



Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Grendon

**For reporting year
1 January 2022 – 31 December 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 Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) is part of the United Kingdom's National Preventive Mechanism.

2. Description of the establishment

- 2.1 HMP Grendon was opened in 1962 as a category B prison and is designed to provide therapy for prisoners with antisocial personality disorders. Grendon has developed both a national and international reputation for its work.
- 2.2 There are a number of prisoners serving indeterminate sentences but most men are serving long determinate sentences. Serving prisoners apply for a place at Grendon to address their offending behaviour and psychological deficits. Many have personality disorders and addiction histories. The process of therapy requires considerable commitment with many men taking several

years to complete their therapy. The therapeutic regime is supported by a multidisciplinary group of staff.

- 2.3** Men are given responsibility within their therapeutic community (TC), for example, chairing the wing community meetings twice weekly. Small therapy groups are held on the other weekday mornings, and staff and residents alike are responsible to the communities for their actions.
- 2.4** The prison's current operational capacity is 183, although the roll for most of the year was around 160, while a fire safety project is delivered, involving the temporary loss of one TC.
- 2.5** F wing (TC plus facility for those with learning disabilities) has a capacity for 20 men.
- 2.6** Arriving residents remain on the assessment wing for between three and six months, with a regime similar to the regime on the TC wings.
- 2.7** Grendon is incorporated into the national offender personality disorder pathway programme.
- 2.8** The prison is jointly managed with Springhill, and a single IMB monitors both prisons. Although the two prisons share many services and staff, Springhill and Grendon operate as separate units and exist for quite different purposes.
- 2.9** The following health services are provided:
 - primary healthcare (Practice Plus Group, renamed from Care UK). Clinics include well-man, diabetes, asthma and immunisations
 - drug and alcohol recovery team (DART) (Inclusion)
 - podiatry and physiotherapy (Bucks MSK)
 - mental health services (Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health Trust)
 - dental (Time for Teeth)
 - audiology (Specsavers)
 - optician (Prisons Opticians Trust)
- 2.10** On-site education services are provided by Milton Keynes College (MKC).
- 2.11** Gov Facility Services Ltd manages the maintenance and facilities management services.

3. Executive summary

3.1 Background to the report

The prison left the national framework of Covid restrictions on 11 May and was able to deliver gradual improvements to all aspects of the regime. Covid continued to affect most wings but without the same level of disruption as the two previous years.

Directly and non-directly employed staffing levels have suffered this year mostly as a result of Covid, with effects felt particularly in education, healthcare, therapy and the business hub.

3.2 Main judgements

How safe is the prison?

Safety was maintained with low levels of assessment, care in custody and teamwork documents (ACCTs) being opened (4.2.3) and a low incidence of self-harm (4.2.2). The use of force remained low (4.4.1), as were the number of assaults and challenge support and intervention plans (CSIPs). Overall, safer custody intelligence reports (IRs) were reduced from the previous year (4.3.1). However, the threat or suspicion of drugs and phones increased (4.5.1 - 4.5.3) and this could be attributed to a loss of culture and ethos (4.5.4).

How fairly and humanely are prisoners treated?

The fire safety project continued all year, with one wing returned to the prison (5.1) after a delay of several months. The project is an ongoing disruption to both men and staff.

Night sanitation continues not to meet basic decency levels on too many occasions (see 5.1.2).

The cost of living increases are felt by men in canteen prices and mitigation steps are not keeping pace with inflation (5.1.3 and 7.2.1).

Staff prisoner relationships are generally excellent (see 5.3.1). The chaplaincy team has offered bereavement counselling in the absence of a specialist provider (5.5.5).

Complaints have reduced by 47% (5.7.1) which is encouraging. Property issues continue to dominate (5.8.1) and processes across the estate remain ineffective. The Board found evidence that some responses from staff needed improvement (5.7.2).

There were regular diversity and inclusion (D&I) meetings with wing representatives present. A broad range of activities was analysed for any out-of-range results across all protected characteristics (5.4.2). The discrimination incident report form (DIRF) process was greatly improved (5.4.3). Wings set up clubs for older men (5.4.7) and men put on some well-received cultural events (5.4.10). Diversity action plans for healthcare and therapy are still to be fully delivered (5.4.9 and 5.4.8).

How well are prisoners' health and wellbeing needs met?

A prison survey indicated that men found the overall quality of healthcare to be very or quite good (see 6.1.2). The Board, however, was unable effectively to monitor the provision of healthcare, due to insufficient reporting caused by staff sickness and shortages (see 6.1.2). Healthcare complaints increased significantly and the department struggled to make timely written responses (6.1.3). Communication issues with men will, the Board hopes, be improved with the appointment of a patient engagement lead (PEL) (see 6.1.7).

How well are prisoners progressed towards successful resettlement?

In spite of the prison holding men with long sentences still to serve, a survey found that 84% said that their experience at Grendon made them less likely to offend (see 7.1.4).

A full therapeutic regime was restored in May (7.1.1). Disruption from the pandemic was still being felt, with a loss of community culture on some wings and the fact that around 50% of men and some new staff were not familiar with a normal therapeutic environment. The culture improved in the last quarter, helped especially by the return of family, social and children's days (7.1.5).

Too many men spent too long out of therapy (OOT). This does not help their progression and their presence can be disruptive for those in therapy. Some of the delays for moving these men were due to parole holds, but a lack of single transports and suitable spaces in other prisons were the main factors (7.1.7).

At Grendon, 111 men have indeterminate sentences. Recent changes as a result of the root and branch review of the parole system are already impacting on some men's progress at review stage: as importantly, there is the hidden impact of loss of hope for other men facing an uncertain custodial future (7.3.1).

Resettlement services have yet to be fully developed both for the few men who are released and for others moving to non-therapeutic environments (see 7.5.3).

Numbers in education picked up by the year end (7.6.2) but provision suffered from staff shortages (7.6.6). By the end of the year, eight men were studying Open University courses (7.6.9).

3.3 Main areas for development

TO THE MINISTER

Is the Minister aware of the impact of decisions to override Parole Board recommendations both for the men and probation staff involved as well as the wider repercussions on the therapeutic communities (7.3.1)?

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

- The lack of availability to transport men out of therapy (OOT) needs to be addressed to avoid unnecessary delays and distress (4.4.1 and 7.1.7).
- Improvements to the delivery schedule of the ongoing fire and safety project, as well as improved handovers of completed wings, are necessary in order to reduce disruption and return the prison to capacity (5.1).
- Improvements to night sanitation from the fire safety project have yet to be evidenced and the Board continues to believe that the system does not meet decency and hygiene outcomes for prisoners (5.1.2).
- There appears to be no maximum response time for appeals against adjudications sent to the external assessment unit (5.2.3).
- There is insufficient budget for the prison to fund a fairer wage to help offset the increased costs that the men face in canteen and other purchases (7.2.1).

TO THE GOVERNOR

The Board looks forward to:

- Continued progress on rebuilding culture and ethos on the communities (7.1.3).
- Training on responses to complaints (5.7.2).
- Improved governance of healthcare data and outcomes (6.1.2) and overseeing delivery of health champions and improved communication with men (6.1.7).
- Delivery of staff training e.g. suicide and self-harm (SASH) (4.2.6).
- Reporting on response times to cell bells (4.2.4).
- The good work on D&I being sustained (5.4).
- The problem of men being pulled from education to attend therapy sessions (7.6.9).

3.4 Progress since the last report

- On rebuilding culture and ethos, progress has been made but more still needs to be done.
- Diversity and inclusion has had the benefit of a dedicated manager this year with some thorough analysis (5.4.2) and positive outcomes (see for example 5.4.3, 5.4.10).
- Analysis of response times to cell bells remains unavailable.

Evidence sections 4-7

4. Safety

4.1 Reception and induction

The majority of men arriving at Grendon live on the assessment wing. With the ongoing fire safety works, the wing operated this year as a single community. In December the wing roll was 29 and men are assessed for a minimum of three months (as opposed to six weeks during Covid). Throughout the year, however, a handful of men from the original community who had finished therapy (OOT) remained on the wing and for various reasons (7.1.7) had not progressed to other prisons. The wing experienced drugs, debt disruption and threats throughout the year (4.5.2), perhaps a combination of the deterioration in the community culture (7.1.3) and the disruptive influence of men OOT.

- 4.1.1 In an HMIP-style-questionnaire organised by the prison in October (referred to as HMIPSQ throughout this report), responses were predominantly positive to questions about reception in relation to safety and respect from staff. But 24% said that staff did not deal with problems they had on arrival: responses to a separate question on problems included a significant number who were feeling depressed. Fifty-seven percent said that their cell was very or quite clean, but 25% said their cell was quite dirty and 13% their cell was very dirty. Fifty-six percent did not get their numbers on their PIN within 24 hours. Processes have been adjusted in response.

4.2 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody (DIC)

- 4.2.1 There were no deaths in custody (DICs) in 2022. The Coroner's report on the DIC in 2019 was published in April 2022 with no recommendations. The Prison and Probation Ombudsman's report (published in May 2022) made six recommendations for Grendon, all of which were accepted and actions completed. These included chaplaincy access to NOMIS and information sharing, and processes for alerting wing staff to late return to cells while night-san is in operation.
- 4.2.2 Actual levels of self-harm were low at 28 (38 in 2021). IRs for self-harm were 35 (32 in 2021). There were two IRs concerning heightened risk of suicide.
- 4.2.3 **ACCTs:** Thirty-two were opened for the year (38 in 2021 and 60 in 2020). Monthly quality assurance checks on the documentation were thorough, with learning points provided to wing managers and case coordinators and reinforced in SASH training. Board members spent time with one individual who was on an ACCT for some months and were impressed with the staff member's relaxed but focussed questioning on a range of subjects potentially relevant for a review.
- 4.2.4 **Cell bells:** to questions in HMIPSQ about response times to cell bells, 60% said their call was answered within five minutes and 15% said it was not. Technical issues with reporting response times were not fully resolved by the year end. The Board reported on this last year and considers it an important safety check.

- 4.2.5 **Samaritans' phones:** Grendon does not have men trained as Listeners (there is potentially a conflict with therapy) but there is access to a direct phone line on all wings. There were, however, two instances in separate months when phones were unavailable when requested on one wing during the night. In the first instance, staff were unaware of mitigating solutions, and on the second, the phone was uncharged. Correcting procedures were subsequently put in place.
- 4.2.6 **SASH training:** on a night rota visit in November, the Board found that only three of the eight staff on duty had in-date SASH training. Training has been interrupted by Covid but needs to be accelerated and is being addressed.

4.3 Violence and violence reduction, self-isolation

- 4.3.1 Levels of violence remained very low, at four instances, and there was one assault on staff. IRs of threats to prisoners (especially in the period March-July) increased from 70 in 2021 to 94 and the prison's own assessment of violence was that it was 'tolerable' for five months whereas it was 'manageable' for all of 2021.

This could be attributed to an immature culture on several of the wings where, in some cases, 50% of residents had limited experience of living in a TC. There was the additional frustration of some men being unable to move on from Grendon (7.1.7).

The total number of safer custody IRs for the year was 351 against 407 in 2021.

CSIPs: 16 referrals were made and seven progressed. Safer custody developed quality assurance which identified issues regarding communication and the slow completion of plans and reviews. All CSIP paperwork is logged on NOMIS which the Board does not currently have the capacity to monitor.

From July, the safer custody meeting redefined its terms of reference and included an additional section called a safety information meeting (SIM) in order to focus on men vulnerable to withdrawing. The Board's observations are that meetings were not always multidisciplinary, and take place at the end of the month to review the previous month's statistics and cases, rather than the most recent and urgent. During the year, safer custody representatives from the wings started attending meetings again, after an absence of 18 months.

4.4 Use of force (UoF)

- 4.4.1 UoF remains at low levels with three incidents compared with five in 2021. One incident related directly to a man whose transfer was repeatedly cancelled.
- 4.4.2 The January and April meetings recorded low levels of body cameras being worn; this had improved by July.
- 4.4.3 Training in the use of rigid bar handcuffs and PAVA (pepper spray) started in September with the latter being rolled out in early 2023.

- 4.4.4 Across both Grendon and Springhill, 142 staff are required to be trained in basic control and restraint. In December, 148 (80%) of staff in both Grendon and Springhill were trained.

4.5 Preventing illicit items

- 4.5.1 **Drugs:** there were 12 finds for the year (12 in 2021). There were 150 IRs against 101 for the previous year. There were also two positives from suspicion testing. Compact drug testing (a voluntary compact) restarted on the wings in July. The body scanner was used (based on intelligence) 14 times with no positives.
- 4.5.2 In August, most of the reports of poor or inappropriate behaviour were on the assessment wing with suspected drug dealing (spice), together with associated debt, and weapons finds. A large quantity of MDMA pills was found on clothing sent in and there were finds of pregabalin on greetings cards on C wing.
- 4.5.3 **Phones:** there were four phone finds (two in 2021) and IRs increased by 110%. For several weeks in the spring, D wing only held wing specials (meetings held to discuss exceptional issues in the community) from April-July while the community tried to deal with suspected phone usage.
- 4.5.4 Although the figures for illicit items are considerably lower than in other category B prisons, the presence or suspicion of both phones and drugs across several wings disrupts therapy and is one indication of the need to rebuild the ethos and culture that had been eroded during the pandemic (see also 7.1.3).
- 4.5.5 **Key lock compromises:** these reduced to 59 from 76 in 2021 but any level represents a threat to safety and security.

5. Fair and humane treatment

- 5.1 **Accommodation:** the fire safety improvement project continues to contribute to a non-normal working and living environment for men and staff. Work on F wing was finally completed in June (this is the first and smallest of six wings to be completed) with work on other wings set to continue until Christmas 2023, although, on the basis of how long it took to complete one wing, this date seems likely to slip. Delays mean that for many men currently on the assessment wing, the move back to G wing (historically the assessment wing) will not be a return to their original wing but a move to a new wing, with the potential disruption that this entails.
- 5.1.1 The handover of F wing from the contractors was unsatisfactory: basic checks to ensure all equipment was in good working order had clearly not been carried out. These included defective night sanitation system, faulty showers, faulty cell bells, general alarm bells not tested in real time, and the Samaritans' phone sockets being covered up. The deep clean had to be

repeated. Issues were dealt with promptly and it is hoped that lessons were learned for future wing handovers.

- 5.1.2 **Night sanitation:** the Board has reported for several years that the system is not compatible with decency and hygiene. On the two hottest nights of the year in July, the system broke down on one landing on D wing, with no access to toilets or to drinking water for several hours. Although mitigation was put in place (unlocking one cell at a time, issuing water bottles and cell pots) responses to issues are reactive and do not provide a long-term solution to a dysfunctional system.
- 5.1.3 **Food:** price increases have meant that some items have been substituted, such as oven instead of oil fried chips, although oil was provided to the wing pods for roast potatoes at Christmas. Some items such as coffee were removed on cost grounds. Other costs are absorbed into overspends on budgets (e.g. the unit cost per egg at the end of the year was 13.5p, up from 7p six months earlier). The main disruption, however, in the last six months has been the non-delivery of items from suppliers which are already listed on menus: the kitchen has to make substitutions and the men are understandably annoyed.
- 5.1.4 Eighty-four percent of responses to HMIPSQ reported that the quality of food was either good or quite good (compared with 57% good and 37% reasonable from an HMIP survey in 2021). A focus group was recommended. The Board received no applications about food and there were only eight complaints.
- 5.1.5 In June, there was an issue with some wings having their dinner at 4pm instead of 4.45pm, with some men asking to leave early from education. This was corrected.
- 5.1.6 Comments from men on rotas and on food comments books are generally complimentary about the quality, but at the end of the year there were comments about smaller portions and a reduction in choices. Staff responses to written comments were either good on some wings or not recorded at all for the past eight months on other wings.
- 5.1.7 **Canteen:** for items that the men can purchase, canteen fulfilment moved back to HMP Bullingdon, which improved reliability. Prices, however, increased e.g. a tin of curry in December cost £2.49, up from £1.89 in September - a 32% increase.
- 5.1.8 **Catalogue ordering:** due to staff shortages in administration, the processing of orders was reduced in October from four days a week to two.

5.2 Segregation, special accommodation

- 5.2.1 There is no segregation in Grendon. The temporary transfer of men from Springhill to Grendon was very limited for the year, although one man transferred in 2021 was still in Grendon at the year end. He had particular issues and his mental health and physical needs were well cared for by staff.

His progression was blocked by a combination of the parole window and the lack of a suitable place in another prison.

5.2.2 **Adjudications:** there were 42 men charged (26 in 2021), of which 18 cases were proven. The increase in the number of men charged is perhaps attributable to the improved time out of cell but numbers are still low.

5.2.3 For adjudication appeals that are sent to an external case assessment team, there appears to be no timeline for how long it will take for a ruling to be returned. One resident's appeal was sent out on 17 May with a response received on 3 August.

5.3 Staff-prisoner relationships

5.3.1 In the HMIPSQ, 90% said they could turn to staff in a time of need. Eighty-two percent said they could talk to managers, governors and psychologists. Ninety-two percent said staff treated them with respect. Apart from being some of the highest scores, these responses illustrate the excellent relationships between staff and men. There were seven complaints against staff this year (13 in 2021, and 10 in 2020).

5.3.2 In February, Board members spoke to a man who was part of an interview panel for a new wing facilitator. This sort of engagement between staff and prisoners is not unusual in a therapeutic community.

5.4 Equality and diversity

5.4.1 There was a return to more regular scrutiny of the monitoring of D&I issues, with meetings held every other month. Meetings were well attended by governors and staff from different sectors of the prison as well as by prisoner representatives.

5.4.2 Analysis focused on out-of-range statistics for protected characteristics, but it was acknowledged that some statistics are often misleading or hard to interpret when low numbers are involved, or when individuals make multiple complaints. For example, in May a high proportion of complaints came from Muslim prisoners, but on investigation three of the complaints were from the same prisoner and two of them related to the same issue; no obvious pattern could be detected and the consensus at the meeting was that there was no cause for concern.

5.4.3 **DIRFs:** there were 29 for the year (18 in 2021). Last year the Board reported on significant delays in response times which improved this year, with virtually all responses on or before the due date. This was no doubt due to improved processes and a dedicated D&I manager. Only one DIRF was upheld as discriminatory.

There was a particular increase in DIRFs from black, Asian and minority ethnic men about race issues but an investigation did not find any discrimination. The consensus among prisoner representatives was that prisoners now have greater confidence in the DIRF process.

5.4.4 **Transgender prisoners:** a local guidance strategy for transgender prisoners was created and made accessible across all wings following acceptance that the transfer of one transgender prisoner had been poorly handled.

5.4.5 **Work:** analysis indicates that there were no black, Asian and minority ethnic men working as orderlies or as red bands, despite representing 19% of the population. An investigation is ongoing.

5.4.6 **Disabled access:** the visits hall is on split levels; on two occasions, inappropriate allocation of places involving visitors in wheelchairs upset the men and visitors involved. Processes and training were adapted.

There are no suitably adapted showers on A,B,C, and D wings; this makes it very difficult to support disabled prisoners who might apply to Grendon but whose application might be refused due to the lack of these facilities.

5.4.7 **Age:** A 50+ club has been running since October with each wing hosting a monthly informal forum to discuss relevant issues.

5.4.8 **Therapy:** following a forum to discuss how diversity issues are handled, the following were identified:

- Therapy is not sufficiently culturally aware and sensitive.
- Therapy targets ought to reflect cultural awareness and needs.
- Regime culture and values lack diversity.
- Need to ensure that the assessment process is responsive to the needs of under-represented groups.

Therapy training for new staff now includes a diversity element, and wing therapists are encouraged to include a formulation of needs around men's backgrounds in their reports.

5.4.9 The healthcare department drew up an equalities plan in 2021 for covering its services, but this has yet to be delivered or monitored through the D&I meeting.

5.4.10 **Cultural events:** Board members heard positive feedback from men about events, including a road show where each wing hosted a group of men who talked about how their culture had impacted on them in this country. For the first time a Roma pride and awareness event took place in June and was well attended.

5.4.11 The position of the dedicated D&I manager was not refilled after the 12-month funding period but ongoing responsibility will be part of a new senior manager's role.

5.5 Faith and pastoral support

5.5.1 The prison moved out of national restrictions in May, which eased previous restrictions on communal worship across wings. Prior to this, Muslim prayers were held on each wing on a rota, which meant that each wing had to wait between three and five weeks for its turn depending on how many wings were

in quarantine. Bible study sessions for Christians have been organised on the same basis.

- 5.5.2 A managing chaplain was appointed in June. For a period, there was only one imam covering both Grendon and Springhill who was therefore only able to attend every other week in Grendon.
- 5.5.3 By the summer, the majority of faith groups had chaplains visiting the prison although a Rastafarian chaplain still has to be recruited for the six men who identify as Rastafarians and the Buddhist chaplain was only able to meet the one practising man online.
- 5.5.4 A session of unsupervised prayer resulted in a policy review where such meetings were allowed with provisions that the leader (a prisoner) was rotated and that the gathering could still be supervised by staff without interruption.
- 5.5.5 The chaplaincy has helped with bereavement counselling, but with only one chaplain trained to do so. A specialist provider, Cruse, is due to start visiting in the new year.

5.6 Incentives scheme

- 5.6.1 Virtually all men are on enhanced status and each community operates its own constitution, which all community members sign up to. Issues of breaking boundaries are dealt with by the community in small groups or, in serious cases, by the community taking a 'commitment vote' on an individual, which can result in them leaving Grendon.

5.7 Complaints

Selected complaints	2022	2021	2020	2019
Property	90	87	110	103
Recategorisation	14	32	49	27
Confidential access	9	57	31	14
Data breach	1	26	0	0
Canteen	10	14	20	55
Catalogue	0	20	10	49
Transfers	16	30	8	12
Mail	4	9	25	8
Other	169	320	345	262
Total of all complaints	313	595	598	530

- 5.7.1 There was a 47% reduction this year in the number of complaints, which is welcome and is indicative of the improved regime post Covid. Complaints about recategorisation decisions and transfers were down, although for the former the Board found some evidence of poor process and delays. Property accounted for nearly a third of all complaints. The Board was able to monitor confidential access complaints and responses and found some evidence of delays, especially if the complaint was not deemed to be confidential and was returned to the business hub to be treated as a Comp1. Some complaints were 'closed' on the business hub database when responses were in fact only interim; this mostly applied to complaints passed to other prisons.

- 5.7.2 The Board sampled 93 complaints through the year and RAG rated the responses for timeliness, tone and for a problem-solving approach. The process was not scientific: results were 47% green, 41% orange, 12% red. Although senior management do their own sampling and quality assurance, there is clearly more room for improvement.
- 5.7.3 In response to an HMIPSQ question – ‘are complaints usually dealt with fairly?’ – 50% said yes and 27% said no. And to the question ‘are complaints usually dealt with in 7 days?’, 33% answered yes and 36% said no, indicating that response times are below expectations, confirming the Board’s findings.

5.8 Property

- 5.8.1 Complaints about property continue to be the highest category. Fifty-five complaints (18% of the total) were received or sent from other prisons and property was the main issue. The Board reported last year about a failed property transfer from Bullingdon which that prison had acknowledged as a non-delivery by the courier in September 2021. The man was returned to Bullingdon in April 2022, with reimbursement still outstanding. The Board monitored several cases where neither the IMB nor the PPO should have been involved if only processes had been followed, and queries promptly dealt with. The issue of how different prisons interpret national rules on hard drives for Xboxes continues to cause frustration.

6. Health and wellbeing

6.1 Healthcare: general

- 6.1.1 In July, the current health provider, Practice Plus Group, won the health contract for another seven years.
- 6.1.2 From the HMIPSQ in October, 71% of respondents said the overall quality of services was very or quite good compared with 71% good, 22% bad in the HMIP survey of 2021 at Grendon. However, due to staff sickness and vacancies in healthcare, the Board and prison management had very limited access to data to assess the provision of healthcare covering areas such as: performance of subcontracted clinics, DNAs (did not attend) for appointments, breaches of waiting lists and analysis of complaints. The local delivery quality board (LDQB) meeting was often cancelled and minutes from meetings, if recorded, were not always circulated.
- 6.1.3 **Complaints:** healthcare makes a distinction between ‘concerns’ and ‘complaints’. The number of concerns is unknown and there were 49 complaints for the year (38 concerns and 14 complaints in 2021). Some of these were multiple complaints from the same men. The main impact of staff shortages and sickness was either delayed or no written responses to healthcare complaints. The issue was also raised by men at inter-wing meetings. By October, with continuing staff shortages, the number of unanswered complaints had reached approximately 20, and healthcare staff had to call on regional support to help clear the backlog.

- 6.1.4 Some men also made healthcare complaints through the prison complaint system, but these were automatically rerouted to healthcare which further added to late responses. One man made complaints on a Comp1, 1A, Comp2 as well as healthcare, the PPO and the ICO about a series of errors involving multiple agencies in relation to his Covid tests and about being held on the isolation unit for 21 days in 2021. Responses (and particularly written responses) took far too long. The issue of confusion between prison and healthcare complaints processes was raised by the Board in 2021 but clearly needs to be revisited.
- 6.1.5 There were 13 applications to the Board about healthcare (39% of the total applications received this year) compared with four in 2021 (20% of the total) and most of these related to lack of responses to healthcare complaints.
- 6.1.6 Unlike prison complaints (where the PPO can be approached and, if appropriate, make recommendations) healthcare complaints can involve NHS England and/or NHS Complaints Advocacy Service. In the above situation, the involvement of PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service) might well have resolved the situation at an earlier stage.
- 6.1.7 Some of the incidents and poor outcomes for some men described in this report point to a weakness in administration and poor communication channels between staff and patients. The Board hopes that the appointment of a patient engagement lead (PEL) will improve outcomes.
- 6.1.8 **Promoting Health:** three health champions were planned but were still waiting to be trained by the year end. Their role will be to promote healthier lifestyle (including blood pressure testing and weight monitoring) and signposting support. They will be paid positions.

Healthcare representatives' meetings did not take place all year (although they were authorised from April) and issues such as the provision of a hearing loop in F wing and a hearing aid for a man might have been progressed more speedily. Both health champions and wing reps will be managed by the new PEL.

6.2 Physical healthcare

- 6.2.1 **Waiting lists for subcontracted care:** in December, these were at reasonable levels except for podiatry, which had 20 men waiting over 12 weeks.
- 6.2.2 **Secondary care:** there were two incidents with hospital escorts, with one man sent to the wrong hospital and the wrong man with the same name mistakenly sent to hospital. Both men missed their appointments, which were rebooked without any serious health impacts. The Board reported on a similar incident in 2020 and processes appear not to have been embedded, which is of concern.

- 6.2.3 One man approached the Board about a hospital visit in April and the prescription from that visit was not delivered until August. This highlighted a process issue for delivering specialist medication, especially when prescribed during outpatient appointments, which has now been addressed.
- 6.2.4 **Covid/Flu:** throughout the year, there were Covid outbreaks across the wings, in some cases with nearly all men testing positive. In February, 17 of the 21 positive cases on the assessment wing were men who had been triple vaccinated. The prison established control measures (including access to gym, religious services and education) which were effective in containing infections to each wing. Men who tested negative were able to continue with visits.

The roll-out of the winter vaccine was not available until the last week before Christmas, which was not in line with access in the community. All eligible men were offered vaccines and 84% were vaccinated for Covid. For flu, 81% of eligible men were vaccinated by the year end.

- 6.2.5 **GP services:** progress has been made to develop links between prison GPs and community GP records with good buy-in from residents. This will also improve the sharing of information between prisons.

6.3 Mental healthcare

- 6.3.1 For both the HMIPSQ in October and the HMIP survey in 2021, results were comparable, with 47% and 50% of respondents saying they had mental health problems. In October, 33% said their mental health had got better since their arrival at Grendon (24% said it had got worse) and 38% had been helped with their mental health (28% had not been helped). Any actions as a result of these responses has yet to be formulated by healthcare.

6.4 Social care

- 6.4.1 There were 15 referrals for the year. All referrals are coordinated through safer custody, but there were communication issues internally as well as with coordination with Buckinghamshire County Council, which delivers assessments and a report with recommendations where appropriate.
- 6.4.2 The Board monitored the length of time from initial referral date to delivery of a social care report. Two of the reports in the first three months took over 70 days, but this improved in the second half of the year to four weeks for an appointment, with the receipt of a report varying from three days to three to four weeks.
- 6.4.3 On a rota visit in June, one man said he had asked for and received a special chair to help address his physical disability. He was full of praise for the support he had received from prison staff and the speed with which his problems had been addressed. More recently, there have been issues with getting some equipment recommended in reports, specifically for men with back problems and needing bed boards, as these requests have been delayed by health and safety and security concerns.

- 6.4.4 A memorandum of understanding between the council and the prison (including details about funding for any specific pieces of equipment) has yet to be agreed but there are now more regular meetings with the council. Healthcare and safer custody meet monthly to improve the coordination of referrals.

6.5 Exercise, time out of cell, gym

- 6.5.1 Gym sessions were one of the first activities to be expanded in May, allowing more men per session and access to all equipment, including free weights. Sessions remained community based. In September, 54% of men reported going to the gym twice a week or more and 11% once a week (HMIPSQ).
- 6.5.2 Men were positive about the new equipment delivered last year. Six men participated in this year's Isle of Wight challenge - a 70 mile run, cycle, row, and ski all done on gym equipment.
- 6.5.3 External gym equipment is due to be installed in the community gardens and the main exercise area early in 2023.
- 6.5.4 In May, the unlock time was 8.15am and lock-up moved from 5pm to 7pm.

6.6 Drug rehabilitation

- 6.6.1 DART's caseload averaged 30 men per month. Surprisingly perhaps, alcohol was consistently the substance of choice throughout the year. In the HMIPSQ, 16% said they had an alcohol problem when they arrived at Grendon and 18% a problem with drugs. Thirteen percent of men with alcohol issues and 20% of men with drug issues said that they had been helped with their problem at Grendon.
- 6.6.2 DART held relapse prevention programmes in Easter and summer breaks for six and seven men respectively.
- 6.6.3 Acupuncture is proven to help manage cravings, reduce anxiety and promote better sleep; group sessions for 10 men restarted in October.

6.7 Soft skills

- 6.7.1 An art gallery opened in August. In September, men and MA students from the University of Wolverhampton mounted an exhibition on the theme 'from night to day'. One man had only started drawing during lockdown; his moth drawings were very impressive and had already been displayed at the Icon Gallery in Birmingham. There is also a workshop for men to work with the artist in residence, with space for 10 men working two sessions per week.
- 6.7.2 A resident on D wing proposed a vintage clothes bank, which involved men in Grendon donating clothing to men in HMP Springhill prior to their release. Men were able to replace what they had donated. Donations were generous but take-up from Springhill has so far been minimal.

7. Progression and resettlement

7.1 Therapy

- 7.1.1 Therapy sessions, including the two community meetings on each wing, resumed in May. They are a central component of the work at Grendon. With restrictions lifted, the number of group sessions increased from the previous year, with delivery of 82% against numbers planned. The shortfall resulted from a combination of the regime on wings being curtailed due to staff sickness, Covid outbreaks and sessions being cancelled due to wing specials (see 4.5.3). Art and psychodrama delivered 93% of their planned therapy sessions.
- 7.1.2 As part of its inclusion in the national offending behaviour programme, the prison has a target of 66 therapy completions for the 12 months from April 2022. By the end of December, there had been 45 completions, with some shortfall for the year anticipated due to staff absences.
- 7.1.3 Last year, following the pandemic disruption, the Board commented on the need for 'rebuilding the culture and the sense of collective responsibility in the communities'. This has continued to be a challenge. Although access to therapy had returned to pre-pandemic levels by May, many men and staff were unfamiliar with a normal regime and there were fewer culture carriers on the communities. For instance, in the past, resistance by a wing to accept a man because of his offence would have been worked through the community therapeutically, whereas this year such an event was met with threats of violence. Phone issues on one wing resulted in several months of wing specials with all group work suspended. In February, some men reported feeling shut down by other men who were involved in illicit activities but who appeared to be unchallengeable.
- 7.1.4 Two senior staff members were tasked with a strategy to redevelop a therapeutic ethos and culture, including forums and consultations. In the last quarter of the year the Board monitored some positive indications of a change in culture. The Board restarted monitoring community meetings after an absence of two years and found good evidence of reflection on behaviour and learning on the assessment wing. On other wings, members commented on positive staff-resident relationships, and in one meeting challenging issues were discussed with extensive and positive contributions from men. Anecdotal conversations with Board members included comments that Grendon is 'a good place but hard work confronting yourself and your offending' and, 'people care about you here'. One man explained that the pandemic had posed a personal challenge which he successfully dealt with and had strengthened his belief that his future is much more secure. Another said that lockdowns had helped him focus on making plans for after his release and gave him the opportunity to work out a detailed business plan. In the HMIPSQ, 84% of respondents said that their experience at Grendon made them less likely to reoffend, with 5% more likely to offend.
- 7.1.5 From September, events such as social, family and children's days were reinstated after an absence of two years, and these are important for reinforcing a sense of community. Board members attended a family day on D

wing where there was a positive buzz and men commented that the day was a really good opportunity for them to show their families where they were living, and also for the families to understand the purpose of a therapeutic community.

7.1.6 In the Board's opinion, HMPPS's instruction to stop referring to prisoners as 'residents' runs counter to the essence of a TC. Outcomes from such incremental changes are hard to monitor.

7.1.7 **Out of therapy (OOT):** on a monthly average, there were 20 men OOT, including men who had completed therapy and those waiting to be transferred out before completing therapy. On average each month, 13 of these men had been OOT for over three months. One man had been OOT for three years. The main reasons for delays were men being in a parole window, a lack of transport for either single or multiple transfers, and the lack of available spaces in either training or resettlement prisons. Delays to transfers are disruptive to communities and for individuals, who do not progress in any meaningful activity while they are OOT. One of the instances of the use of force in the year was a result of one man's frustration with his transfer being constantly cancelled. It also means that spaces are blocked for new arrivals.

7.1.8 Transfers:

Type of transfers out of Grendon	2022	2021	2020
Progressive	11	31	32
Release/conditional release	5	1	0
Own request	9	13	9
Returned to sending prison	4	4	2
Security issues	3	2	3
Voted out	5	0	0
Unsuitable for therapy	6	5	0
Other reasons	22	6	21
Total	65	62	67

Although year on year comparisons are not that instructive when each individual is on his own therapeutic journey, it is interesting to note that progressive and release transfers totalled 16 compared with 32 for 2021, reflecting perhaps the difficulties noted in 7.1.7. Twenty-six percent of all transfers were from the assessment wing.

7.2 Work

7.2.1 At Grendon, therapy is the main 'work' and opportunities for additional work are restricted to education and wing-based jobs. Men are not immune from increases in the cost of living with price rises on canteen items and the facilities list. Wages are set locally by the Governor, who was unable to implement a weekly pay increase of 50p due to budgetary constraints. An increase in the transfer allowance from private to spends accounts from £30 to £33 was, however, implemented.

7.2.2 There is limited vocational work on offer: as many men have more than 10 years of their sentence left to serve, it is hard to know what vocational work

would be appropriate on these timescales. One man said that Grendon had given him the time and space to focus on his own issues which was not possible in all the other prisons he had been in. In October, 22% of men found it 'difficult' to access vocational skills, 19% 'easy' and 34% 'don't know' (HMIPSQ).

7.3 Offender management, progression

- 7.3.1 **Parole Board changes:** following the root and branch review, two men in one week in October (both on indeterminate sentences and 16 years over their tariff) had their recategorisation to open conditions blocked. In December, there were 111 men (66% of the total) with a life or IPP sentence. For men on these sentences, there is now an even greater sense of loss of hope about their future. Staff in the offender management unit (OMU) feel their work is under-valued in such cases.
- 7.3.2 In November, due to ongoing staff shortages (two probation officers and one member of administrative staff), the OMU had to restrict the drop-in sessions on each wing and rely on applications, with a one-week lead time for a response. The assessment wing has a monthly drop-in session.
- 7.3.3 The number of complaints about recategorisation processes fell compared with the previous year (5.7.1). At a wing meeting in May, men said that therapy was playing too big a role in decisions, and the Board understands that missed therapy targets should not, on their own, be grounds for a refusal to consider a recategorisation.

7.4 Family contact

- 7.4.1 Family contact is an area that Grendon does very well. Getting back to pre-Covid activities took time. Physical contact at the start and end of a visit was allowed from February, but all visitors were still required to provide a negative lateral flow test. The number of visits was increased in April and refreshment bags were available. Visits were increased to two hours and in the summer months, and the play and garden areas were reopened. Fifty-three men had 158 visitors (including 38 children) in April. In October, 101 men had 166 visitors (including 50 children).
- 7.4.2 Family and social days restarted in September, and there was a children's day in October for eight children together with the parents and relatives of six men. One family was very positive about the day and staff, and commented that 'nothing like this happens in any other prison'.
- 7.4.3 Grendon is a national resource and takes men whose homes are spread across the country. It is not surprising, therefore, that 45% of men said their family found it 'quite/very difficult' to get to the prison (HMIPSQ).
- 7.4.4 From the same survey, 48% said they had not seen loved ones in the last month. This could be connected to the 56 men (34% of the roll) who do not receive any form of visits. The Prison Advice and Care Trust (Pact) left leaflets on wings with signposting options. By the year end, 39 men were not receiving visits. There are four active Official Prison Visitors.

- 7.4.5 The prison conducted its own visits' survey in the summer with 36 responses from visitors. Sixty-four percent said it was always easy to book visits and 66% said that the centre is relaxed and inviting. Eighty-six percent said that they felt they were treated like a human being. Suggestions included more disabled facilities. Comments included:
- 'giving the men time to run and play with their children lets them be a dad – priceless'.
 - 'relaxed atmosphere, summer outdoor visits, prisoners allowed to shop at the canteen'.
 - 'staff are happy'.
- 7.4.6 Social video calls were popular throughout the year, and a positive outcome from Covid at no cost to men or their families.
- 7.4.7 **In-cell telephony:** this is planned for 2023 and will be a welcome addition to family contact, especially for early evenings.

7.5 Resettlement planning

- 7.5.1 Most men who leave Grendon are returned to another prison which could include a psychologically informed planned environment (PIPE). This year, five men were sent to open conditions and five were released.
- 7.5.2 A research study on men released to neighbouring HMP Springhill (an open prison) found that men saw the transfer 'as an opportunity to test and embed practices prior to release'. However, it also added that 'the mainstream and non-therapeutic milieu, culture and population of the open prison was found to be particularly challenging for [Grendon] graduates to acclimatise to'. The research highlighted the importance of the support men receive from their new prison offender manager (POM) and their personal officer, including contact prior to transfer, and the potential for peer support from men already transferred.
- 7.5.3 Despite some initiatives such as a dial-in with the TC unit in HMP Warren Hill, resettlement and specifically the 'endings process', both for men due to be released and those who have finished therapy, has yet to be developed across all the wing communities. In June, the Board noted that two men looking for transfers which were fully supported by their POM were struggling to make a transfer. One man had been OOT for two years and both men had very little purposeful activity on the wing.
- 7.5.4 **Banking:** for the very few men who are released from Grendon, Barclays has withdrawn this facility. HSBC is now able to offer a service and resettlement services will help men to complete applications, although this support will need to be resourced.
- 7.5.5 There are ongoing discussions about creating separate accommodation (possibly the 10 empty cells above healthcare) for men prior to their transfer.

7.6 Education, library

- 7.6.1 Numbers attending education remained low due to the reduced roll and continuing staff shortages. Prior to moving out of restrictions in May,

education provision was still wing-based and men did not have the benefit of mixed wings or classes.

- 7.6.2 However, by December enrolment across all courses was 20% higher in the months from April onwards compared to the same period last year, with the annual figures continuing to record impressive success rates.

All courses April – March	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20
Starters	106	95	252
Completed	94	97	211
Achieved	90	95	200
Success overall	96%	98%	95%

- 7.6.3 The number of education courses increased on the previous year with the following offered:

- English (Entry Level, Level 1, Level 2)
- Maths (Entry Level, Level 1, Level 2)
- ICT (Level 1 to Level 3)
- Business (Level 1 to Level 2)
- Mentoring (Level 1 to Level 2)
- Award for Learning Support Practitioners (Level 2)
- Award in Preparing to Support Learning (Level 3)

- 7.6.4 Priority is given to basic literacy, numeracy and IT skills, rightly so given the need: figures for the 45 new arrivals from April to November showed that 26% had literacy levels at entry level 3 or below (equivalent to ages 9-11); numeracy scores were worse with 37% at entry level 3 or below.

- 7.6.5 Delivery has been adversely affected this year by staff shortages caused by sickness (mostly Covid-related) and by ongoing vacancies: in October, three out of eight posts were vacant. For a number of months, the business delivery course had no tutor, though a replacement was appointed to start in February 2023. Delivery was also affected by infrastructure issues, including student toilets, which were non-operational for nine months, and the non-arrival of IT equipment, which meant that staff IT reports could not be synchronised to the new network for three months in the second half of the year.

- 7.6.6 Despite these problems, over 90% of those who responded to MKC surveys said they were satisfied with the courses they had completed, and this was confirmed by discussions on rota visits. On a November rota, two recent arrivals were enthusiastic about the basic courses and said they would use the qualifications as stepping-stones to apply to study for higher level college courses.

- 7.6.7 Board members heard criticism that not enough time is allocated to education (extending course times to early evening is repeatedly suggested). It was not uncommon for learners to be past the end date for their courses which happens when attendance at education coincides with activities such as art and music therapy and wing specials. Some of these are structural issues which the Governor plans to address.

- 7.6.8 **Vocational courses:** although many men would like to do more practical work (see also 7.2.1), setting up more vocational as opposed to academic classroom-based teaching remains a constant challenge of where best to direct resources, as the majority of men have several more years to serve before release.
- 7.6.9 **Distance learning:** an open day in August for the Open University was attended by 25 men. In December, eight were enrolled (compared with five last year) with a further five due to start in February 2023.
- 7.6.10 **Library:** as the regime became more flexible through the year, membership increased from 60% of the roll in July to 97% in November. Access is good and 59% of men attend twice a week or more and 39% once a week (HMIPSQ).
- 7.6.11 In June, loans (mostly books) from the library totalled 900, considerably down on the same month in 2019 when loans stood at 1,740. However, by December, loan numbers had risen to around 2,000 of which 50% were books, as opposed to DVD loans.
- 7.6.12 A reading club started in late December to replace the virtual club and there are plans for a separate club for men with learning difficulties.
- 7.6.13 **National Literacy Trust:** men are offered a free loan of a DVD if they write a review of books donated by the trust.
- 7.6.14 The Shannon Trust provides a peer-to-peer reading scheme, and by December one mentor was supporting five learners. With current literacy and numeracy rates (7.6.5) this is tapping into a largely unmet need.
- 7.6.15 The library does not keep hard copies of Prison Service Instructions but is able to supply them on request.

8. The work of the IMB

Except when individual wings had restricted access due to Covid outbreaks, the Board maintained a full year of weekly rota visits and covered prison meetings, although with the introduction of Teams meetings for staff, the Board accessed some meetings remotely.

Two Board members resigned and one new member was appointed in April and was able to commit to an accelerated training programme. Current numbers are five and a regional recruitment campaign was launched in December.

Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	14
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	6
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	5
Total number of visits to the establishment	125
Total number of shifts on the 0800 telephone line	0
Total number of segregation reviews attended	N/A

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

Code	Subject	Current reporting year	Previous reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	3	6
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives scheme, sanctions	2	0
C	Equality	0	1
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	0	0
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection restrictions	1	1
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	0	1
F	Food and kitchens	0	0
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	13	4
H1	Property within this establishment	0	1
H2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	2	0
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	2	0
I	Sentence management, including home detention curfew, release on temporary licence, parole, release dates, recategorisation	1	0
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	0	3
K	Transfers	6	1
L	Miscellaneous, including complaints system	3	2
	Total number of applications	33	20



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