of restricted social interactions during lockdown regimes. This challenging result deserves careful attention by prison management.

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

In a competition between concepts of whether Wayland is engaged in the warehousing of prisoners or in their rehabilitation, the outcome is that the warehousing concept wins hands down; humane warehousing, however, is not the point. We see staff strive, at all levels, to ensure that that warehousing is as fair and as humane as it can be but, for all prisoners, it is little more than that. In terms of fairness and humanity at the individual prisoner level our evidence is therefore similar in detail to that of previous years' monitoring, in that treatment could be fairer and more humane and we give specific examples in the appropriate sections of this report.

However, in a very real sense, the failure of the Service to maintain the prison's fabric adequately has resulted in circumstances during the winter 2021/2022 when conditions in some of the new build units bordered on the inhumane, with windows that would not shut and a heating system that did not work, forcing the prison to



purchase well over 200 electric heaters for prisoners' cells. This must not happen in the winter 2022/2023, although we fear it will.

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

The standard against which prisoners' healthcare management should be measured, according to the Prison Service, is that pertaining to the outside community. In the past this has been a reasonable guide even if we believed it did not go far enough when the specific needs of prisoners are considered. Currently, however, given the general disappointment with extreme waits for GP face-to-face appointments, and the increasing NHS image of a system in crisis, perhaps the external comparison approach to meeting needs is beyond its sell-by date. We make suggestions for a realistic reappraisal of the healthcare and wellbeing needs of prisoners which takes into serious account prisoners' special needs due to their increased likelihood of having much poorer health, at almost any age, than outside comparators. Certainly prisoners' attitudes to healthcare contacts reveal significant dissatisfaction.

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

The Board's response to this fundamental question of Wayland's responsibility for successful resettlement is that it is failing prisoners at almost every level, from initial assessment and sentence planning, through provision of a regime and opportunities to turn their lives around, to managing the actual process of discharge and resettlement. Resettlement should be the end activity of a process and relationship which stretches back to each prisoner's first night experience. We do not see evidence that this is the case at Wayland and we report on the situation that prisoners, who should be preparing for discharge, face on an almost daily basis in the appropriate sections of this report, with many knowing that they have no accommodation to go to on release.

## **3.3 Main areas for development**

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

First, throughout this report we have set out our views on the failure of the Prison Service to respond adequately to the prison's desperate needs for a greatly improved physical infrastructure.

Secondly, we make a plea for a realistic assessment of the staffing required to look after prisoners' rehabilitative needs for education, training and working experience and their preparation for life after release. Obviously integral to that is the need for the pay and conditions of service needed to attract staff, especially those with the life-skills and the mature experience on which the specialist training of prison officer work can build. Asking 18-year-old men and women to successfully manage, treat and motivate prisoners twice their age after only a 12-week, mostly PowerPoint presentation off-site course, and to seek effective guidance from other staff, when 50% of the prison's staff have less than a year's service themselves, is asking for the unachievable.

Believing this situation to have been, largely, that across the entire prison estate for many years, the IMB at Wayland can see no effective alternative to a request to the

Minister to order a complete review of the initial and development training of prison officers.

We also, given the numbers involved and the severity of the problem of drugs in the commission of crime, consider that there might be thought given by the Minister to a consideration of post-release drug treatment perhaps through a new sentence licence requirement, given the links now, operationally, through the combined Prison and Probation Service.

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

The Board notes that 60% of the recommendations of the 2017 inspectorate report had not been achieved by the time of the 2022 inspection. When the Board has asked why, it has been informed that the prison has had insufficient resources to achieve them all. We therefore recommend to the Prison Service that it immediately carries out a clear-eyed needs analysis of the new HMIP report's recommendations to identify which of them will need additional resources provided to Wayland's Governor for their delivery and then to commit to providing those resources (see section 3.1).

Approximately 50% of Wayland's prison officers are both very young and very inexperienced, not just in terms of prison experience but in their own personal confidence and maturity. They need more than classroom training; they need the support of experienced staff. Where this is lacking, the final fall-back has to be numbers, so inexperience can be mitigated by greater numbers of visible staff. We therefore make our views known again, in relation to the management of the constant challenge of social breakdown within a prison, that the review of staff profiling for which we have called in previous reports, and for which we are now calling again, must take into account the context we have just described, at least until the balance of experience is restored (see section 4.3).

Last year the widespread and continued failure of the heating system across the 'new build' sector resulted in conditions bordering on the inhumane, only saved by more than 200 electric heaters being purchased and provided to prisoners. We therefore recommend that the Prison Service provides the finance and resources for a comprehensive overhaul of the new build heating systems to be put in place before the next cold season (see section 5.1).

The effects of international price rises have already been reflected, prisoners believe, in their meal portion sizes and the 6p per diem increase in the food budget will not be enough (see section 5.1).

We recommend to the Prison Service that the new care and separation unit, built, so we are informed, at considerable cost, can at least be staffed to properly address the 'care' element as well as that of 'separation' in the management of prisoners held there when it does, finally, open (see section 5.2).

We are concerned that the training received by newly joined prison officers falls far short of what is needed to equip a new prison officer to deal with the challenging task ahead of him or her. Prisoners are very attuned to the competence and professionalism of staff and from their comments, which we detail in section 5.3, we

recommend that prison officer training is reviewed to include deeper and more extensive training on key work and staff/prisoner relationships. Absent this, new staff are inevitably ‘thrown in at the deep end’ and either sink or swim; hence our concern with how they learn to swim and what they do to stay afloat (section 5.3).

In addition to the prison’s mandatory refresher training requirements in control and restraint etc., the Board believes that the management of the incentives scheme should be regarded as an absolute requirement at establishment level and therefore properly supported and resourced by the Prison Service (see section 5.6).

The Board has received frequent property complaints by prisoners, for a further year, almost all down to the lack of a proper management of property on reception, transport, and transfer. We therefore recommend to the Prison Service that it reviews its decision not to resource a modern IT system to support property management and that it seeks appropriate IT solutions without further delay (see section 5.8).

Approximately 20% of prisoners released from Wayland have no known discharge address. We cannot, as a Board, accept that this is an acceptable result for a prison which has been confirmed, again, as a training and resettlement prison. For the past year there has been precious little training and less resettlement. The Board believes that the Prison Service needs to shoulder its responsibilities to work with other government departments to provide the accommodation to allow the Governor and her staff to do the job expected of them.

## **TO THE GOVERNOR**

More prisoners this year reported they felt unsafe after 18 months in the establishment than they did on arrival, by a significant margin, despite this period including many months of restricted social interactions during lockdown regimes. The proportion of prisoners feeling unsafe after reception had risen from about a fifth (22.5%) in the 2019 survey, to almost a third (30.5%) in the latest survey. This challenging result deserves careful attention by prison management (see section 3.2).

In the Board’s experience of monitoring Wayland over many years, the failure to manage the induction process properly is not something that has happened overnight, it seems a baked-in problem. We recommend, therefore, to the Governor that this is a situation which needs serious commitment to change (see section 4.1).

To try and manage the scourge of illicit substances the Board suggests that the separated nature of the accommodation units across the site could be used to manage the population through smaller, and more focused, groups and create a more cooperative population through encouragement and attention rather than simply punishment (see section 4.5).

In our latest survey it was revealed that 40% of prisoners were still not getting a reliable weekly bedding exchange. This is not acceptable and so the Board draws the prison’s attention to this finding, for the third year in a row, and hopes again that effective measures will be put in place, this time, to achieve a reliable bedding change process as a matter of routine for all prisoners (see section 5.1).

It has been reported to the Board that almost all responsible prisoner jobs as induction orderlies, DHL workers, Insiders, library orderlies and mobile maintenance orderlies are held by white prisoners. The Board recommends that this area of potential discrimination is reviewed by the Governor and we will continue to review progress on this issue (see section 5.4).

From frequent discussions with prisoners we have learned that the opaqueness of the incentives system is a drawback to progress. It is the Board's view that prisoners should be told when either a negative or a positive entry has been made as a way of challenging poor behaviour openly, confirming good behaviour, and helping to make the incentives process transparent (see section 5.6).

The Board has dealt with numerous applications throughout the year alleging that property has been stolen from cells which have been left unlocked, or unlocked later in error, after the occupant has been moved to the segregation unit. In many cases the required cell clearance arrangements have either not happened or the record not been maintained properly. We suggest wing management ensure that cell clearances are properly carried out in future (see section 5.8).

There have been instances of violence in the drug dependency medications queue. Perhaps tempers are shorter due to the policy of prescription reduction of such medications but it suggests that there may be a need to review how the medication periods are managed and supervised (see section 6.2).

The Board believes that there would be significant value in the establishment of a buddy system within the prison for those prisoners who may be mobility-compromised or in need of a degree of personal care in some way, and we recommend that this concept is researched and supported (see section 6.4).

The Board is forced to conclude, as we have observed in previous reports, that the cooperation/collaboration between the operational and the education contractor sides could be significantly improved and recommends this to the Governor in order to make better use of an expensive prisoner rehabilitation resource (see section 7.1).

The Board recommends that open access to the library is recommenced as soon as possible so that prisoners' library needs can be more fully met, their reading improved, and their individual inner lives properly nurtured (see section 7.1).

The Board notes that the HMIP inspection report (carried out in the closing months of this reporting year) concluded that the education contractor, PeoplePlus, was judged as inadequate in all areas. The Board recommends that steps be taken by the contractor and the Governor, who, we understand, is in charge of the contract, to reverse these unacceptable judgements in the coming year (see sections 7.1 and 7.2).

The Board understands that Shannon Trust volunteers are unable to reach large numbers of prisoners who request their help in learning to read. We therefore recommend that the operational objections to allowing cross-unit mentoring by Shannon Trust volunteers be reviewed to see how this valuable addition to the prison's rehabilitative function and its stated priority to 'create careers' for prisoners can be allowed – few careers can be created without being able to read (see section 7.2).

Through the Board's discussions with prisoners and in its latest survey of attitudes we have again learned that prisoners still seek help from staff about their personal problems. Unfortunately, only just over 10% report that they were helped by staff in their response. The Board therefore recommends to the Governor that greater training effort is made to upskill staff who are in daily contact with prisoners so that they are competent and confident to respond to prisoners who are seeking their help and, also, to proactively interact with prisoners to create the atmosphere and relationships where such interactions can take place (see section 7.3).

We recommend to the Governor that steps are taken to consider how the charity-funded Storybook Dads initiative could be restarted in full with library access which was a valuable, and valued, feature of library activity before the pandemic (see section 7.4).

The visits hall is on the first floor. There is no lift to that level and only a chairlift which is not suitable for all disabilities nor, crucially, is it consistently working. Each time it has been repaired, incorrect operation by staff (there are no easy to comprehend operating instructions for staff unfamiliar with its management) has led to its rapid failure. These issues have been raised numerous times with prison management without success. There is a suggestion that a personnel lift will be installed in a new 'lift tower' but not for two years. This problem requires an operational and reliable answer now (see section 7.4).

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

The issues we report on seem almost permanent and impervious to either 'quick fixes' or easy answers. Following each of our last two reports we were informed of efforts to address some of the problems we had then identified; sadly these have not borne fruit. In fact, as we report in detail in these pages, the treatment of prisoners has continued to decline, almost universally, in its quality and in its effectiveness. This report is therefore a greater challenge to the Prison Service than may be usual but we would be failing in our responsibility if we did not make clear our assessment of the reasons behind the particular challenges of Wayland and the need for a serious consideration of those views. We have taken note of the latest Prisons Strategy White Paper, published in December 2021, halfway through our reporting year; although we find it long on soundbites and 'we wills', it is short on detail and on specific commitments to provide the necessary additional resources to train, support, and develop the most important, and expensive, resource: the staff.

At this point, the Board wishes to acknowledge that, for reasons largely beyond its control, this report does not include some of the work that has been done in the months since our reporting year ended. However, we have felt it appropriate to make a few additional observations on some issues which have been improved since our reporting year closed.

We are therefore pleased to note that additional, and positive, work has begun, or increased, in the following areas:

- staff support through the Director General's approval of a local pay uplift
- improved regime planning which, although nowhere near pre-pandemic levels, now approximates more closely what is being achieved elsewhere

- more visibility from senior staff around the prison during critical times when prisoners are more out of their cells
- a commitment to retain, and improve the use of, a weekly afternoon shut-down for staff training
- a start to an improved prisoner induction programme, for which we have been calling for some time
- a commitment to increasing the access to and attendance at training and education activities for prisoners, including, for the first time for three years, open access to the prison library
- an improved management of reception and particularly, of prisoners' property

Set against the challenges which Wayland has faced, and still faces, these improvements, if sustained and developed, are a welcome start on the path to a prison which can be more justifiably described as a training and resettlement prison.

The Board hopes to be able to report more fully on these developments, and, we trust, others, in our next annual report.

## Evidence sections 4 – 7

### 4. Safety

#### 4.1 Reception and induction

While the Board understands, and accepts, that the impact of Covid in the early months of this reporting year was severe on the establishment in terms of coping with infection rates amongst staff and prisoners, it remains disappointed that more was not done to adapt the reception and induction process to the new reality. With the extensive in-cell laptop technology available, and with the experience of the first year of the pandemic to learn from, we were expecting that more would have been done.

In fact, the prison's focus on reception seemed to be largely on the utility of the airport-style body-scan equipment in detecting contraband. That this equipment did pick up more attempts to smuggle contraband items in is, of course, welcome, but that is a sideshow to the real business of reception and induction which is to welcome, set at ease, deal with urgent and pressing personal problems, and begin to map out what the experience of Wayland holds for each prisoner as he progresses through his sentence.

After the rush of reception activities there should come a period of careful analysis of needs as well as a time for a thorough appreciation of what Wayland stands for, what it can deliver and what would be the best way for the prison to meet each prisoner's needs across a variety of sectors: education, purposeful activity and work training, healthcare and the management of substance abuse, the personal issues they face, what help can be made available and how, and also the expectations the prison has of prisoners' behaviours and the management of their daily lives.

We asked in our latest survey how helpful respondents thought that their induction had been.

Seventy percent (70%) responded that it was not helpful. This is an even worse figure than in 2021 when it was 65%. Induction programming and delivery is always a challenge but, from the consistent results of two surveys, it seems that the process and content of induction at Wayland needs significant improvement. As we have noted above, a lot depends on how a prison manages a prisoner's first few days in a new prison, whether he is a first-timer or not, how it can answer his questions, deal with his fears, help him adjust to his new life and start building a positive foundation to his future relationships with staff. Absent a positive experience of induction, all these benefits are in jeopardy, making it much harder for staff to do their job later.

It is the Board's view that a prison's investment in a positive and relevant induction experience is always worthwhile. It seems, however, that Wayland either does not understand that truth, or cannot organise itself, even with a reasonably predictable flow-through of receptions, unlike that of a local prison, to deliver a meaningful induction period.

But, apart from the Board's view of the need for a much-improved induction process, our survey also revealed that a fifth of prisoners reported feeling unsafe on arrival, and none volunteered that their fears had been addressed adequately. We deal with this challenge in another section but it is worth noting here that the proportion of

prisoners feeling unsafe after reception had risen from about a fifth (22.5%) to almost a third (30.5%). We note that this proportion is broadly similar to that reported by the 2022 HMIP survey: 25%. Of course, there are myriad reasons which might lie behind that increase in feeling unsafe, but a positive induction experience might make all the difference to a prisoner being able later to confide in staff and obtain the support then required

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

The Board receives the prison's daily briefing reports and there are few days when self-harm by prisoners is not reported, some of these incidents being very severe and necessitating outside hospital intervention and not just local healthcare attendance.

However, evidence over the past year has been that the picture has improved slightly. Self-harms remain high at an annualised rate at the end of the reporting year of 400 cases per 1,000 prisoners, but this figure is down from a rate almost double that at the start of the year. At the start of the reporting year Wayland reported the highest number of incidents of self-harm by some margin in Wayland's comparator group of nine category C prisons. Twelve months later, although in seven of the 12 months still reporting the highest number of incidents, the actual number of such incidents had decreased, as had those in many of the other comparator prisons. Wayland is now at the average of the group, suggesting there has been more proactive and effective staff care for troubled prisoners.

One Board member regularly reviews assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) forms, however, and has reported to the Board that, although these are routinely written up as required, the content and meaningfulness of the comments made and the actions to be taken seem to be poor and sometimes very poor. These views have been shared with the prison's management and efforts have been made to improve. However, the under-strength staffing situation and the constant presence of detached duty staff seem to militate against maintained improvement. When the new forms were introduced the Board felt that the increased bureaucracy and requirements for reporting stood little chance of resulting in improved ACCT management unless serious training time was given to the new demands. There was some prison-wide training at the time of the forms' introduction but the evidence the Board has seen suggests it is likely that this was too little and has not, we believe, been followed up with further refreshers, except perhaps at an occasional individual level. The result is that the Board has not seen a noticeable improvement in the management of these important documents. We report elsewhere on the efforts of the healthcare mental health team but self-harming behaviours are much more likely to be reduced and the prisoners involved supported effectively if there is good and predictably supportive interest and care by staff. We believe this aspect of the prison's management needs sustained attention and we make further mention of this elsewhere.



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

Violence in a prison means more than the mere counting of incidents of acts of prisoner-on-prisoner and prisoner-on-staff violence. However, the Board is pleased to report that, in terms of prisoner-on-prisoner incidents, Wayland has managed to reduce its position within its comparator group from the worst at the start of the year, through positions in the top quartile for significant periods to, at the end of the year, its position under the average by some margin.

However, the same cannot be reported for assaults on staff. Apart from two periods, of two months each, at the start and at the end of the reporting year, Wayland has either been the monthly highest, or highest bar one, for assaults on staff in the comparator group reports and the trend line for the prison is trending upwards.

Although some of the assaults can be attributed to an escalation of a refusal to obey orders, for example to stay in a cell and the prisoner then barges past the officer to get out, some of the assaults have been very serious, with one incident where only the unexpected intervention of a senior officer prevented a much more serious outcome. The Board frequently asks prisoners for the reason for the assault and on too many occasions we are told that it was deliberate to ensure that the prisoner got a transfer out of Wayland because the prisoner believed he was or would be a target for other prisoners for actions he, or his associates, had taken in the murky world of the drug business. If this is the case it seems that, once again, the need to proactively address this culture is obvious. Part of this may be a greater willingness to consider granting rule 45 'own interest' segregation either to manage a short-term issue or to ensure safety while other solutions are sought. This has not been the response in the past but we see signs that this might change, and, if it does, and if it reduces the assaults on staff, it can only be an improvement on the total quality of life in Wayland

In terms of self-isolation there is better news to report. Over the year, with a few higher spikes, the numbers of prisoners seeking to isolate themselves from the general regime have been lower than for some years. There are checks on their welfare, attempts to encourage them back into normal location and a general lack of the punitive approach common two years ago which was then used to make life even more difficult for those self-isolating in an attempt to try and get them to re-enter the regime. The more supportive approach seems to be more effective although there are still issues such as requests for more comparable showering and exercise opportunities.

Yet, as we noted at the start of this section, the issue of prison violence is more than just a log of incidents. In discussions with prisoners the Board has been told of an increase in the perception amongst prisoners that there is a breakdown in the prison community's own control of such behaviour and that they have seen too many incidents of low-level anti-social behaviour being ignored by staff unwilling to challenge that behaviour. This was at one time called the 'broken windows theory': that an ignored single broken window inevitably leads to more being broken and anti-social damage escalating until the situation is beyond control. We do not suggest that Wayland has reached that point, yet, but we do suggest that, again, a major part of the solution has to do with the twin issues of staff training and staff numbers.

#### **4.4 Use of force**

The unplanned use of force over the year at Wayland has, we have been informed, either been the highest or almost so compared to its comparator establishments. The Board has also been informed by prisoners, on numerous occasions, that staff have been too quick to use force in situations where the prisoner believed it was not called for: although they accepted that such incidents were because of their behaviours they felt the response was too severe. On occasions we have taken these issues to senior staff and have seen the CCTV footage where possible, although body-worn video cameras have not always been switched on or even worn, a situation that was being addressed at the close of the reporting period. On occasions, the result of such reviews has been that the officer concerned has been advised of a better response. We discussed with senior staff the apparent tendency by some junior staff to use personal safety techniques where a calmer response might have been called for and recommended that perhaps some refresher training might be in order. This has now been overtaken by the gradual training of staff in the new, national, technique of spontaneous protection enabling accelerated response (SPEAR). We assume that the Prison Service has evaluated in-depth the appropriateness of this new technique, adopted since 2007 by British police forces, in the, usually, confined and close-up contact between staff and prisoners, as SPEAR is apparently predicated on a pre-programmed response. The Board has doubts about the utility of such an aggressive response to a violent assault when the majority of incidents we are aware of in Wayland, although not all, have been at a much lower level than a sudden violent attack. The Board is concerned that inexperienced staff may over-interpret a physical move by a prisoner as a violent attack, thus triggering the muscle-memory training involved in SPEAR. We shall monitor such use of SPEAR closely in the coming period.

#### **4.5 Preventing illicit items**

The prison has been successful, up to a point, in preventing a range of illicit items from entering the prison, particularly drugs and mobile phones by the diligent use of the body-scanner, the X-ray scanning of items brought through reception from in-possession property, follow-on property and ordered items, and hand searching by staff. Nevertheless, the surest guide to the availability of drugs is their 'street price' within the prison. According to our discussions with prisoners over the year this seems to have affected different contraband items differently. Spice has dropped in price from £1,000 for an A4 sheet earlier in the year, to around half that. We suspect that although the efforts of the mail team, the mail itemiser, the provision of routine photocopies rather than original items, and the use of the drug detection dogs to sniff incoming mail has reduced one means of obtaining the drug, others must be being used, causing the 'street price' drop. Attempts to import by 'throw-overs' are thwarted by searches of activity and exercise areas but the lack of sufficient staff for this purpose perhaps means that some items do get through by this means; the use of drones, though, seems rare. However, these efforts are somewhat negated by, we are informed, the manufacture of Spice equivalents from ingredients available in the prison itself. Some prisoners have alleged that staff are bringing in contraband.

But aside from imported drugs and locally-manufactured Spice, the brewing of alcohol ('hooch') has been a feature of much staff counter-activity over the past year,

from the use of illicit brewed alcohol dogs (IBAD), to the management of those who brew and those who consume such hooch and those who are found 'under the influence'. The Board attends adjudications, where hooch is a constant element, and its consumption a cause of significant violence and disorder.

The new half-and-half prison regime is still quite restrictive, so that prisoners can spend long periods of time in their cells. Coming on the top of the pandemic lockdowns and previous restrictions this is driving, the Board believes, at least some of the demand for hooch and home-made Spice, resulting in frequent requests for healthcare attendance at suspected 'under the influence' incidents (UTIs).

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

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

#### **Accommodation**

For yet another year it is the reluctant duty of the Wayland IMB to report that the disintegration of the basic accommodation infrastructure, indeed the whole prison's infrastructure, has continued to accelerate.. Across the prison in every building this litany of decay extends from the flooring to the roof covering, it is all either beyond its useful life or simply not fit for purpose. The flooring in the 'new' kitchen is giving way, flooring in the 'new' units continually suffers the same fate, as does the floor covering in the old buildings. The flat roofs of the latter leak and the visits hall has a cordoned-off area as rain comes in, with parts of the ceiling also falling, The only realistic solution to this prison-wide situation would be to build a new facility from scratch on the unused part of the site, decant as necessary until then, and then move the whole prison into the new facility in order to demolish the old and build additional facilities on the cleared site. A prison of at least the capacity of the new prison HMP Five Wells would then be available. Instead, we confidently predict, there will continue to be piecemeal, extensive, and expensive, refurbishment to the old buildings.

We make no apology for this assessment, which we know is privately shared by some with operational responsibility for the current site. In our report last year we identified the infrastructure's failings and hoped that remedial works would be sufficient but a further year's monitoring experience has convinced us of the depth of the difficulties, the error in trying to refurbish the old buildings, whose basic design is not operationally fit for purpose, and the financial sinkhole represented by the crumbling 'new' ready-to-use temporary buildings.

Last winter (2021-2022) the heating in the 'new' buildings once again failed across much of the site, resulting in more than 200 electric heaters being purchased and provided to prisoners. The same situation existed in the gate and administration building which for months in the winter had no heating or hot water. Again, fan heaters had to be provided to all offices, resulting in dangerous overloading of the inadequate electricity supply. We recommend that a comprehensive overhaul of the new build heating systems is put in place before the next cold season requires supplementary heating provision again.

The external training unit was unusable for similar reasons.

It came, therefore, as no surprise to the Board that many prisoners, who have to live in the conditions described, share the view that the conditions in the prison in which they are forced to live are totally unacceptable in a modern, first-world, prison service in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

We believe that it is important for the Minister to have our views and concerns as above laid out, although at the close of the reporting year we have been informed that the extensive refurbishment of buildings which, as we have said, we believe to be the wrong decision, is likely to go ahead. The Board can only hope, but is not confident, that the results will provide a prison for the staff to feel safe in and of which they can be proud.

## **Clothing**

Wayland prisoners are allowed to wear their own clothes. In the Board's view, however, 'clothing' also includes bedding, and in our recent survey we asked, again, if clean bedding was available at least weekly. This time the basic decency standard was reported as achieved by only 57% of the sample (although this is an improvement on the 2021 result of just 44%). This does not seem acceptable and so the Board draws the prison's attention to this finding, again, and trusts that communication with prisoners improves so that all understand that they have to make an individual request for clean bedding before staff supply this, and that staff welfare checks include this issue.

## **Food**

For most of the year the kitchens were under pressure to supply individually-packaged meal items from the two kitchens. The content was acceptable, we were told by many prisoners, 'if you accept that it's prison food' – it was nutritious and, if unimaginative, it sufficed. After the repeated concern of Covid infection eased, the prisoners' ability to prepare their own foodstuffs in the unit microwaves and other equipment, as pre-pandemic, began to happen again. Then several things occurred at once: ingredients for prisoners' meals went up in price, for which the 6p per diem increase to £2.08 is no recompense; prisoners have begun to believe the situation has resulted in smaller portions, and, indeed, to the Board's eyes the portions do seem a little smaller; the prices of personal foodstuffs purchased through the DHL canteen have also risen thus restricting prisoners' ability for them to make up for what they feel is a smaller meal quantity; then the 'new build' kitchen had to close for some time for a major refurbishment, with all catering managed from the 'old build' kitchen designed for about half the current population; and, finally, the staffing crisis has now hit the catering staff which is operating significantly under its complement. Such a situation might justifiably be called a 'perfect storm' of issues.

The mechanisms behind almost all of the above will not change any time soon and the Board believes that food and meal provision will come under much increased stress in the next period if the dire warnings about energy and food price increases come fully true, as it seems that they will. The Board hopes, therefore, that the government will understand, in time, that prison meal provision is a critical element of prison stability. In this area, as with many others, communication with prisoners will be vital.

## **5.2 Segregation**

As of the end of this reporting year the new segregation unit is still not in use. We had been assured that the road connection to the rest of the site would be the last task but although this has been done the unit is still not in use, because, we are informed, there are now issues over the telephone system's capacity to include the new unit and, unbelievably, everyone wrongly thought someone else was procuring the locks for the cells and the building,. The locking delay, we have been informed, will be further exacerbated by expected post-pandemic supply issues: the go-to blame-frame for delays it seems.

But it is not just the delay to the building which is disappointing. Last year we had hoped that the new segregation unit would have a commensurate increase in staffing for two reasons. First, as the new unit would have twice as many cells as the existing one it seemed obvious that, with double the number of prisoners there should be, perhaps not a doubling, but at least a additional members of staff, even though this would only amount to an effective separated warehousing operation for much of the time. Second, in order to make a reality of the new 're-integration unit' (the current title of the existing facility) inter-personal and even programmatic work would be necessary to help prisoners held there understand how their behaviours had resulted in their deeper incarceration, and also adjust to, and even perhaps practise, more socially acceptable behaviours while in the unit before returning to normal location. This would, of course, require more than one extra member of staff. In this way the new unit would avoid the dominant activity of the old: merely holding prisoners until they could be transferred to another establishment. That this is not a surprising hope is confirmed in the title often used to describe such a facility: a care and separation unit. Our expectation was that the care would require additional staff and that those staff would need additional and specific training in the complexities of the new role.

It appears that these fundamental issues have not occurred to the Prison Service, or, if they have, that they have been ignored, on grounds of cost, of difficulty, of precedent-setting, or any number of other reasons, all of which, we believe, discredit the values of the service and condemn the staff and prisoners in the new unit to a mere continuation of the largely barren warehousing of some of the most challenging, yet often vulnerable, prisoners held in Wayland. We therefore recommend to the Prison Service that the new care and separation unit, built, so we are informed, at considerable cost, can at least be staffed to properly address the 'care' element as well as the 'separation' in the management of prisoners held there when it does finally open.

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

#### **Staff-prisoner relationships**

This aspect of our report has been one of the most challenging that prison management has faced in years. The difficulties are not unique to Wayland, but, certainly, Wayland has had much more of a problem with many of them than some other establishments, particularly with the combination of a low recruitment stream and a high resignation rate, sometimes within days or weeks of recruitment. Lower pay, when compared with similar prisons in an acceptable travel to work region, may be behind a good deal of the difficulty but also the prison's distance from centres of population means the recruitment pool is smaller than some, and it is a pool in which other employers, like the police and armed forces, are also fishing. That, coupled with Covid absences through actual illness and protected vulnerabilities, meant that the prison frequently struggled to achieve even the impoverished regime of the lockdown, especially once the major Covid restrictions were eased. Towards the very end of the reporting year this 'perfect storm' was finally recognised by the Prison Service and measures were announced, and some put in place, including additional detached duty staff and the closure of wings without removing their staff from the operational staff complement. Yet even this was insufficient to guarantee the restricted 'half-regime/half-lockdown' then in place and the prison goes forward,

we have been informed by the Governor, knowing that its recruitment will not even make up for its known resignations in the coming months.

It is against this desperate situation that we have to set our comments about staff-prisoner relationships and key working. Yet this situation must be regarded for what it is in creating the dire straits that both prisoner-staff relationships and the virtual absence of the key rehabilitative focus on key work are in. The policies and actions of the Ministry of Justice and the Prison Service over the past decade or so cannot be set aside. Between 2010 and 2015 prison staffing was reduced by 10,000, the vast majority of whom were experienced prison officers. At the same time, not only was the prison population virtually stable in numbers but violence began to increase and the scourge of Spice was not far behind.

Those policies have meant that there are now many young, inexperienced staff and fewer older, experienced staff to mentor and guide them. On top of that, for almost the whole of the last two years, new staff did no more than lock and unlock prisoners for basic activities like exercise, showering, basic accommodation cleanliness, healthcare and meal delivery. Even the hesitant opening up of the regime, which is still nowhere near back to its pre-pandemic levels, has presented tremendous challenges and the Board is full of admiration for those new staff who have stayed.

That is the situation which is behind the view of the Board that the quantity, quality and effectiveness of staff-prisoner relations have not improved since before the pandemic. When we discuss a prisoner's problems with him, whatever they may be, we obviously ask if he has spoken with staff and what they have managed to do for him so far. The answers are varied but frequently the response goes something like this: 'Well, they said they would try, but haven't done anything.' Now, of course, by the nature of such exchanges it might be thought that a negative response would be expected, so in our surveys we have asked, in each of the past three years, a number of questions aimed at examining prisoners' feelings about staff.

We have asked 'Do you trust staff?' in every survey and the response has been virtually identical (indeed 2022 is identical to 2019) in that about 45% say they do not trust staff. If their response was a negative one, the next question asks if they can say why they felt that. In many cases it is that, simply, staff let prisoners down by saying they would do something and then forgetting or not doing it. This is important; if a prisoner has staff for help in something, even after other prisoners may have told him the likely result would be nothing, and that member of staff, for whatever reason, has failed to help or even to say that they couldn't, then it is more than a simple act of forgetfulness, it is proof to a prisoner that his friends were right and it's no use talking to staff. Against that background how can staff hope to create a relationship with prisoners that is meaningful? A few other extracts from the many responses to this question are instructive, if saddening:

*Because no one cares. You ask something then they go and forget.*

*Too young, no life experience, lack of prison experience, no knowledge of lifers or mental health, too scared to enforce any rules or challenge a prisoner.*

*Don't seem like they want to help or do anything.*

*They try their best to help but they don't get help themselves with the matter.*

And,

*Only a small handful actually care the rest are either rude or have no care.*

It could be said that disappointed prisoners would make such comments, and also it should be pointed out that more than half of the respondents reported that they did trust staff, but we think it important that the responses have been virtually the same for three years during which time many prisoners have changed and so have many staff, yet the same percentage holds.

But this also prompts the question: on what evidence are prisoners making these judgements?

To address this we asked a number of other questions, some of the responses to which we have quoted above. But the overall statistics of the answers is indicative, we believe, of the Prison Service's apparent inability both to train new staff adequately in the fundamentals of staff-prisoner relationships, and certainly of its failure to create a national standard programme of refresher and development training in this key task. We therefore recommend that Prison Officer training is reviewed to include deeper and more extensive training on key working and staff-prisoner relationships. Absent this, new staff are inevitably 'thrown in at the deep end' and either sink or swim, hence our concern with how they learn to swim and what they do to stay afloat. To make sure we captured as much as possible of respondents' views on staff relationships we asked three questions: *Did you have personal problems on arrival? Did you speak with staff about them? Were they able to help?*

- The first question has had the most stable response over the three surveys, with no significant difference between the responses, all within a percentage point or two of the 2022 result of 62% of respondents admitting to problems. This itself, the Board believes, cannot be unappreciated by staff and should galvanise attempts to dig deeper and discover how these problems could be categorised and then addressed.
- Respondents answering the next question, that they had sought help from staff, was a very significant increase on that in 2021 - 70% against 50% - and also an increase on 2019 when it was 60%, possibly indicating the greater approachability of younger staff and a less jaded prisoner demographic (as this survey reported a higher percentage of first-timers in prison), which has obvious implications for prison organisation and training, if it can be built on.
- The obvious follow-up question to the above had, however, a disappointing result. Although the positive responses were a little higher than before, at 45%, this still means that more than half of those prisoners who had tried to seek effective help for their problems were disappointed. In the Board's view these few questions and their responses go to the heart of what is needed if a caring culture is to be created as the Governor wants, and that is a significant increase in initial staff training to at least give the large number of young and life-inexperienced officers a fighting chance to begin to lay the foundations of effective help for Wayland's prisoners, with a commitment to reinforce that training as those staff gain in experience.



Finally, in this context of staff-prisoner relationships we asked ‘check’ questions in a different part of the survey. We asked how many prisoners had felt lonely in Wayland, whether they had spoken with staff about this and how helpful that approach had been.

We are disappointed to record that although nearly 80% of respondents reported that they had indeed felt lonely, only half of this number said they had talked with staff about it.

But, of those who had talked with staff, 90% said staff had not been able to help. This is a much higher negative response than previously and although that may have something to do with the specificity of the question, about loneliness, and therefore could be thought of as a particularly hurtful rejection at a human level, it should not in consequence be dismissed as of lesser importance. At a particularly vulnerable time in a prisoner’s life, opportunities to help were missed in nearly every case. As we have noted before, we believe, as a Board, that this is not the ‘fault’ of staff, many of whom are young and inexperienced, but of the Prison Service which has not taken account of the needs of these young staff and the needs and vulnerabilities of the prisoners they will meet in the design and content of their initial training and of their later development training. As we say elsewhere, this has to change.

### **Key workers**

We also regret to report that key work, as a viable staff activity across the prisoner population, has not operated during our reporting year. There have been some efforts to try to ensure that the most vulnerable, or the most challenging, have had welfare checks, particularly those who self-isolate or who are at risk of self-harm and those whose behaviours are the most challenging to others and the prison. But the ‘45-minute-a-week-with-every-prisoner’ meaningful discussion has not been delivered. This has been a significant result, again, of the ‘perfect storm’ of Covid, low staffing levels, high resignation and low recruitment and retention rates we have mentioned elsewhere.

The Board knew of this situation from discussions with prisoners and so included two further questions in the recent survey: *Do you have a key worker?* and *How often have you spoken with your key worker?*

At least the management’s hope that key work could restart properly at some point has meant that almost 60% of respondents did understand that they had a designated key worker, but 80% said that they had either never spoken (54%) or rarely spoken (26%) with their key worker.

On the other side of the equation, we asked a number of newly joined prison officers (who had been in the prison for at least six months) whether they felt their training had equipped them to properly act as key workers. The response was definite: it had not. So, whatever the training intention, the result does not seem to have been a success. In fact, two of the staff we discussed this with, in confidence, revealed that their total key worker training was a two-hour scripted role-play session. Whatever the impact of the additional Socratic dialogue ‘five minute intervention’ training may

have been, the total interpersonal training commitment seems woefully inadequate, and even perhaps dangerously over-confident in its aims, the Board believes.

We therefore make no apology for repeating what we have said elsewhere: the Prison Service is letting down its staff, and its prisoners, by its current approach to the initial and development training of its most valuable resource, new staff. We say, again, this has to change.

#### **5.4 Equality and diversity**

Regarding the general equalities issues in the prison we can report that improvements have been made in some of the areas of concern but that others remain:

- Whereas previously discrimination incident reporting forms (DIRFs) had to be requested from staff, an obvious deterrent to some prisoners and certainly not conducive to an openness about equality issues, holders for DIRFs have now been installed on all wings. The forms should now be available to all prisoners without staff intervention.
- Although prisoners do routinely get a written response to a DIRF it has now been decided that it will be good practice that staff should also follow up with prisoners to see if they are satisfied with the result.
- We have learned that the independent scrutineer of DIRF investigations, ISCRE, has now withdrawn from the contract and it is understood that a competition for the new contract is underway.
- Wayland currently holds 72 foreign national prisoners and three prisoners held under Immigration Act powers, and there have been complaints in the past about communication with all such prisoners. To address these issues we have been informed that there will now be a bi-monthly foreign nationals focus group, and a new software translation program is being installed on staff computers so that all foreign national prisoners can get a copy of written information in their own language. Prisoners will also be able to access this information on their own laptops.
- It has been reported to the Board that all induction orderlies, Insiders, library orderlies and mobile maintenance orderlies are white. The equalities lead accepts that this could be discriminatory and has agreed to monitor the situation closely. The Board fully understands that security-sensitive prisoner employment tasks as outlined cannot merely be filled by crude 'quotas' but it would like to be convinced that decisions are not made on other than strict security or behavioural grounds. The Board is also unsure whether the suggestion by some staff that black, Asian and minority ethnic prisoners are less likely to want to commit to long-term employment than their white counterparts is factually correct and would like to see this suggestion tested more thoroughly. The Board recommends that this area of potential discrimination is reviewed by the Governor and will continue to review progress on this issue.

## **5.5 Faith and pastoral support**

For much of the reporting year there was no corporate worship and chaplains had to minister to their respective flocks on an individual level. But, as before, whenever the IMB member enquired about a prisoner of their faith they always knew him and his problems and were always able to add to our knowledge and assist where we believed there was concern.

As the prison began to open up, although it had been billed as a return to normal this was in shadow only, as the ability to have large corporate worship was limited, which meant that, for example, not every Muslim or Christian could attend their relevant service every week.

It is a pity that the Sycamore Tree initiative had a delayed restart as, pre-pandemic, some Board members had attended some of their meetings and were impressed by the commitment of both the leaders and of the prisoners who had worked through what may be wrongly entitled a 'programme' but which had clearly been instructive and important to them in their rehabilitation. The Board hopes that this initiative will soon return to its previous levels of involvement.

## **5.6 Incentives schemes**

For some time the general rules for the incentives scheme had been suspended nationally because of the pandemic but, as the more open regime began to be put in place so did a return to a more ordered system. Newly received prisoners no longer go straight on to the enhanced level of privileges but once again have to earn this in the normal way. However, we believe the incentives system will take time to bed in again, especially under the revised policy framework which requires more effort from prisoners and has a real potential to be a useful addition to working through prisoners' sentence plans.

Unfortunately, however, although it may be a temporary observation given the unfamiliarity with the system of many staff, we have found on occasion from the complaints of prisoners that the system may sometimes be treated as a back-door punishment system rather than a properly managed incentives scheme. We have seen examples of written downgrades which do not follow the required procedural justice path and have brought these to the attention of senior staff for their review. The Board's view, yet again, is that there needs to be more training in this area, especially with the newer staff, and it further underlines the Board's view that staff training, in terms of its relevance and effectiveness, aside from the prison's mandatory refresher training requirements in health and safety, control and restraint, etc. should be regarded as an absolute requirement at establishment level and properly supported and resourced at all Prison Service levels.

The Board has raised the issue with senior staff of negative entries made on prisoners' records without prisoners being informed. This seems to be an 'own goal' in the incentives procedure as negative entries are used to make decisions on employment and other potential privileges. From frequent discussions with prisoners we have learned that the opaqueness of the incentives system is a drawback to

progress. It is the Board's view that prisoners should be told when either a negative or a positive entry has been made as a way of challenging poor behaviour openly, confirming good behaviour, and helping to make the incentives process transparent.

## **5.7 Complaints**

By the nature of things, by the time a prisoner gets to putting in an application to the IMB about his concerns he has in all probability already gone through the prison's complaints system so is likely to be jaded about his experience. But the question is whether there is justification for his views. Unfortunately, in many cases he has a point.

One difficulty is that statistics can tell one story and experience another. We receive information on complaints that are dealt with in time on a monthly basis but it is apparently too difficult to report accurately on complaints management after the month in which they have been raised. A considerable number of a month's complaints, therefore, seem 'lost to view' and so might not get a satisfactory response in terms of time, at least from the prisoner's viewpoint because, obviously, there is nothing more important to him than a timely answer to his question. Complaints are frequently about lost personal items (through delayed access, or even physical loss) or about issues which he has raised with the appropriate department without answer, for example, to do with his progression in his sentence, all of which deserve a prompt and full response. Our recent survey revealed a drop in perceptions of timeliness of replies to complaints, with only 14% reporting that they had been quick, as against 20% saying this in 2021. The old adage of justice delayed is justice denied is entirely appropriate to this issue. However, we suggested, in our last report, that perhaps the tight timetable, especially as nationwide staffing issues make investigation much more difficult, could be extended a little so that fewer interim responses need be made and that prisoners are given a realistic timeframe rather than a target which cannot be met.

But, of course, the other issue is the quality of the response.

We always review any complaints history if a prisoner's application to the IMB notes that a complaint has been previously made. In a significant number of cases we find that the responses do not deal with the issue raised in appropriate detail, or even at all, and are sometimes dismissive in tone. We do not bring every individual instance to the attention of senior management, but where we think it either appropriate or as a demonstration that more needs to be done generally or particularly, we bring examples to their attention. We appreciate that, in egregious instances, our concerns are acted upon but believe that, once again, more, and more focused, training for the managers involved needs to be given in the important business of managing responses to the complaints received, even to follow the simple requirement that the manager making the response should identify himself, his role and the date of the response, as often this basic courtesy requirement is not met.

In evidence, our recent survey asked, as in previous years, whether the respondents felt that the complaints system resulted in fair replies. The responses show a clear dissatisfaction with perceived fairness; the scores are not ambivalent and have got worse since 2021. In 2021 the question was answered in the negative by 64% of

respondents, in 2022 this had risen to 73%. Although an improvement on 2019 figures, this is a significant drop in perceived fairness since 2021. We recommend this result is investigated further by Wayland management to determine its stability or otherwise because such clear negative feelings about obviously important matters to individual prisoners are likely to make the job of prisoner-staff relationships, upon which so much else depends, even harder.

## 5.8 Property

We begin this section with a direct quote from the conclusion of our comments about property from our last annual report. We are saddened, but not surprised, that our hopes of improvement have been dashed by the reality of no change in the last three years.

*We said, then: That property is an important issue should not need be emphasised, but we will quote from our previous report, which we concluded with a view which we still hold: 'Take (a prisoner's property) away and more than clothing, family pictures, or an X-Box Console is lost, taken away is also any feeling of being respected as a person of value to the authorities'. We trust we shall not have to repeat that view in our next report.*

We, regretfully, must say that we do repeat that view in this report.

In the past 12 months property complaints have featured in 30% of IMB applications. This is a slightly higher percentage than in last year's report, possibly due to more transfers, and every application to the IMB followed a prisoner's failure to achieve a response to his official complaint. The Board refuses to believe that it should resignedly accept that it cannot spur the Prison Service to better action and we will therefore continue to try to successfully uncover 'lost' property, or request other Boards at sending prisons to apply pressure at their end to discover property retained, when prisoners approach us. These actions should not be necessary in a modern prison service but we regret that they are.

Aside from prisoner transfers creating opportunities to lose property there has been a continuing problem with the loss of property consequent upon cell clearances not being done properly, or at all, resulting in complaints and IMB applications alleging that personal property, of intrinsic or sentimental value, has been plundered by other prisoners after prisoners have been removed from their cells, mostly to the segregation unit. Cells have either not been secured immediately, or have been opened by mistake afterwards, allowing items to be stolen before a cell clearance has been properly managed. The cell clearance rules are simple, but frequently not followed. We have brought such instances to the attention of senior staff who accept that more needs to be done. We take this opportunity to ask the Governor to ensure that this acceptance is properly carried forward.

Finally, although we are aware of the revised policy framework for property which was published while this report was being composed, we have little confidence that there will be much change arising from its publication. There is no new (or old) IT

proposed to manage property, as happens routinely in privately managed prisons, and until that is provided we expect property issues to continue. While the new policy framework's message is, essentially, limited to exhortations to, 'please do your existing job properly', this Board, regrettably, does not expect much improvement. The Board therefore recommends to the Prison Service that it reviews its decision not to resource modern IT to support property management and to seek appropriate IT solutions without further delay.

## **6. Health and wellbeing**

### **6.1 Healthcare general**

Pre-pandemic, the test for the acceptable availability of healthcare access was whether it was equivalent to the outside community; for all the wrong reasons this is no longer an appropriate test. To begin with, the external comparability test, it is assumed by the Board, was a proxy for a generally acceptable standard of healthcare provision in the prison. With the strain on the health service generally now, and with access to GP surgeries in particular being very difficult, the Board believes that the time has come for the Prison Service to set its own standard of healthcare provision acceptability, against which new contracts can be tendered and their contractors' performances be measured. Contractual provisions such as response times, access to specialist services, the management of drug-dependencies and the like, should not be hidden from view within commercial confidentiality contractual clauses. All standards should be open, and the response of healthcare contractors fully open in their turn, including a transparent complaints system, which, with the current Wayland healthcare contractor, it is not. This is not something which would breach patient medical confidentiality as all information could easily be anonymised. The Board, therefore, believes there is no real alternative to ensuring a healthcare system which can be properly, and visibly, targeted on the needs of its clientele. That this is the right time to be insisting on such a change seems clear to the Board, as it is, after all, working to such a system of monitoring now, even if the outside comparators are hardly relevant.

But, turning to the details of what we have monitored as the year progressed from being Covid-driven, through being Covid-wary, and at the end of the year, to being Covid-cautious, we can report the following:

- Healthcare is mostly back to normal.
- The repairs to the medical building are scheduled to take place, with a new pharmacy being built.
- Lessons learnt from the pandemic are continuing, with multidisciplinary meetings for complex patients, and a one stop shop for patients to access vaccinations, health promotion, blood borne virus testing and sexual health.
- Screening has resumed and there is now a hepatitis trained nurse who manages liver scans and treatment.
- The in-house X-ray and ultra-sound appointments have resumed, although there are difficulties with regime restrictions and lack of escorts.
- DNAs (did not attend) are now followed up and rescheduled.

- A long-term medical conditions nurse with appropriate training has been appointed.

These improvements are, however, still blighted in their effectiveness by the following facts:

- Hospital appointments are cancelled on a routine basis because of lack of escort staff. This is not only potentially harmful to the patient, it also wastes valuable NHS time and therefore resources in cancelling scheduled appointments at the last minute.
- Post-Covid, prisoners are no longer being escorted to their healthcare appointments and are not always told, or reminded, of their appointments. This creates resource-loss for the prison in the same way as missed appointments do for outside hospitals.

As expected, the reason often given to the Board is that the lack of staff prevents a particular activity or appointment. In response the Board would ask that, as this situation has continued for some time, and is likely to continue into the future, alternative management solutions be explored, including, perhaps, nurse triaging or even conducting remote GP appointments using the prisoner in-cell telephone system, as is now becoming common in the outside community and as was used for a time during the initial Covid lockdowns.

Lastly, we have noted the frequency with which nurse and pharmacy staff have been abused and even subject to violence during the allocation of, mostly, psychotropic medicines at the medicine hatches which, we are informed, has been due to the poor supervision of the areas by operational staff. Perhaps tempers are shorter due to the policy of prescription reduction of such medications, but it suggests that there may be a need to review how the medication periods are managed and supervised.

## **6.2 Physical healthcare**

The management of physical healthcare, setting aside our comments above about standards and their monitoring, is suffering through reduced staffing in various disciplines. There are, currently, vacancies for five pharmacy technicians, three healthcare assistants, two physical care nurses, as well as one mental healthcare nurse.

There have been a small number of Covid cases, scattered across the prison in the closing months of the reporting year with varying restrictions depending on the number of cases per unit. Regular Covid testing has ceased.

Dental care has resumed and despite hiccups is functioning at about the same level as pre-pandemic.

Appropriate medical discharge plans are put in place for those prisoners who need ongoing medical attention.

The above has been the general picture, but what of the individual patients' views? This is best monitored by a rigorous complaints analysis and review system, and, perhaps Contract Plus, the Wayland healthcare contractor has one. However, it is impossible for the Board to tell, as access to all such complaints is routinely denied,

claiming patient medical confidentiality. We have commented on this unsatisfactory system above. What we do know is that our survey asked again this year whether, if a medical complaint had been made, the result was satisfactory. The answer from 73% was that it was not, although this was an improvement on the 2021 response to this question when almost 90% answered negatively. This is still too high a percentage of dissatisfaction and the Board hopes that the improvement noted this year will continue.

Similarly, there were significant improvements in the satisfaction scores for the ease of making appointments with the dentist, the nurse, the mental health team, and the GP, with 29% reporting that they were now easy to make against just 7% in 2021. The improvement in perception seems to have come from the reduced percentage that reported difficulties with making such appointments, from almost half of respondents in 2021 to just over a third in 2022. These improvements may be small, but are significant even if it is a slow process to change perceptions in such a personal area as healthcare. We trust that these improved responses will be continued in the coming year.

### **6.3 Mental health**

All mental health appointments are again taking place face to face both in healthcare and also on the wings, with the latter innovation designed to encourage engagement. The level of mental health activity and staff workload seems to be at normal levels again after the ups and downs of the various Covid periods. This includes new reception referrals and new ACCTs and urgent referrals. Typically, the mental health caseload seems high at 112 across four registered nurses, but we do not know what ratio, if any at all, was required in the contract. The target for routine referrals to be seen is five days, but it is gratifying to report that the average waiting time is just three days. Having said that, all urgent referrals are seen within 24 hours. This includes ACCTs, unless the patient is attending hospital.

Prisoner self-harming remains high, with a reported incidence of 400 cases per 1000 prisoners at the end of the reporting year, although we accept that this is an improvement on the, almost double, level at the year's start.

Unsurprisingly, the single psychiatrist has a significant caseload and it is not uncommon for there to be a three-week waiting period before a psychiatric consultation. However, cases are triaged and if there is an urgent case this would take precedence, but would clearly cause delays to other appointments.

In response to the Board's question of how many of Wayland's prisoners have a mental health diagnosis we have been informed that, with the wide interpretation of what mental health means, it is difficult to say how many prisoners this applies to, as some may be under the care of the mental health team, whereas others with mild depression or anxiety may be under the care of the GP, or even the wellbeing service. Nevertheless, it would appear that some 40% of the prison's population is under some sort of mental health care, although we have been informed that there are no patients with dementia or memory concerns.



## **6.4 Social care**

There are about (the number fluctuates) 40 prisoners on an active social care plan and the Board is pleased to note that the improvement in cooperation between the local council and the prison has been maintained; care equipment – grab rails and the like – is supplied by the council and fitted by the prison. Unfortunately, there is no occupational therapist currently available although we are informed that recruitment is active.

But, apart from the 'official' service provision to prisoners who need extra care in this way, the Board is convinced that there are prisoners who do not figure on such plans but who would benefit from assistance from other prisoners on a regular basis. As far as we can determine such assistance is ad hoc and reliant upon individual initiatives. At least one example of a prisoner in need of the sort of care input, which in the community would have a carer visit at critical points in the day, has no assistance and that provided by another prisoner was effectively terminated by staff refusing to acknowledge the situation or the need.

The Board does appreciate and understand that there may be some offers of such assistance which might be considered to benefit the carer more than the cared-for but believes this merely serves to identify a need for a buddy system, common we understand in other prisons where, in some cases such as new build wings, there are even 'buddy cells' provided. The Board therefore suggests that serious consideration is given by the Governor to how such a buddy system could be set up operationally, how the training and supervision necessary could be organised and delivered, and, perhaps, even to how accrediting such assistance could form a pathway to later employment as well as a contribution to the health of the prison. We are sure that other prisons could provide useful information in these areas.

## **6.5 Exercise, regime**

Exercise time on a daily basis has varied across units and across different periods during the year, although, with very few exceptions due to Covid outbreaks, at least half an hour's exercise a day has been provided, often more, although this has not been possible for all prisoners all the time. Nevertheless, prisoners have accepted, for the most part, the restrictions due to both pandemic and staffing shortfall with good grace.

Towards the end of the reporting year a system of half-and-half purposeful activity and restricted regime was created. This is not without problems and often, we are informed by staff responsible for the delivery of such purposeful activity, the failures of the management of roll-counts, and the need to secure training tools away well in advance of prisoners being collected from the workshop, all reduce the theoretical target to just six hours a week training availability time. Again, as we have observed before, the general lack of staff has been at the core of these difficulties and we see no possibility of change until this basic lack is eradicated, although we do believe improvements can be made.

The provision of modern IT management for roll-counts would ease this difficulty but there is no sign of such forward thinking being deployed in the wider Prison Service

and without sufficient trained staff the prison has little hope of a situation where prisoners can expect a genuine, comprehensive, training regime being in place at Wayland.

## **6.6 Drug and alcohol rehabilitation**

Phoenix Futures, the contractor for the treatment of substance misuse, has been busy due to the high and increased number of prisoners referred to them found to have taken drugs and alcohol, particularly hooch. We were provided with revealing statistics for the quarter October to December 2021. All new receptions were seen within 72 hours and after reception those with drug or alcohol problems can self-refer. In that quarter these procedures saw Phoenix Futures' caseload reach 30% of the prison population and the number receiving treatment increased 99% on the previous quarter. At the end of our reporting year the caseload had increased further, with 738 prisoners being seen. In the last few months some therapeutic activities had to be cancelled because of Covid, for example mutual aid sessions from outside speakers, some pre-release plans because of non-cooperation, and a number of group therapy sessions, although they did manage to hold thirty sessions in October with a total of 131 prisoner attendances. However, during the year, additional support for recovering users was provided by the prison by the reassigning of E wing as a drug recovery wing and a governor-grade member of staff appointed as the substance misuse lead. This is an example of the prison taking the opportunity provided by the large number of separate units to create specialist units, a general policy which we are calling for in this report.

But no matter how effective in-prison treatment may be claimed to be, the full test is always going to be a prisoner's behaviour after release. All prisoners who have been supported by Phoenix Futures have a discharge plan with information on the Reconnect Service, a service for discharged prisoners with drug and alcohol problems. However, on release the percentage of those referred to such community support who actually attended the referrals was only about 50%. Of course, there is no compulsion to attend and so it is possible to conclude that a success rate of continuing contact of 50% is a good result.

But the scourge of hooch, drugs, and associated activities and substances in prison cannot be eradicated by 'hard' means alone, however many staff or technologies can be realistically devoted to this negative activity. Rather, the Board feels, there needs to be a consistent attempt to build on the realisation of most prisoners that drugs are indeed a scourge, that the prison would be better without them and their baleful consequences on prisoners' individual behaviours, as well as the debt, threats, and active bullying and violence they cause. In this scenario the Board suggests that the separated nature of the accommodation units across the site could be used to manage the population through smaller, and more focused, groups and create a more cooperative population through encouragement and attention rather than simply punishment alone. We do not imagine that such a process would be easy to implement and manage, it would require staff stability, significant training input and supervision, consistent management, and the cooperative involvement of the prisoner population. But it is, perhaps, one possible way forward which has yet to be tried as a unified response to the problem of what may be regarded as many prisoners' self-medication against the pains of imprisonment. Substitute at least

some of those pains with proactive help, support and engagement on a prison-wide basis, with the support of the wider prison service and the full-time goal of rehabilitation, and the potential of the Governor's visions for the establishment would be enhanced dramatically.

## **7. Progression and resettlement**

### **7.1 Education, library**

There has been almost no face-to-face education in the whole year, although there were signs that more might start in the quarter following this reporting year. There has been an in-cell workbooks approach for some education subjects during the year but this has had less attention and success than the Board was looking for after our comments in our last report when we believed more could have been done.

There have been many courses delivered by the education provider this year, but these have been, almost exclusively, by in-cell learning packs. The Board is impressed with the range of these provisions, such as: 'personal and interpersonal conflict', 'family relations', 'management of money', and 'effective communication in the workplace'.

But no matter how comprehensive these in-cell courses may be, the Board does not believe, nor do prisoners, that they are much of a substitute for the learning in practical issues that comes with interpersonal engagement from teacher and student in a group setting. Even though the education unit is comprehensively resourced with computers and these courses could be held by this means, the engagement between instructor and learner, in what are intensely personal and interactional activities and skills, needs personal practice. Neither a solitary experience with an education pack, nor an interaction with a screen can deliver that level of personal engagement.

The Board therefore hopes that, when the prison is able to manage a full return to a normal activities regime, and not the half-and half, six hours a week as currently, the provision of such learning is reviewed to increase its personal engagement content with prisoners.

Our survey asked questions about the use of in-cell material and whether returned material had been followed up.

The access to such in-cell education was reported by 67% of respondents, up from 50% last year, but, once again, the vital follow-up to submitted work was poor; 75% had submitted work but only 44% said they had had a response. Given that for much of the time Covid was not restricting access to wings, it seems hard to understand why education staff, who knew to whom material had been sent, did not proactively chase and respond at a 100% level. We observed good communication between education staff and prisoners but felt that the whole process lacked energy and collaborative leadership and much more could have been done. At least that would have shown learning from the situation earlier in the pandemic. The Board is forced to conclude, as we have observed in previous reports, that the

cooperation/collaboration between the operational and the education contractor sides could be significantly improved in order to make better use of an expensive resource.

The library was shut for prisoner access during the entire year, for Covid and staffing shortfall reasons we are informed, so it was no surprise that the energetic librarian (the library is staffed from the local council) sought other employment; he is a loss. There were book deliveries but the arrangements for returns, including strongly-made book drop boxes for wings, were not a success, with many of the boxes being damaged, the locks torn off etc. That initiative therefore ceased, another victim, it seems likely, of the disconnect between the providers of operational control and of educational input. The Board recommends that open access to the library is recommenced so that prisoners' library needs can be more fully met, their reading improved, and their individual inner life can be properly nurtured.

The Ofsted inspection, which occurred as part of the HMIP inspection at the end of this reporting year, supports the Board's conclusions. Ofsted's assessment of the education, skills, and work provision at Wayland was as follows:

- Overall effectiveness – *inadequate*
- Quality of education – *inadequate*
- Behaviour and attitudes – *inadequate*
- Personal development – *inadequate*
- Leadership and management – *inadequate*

The Board will attempt to monitor the steps which it hopes will be taken by the contractor (PeoplePlus), the Prison Service, and the Governor, who, we understand, is in charge of the contract, to reverse these unacceptable judgements in the coming year.

Outwith the education contract, however, we are aware of the contribution that has been made in the past to the key educational skill of reading English, not, specifically, as a foreign language but by those for whom the normal educational pathway has either been absent or not well-attended during school-age. This has been from the activities of the national reading support charity, the Shannon Trust. In the recent past this contribution has withered but, at the close of the reporting year, we discovered two things of importance to reviving the success of this scheme.

The first was an unlooked-for offer of a 0.6 full-time staff member from the Shannon Trust to work in the prison, training, supervising, and managing the Shannon Trust prisoner mentors. The second was the lack of the same operational collaboration with the scheme which, as we have noted, has reduced the effectiveness of educational efforts by PeoplePlus. To the Board, this particular problem seems easy to solve in a category C training prison. Currently, the work of the Shannon Trust prisoner mentors is diminished by the refusal of unit managers to allow trained and accredited prisoner mentors to mentor prisoners not on their own wings, thus preventing this small number of trained and keen volunteer mentors from accessing prisoners who want to learn to read but who are not on a wing with a mentor. We cannot see the logic of this, when other trusted prisoners, for example those on the small works party, are allowed across-unit passage. To restrict this scheme's mentors in this way might be, theoretically, more understandable with a category A or perhaps a challenging category B prison, but for a category C prison like Wayland

we believe this is hard to justify, especially as other comparator prisons do allow such access. We therefore recommend to the Governor that the operational objections to allowing cross-unit mentoring by Shannon Trust volunteers be reviewed, to allow this valuable addition to the prison's rehabilitative function and its stated priority to 'create careers' for prisoners – for few careers can be created without being able to read.

## **7.2 Vocational training, work**

It has been impossible to provide detailed, evidential, comment on the topics of this sub-section as there has been very little meaningful availability of any such activity (see also sections 6.5 and 7.1). The only work available was in the prison kitchens, wing cleaning, waste management, one small PPE workshop, and the DHL workshop which manages the prisoner canteen purchases for Wayland and a number of other prisons in the area. No other production workshops nor any vocational training workshops were open during the year.

## **7.3 Offender management, progression**

In our annual surveys of prisoner attitudes we have asked a question about staff help for life after release. We asked:

*Do you think you are being helped by staff with your personal problems about life after release?*

We deliberately did not specify which department staff worked in, just asking about 'staff' in an attempt to gauge prisoners' total experience of their interactions with all staff, whether specialist, generalist, or operational.

We have to report that in the responses to this question, for the three years we have asked this since the 2019 survey, the needle has not shifted on the dial; just 15% of respondents reported effective help in 2019, and only 13% in 2022. This result is not an aberration – it has occurred for three years. The result, therefore, is real and it is shameful that such a response shows that almost 90% of prisoners feel that they are not getting any effective help for their lives after release. Rehabilitation is a concept, even a word, that the modern prison service seems unable, or unwilling, to accept is its business, indeed, after security, its fundamental business. This has to change. We therefore recommend to the Governor that greater training effort is made to upskill staff who are in daily contact with prisoners so that they are competent and confident to respond to prisoners who are seeking their help and, also, to proactively interact with prisoners to create the atmosphere and relationships where such interactions can take place, whether this be operational or other staff.

There may be a temptation to say that 'offender management and progression' is wider than interactions with staff, covering such things as offending behaviour programmes, movement through the system to category D open conditions, relationships with in-house and community probation and the like. We do not deny that, although the pandemic and staffing crisis have, themselves, degraded the total package expected by the phrase 'offender management', but we insist that, in the

end, it is the prisoners' perception of the help that they feel they need, and have not been given, which is the real test of the effectiveness of preparation before release.

The personal contact between prisoners and staff through programmes, and the general work of the offender management unit (OMU) suffered grievously during the year, mainly due to the Covid-caution we have described elsewhere. Some specialist intervention programmes were maintained but with very reduced numbers of participants and much interaction between the OMU and prisoners was done remotely. It is hoped that, as Covid fades, these interventions and personal contacts can be restored.

#### **7.4 Family contact**

Family contact in Wayland has been supported by the fortunate fact that the prison was one of the early pilots for in-cell telephones, allowing prisoners to keep in close contact with their families and friends even if they could not visit. For much of the year prisoners received an extra telephone credit which was much appreciated.

Although, perhaps, the family contact through the telephone is very helpful in maintaining a prisoner's relationships with his family generally, we regret to record that the full national charitable initiative Storybook Dads which many prisoners, and their children, found very valuable has not been restarted after the pandemic due to the continuing closure of the library. The family support group has partially stepped into the breach and is now organising part of the scheme whereby prisoners and their children complete diaries about what they have done since last they spoke so that they have something to share together about their lives. This is valuable but we are surprised, however, that, the family support initiative has not been able to include the full Storybook Dads idea whereby prisoners read stories to their children, a CD is made and posted to the family for the child to be able to hear when they want to. We recommend to the Governor that she take steps to consider how this initiative could be restarted with, or without, reopened library access.

Physical visits were maintained when it was prudent to do so and these were supported by the management of social video calls when prisoners can contact their families for a video call through specially-programmed and secure laptops in the visits sector of the prison. So, although the number of visits stations had to be reduced in the main hall the video call arrangement in some way made up for this. It is welcome to that at the end of the reporting year the special family days had restarted.

The reduction in visits in the main hall was due to the need to maintain Covid-safe distance for the first part of the year and then due to the need to cordon off a section of the hall because of major leaks through the roof and the consequent penetration of water and the threat of part of the ceiling being brought down. This is a further example of the effect of the poor infrastructure of the prison generally and the inability of the current arms-length company GFSL works management system to respond quickly and successfully.

In a very practical way the prison continues to fail those prisoners whose relatives or friends are disabled as the visits hall is on the first floor, and no visitors' lift was ever in the original design. Although a chairlift has been installed for many years this is neither suitable for all disabilities nor, crucially, is it consistently working. Each time it has been repaired, incorrect operation by staff (there are still no easy to comprehend

operating instructions for staff unfamiliar with its management at the time of writing, despite constant reminders by the Board for these) has led to its rapid failure. These issues have been raised numerous times with prison management and now there is a suggestion that a personnel lift will be installed in a new 'lift tower' but due to financial or other constraints will not be completed for at least two years. On occasions it has been possible for very disabled visitors to use the chapel area but this is not routine, is staff intensive, and many visitors, so we are informed by prisoners, do not visit precisely because of the difficulty they will encounter. This is an unacceptable situation. The Prison Service emphasises that it understands how important family links are to prisoners, but does not seem able to demonstrate this in action at Wayland with regard to disabled visitors. In our recent survey half the prisoners reported that they do not receive visits, and, perhaps, at least one of the reasons for not visiting, which we know from talking with prisoners, will have been the difficulty of access.

## **7.5 Resettlement planning**

Obtaining meaningful statistics of resettlement planning outcomes has been more than a challenge: it has been impossible this year whereas in previous years it has merely been exceptionally difficult.

This is not just the effect of the pandemic, nor staff shortages, although that hasn't helped, but, we have to say, what appears from the outcomes and outputs, as an absence of real leadership or of trying to match prisoners' real needs against effective delivery.

At the end of the year there was no resettlement senior probation officer although we have been told of the new position of employment lead likely in the autumn, who will concentrate on trying to match prisoners' employment skills with opportunities in their home areas. Given the number of prison releases this will be a tall order for one person to manage but we hope that it will at least lead to better statistics being available than heretofore.

The discharge board, which started off with high hopes last year, fell into the black hole of staffing shortfalls and was also perhaps affected by the change from the community rehabilitation companies to the government's community rehabilitation service, which did not appear, to the Board, to be either well-planned or well-executed and we anticipate will struggle to provide a service. We will monitor the performance outcomes of the new community rehabilitation service in the coming year.

Finally, last year we condemned the large number of prisoners who left without assured accommodation; we understand the figure is virtually identical this year. So, for another year, approximately 20% of releases, or perhaps as many as some 400 prisoners a year, just walk out of the gate with nowhere known to sleep that night.

We cannot, as a Board, accept that this is an acceptable result for a prison which has been confirmed to be a training and resettlement prison. For the past year there has been precious little training and less resettlement. The Board believes that the Prison Service needs to shoulder its responsibilities to provide the accommodation and resources to allow the Governor and her staff to do the job expected of them.

## The work of the IMB

For the most part of this reporting year the Board has managed to monitor the treatment of prisoners in Wayland in a number of ways: through rota visits; investigating prisoner applications to the Board; visiting all parts of the prison; speaking to prisoners, and staff, on the accommodation wings and in other areas; observing staff meetings and prisoner forums; conducting surveys of prisoners' attitudes; and attending segregation reviews and prisoner adjudications.

Although we have managed to visit the prison to carry out these duties to something like 80% of the Board's annual visiting allowance, despite the reduced Board membership, the actual circumstances of monitoring have been challenging, not just through the periodic disturbance to the regime by spikes in Covid infections resulting in isolated wing lockdowns, but through the general paucity of the regime during the year, with many prisoners experiencing frequent restrictions to their out-of-cell freedoms.

The Board has continued to be supplied with daily, weekly and monthly bulletins, for which we have been grateful, and which have helped us considerably in understanding the wider challenges to the prison's management, through prisoner indiscipline, drug use, and illicitly brewed alcohol, when it has been difficult for us to physically monitor events.

### Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	15
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	9
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	8
Total number of visits to the establishment	362
Total number of segregation reviews attended	58



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

Code	Subject	Previous reporting year	Current reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	9	16
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives scheme, sanctions	18	18
C	Equality	12	7
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	8	14
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection restrictions	14	7
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	6	22
F	Food and kitchens	13	9
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	56	42
H1	Property within this establishment	18	54
H2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	50	60
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	4	6
I	Sentence management, including HDC, release on temporary licence, parole, release dates, recategorisation	32	54
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	28	33
K	Transfers	9	27
L	Miscellaneous, including complaints system	0	0
	Total number of applications	277	369



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