



# **Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Guys Marsh**

**For reporting year  
1 December 2021 – 30 November 2022**

**Published April 2023**



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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

HMP Guys Marsh is a category C adult male training and resettlement prison located two miles south of Shaftesbury in rural Dorset.

The operational capacity as of the end of the reporting year was 491. Numbers fluctuated to fit the fire safety refurbishment schedule as wings were emptied in rotation.

The campus style layout had at the beginning of the year nine residential wings, one of which consisted of 24 separate units. One of the wings for enhanced prisoners, Fontmell House, was decommissioned during the year given the costs involved in upgrading the fire safety within the building. The 'winterisation' project on Rainbow wing did not take place resulting in the absence of a covered association area, servery and purposeful activity area for prisoners. Zonal fencing was introduced on to the reception wing (Anglia) during the year.

The fire-gutted wing (Wessex) was at long last demolished in February and it is proposed that as part of the establishment expansion plan, it will become the site of a new multi use games area (MUGA).

The fire improvement project across the establishment concluded in May when Jubilee wing was reopened and rehoused a number of prisoners formerly on Fontmell wing.

Tarrant wing, the care and separation unit (CSU), has 12 cells in the main block and two adjacent special cells. It has its own exercise yard. The CSU was closed for a month in March whilst work on replacing flooring was carried out.

There is an extensive range of workshops suitable for industries, and land-based activities including horticulture and ground maintenance.

The prison has one MUGA due to be the site of a future wing, a well-appointed gymnasium, a health centre and a multifaith chapel complex attached to the education and library block. The expansion plans were still in place, but no work had started by the end of the reporting period.

The visitor centre is just outside the perimeter fence. The regional learning centre is located near the entrance to the site, as was the Jailhouse Café run by the charity Expia. Regrettably, the café was closed in October; it had provided a welcome source for release on temporary licence (ROTL) placements but proved uneconomical to run.

The main contractors for the provision of services at HMP Guys Marsh were:

- education and learning skills: Weston College
- healthcare: Practice Plus
- works and maintenance: GFSL
- prisoner transport: GeoAmey

## **3. Executive summary**

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

**3.1.1** This report presents the findings of the Board from 1 December 2021 to 30 November 2022. Evidence has been derived from monitoring activities, attendance at meetings, scrutiny of data, the prison's daily reports, logs and registers, surveys, discussion with prisoners and staff, and applications to the Board.

**3.1.2** The year was marked by the easing of Covid restrictions. As of April 2022, all Covid regimes had been lifted and a semblance of normality had returned to the prison with prisoners being actively encouraged to attend work and taught education courses.

**3.1.3** The prison was inspected by HMIP in July of the reporting year and judged to need improvement in three key areas. Only one area – that of respect – was considered good by the inspectorate.

### **3.2 Main judgements**

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

**3.2.1** The HMIP survey found that just over half (53%) of the prisoners surveyed felt safe (see section 4.0.4). The Board had real concerns as to the safety of staff and prisoners in the later stages of the year, particularly in August when violence statistics peaked (see figures four and five).

**3.2.2** The ability to provide a full and safe regime was compromised throughout the year by spikes in staff absenteeism. The high number of assaults on staff (see section 4.3.1) was of considerable concern to the Board.

**3.2.3** Debt issues surrounding the use of illicit substances and the use of mobile phones were significant drivers of violence within the prison. Despite the frequent finds of throwovers throughout the year (132 throwovers intercepted), the location and perimeter length of the establishment demanded a more sophisticated approach to combat the highly lucrative organised crime groups' (OCG) business of supplying illicit items into the prison (see section 4.5.1).

**3.2.4** Use of force (UOF) incidents were high against comparator prisons and peaked in August, attributable to the issues surrounding the prison at the time. Incidents were dealt with professionally in all the cases IMB members attended. The addition of a UOF review meeting was helpful and provided a learning platform for staff. There needs to be a more robust reporting of the process through more timely completion of F213 paperwork (see section 4.4.4).

**3.2.5** The use of body worn cameras was disappointingly low. In part this was due to the unreliability of the cameras. The Board welcomed the arrival of new cameras at the very end of the reporting year.

**3.2.6** The PPO's report dated September 2022 highlighted a lack of effective communication between the healthcare providers at both the sending and receiving prisons, as well as the ACCT process which lacked rigor and consistency. The report

on a further death in custody at the end of the reporting period was yet to be received. The Board expresses condolences to those family and friends involved.

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

**3.2.7** HMIP noted that relationships between prisoners and staff were positive and helpful which the Board would entirely endorse (see section 5.3.1).

**3.2.8** There is a fair and extensive incentives policy which the Board commends. However, the implementation of the policy was not even and was often used for punitive reasons rather than acting as an incentive to progress (see section 5.3.2). The Board noted several cases where officers made NOMIS entries without informing or discussing the issues with prisoners.

**3.2.9** The lack of key working was a major concern to the Board throughout the year. Staffing issues did not allow for regular and well documented one-to-one contact (see section 5.3.3).

**3.2.10** Property loss continued to be a major issue on transfer (see section 5.7.3). This was reflected in complaints to the prison and the Board (see sections 5.8.2, 5.8.4).

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

**3.2.11** The provider Practice Plus Group, despite losing its contract at the end of the reporting period, supported the prison population effectively (see section 6.3.1).

**3.2.12** The Board had concerns during the reporting year about the absence of a psychiatrist at the establishment, followed by an unsatisfactory situation where the position was filled by a locum (see section 6.3.3).

**3.2.13** The Board commends the work of the integrated substance misuse service (ISMS) team in supporting prisoners with addiction issues. The establishing of Cambria as a wing for those with drug rehabilitation needs was a forward step by the prison in partnership with the NHS commissioner.

**3.2.14** The Board regrets the death in custody of a prisoner (see sections 3.2.6, 6.3.4) with very challenging mental health needs who had been in the establishment for six weeks.

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

**3.2.15** The resettlement service continued to be a highly challenged one. The Board was concerned about the fragmentation of the service, given the fractured responsibility shared between the prison and outside probation services. This often led to prisoners not engaging with the process fully and created anxieties for those who did try and engage (see sections 7.5.1, 7.5.2).

**3.2.15** The Board had real concerns about the lack of attendance for work. In part this was caused by a change of culture after the long periods of inactivity during Covid regimes. However, there needed to be a major shift in prisoner culture to re-

establish work regimes (see section 7.2.3). The Board would welcome a more proactive role by wing staff to ensure that all prisoners assigned work or education placements leave the wing in a timely manner.

**3.2.16** One of the barriers to attendance at work has been the low level of pay. The Board would welcome a review of pay which incentivises attendance at work.

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

#### **TO THE MINISTER**

**3.3.1** Can the Minister give assurances that the planned expansion plans will materialise?

**3.3.2** The Prison White Paper published in December 2021 contains a blueprint for prison reform over the next ten years. It contains many welcome commitments to safety, education and resettlement. Can the Minister give any assurances that these commitments will be translated into action as opposed to aspirational theory?

**3.3.3** IPP prisoners continue to languish in the establishment after the recent Justice Committee decision that these individuals will not be resentenced. At what point will there be a recognition of the inhumanity of these sentences?

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

**3.3.4** HMP Guys Marsh is a rural establishment with a significant perimeter to patrol. Organised crime groups bombarded the establishment with throwovers and drone deliveries of drugs and mobile phones. There needs to be more sophisticated ways of combatting these destabilising deliveries rather than the current patrols around the establishment. Can the Prison Service support the prison in providing the means to tackle these OCG activities?

**3.3.5** The prison was to receive in-cell technology, now cancelled, so that everyday tasks could be carried out seamlessly by prisoners, and education programmes delivered effectively. Is there to be a review of that decision?

**3.3.6** The cornerstone of offender management in custody (OMIC) is the importance of the key worker and prisoner relationship. Current staffing levels simply do not allow for the effective delivery of OMIC. leading to pressures elsewhere in the system. How can the Prison Service ensure the successful delivery of OMIC?

**3.3.7** The current recording of prisoner property on property cards is time-consuming and often mismanaged, leading to compensation payments and much wasting of staff time. Is there not a case for the immediate digitising of all prisoner property cards to be then placed on NOMIS?

#### **TO THE GOVERNOR**

**3.3.8** Attendance at purposeful activity was significantly lower than the 80% target. How can that target be met once staffing complements allow it?

**3.3.9** It was planned that the offender management unit (OMU) be moved out onto the prison estate to ensure that there was greater contact between the OMU and prisoners. Is this still to happen?

**3.3.10** The management of the complaints process improved markedly but responses to complaints continued to be disappointingly slow. Can the Governor assure the IMB that this will change in the immediate future?

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

Issue raised in 2021 report	Response	Action
What priority is HMPPS giving to investing in more efficient IT systems to improve both staff efficiency and accurate, timely communication?	HMP Guys Marsh is due to have MoJ Official deployed in July 2022 which replaces the current staff IT system.	New IT capabilities installed across the establishment.
What progress is HMPPS making with plans to install IT capabilities in cells to aid prisoner education and administration?	HMPPS is yet to be able to offer in-cell technology to prisoners such as HMP Guys Marsh.	Project cancelled because of lack of funding.
How does HMPPS propose to ensure that prisons are adequately resourced to deliver the six remaining pathways for resettlement?	The prison's progress through the remainder of its recovery from Covid-19 will also improve the approach as this allows for the reintroduction of the resettlement academy and the enablement of the four-week pre-release boards in partnership with the offender management unit.	Responsibility split within the establishment to allow for greater focus on resettlement. Key area of accommodation still a contentious issue given the number of prisoners released to no fixed abode. Resettlement Academy not seen. It appears that the four-week pre-release board has not been actioned.
This has been another difficult year and the Governor is commended for prompt management of Covid outbreaks and progressing the regime to level two. However, how is the model structure and implementation of key working going to be repaired?	Governor has acknowledged that under the current staffing regime, the model of key working as seen in OMIC is impossible to deliver.	Still an outstanding issue. Will not be resolved by Guys Marsh. It needs a wider context.
After such a long period of disruption, how are plans for incentivising attendance at work and education developing?	Governor response was to focus on ensuring wing staff are proactive in getting prisoners off the wing to work and using the incentives system to enforce it.	Still an outstanding issue for the Board.
The IEP policy is in place, but how is it going to be monitored so that it clearly acts as more of an incentive rather than being punitive?	Governor views the policy as effective; it was the adherence to it that remained unsatisfactory.	Still an outstanding issue for the Board.



## Evidence Sections 4 – 7

### 4 Safety

**4.0.1** HMP Guys Marsh safety strategy (June 2022) continued to be the guiding framework of the efforts to improve safety within the prison.

**4.0.2** Covid continued to cast a shadow over the beginning of the reporting year. Concerns over the Omicron variant led to restrictions of the regime. There was disappointment regarding delays to the reintroduction of purposeful activity. This was due to the national restrictions rather than being driven by the prison and movement around the prison led to increased tension on the wings.

**4.0.3** The daily report logged incidents of restlessness on wings, including ‘under the influence’ (UTI), self-harm or threats to self-harm, fighting and assaults. The Board noted that several individuals were responsible and that certain wings featured regularly, whilst others were quiet.

**4.0.4** The Board noted that by the middle of the reporting year a survey carried out by HMIP (July 2022) indicated that 34% of 114 respondents suggested that they had felt unsafe at the prison at some time. However, this figure was qualified, in that only 17% of prisoners felt unsafe at the time of the response. Board members received varied reports of safety concerns from prisoners in applications and conversations on the wings during rota visits. These perspectives generally correlated with staffing problems on wings, officers deployed onto wings without knowledge of the prisoners, and the inexperience of officers, especially in the face of tensions and altercations. The view of the Board was that HMP Guys Marsh was largely a safe place for prisoners during the reporting year. This was largely reinforced by exit interviews IMB members had with those leaving the establishment.

**4.0.5** Staffing strains were evident, adding to less pliable management of incidents with ‘put on report’ (POR) favoured over de-escalation, which led to adjudications. The officer dealing with Covid-related staff absences believed HMP Guys Marsh ‘was holding its own compared to other areas’ but was aware that there was a haemorrhaging of staff ‘because you can make more at Tesco with zero risk.’

**4.0.6** Officers were alert and responsive when called to attend incidents on other wings. However, the pressure caused by the frequency of these calls was difficult to manage and draining on manpower resources.

**4.0.7** The wing refurbishments created added concern for safety on the wings as prisoners were relocated. Tarrant wing, the care and separation unit (CSU), was relocated to Anglia wing for one month. This was not ideal as there were other prisoners around the cells, as well as creating noise while adjudications were taking place.

**4.0.8** Safety was temporarily under the leadership of an internally promoted member of staff to cover the maternity leave of the safety governor. The safety team continued to support the strategy and the interim governor.

**4.0.9** The Board thanks the safer communities team for welcoming IMB observation at the weekly and monthly meetings, for access to information and for ready communication.

**4.0.10** The whole prison approach to safer custody, which was improved last reporting year by the siting of the intelligence unit in the safer community hub, bedded in well as good practice. The flow of information from the integrated substance misuse service (ISMS) and the co-location of a custodial manager (CM) drug strategy lead, enhanced progress towards a fully holistic approach.

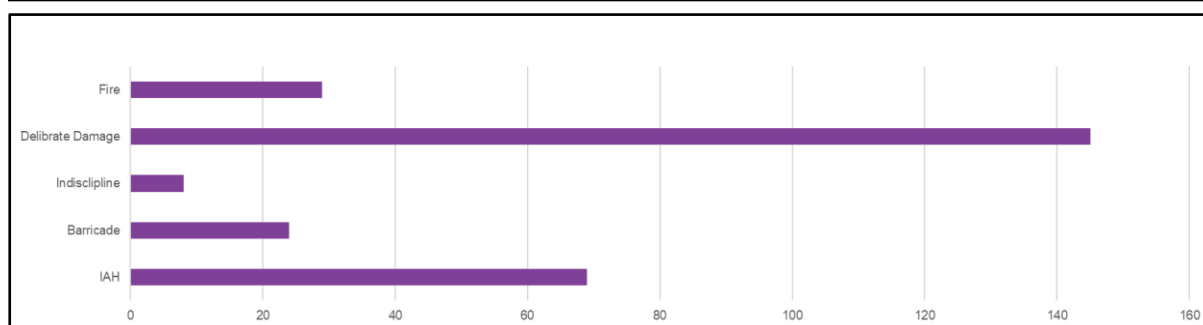
**4.0.11** The weekly multidisciplinary safety intervention meeting (SIM) continued to identify the prisoners with mental, emotional, physical and behavioural needs. Thorough analysis of each prisoner's needs by all agencies, and recommendations for best management and progress were sympathetic, humane and professional.

**4.0.12** As a result of the HMIP unannounced inspection in June/July 2022, the structure of the SIM was adapted to include drug strategy, illicit substance use, self-harm and debt. The Board noted that these were always an intelligence priority. It was pleasing to see that work was done to develop a system of statistical analysis.

**4.0.13** The Board noted that prisoners identified for the challenge, support and intervention plan (CSIP) were not always rigorously supervised. A number of these prisoners continued to display difficult and violent behaviour contrary to expectations of their compact. The reviews of those prisoners were behind schedule. By the end of the reporting year, the Board was pleased to note that those on CSIP were identified on the daily report to staff, including the status and review dates.

**4.0.14** In discussion with the safety team, the Board noted that a clearly identified risk to safety was regime instability. The rise in assaults (see figures four and five) was linked to regime changes and inconsistency.

**Figure One : Events that affect the stability of the prison (source HMP Guys Marsh)**



(IAH: incidents at height)

**4.0.15** The HMP Guys Marsh core strategy: purpose, achievement, community transformation (PACT), was at the heart of improvement in safety and was promoted on all materials and communications.

## **4.1 Reception and induction**

**4.1.1** The reception area was a clean, welcoming area with a well-organised system of managing the transfer of prisoners in and out of HMP Guys Marsh.

**4.1.2** A body scanner is located facing the entrance, the use of which was intelligence-led. Staff underwent training in its use so that there was more confidence in interpreting finds. The Board did not receive complaints relating to the use of the body scanner during the reporting year.

**4.1.3** The Board observed courteous, competent officers on duty. A Listener was also always on duty during the arrival of prisoners.

**4.1.4** The expectations of the HMP Guys Marsh early days in custody policy (March 2021), were translated into a clear portfolio of guidance and information given to each new prisoner in a folder. This package was created to help navigate the first days in custody, identify needs, vulnerabilities and characteristics, and explain all that was available for purpose and progression.

**4.1.5** The latest time of arrival at HMP Guys Marsh as agreed between HMPPS and prisoner escort and custody services (PECS) was fixed at 5pm. This allowed for the conditions for the first night in custody to be fully implemented.

**4.1.6** In September, arising from the safer communities monthly meeting action plan, the safety team was tasked to send debt information and advice to reception staff. The purpose was to talk about debt as a serious issue during the first night in custody and to reduce the risk to prisoners of getting into debt whilst on the induction unit. Debt awareness within the prison was also a focus of action.

**4.1.7** A healthcare check and the cell-sharing risk assessment (CSRA) screening took place within 24 hours, followed closely by the education assessment.

**4.1.8** The full induction programme, detailing support and opportunities at HMP Guys Marsh, was offered at varying times over the following two weeks after arrival. The Board was pleased to note that the programme was largely completed within the first two weeks.

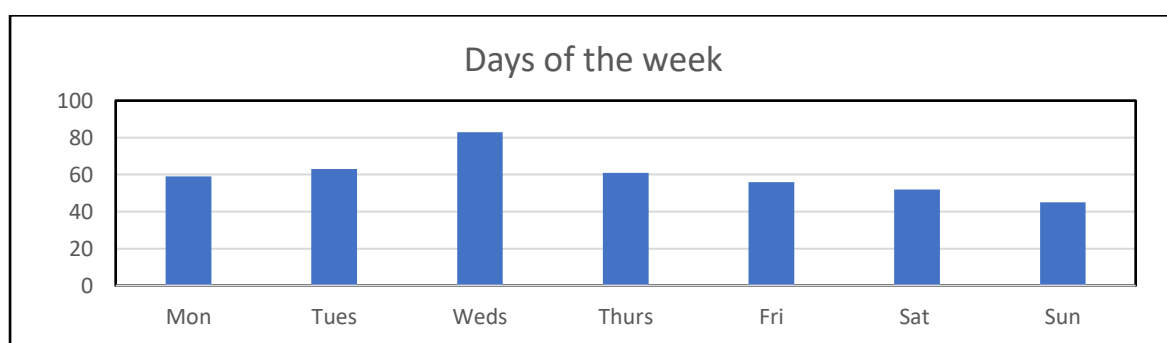
**4.1.9** Wing officers on Anglia, the designated induction wing, coped with the changing regime and the variable levels of staffing but spoke to the Board about concerns over limited space and the refusal of some prisoners to relocate to other appropriate wings or share cells.

**4.1.20** The Board would welcome the relocation of induction activities to the education area, to allow for an uninterrupted delivery of the induction programme.

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

**4.2.1** The safer communities team identified that a major reason for self-harm was debt. Action was taken to reduce this (see section 4.1.6) so that, by the latter part of the reporting year, the primary reason was regime inconsistency. Data indicated that Wednesday was the peak time for incidents to occur. Analysis indicated that debts were called in around canteen on this day.

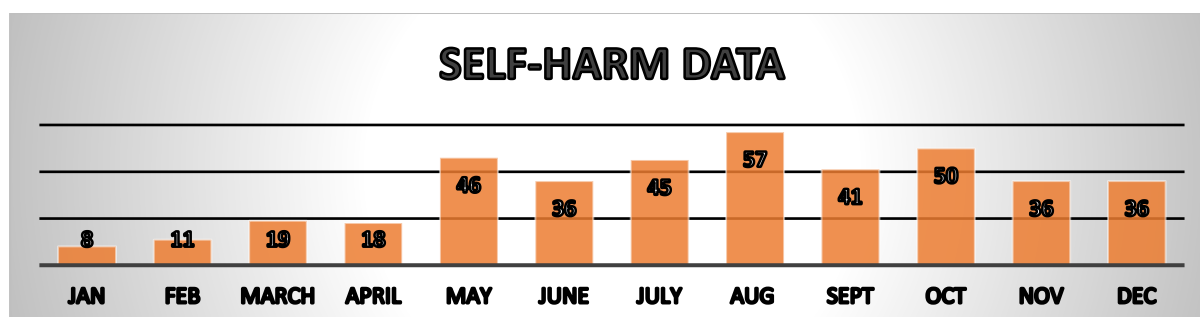
**Figure two: Self-harm incidents occurring on days of the week**



**4.2.2** The Board noted that the findings indicated (and rota teams observed) that incidents were linked to a few specific prisoners who self-harmed multiple times.

**4.2.3** According to data produced by the safer communities hub, there were 416 incidents over twelve months with an average of 35 each month. There were peaks in May, August and October which coincided with regime adjustments. Eleven prisoners self-harmed in 176 of the incidents, which equated to 42% of the total.

**Figure three: Self-harm incidents (source HMP Guys Marsh)**



**4.2.4** The Board continued to be concerned about the number of prisoners arriving at HMP Guys Marsh with mental health problems. The attending staff, wing officers and healthcare are to be commended for the level of care and prompt response to incidents whatever the level of severity.

**4.2.5** The chaplaincy had not been able to be fully open for refuge or counsel because of the stricter regime. The Board was made aware that restrictions would continue to be imposed on access to the chapel and were concerned about the impact on fragile prisoners more liable to self-harm. No evidence of this particular impact was available.

**4.2.6** Distraction packs were available during Covid restrictions and the in-cell telephones helped to maintain family ties.

**4.2.7** The few Listeners were able to be more active towards the end of the reporting year. More Listeners were recruited for training.

**4.2.8** The assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) version 6 document was introduced but training in suicide and self-harm (SASH) lagged.

**4.2.9** The number of prisoners on ACCTs averaged eight at any one time. At one point mid-year, there were 30 open ACCTs which severely overstretched officers and staff carrying out observation requirements. Staff attendance at reviews became more disciplined and good, sensitive interactions resulted in more prisoners feeling that they had support and care.

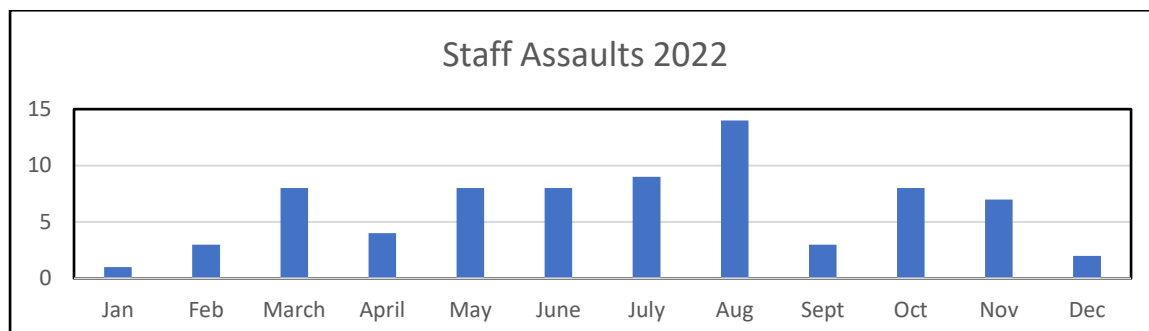
**4.2.10** The Board carried out routine checks of ACCT documents and found that entries varied in quality, in part because of the volume of documents open, but also because of lapses or the lack of proper understanding of the purpose of observations.

**4.2.11** There were three recorded deaths in custody (DIC) during the reporting year. The first death was that of a prisoner with a long history of mental instability and is referred to elsewhere in this report in the mental health section (see section 6.3.4). The Prison and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) report published in September 2022 was critical of the ACCT process which was led by different staff, and as such was disjointed and often lacked critical support for the prisoner. The remaining two deaths are awaiting investigation by the PPO.

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

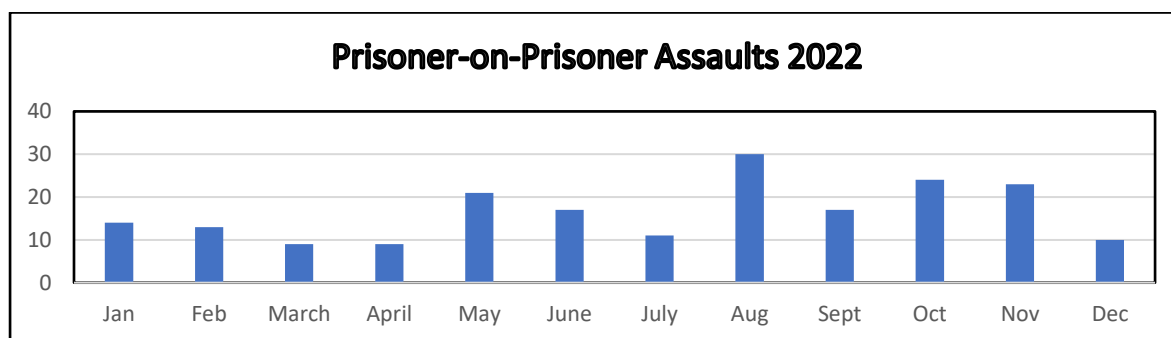
**4.3.1 Assaults on staff** There were 75 incidents of assaults on staff during 2022, an average of 6.25 a month. The number of assaults peaked in August and declined towards the end of the year when the regime became more restricted.

**Figure four: Staff assaults 2022 (source HMP Guys Marsh)**



**4.3.2 Prisoner-on-prisoner assaults** There were 205 incidents of prisoner-on-prisoner assault, an average of 17.3 a month, with 208 individuals involved in 205 incidents across the year. Again, August was the month for the highest number of incidents (30). Debt and bullying were the main reasons for incidents occurring; there were 103 victims involved in 138 incidents, with 36% of the incidents generated within two wings. Notwithstanding this, there were relatively few prisoners admitting that they felt unsafe in the prison, although there was an increase in prisoners causing disruption to orchestrate a move to the CSU.

**Figure five: Prisoner-on-prisoner assaults 2022 (source HMP Guys Marsh)**



**4.3.3** There were, on average, some 14 prisoners on CSIP at any one time. Staff shortages may have been responsible, but the list did not seem to progress month by month as reviews and investigations were delayed. The same individuals would regularly reappear in incidents involving violence and substance misuse.

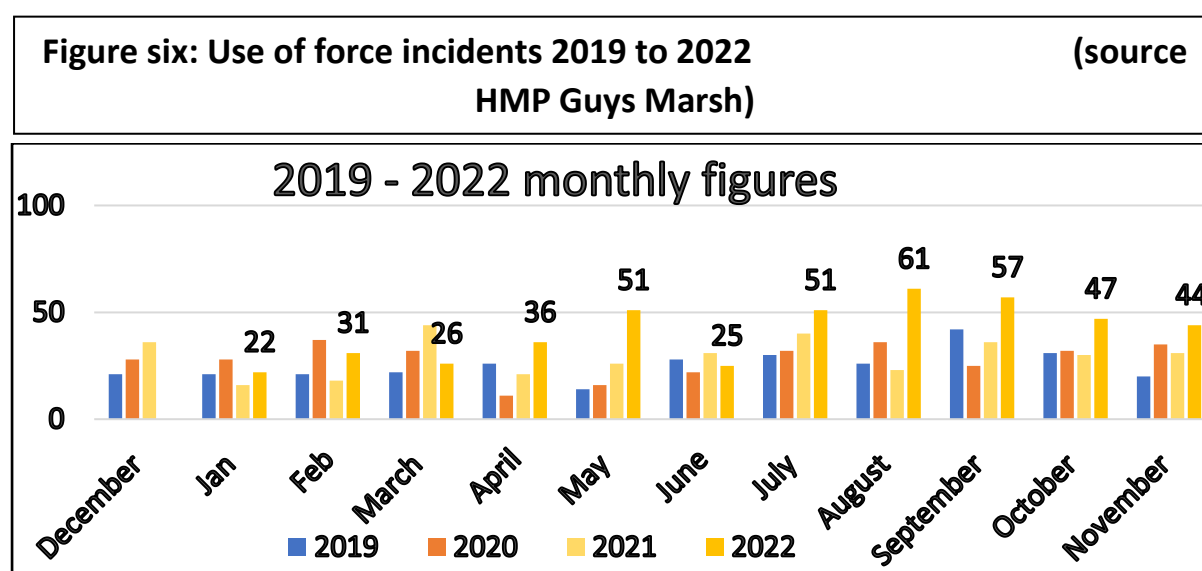
**4.3.4** There was considerable evidence of gang activity on the wings, which contributed to the issue of debt. Staff were acutely aware of the problem and their efforts to separate – particularly vulnerable – prisoners were noticeable. The decision was taken to continue to disrupt those that were behind the violence and debt issues and continue to monitor vulnerable prisoners connected to county lines who also involved themselves in the illicit economy in prison.

**4.3.5** There was growing evidence of the influence of debt on certain wings and the violence this engendered was evidenced by the prisoner-on-prisoner assault figures in August of the reporting year. The most serious assault occurred on Saxon wing when a prisoner's throat was cut. He survived only because of the speedy intervention of the wing and medical staff.

**4.3.6** Generally, the management of prisoners not engaging with the regime (self-isolators) was good, with the list rarely exceeding three or four. It was identified that further work was needed to put reintegration plans in place for them in the same way as for CSU prisoners.

#### **4.4 Use of force (UOF)**

**4.4.1** There were 387 unplanned and 85 planned UOF incidents in the year. The number of incidents climbed noticeably over the year, hitting a four-year high in August, when there were nearly three times the number of incidents as in January.



**4.4.2** Debt and the ensuing assaults it triggered, was the primary reason for UOF. UOF was used to intervene when debt related assaults were perpetrated, as well as when self-harm was threatened or taking place because of debt. The refusal to relocate was the third highest reason for UOF.

**4.4.3** A decision was taken to separate figures into green (guiding – and other, non-pain-inducing – holds) and red (pain-inducing holds) for the more serious incidents. There was only one instance of a baton drawn and used. There were no instances where PAVA spray was used and only five qualified UOF instructors were trained to use PAVA. Body belts were not deployed, although there were plans to train CSU staff in their use at the end of the year.

**4.4.4** The standard of UOF paperwork was disappointingly low with many 213s not being completed and almost no prisoner debriefs being documented and submitted.

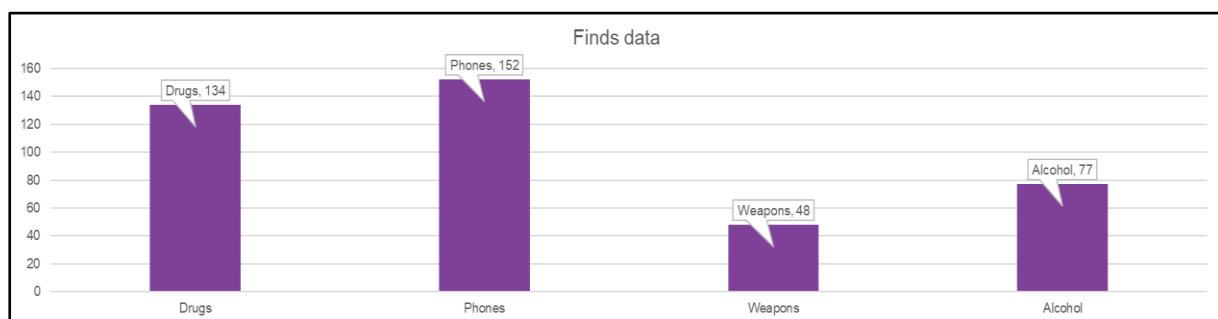
Timings and statements often did not match, and some statements arrived late, without personal statements and little history of how incidents started. There were always statements outstanding at the end of each month.

**4.4.5** The wearing of body-worn cameras (BWCs) continued to be contentious among staff, and their use was hampered by a low standard of reliability. Plans were in place to upgrade and replace with better equipment at the end of the year.

## **4.5 Preventing illicit items**

**4.5.1** During the reporting period, the prison faced considerable challenges in preventing the supply of illicit materials. The prison is set in a rural context, surrounded by open fields with footpaths running alongside the perimeter fencing. The prison is to be congratulated on achieving the finds that they have. However, the IMB had real concerns throughout the year as to the effectiveness of dealing with this constant flow of illicit materials. The supply was organised by OCGs; over the reporting year, there were 132 intercepted throwovers in various guises. It is difficult to quantify the ratio of finds to throwovers, but given the price of a mobile phone in prisons, the throwovers will continue. It is a highly lucrative and well organised business.

**Figure seven: Illicit items finds (source HMP Guys Marsh)**

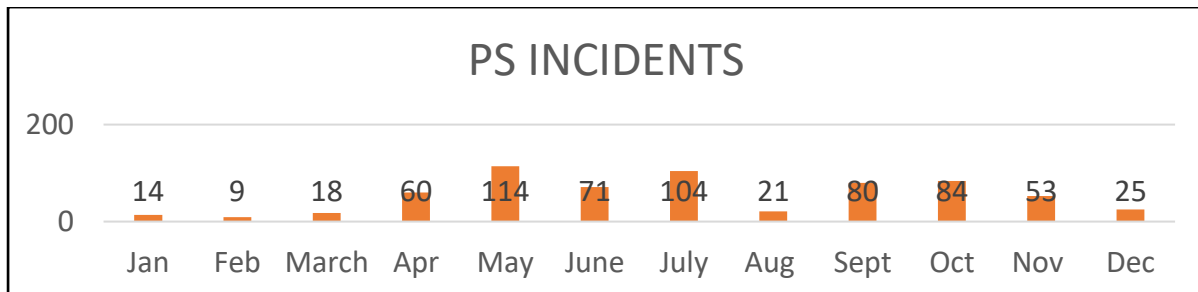


**4.5.2** The Board is of the strong belief that given the geographical location of the prison, the Prison Service will have to match the persistence and technological advances of OCG groups in getting illicit material into prisons. There is an urgent need to combat the use of drones and to utilise technology to track or block the use of mobile phones.



### 4.5.3

**Figure eight: PS incidents (source HMP Guys Marsh)**



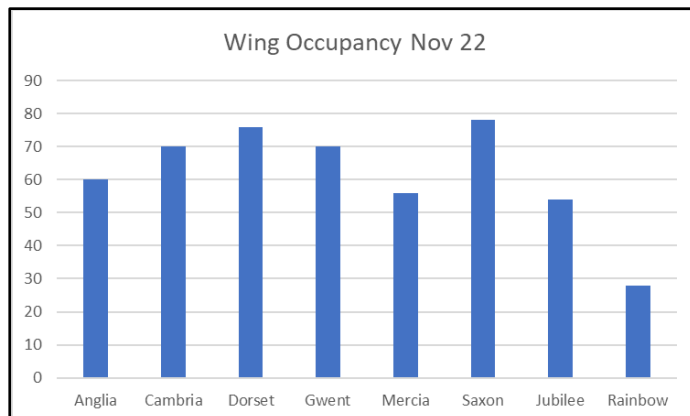
Psychotic substances (PS) incidents reached their peak during May to July of the reporting year. There were fortunately no fatalities though there were frequent code blue alerts because of PS use. The frontline staff are to be commended on coping with some very challenging situations. Those prisoners who were deemed to be under the influence (UTI) were visited by healthcare who provided a diagnosis, and if diagnosed to be UTI, were regressed back to basic. The Board was aware of the considerable amount of work undertaken by the drug strategy lead to try and combat the demand for PS throughout the year. Newsletters were published regularly in an attempt to try and reach users.

**4.5.4** The brewing of illicit alcohol (hooch) continued to be a challenge for staff. Prisoners have found multiple substances, some of which were highly dangerous and toxic, to act as 'kickers' for the fermentation of alcohol. Hand sanitiser and cleaning fluids were two liquids used. It is a matter of considerable regret that one death in custody may have been attributable to drinking a toxic hooch concoction.

## 5. Fair and humane treatment

### 5.1 Accommodation, clothing, food

**5.1.1** At the end of the reporting period, the principal accommodation was made up of six standard wings, Anglia, Cambria, Dorset, Gwent, Mercia and Saxon and two enhanced wings, Jubilee and Rainbow. By then wing occupation was as follows

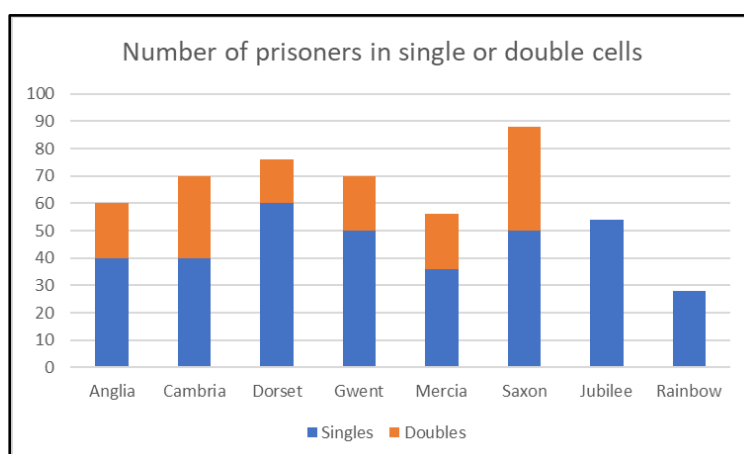


**Figure nine:**

**Wing occupancy  
November 2022**

**5.1.2** Anglia was the designated induction wing. Cambria, the drug recovery wing, had half of the wing population under the care of the ISMS team.

**5.1.3** The management of allocating prisoners to double cells continued to be difficult for wing officers to manage. As the pressure on roll numbers increased from 460 at the beginning of the year to 491 at the end of the reporting year, there was additional pressure to ensure that all double cells accommodated two prisoners.



**Figure ten:**

**Single/double cell  
occupancy  
November 2022**

**5.1.4** The fire improvement project concluded in May and Jubilee wing was reopened as an enhanced wing. The Board was pleased to see that Fontmell wing, a temporary structure, was closed permanently in May.

**5.1.5** The CSU, Tarrant, was closed during March whilst new flooring was laid. The unit was transferred to Anglia wing; the staff are to be commended for operating under some quite challenging circumstances during this enforced move.

**5.1.6** External cleanliness around the wings was not good since it encouraged vermin and gave the establishment an unkempt and ill-disciplined feel. The Board continually raised with the senior management team (SMT) the levels of litter and rubbish around the establishment. At the very end of the reporting period there was a marked improvement in the state of the grounds due to teams of paid external cleaners being in evidence: a very welcome development. The Board had concerns around the perimeter fencing of Saxon, given the piles of rubbish which accrued, often masking potential throwovers.

**5.1.7** Cleanliness on the wings was largely satisfactory, though in the case of Saxon and Gwent the common access area was often unpleasantly scruffy and dirty.

**5.1.8** Fencing was installed around Anglia following a successful asset improvement bid by the Governor which allowed prisoners to exercise freely and safely around the newly established yard exercise area.

**5.1.9** The district heating main around the establishment continued to be not fit for purpose, as a consequence of which several back up boilers were used as temporary measures. There were several occasions on wings where hot water for heating, showers and washing was not available. The temporary boilers were susceptible to power outages and required frequently resetting.

**5.1.10** The Board was pleased to note that laundry facilities on the wings improved with the arrival of new machines and driers which were reliable and durable. However, it was disappointing to see that the main laundry had a disastrous refit with particularly poor project management at HMPPS central services. The delays in completion of the refit often led to shortages of basic items on the wings, and the clothes exchange scheme was placed under severe strain.

**5.1.11** The Board received various complaints from prisoners that laundry detergent was not made freely available for prisoner use on the wing. The prison response was that it was a matter for individuals to buy their own.

**5.1.12** The decency project, where personal items were ordered weekly, worked well. The Board received few if any complaints. Shortages tended to occur when prisoners had failed to order items in time. The Board welcomed the idea that the decency team develop a maintenance group to assist with low level maintenance issues around the establishment.

**5.1.13** The catering operating annual, annex B of PSI 44/2010 Catering – Meals for Prisoners, clearly states the following: 'It is a fundamental requirement that prisoners and members of staff are provided with meals which meet an individual's religious, cultural and medical dietary needs. It is further necessary that all prisoners are provided with food commodities that are stored, prepared and served in an appropriate way. The menu choices and meal provision must reflect the religious and cultural needs of the establishment'. In general, HMP Guy's Marsh caters well for individual, religious, cultural and medical dietary needs. The daily budget per prisoner of £2.18 is an increase on last year, however, in the light of 2022 cost of living crisis, and the cost of foodstuffs, this represents a decrease in real terms.

**5.1.14** Observations by the Board showed that servery staff were generally well aware of religious and medical diets and the need to ensure that there was no cross contamination (even briefly) with other food items and that correct serving utensils were used. Serving utensils were clearly displayed and labelled. There were several complaints to the Board that on one wing the correct use of utensils for halal food was not being observed.

**5.1.15** Checks in wing offices by Board members show that food temperatures were being measured and recorded daily. Food trolley cleanliness has been an issue. The implementation of a designated kitchen worker cleaning the trollies seems, for the time being, to be improving cleanliness standards. The cleanliness of servery areas was inconsistent. The Board received several complaints from one wing as to the potential hazards of poorly cleaned servery areas.

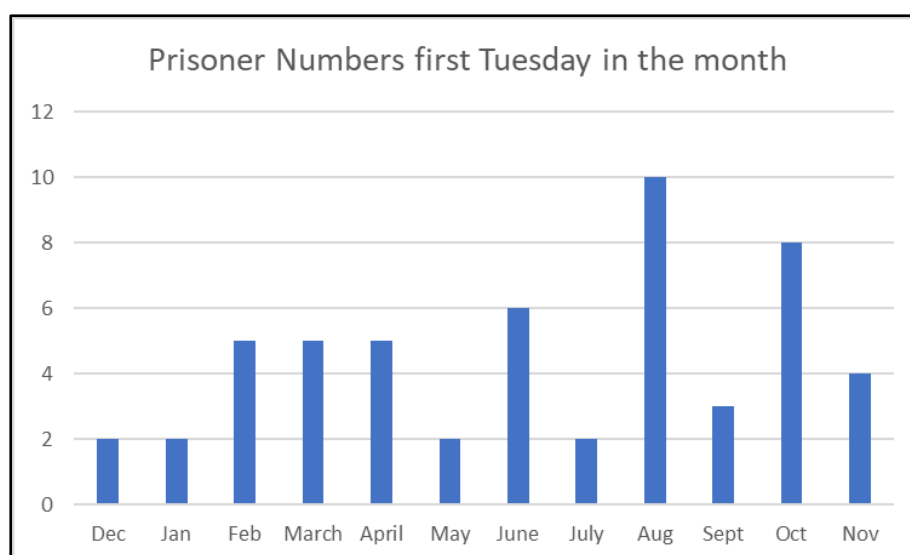
**5.1.16** The wearing of whites appeared to be an ongoing and unresolved problem. Between collecting clean whites from laundry, returning dirty whites to laundry and a 'one size fits all' (which it doesn't) approach, the wearing of whites to serve food was still inconsistent. Officers seemed not to view it as a priority. Officers were usually present at servery during mealtimes, but not always.

**5.1.17** HMP Guys Marsh generally demonstrated good practice when it came to catering, with comparatively few complaints. There were 19 Comp1s over the year and six applications to the Board.

**5.1.18** HMP Guys Marsh has good sized land/garden areas and it is disappointing to report that very limited fresh produce was grown or used in prisoners' food.

**5.1.19** Microwaves have been removed from wings. The Board would welcome their reinstatement on all wings.

## 5.2 Segregation, special accommodation



**Figure ten**

A snapshot of CSU numbers

(first Tuesday in every month)

HMP Guys Marsh

**5.2.1** The CSU, Tarrant, was closed during March whilst new flooring was laid. The unit was transferred to Anglia wing; the staff are to be commended for operating under some quite challenging circumstances during this enforced move. The unit

was well maintained, with daily cleanliness varying according to the cleaning orderly but generally the unit was clean and well-tended.

**5.2.2** During the reporting period there were few instances of prisoners remaining in the CSU beyond 42 days and it was impressive to observe the efforts made by staff to reduce the duration of stay and either to reintegrate prisoners into the general population or, where not viable, to transfer them to another prison.

**5.2.3** There were relatively few instances of prisoners with complex needs – or on an ACCT – being held in the CSU. However, it was inevitable that there were a few and it was noticeable that staff made strenuous efforts to address their needs.

**5.2.4** Because of the nature of the unit, the regime was flexible and designed around the needs of the prisoners. Showers, exercise and distractions in the form of radios, books and distraction packs were all made available. Staff often went out of their way to accommodate prisoner needs.

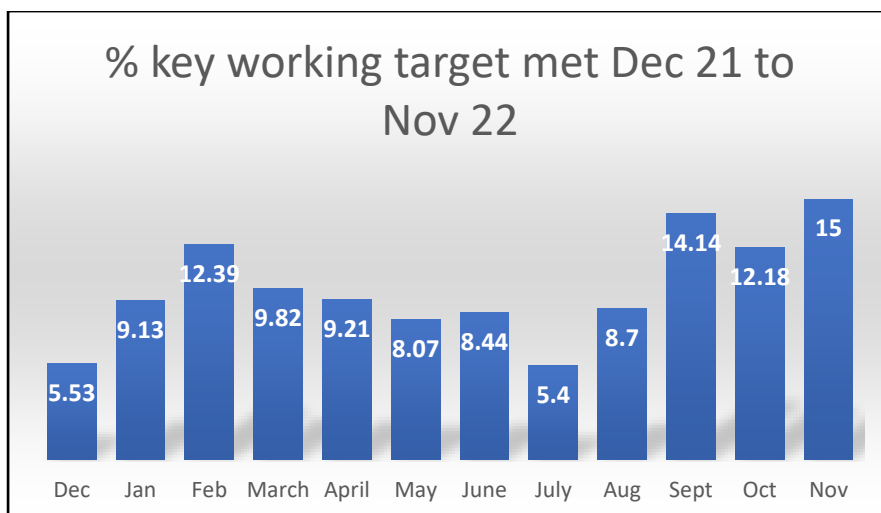
**5.2.5** The quality of adjudications varied. Generally, they were fairly and efficiently conducted although the Board was disappointed to note that the supporting paperwork remained a challenge for staff, frequently resulting in a charge being dismissed. Adjudications where the adjudicating Governor's use of language was moderately expressed and informed were often the most clearly led and fruitful.

**5.2.6** Dirty protests were few but, towards the second half of the year, a prisoner with a history of prolific dirty protest was transferred into the prison and the CSU. His management considerably challenged the staff, particularly since he was less than compliant in other areas. However, a strict bio-hazard protocol was established and staff were further protected by the provision of a physical barrier which prevented them from being exposed to the noxious substances which were thrown at them.

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

**5.3.1** The majority of prisoners Board members talked to confirmed that they felt safe and well cared for by staff. This finding was endorsed by the HMIP inspection team in June of the reporting year. The majority demonstrated an understanding of the restricted regime and appreciated the information and updates they received.

**5.3.2** Key working, or lack of it, continues to be a major cause of concern to the Board. It should be the cornerstone of prisoner rehabilitation and progress. As it existed during the reporting year it was barely fit for purpose given the few prisoners it involved.



**Figure eleven:  
percentage of  
key working  
target met**

**(source HMP  
Guys Marsh)**

**5.3.3** Whilst officers used NOMIS to make negative comments on individuals, too often this was not discussed directly with the prisoners themselves.

**5.3.4** Staff retention remained a concern. One particularly vicious prisoner-on-prisoner attack was witnessed by several officers new into their training, which led to several officers leaving the service. The IMB has concerns about how effectively officers new to the service were supported.

## **5.4 Equality and diversity**

**5.4.1** As of September 2022, HMP Guys Marsh held 30 foreign national prisoners. A third of these hold Western European passports (four being Republic of Ireland citizens). The next largest groups were Eastern European and sub-Saharan African prisoners (six in each group) followed by three Middle Eastern prisoners.

**5.4.2** HMPPS launched the FNO Information Hub (the Hub) on the intranet on September 2021, with advertisements in Inside Time and on internal TV. Also, posters were provided for prisons to raise awareness amongst staff. The Hub provides online information for prison and probation staff to support foreign national prisoners in custody and on release. The Hub also provides foreign national prisoners with information in their own language. Prison officers and staff at HMP Guys Marsh were largely unaware of the service, though the chaplaincy did use it.

**5.4.3** Research carried out by the lead Board member ascertained that there was little awareness of the IMB role by foreign national prisoners, particularly those with limited English language skills. There were no applications to the IMB from foreign national prisoners. This research will inform Board practice for the coming year.

**5.4.4** Foreign nationals are not provided with information in their own language. They rely on fellow prisoners for explanation. The Board would like to see this addressed, particularly in the induction process and with support services in the library.

**5.4.5** There were several cases of foreign national prisoners being deported throughout the year, often resulting in much prisoner distress. One prisoner hid for

three hours before he was subsequently discovered and transported out of the prison.

**5.4.6** During the reporting year, one wing – Rainbow – was available to house prisoners who had a vulnerability because of age or neurological diversity. The cells, individual pods, were in a fenced compound. The prisoners were cared for and had specific support. For example, one prisoner who was receiving palliative care had a motorised wheelchair to help him get around the estate.

**5.4.7** Older prisoners reported that they were happy with their treatment.

**5.4.8** The Board had concerns about the lack of support for those prisoners with neurodiverse characteristics. This was highlighted by one prisoner who had a well-documented history of autism, and despite the concern and care of well-meaning staff, was not dealt with effectively by the prison. Although funding for the appointment of a lead for neurodiversity had been achieved by May and an appointment made, the post became vacant again in November and remained unfilled at the end of the reporting period.

## **5.5 Faith and pastoral support**

**5.5.1** The Board commends the work carried out by the chaplaincy team, who supported prisoners' needs across multiple faiths. The team was very active around the prison, attending GOOD reviews and ACCT reviews as well as supporting prisoners when a family or personal crisis occurred and being on hand to talk to prisoners in need.

**5.5.2** It was a year of change in terms of personnel within the chaplaincy. A Roman Catholic chaplain replaced the retiring previous incumbent; the arrival of a Pagan chaplain was particularly welcomed by the eleven declared followers of Paganism as there had previously been no Pagan chaplain.

**5.5.3** Ramadan was successfully supported by the imam and was followed by 63 Muslim prisoners. The Board was grateful to the imam for the invitation to attend the Eid festival, which was enthusiastically welcomed by Muslim prisoners. The kitchens successfully provided suitable food to be eaten after nightfall during the fasting period.

## **Incentives schemes**

**5.6.1** The incentives scheme did not work as well as it should. The scheme seemed to be used more as a tool to punish rather than as a tool to incentivise good behaviour.

**5.6.2** There was an inconsistency in the assessment of enhanced status between wings and particularly on Fontmell, where all the prisoners were required to be of enhanced status. Wing staff complained that prisoners were being placed on an enhanced wing to separate them from mainstream prisoners rather than to reward them for progression.

**5.6.3** The regression from enhanced to standard and to basic was not always documented on NOMIS and was often not done face to face. These criticisms were

more disappointing because the prison produced an excellent guide to the scheme in 2018, updated during lockdown, which was clear and unambiguous but was not always followed.

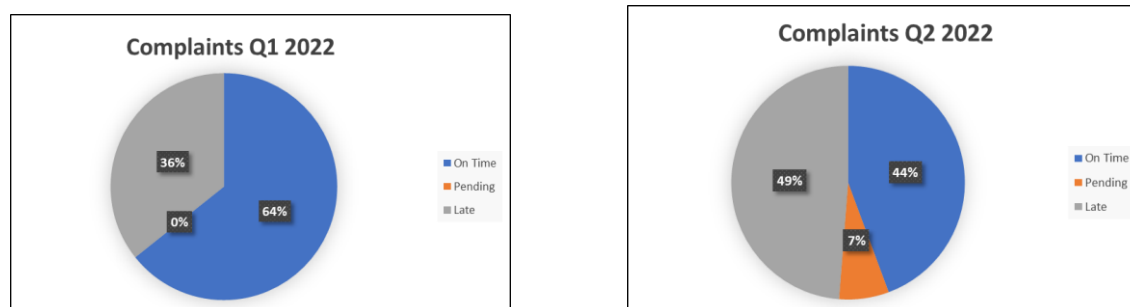
## 5.7 Complaints

**5.7.1** The complaints process was stretched given the volume of complaints received and more pertinently the changes in personnel dealing with the process. There was a period of three months at the beginning of the year where, because of staff absence, the process was fragmented and lacking in rigour. For the second half of the year, there was a distinct improvement in complaints administration, but the process was still hampered by late responses.

**5.7.2** The overriding number of complaints concerned property (25% in quarter 1 [Q1]) both inside the prison and on transfer from elsewhere. Dissatisfaction with the offender management unit accounted for 25% in Q1, with confidential and canteen representing the next highest number.

**5.7.3** The complaints situation was carefully monitored, with both monthly and quarterly statistical returns being produced. The number of late responses to complaints was of concern, particularly those from departments within the prison. There were late responses to almost 50% of total complaints in the first two quarters of the year. In the first half of the year the Board was constantly being asked to follow up poor quality and inadequate responses to complaints and, while the quality of response slightly improved with a change of complaints clerk in Q1, the speed of response remained a problem.

**Figures Twelve and Thirteen Complaints Response Times Q1, Q2**



**5.7.2** The Board has expressed concern on several occasions about the length of time it took for responses to reach prisoners. This was particularly so when responses were required from prisons other than HMP Guys Marsh.

**5.7.3** By far the greatest number of complaints received by the prison related to property lost on transfer in. This mirrored the pattern of applications to the Board.

## 5.8 Property

**5.8.1** There were clear guidelines as to prisoner property entitlement provided by the custody manager (CM) of the unit.



**5.8.2** Use of force operations within HMP Guys Marsh frequently resulted in a prisoner's cell remaining unsecured for a brief period, which led to theft from the cells.

**5.8.3** Prisoners transferring in often arrived at reception without some of their property, usually because they had been limited in the amount they were allowed to carry on the transport. Property remained a contentious issue which resulted in complaints and applications and was frequently the cause of frustration among prisoners, who saw little action being taken to recover their goods.

**5.8.4** The Board had considerable sympathy with prisoners whose property cards were not sent on from previous establishments and would welcome the introduction of a digitised list of prisoner property.

## **6. Health and wellbeing**

### **6.1 Healthcare general**

**6.1.1** The healthcare provider was Practice Plus Group, a private company operating only NHS contracts. There were three days of doctor cover per week with two nurse prescribers.

**6.1.2** Staff were generally present at ACCT and segregation reviews as part of their daily role; there were a few incidents monitored by the Board where, because of pressure on staffing, this was not the case. Healthcare staff attended the daily SMT meetings and other meetings where a healthcare input was needed. The head of healthcare had a quarterly meeting with the Governor to address issues and performance.

**6.1.3** The HMP Guys Marsh monthly healthcare newsletter supported health events promotions.

**6.1.4** On average, eight to ten patients a month attended Salisbury or Yeovil district hospitals. Video consultations for outpatient hospital appointments were generally successful and comparatively less stressful for residents and staff alike. Cancellation of appointments regrettably became more frequent because of a lack of escort staff. On one occasion a hospital appointment was lost because of a road traffic incident and subsequently could not be rescheduled.

**6.1.5** The local ambulance service, despite the well-publicised pressures, was responsive to emergencies.

**6.1.6** Healthcare complaints (direct to healthcare) averaged seven a month; the majority concerned medication being stopped or changed after use of psychoactive substances.

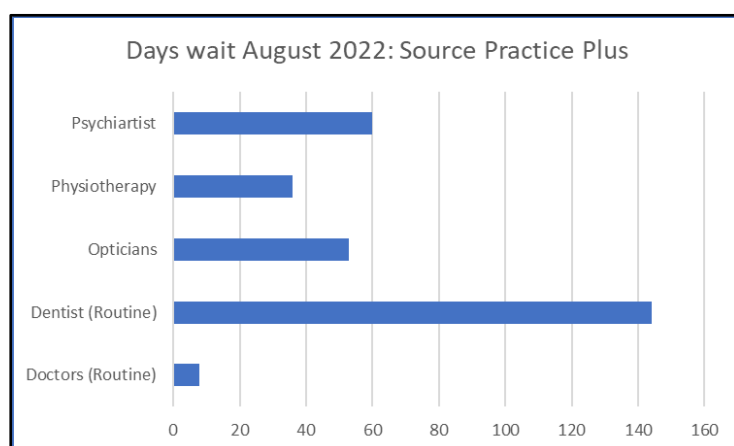
**6.1.7** There was a continued move away from pharmaceutical prescriptions for both physical and mental health issues, with a new focus on exercise and talking therapies. Some prisoners found this challenging, but it did reduce the tradeable market in medications as well dealing with prescription drugs addiction issues.

**6.1.8** Wellbeing checks were introduced to target vulnerable prisoners (around 100 at any one time) to establish a rapport and explore worries before they became more serious.

## **6.2 Physical healthcare**

**6.2.1** Less than 5% of physical health issues concerned serious conditions and were limited to a few prisoners.

### **6.2.2 Waiting times**



**Figure fourteen:**  
**Waiting times for consultations Practice Plus August 22**

**6.2.3** Medical urgent cases were seen on the day where possible by doctors, but if not by the nurse prescribers. Dental appointments had long waiting lists made more difficult by the Covid hygiene regime limiting the number of patients that could be seen in a session.

**6.2.4** The relatively high percentage of GP 'did not attends' (10.24%) was a concern given the waste of precious resources

## **6.3 Mental healthcare**

**6.3.1** The clinical mental health caseload averaged 50 at any one time throughout the year, with new referrals seen within five days. However, the waiting times for mental health hospital transfer remained long, reflecting the national shortage of beds. There were five transfers to secure mental health hospitals in the year.

**6.3.2** The Board received a number of complaints from prisoners about the lack of access to a psychiatrist. The full-time psychiatrist left the establishment in March and Practice Plus struggled to recruit a satisfactory replacement, resulting in long waiting lists.

**6.3.3** As a matter of policy, the mental health team made every effort to deal with prisoners with mental health difficulties through a number of social psychology support programmes rather than relying on medication. This did not always meet with the initial approval of the prisoner, but the programmes proved successful.

**6.3.4** It was deeply regrettable that one prisoner with mental health concerns took his own life. He had been in the prison about six weeks, having transferred from

HMP Winchester. He had severe mental health issues and was being supported by the mental health team. The PPO report was critical of the exchange of information between Guys Marsh and Winchester and the ACCT process which was not as thorough as it should have been. A possible trigger for the death was the fact that the prisoner was aware that he would be shortly transferred to a secure mental health hospital. There was an immediate review by the SMT and health team on receiving the report, and procedures are now in place to ensure that there is a full evaluation of case notes on arrival and that ACCT procedures are more consistent and robust.

## **6.4 Social care**

**6.4.1** Referrals were made for specific social care needs throughout the year, involving Dorset Council needs assessments, aids and support. It was a source of frustration to the health team that one referral took four months from assessment to a report being received. A 'buddy' system was in place so that prisoners supported each other when needed. Age UK located a liaison officer at the establishment; the prison was one of three in the country to acquire more services for the over-50 age group.

**6.4.2** One prisoner required social care input by Age UK and received a motorised wheelchair which has had a hugely beneficial effect on the quality of his life.

## **6.5 Exercise, regime**

**6.5.1** Gym sessions, once all Covid restrictions were lifted, remained popular and open to all who signed up. The gym had well maintained aerobic and anaerobic kit. The outdoor MUGA was not fit for purpose in anything but dry weather.

**6.5.2** It is a source of regret that there was little scope to develop team games within the establishment. The area created as a rugby area became the site of Rainbow wing and is unlikely to be reclaimed. The Board looks forward to the future development of a MUGA as part of the expansion plan.

**6.5.3** The footballing coaching course run by AFC Bournemouth was popular and successful.

## **6.6 Drug and alcohol rehabilitation**

**6.6.1** The integrated substance misuse strategy (ISMS) was run by the Exeter Drug Charity. There were eleven full time drug alcohol rehabilitation support workers.

**6.6.2** The team at the end of the reporting year was in contact with 219 prisoners. Many were on social programmes and were recovering addicts. Sixty-four prisoners were on methadone/Subutex prescriptions.

**6.6.3** Cambria wing was established as a drug rehabilitation wing. Half the wing (30 at the end of the reporting year) were prisoners who were being managed by the ISMS team. This has allowed for a wide variety of social activities to be run on the wing to promote a sense of cohesion. Funding was available through the health commissioner and was used to finance various activities including Unlock Drama,

yoga and meditation sessions and music week. There are plans to fund outdoor gym equipment on Cambria wing.

**6.6.5** The Board congratulates the ISMS team on the scope and breadth of their work. There was evidence of a huge amount of support material available for recovering drug users covering a wide range of issues.

## **6.7 Soft skills**

**6.7.1** Accessing personal and social development (PSD) support during Covid was difficult, with opportunities limited by permitted group sizes. There were few soft skills courses available for lone in-cell work as this increased vulnerability, although 23 prisoners completed 'facing up to conflict', while four were awaiting completion. Contact was maintained with all previous education users during the pandemic.

**6.7.2** Wellbeing and mindfulness sessions were offered in in-cell packs during Covid, as well as yoga and art therapy exercises, but take up was low. Further art therapy was available through the in-cell packs, including making cards to send home and a selfie project.

**6.7.3** The education department used one tutor for all three of their soft skills courses: change lets everyone achieve (CLEA), emotional resilience and peer mentoring, with through rates averaging only 10 a course. At the end of the reporting year there were 100 on the post-Covid waiting list (usually around 20). The CLEA tutor split her time delivering another course. This restricted the course time and places available. Throughput was affected, which created a long waiting list, including those awaiting D-categorisation. Those due for release were prioritised, but demand could not keep up with delivery. There were 32 successful graduates, who are to be congratulated, but it is a small number. There remained a need for general educators capable of delivering all the courses and able to cover for staff absences.

**6.7.4** The emotional resilience course was suspended during Covid, but was run from April onwards, as were CLEA and a victim awareness course. CLEA was initially delivered in-cell but, being victim-focused, this approach was changed at regional level due to concerns about mental health.

**6.7.5** Peer support was available through education mentors, 3Cs champions (focusing on rehabilitation), together with Shannon Trust mentors and workplace quality champions. A fathers' group, run by the Inside Talking telephone group, met once a week.

**6.7.6** There was professional unease about delivering soft skills during Covid isolation to prisoners in their cells because of the potential dangers to staff.

**6.7.7** THREADS (trust, hope, resilience, empathy, action, direction and strength) recommenced in September 2022. This collaboration between three prisons in the south west is a peer-to-peer wellbeing scheme and had positive feedback from the prisoners involved.

## 7. Progression and resettlement

### 7.1 Education, library

**7.1.1** Weston College provided functional and level 1 and 2 education for approximately 52 men at a time and, with the Prisoners' Education Trust, supported 18 distance learners studying with the Open University. The provision was inspected by Ofsted in July. Its report (section 5.12) concluded that all areas required improvement. This overall judgement applied to education, skills and work.

Ofsted found, with caveats,

- a curriculum that met the needs of most of the population
- sufficient activity places
- improved allocation to education, skills and work
- well considered plans for post Covid-19 education
- good understanding of key weakness

In addition, that 'prison leaders had taken decisive action to hold the education provider to account for recent poor performance' (see Ofsted report, section 5.17).

**7.1.2** Education induction for all incoming prisoners took place over two mornings a week and included rapid screening. In-depth assessments took place where weaknesses were identified.

**7.1.2** In April, the Board observed that 'education as a whole prison objective is a work in progress'. Overall, there were sufficient places for all learners although Ofsted found that some courses in English and maths were oversubscribed and that there was a need for more advanced teaching if attainment by learners was adequate at the start of a course. Most learners were working at level 1 and together with those at functional level were generally successful in passing their courses. Ofsted noted that the success rate for level 2 was lower. Personal development was well provided for and courses on resilience were effective and valued. English for Speakers of Other Languages was offered in individual sessions, which were not always well targeted. Achievements were celebrated in displays and newsletters. Promoting education was recognised as an essential but neglected route to encouraging prisoners to gain qualifications.

**7.1.3** Post-Covid classes resumed with low attendance, attributed to a disparity between temporary pay and non-Covid pay rates. By June attendance had increased but short-term pay incentives were judged insufficient by prisoners and staff. Unemployed men were only marginally less well off than men in purposeful activity, who earned 65p per session by October. In addition, attending accredited courses paid less well than work. A revised pay policy included incentives for gaining qualifications. The Education Smart rate of £1 per session rewarded those who continued to engage through two vocational courses or three courses over six months.

**7.1.4** A rota was implemented for weekly teacher visits to all wings and officers to raise awareness of the importance of education and purposeful activity. This had variable success. Shout Out (the education newsletter) emphasised that level 2 qualifications were needed for prison employment, and that vocational skills with updated IT skills were essential for employability on release.

**7.1.5** Prisoners refusing education were the responsibility of the activities hub. Given the needs of most students, education staff felt that their efforts should be focussed on men who wanted to engage.

**7.1.6** Good practice for those learners with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD), suggests that there should be a secure open-air area where learners with attention and/or sensory difficulties or neurodiverse conditions could take necessary short breaks structured into lessons. This could not be facilitated at Guys Marsh.

**7.1.7** All distance learners were in their first or second year of study. The responsibility of accepting a government loan was thought to motivate the completion of courses, as was good family support. Three gym orderlies studying for first or second OU degrees told the Board that staff absence had had an impact on administration and the submission of assignments and they felt support was poor. Ofsted reported that learning opportunities for prisoners serving long sentences were not well advanced.

**7.1.8** The virtual campus was underutilised during the reporting year. In-cell learning was limited during Covid-19 restrictions. In July for one week and again later, education sessions were cancelled because of staff shortages.

**7.1.9** Only some wings displayed photos of education monitors, Shannon Trust workers, and mentors. Security vetting held up the appointment of education mentors. Each wing had a prison information desk run by education peer monitors by October.

**7.1.10 Library** This was a well-stocked resource run by Weston College, providing reading for pleasure, professional interest and personal development. Following induction, use was timetabled by wing. Distinctive movement slips were available for long distance learners who had freer access. After restrictions eased in May, the library was open for four and a half days a week, with two sessions for each wing and later sessions for the employed. One prisoner was employed in the library. The facility and staff were welcoming with an enthusiastic librarian, easy chairs, clear labelling and photographs. Non-readers were encouraged and offered support including from the Shannon Trust. Outside, a regularly changing display featured interesting facts and quiz questions. Materials were varied and comprehensive.

**7.1.11** At the entrance were displays about recommended reading, international news, activities such as mindfulness and topical word searches, promotion of a reading challenge, and a picture quiz. Examples of featured topics included the work of Frida Kahlo, sharks, democracy, the Conservative leadership contest, England and St George's Day.

**7.1.12** Further inventive displays included publicly exhibited prisoner's artwork which had been set to music by a local composer and submitted for the Koestler Awards. Black History Month was celebrated with a group quiz, guest speaker and open mic session plus a feature on Marcus Rashford. Meditation and group art sessions took place in August. Autism Awareness week featured a good selection of books looking at neurodiversity. Traveller Week focussed on life on the road. A monthly film day and weekly quiz were initiated but a reading group ended in November through lack of staff.

**7.1.13** The office was available for Story Book Dads facilitated by volunteers, Open University and Prison Education Trust administration. A suite of computers for education purposes only was available in a separate room.

**7.1.14** Prisoners not attending in person could request books and materials. During the Covid restrictions, distraction packs were available although the Board did not see much evidence of them.

## **7.2 Vocational training, work**

**7.2.1** The education, skills and work department statement of intent was specific:

"We will create curriculum pathways designed to inspire and prepare the men at HMP Guys Marsh for employment sectors of growth within our resettlement areas". The six pathways were

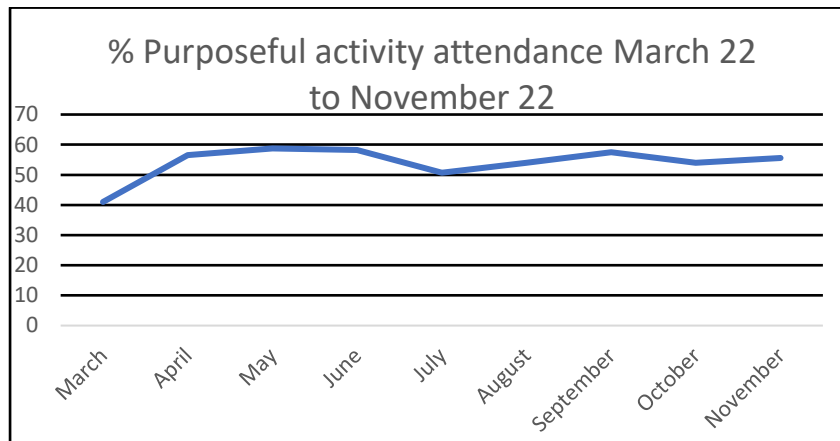
- construction, retail and business
- hospitality, retail and business
- health, sport and social care
- creative arts and trades
- science and technology
- animals and agriculture

Up to 41 men at any time studied for vocational qualifications. Courses included drama, chocolate making, bricklaying, painting and decorating, maintenance skills, horticulture, cleaning, forklift truck operation, IT qualifications, peer mentoring and emotional resilience. Ofsted noted that vocational teachers were experienced, with up-to-date knowledge. Prisoners did not always attend for work punctually or in some cases at all. There were examples of inadequate staff performance leading to lost days of employment. The Board received one application about vocational education in April when an industry qualification could not be located.

**7.2.2** There were some encouraging moves from the establishment in respect of developing new employment opportunities. A textiles facility was opened in workshop one and electrical apparatus recycling was developed in workshop six as well as electrical loom wiring. Progress in both workshops was hampered by a lack of consistent attendees. The farms and gardens areas suffered as a result of staff absence. Opportunities to supply the kitchens with fresh produce were lost. The poultry unit had to be closed because of the restrictions of avian flu, as well as a

vermin infestation. The Board was pleased to see the development of bee keeping with several prisoners being given training in bee management from an outside apiary expert.

**7.2.3** Some prisoners made decisions not to attend work. One of the primary concerns prisoners had concerned the low level of pay. Complaints also concerned the time prisoners had to socialise and complete domestic tasks on their return from work. The Board would welcome a review of pay scales and the introduction of further incentive schemes to reward those who attend work regularly.



**Figure fifteen**

**% Attendance at purposeful activity March 22 to November 22**

### **7.3 OMU and Progression**

**7.3.1** There were a significant number of complaints to the prison and to the Board concerning lack of contact or support from the OMU. In part this reflected the lack of key working in guiding prisoners through the requirements of a sentence plan. However, there was a significant impact caused by prison offender managers (POMs) having high caseloads and so having to limit their contact with prisoners.

**7.3.2** The Board had concerns about the lack of availability of certain courses which were a requirement of sentence plans. In particular, those prisoners who had a history of violence were required to follow the Resolve course which was then subsequently replaced by the thinking skills programme (TSP). However, for high-risk prisoners TSP was not appropriate. The Board received a number of complaints from prisoners who were frustrated by their lack of progress as a result of this change.

**7.3.3** The Board commends OMU personnel in dealing with some very difficult and litigious prisoners throughout the reporting period.

### **7.4 Family contact**

**7.4. 1** Screened mail was usually delivered promptly, though there were some instances when personal mail suffered lengthy delays when it required translation as a consequence of any court restraining orders . A few prisoners were uncertain about mail and photocopying arrangements. HMP Guys Marsh has in-cell telephony and on each wing a telephone for prisoners was nearly always available. By August,



a change in service provider allowed social video calls for up to 45 prisoners a week. The Board received one application about a missed social video call. The prison provided a dedicated email address for families and significant others to ask about men newly transferred to HMP Guys Marsh.

**7.4.2** HMIP reported that ‘20% of respondents had had an in-person visit within the month before inspection and 26% a virtual visit.’ Online booking of visits began in June at the same time as visitor numbers were increased.

**7.4.3** Numbers for social visits offered on a wing basis during Covid restrictions were restricted. At the same time the full posting box indicated that visitors’ suggestions were not acted upon promptly and there was a delay in dates being set for family days though these had begun by May.

**7.4.4** Barnardo’s held a monthly virtual forum for friends and family, offering an opportunity to talk to others in similar circumstances. The prison responded to comments from these sessions with an information booklet and regular newsletter sent directly to families. In June, a new family engagement worker was appointed. Social media was well used by the family engagement lead. The Visitors centre, decorated with cartoon graphics, was outside the establishment. It was usually clean and warm, and had two vending machines.

**7.4.5** During social visits, access for visitors was not always prompt but search staff were professional and always friendly. They dealt with incidents calmly. Dogs were used on a regular basis. The shop, which had been missed after Covid restrictions eased, reopened in July.

**7.4.** Barnardo’s acted as the family provider until the autumn. In July, they began their own induction sessions for new arrivals explaining how support for families and significant others could help maintain ties. In September, they produced a clear, illustrated guide for children describing appropriately life in prison, prison activities and rules and how a child might feel about someone being in prison. Barnardo’s offered good quality toys, activities and voluntary staff in a child friendly area for which they had planned a limited refurbishment including better storage and improved flooring. They offered alternatives to parenting courses through projects such a crafting a memory box, a photo project and in-cell activity packs.

Barnardo’s workers commented that there seemed to be a variable response by officers in advising which aids such as walking sticks or an EpiPen could be kept by visitors and which should be retained by them for the duration of the visit. They also noted examples of care taken by staff to ensure full accessibility for visitors with mobility issues.

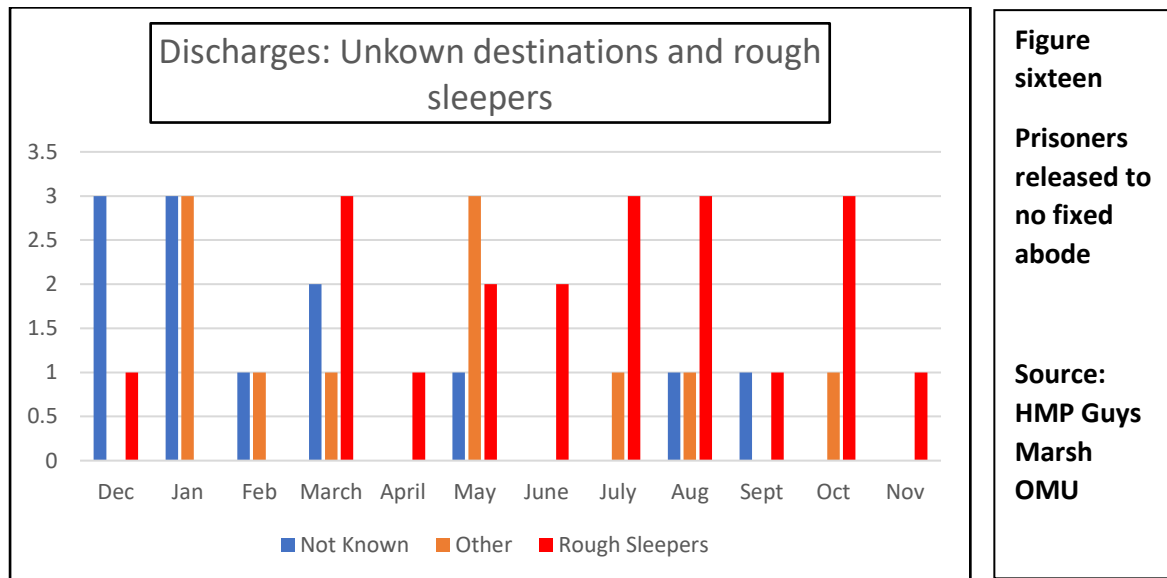
**7.4.8** In October Pact (the Prison Advice and Care Trust) took over family engagement services. At the time of writing this organisation was still settling in.

**7.4.9** Monthly family days were changed to wellbeing visits so as to be more inclusive of significant others, notably prisoners who did not receive visits, and disadvantaged groups, as well as families. They covered Father’s Day, a summer party, sports day, Halloween, and a new-born baby visit. At the wellbeing day in

November the Board noted a good atmosphere, well-chosen and supported children's activities, snacks and a pizza lunch. Staff involvement was limited.

## 7.5 Resettlement planning

**7.5.1** The Board continued to have concerns about the support offered to prisoners leaving the establishment. The number of prisoners rough sleeping (NFA) will only encourage the revolving door. There was an acute shortage of accommodation for prisoners, both locally and nationally, who had come to the end of their sentence and were not high risk.



Whilst acknowledging that the numbers of rough sleepers are not huge, when combined with those prisoners for whom no data exists, there is a problem in finding accommodation for low risk prisoners at the end of sentence.

**7.5.2** Since the demise of Catch 22, which was a support service contracted to provide a holistic resettlement service, in June 2021, the resettlement service became piecemeal and split between COMs, POMs and the reducing reoffending team within HMP Guys Marsh. Prisoners found this disconcerting and difficult to manage. COMs rarely engaged in the process until fairly close to release date, which made vulnerable prisoners anxious and they often blamed their POMs for a failure to secure accommodation and employment opportunities.

## 8. The work of the IMB

**8.1** The Board operated normally throughout the period, attending the prison in four weekly rotating teams. Monthly Board meetings were held in the establishment. The Board would like to acknowledge the excellent support of the IMB clerk as well as the courtesy and goodwill extended to its members by the Governor and his staff.

**8.2** The prison's daily report was received by all the members of the Board, as well as ACCT registers, SIM minutes, and information on releases and staffing allocation, via the secure cjsm system.

### 8.3

#### Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	12
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	9
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	9
Total number of visits to the establishment	321
Total number of segregation reviews attended	43

## Applications to the IMB

### A Section - Applications

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Code	Subject	Current reporting year	Previous reporting year
A	Accommodation including laundry, clothing, ablutions	8	2
B	Discipline including adjudications, IEP, sanctions	3	5
C	Equality	13	5
D	Purposeful Activity including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	12	4
E 1	Letters, visits, phones, public protection restrictions	27	11
E 2	Finance including pay, private monies, spends	21	10
F	Food and kitchens	6	5
G	Health including physical, mental, social care	13	22
H 1	Property within this establishment	19	4
H 2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	80	40
H 3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	12	12

I	Sentence management including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-categorisation	32	34
J	Staff/prisoner concerns including bullying	28	25
K	Transfers	11	10
L	Miscellaneous, including complaints system	31	27
	Total number of IMB applications	336	216



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