



Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Winchester

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

2. Description of the establishment

His Majesty's Prison/Young Offender Institution (HMP/YOI) Winchester is a complex all-male reception and resettlement (local) prison operating within the South Central group of prisons. Approximately 23% of the prisoners are young adults aged between 18 and 25. The prison serves the criminal courts of Aldershot, Basingstoke, Bournemouth, Portsmouth, Salisbury, Southampton and Winchester and functions as a local and a resettlement prison.

The main fabric of the prison was built in 1846 in a radial design whereby wings emanate from a central area. The prisoners are either on remand, charged, sentenced, or awaiting sentence. During April 2023 the prison reported an operational capacity of 678.¹

¹ Figures included in this report are local management information. They reflect the prison's position at the time of reporting, but may be subject to change following further validation and therefore may not always tally with Official Statistics later published by the Ministry of Justice.

In a separate block from the main building, 120 (129 operational capacity) category C prisoners are accommodated in two resettlement units, West Hill and the Hearn. These units are adjacent to but separate from the main prison. While the prison is designated for category B prisoners it holds B and C category prisoners on the four main wings. The lower ground floor of D-Wing temporarily houses the care and separation unit (CSU) until a purpose-built facility is completed.

A healthcare unit (HCU) is also situated on the prison complex, accommodating 17 beds in a separate unit from the wings. E-Wing houses administrative services, the Governor's and other offices, the chapel and the control room.

3. Key points

3.1 Main findings

HMP Winchester continues to make steady progress as work to improve delivery has been led by a determined senior leadership team, supported by the highest level of staffing for many years. While the poor physical environment and endemic challenges around the prison population mean that consistently good standards remain hard to achieve, the effort required and the resulting performance should not be underestimated.

Safety

- The total number of self-harm incidents decreased overall, but there has been an increase in the number of prisoners who repeatedly self-harm.
- Prisoner assaults on staff have reduced, but prisoner assaults on other prisoners have increased. Staff use of force has decreased by 17% over the previous year.
- Hooch (illegal alcoholic drink) is being used instead of other drugs, pointing to reduced availability of those drugs in the prison.

Fair and humane treatment

- Significant issues and defects with the fabric of the buildings are affecting the accommodation and the overall operation of the prison.
- Confidence and competence have been growing amongst staff but still have a way to go. Officers have been observed adopting a more coaching, friendly and informal style, developing relationships with individuals. The IMB observations suggest that prison disorder has been reduced.
- The Board did not see any significant improvement in the handling and management of prisoner property, either on transfer between establishments or within the prison itself.

Health and wellbeing

- Despite significant pressures on Healthcare as a result of Covid and post-Covid rebuilding of staffing, the services offered to prisoners were similar to or better than they would have experienced on the outside.
- Efforts have been made to alleviate the issues associated with the escorting of prisoners in a timely fashion to attend internal and external medical consultancy appointments with the aim of improving attendance figures.

- Over half of prisoners with a disability at Winchester also have mental health issues.

Progression and resettlement

- As of January 2023, there were 295 work or education placements available to prisoners, which is too low for the prison's population.
- Support for prisoners to find housing on release is an ongoing concern as its lack impacts health, safety and the chance of rehabilitation to avoid reoffending.
- Family services provided by Spurgeons have been expanded both in terms of staff and service offerings making more help available to prisoners.

3.2 Main areas for development

TO THE MINISTER

- What support can be provided to help remand prisoners with release planning as they are not eligible for probation services?
- Given the issues associated with the Victorian infrastructure of the prison, what alternative provisions are being considered for the increasing numbers of elderly and disabled prisoners?

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

- When will the much-delayed construction of the new CSU restart?
- When will the finance be approved for the modernised CCTV system and when will the necessary cameras, connectivity and software be installed?
- What is the timetable for repairing/replacing defective/dilapidated fabric and when will the required finances be approved?

TO THE GOVERNOR

- When will key-working be fully up and running?
- What is the plan to improve the service to resettle prisoners?

3.3 Response to last report

Issue raised	Response given	Progress
Minister 1. What measures can the minister outline to improve staff recruitment, motivation and retention? 2. What steps are being taken to ensure the recent positive trend in improvements in safety are maintained?	1. A number of incentive schemes have been implemented. 2. A number of measures have been initiated, among them a local safety strategy including data analysis to inform meaningful action.	1. The situation is much improved with staff numbers at or above budgeted levels. 2. Improvements have been seen in prisoner on staff violence, but prisoner on prisoner violence remains a significant issue.
Prison Service 1. What is the plan to rectify the overcrowding issue? 2. When will the Prison Service supply the funds to install the modern, integrated equipment to rectify inconsistent provision of CCTV? 3. What are the plans for stopping prisoners being locked behind their cell doors for over 22 hours per day? 4. What are the plans for resolving the issues related to an outdated fabric?	1. Two prisoners to a cell continues to be necessary in order to accommodate all those committed by the courts. 2. A £1.1 million project to replace the CCTV site-wide has received financial approval for implementation 2023-24. 3. A range of activities and facilities are available to prisoners on the main location. 4. A number of projects to improve the fabric (boilers, showers, fire safety) have been or are being delivered.	1. With high pressures on prisoner numbers there is no reduction in overcrowding. 2. No lasting improvement due to implementation still at least 12 months out. 3. There have been some improvements to purposeful activity post Covid, but staff pressures mean that these are still limited. 4. Progress has been slow and incremental. Major issues with the fabric remain unaddressed.
Governor 1. How can greater compliance with systems and procedures by staff be encouraged to ensure a more consistent delivery? 2. What measures can be taken to further reduce the supply of intoxicating substances, especially hooch, to prisoners? 3. What more lasting and impactful arrangements can be made to resolve the issue with vermin?	1. Introduced measure to improve process assurance, individual accountability and team accountability. 2. No special measures but focus on prevention and enforcement. 3. Increased action by pest control contractors.	1. System non-compliance remains an ongoing concern and leads to issues and delays on the ground. 2. The number of discoveries and the quantities have increased indicating that the measures may be having some success. 3. While not eliminated, the prevalence of rats in the prison has been reduced.

Evidence sections 4 – 7

4. Safety

4.1 Reception and induction

Reception staff were observed to be professional, engaging with prisoners and having an overall calming effect on arrivals to facilitate the transition into HMP Winchester. All prisoners were put through an airport style X-ray security scanner to reduce instances of illicit items being conveyed into the prison.

As part of the reception and induction processes the prison deployed trusted prisoners to help new arrivals feel settled and assist them with completing paperwork.

The prison's local initiative to combat prisoner debt by offering new prisoners a "credit starter" during the reception process enabled new prisoners to purchase essentials while their spend accounts were being set up, stopping them from resorting to prohibited inter-prisoner loans.

Board members observed on at least two occasions Serco prisoner transports arriving late in the evening at HMP Winchester, something prison staff had previously flagged up. These late arrivals resulted in reception staff working long after their shifts had ended in order to process the new arrivals creating additional pressure on prison operations.

4.2 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody

The number of Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) processes opened in the prison increased from 617 in 2021-22 to 673 this reporting year. The range of open ACCTS for any month so far this year was lowest in April (48) and highest in May (72), where an average of 30 ACCTS were live at any one time.

Self-harm incidents are recorded as having reduced from 597 in 2021-22 to 540 incidents this reporting year. However, the number of individuals involved in self-harm in 2022-23 increased from 193 to 212. Whilst it is positive that the total number of self-harm incidents decreased overall, the increase in the number of prisoners who are self-harming is of concern.

The most common reasons cited for self-harming were location, frustration, vapes/caps, transfer, and medication. The IMB notes that the prison provides support such as access to, for example, Samaritans, Listener suites, and induction packs to address the self-harm issues.

There were four deaths in custody during this reporting period. One death was due to natural causes and the other three deaths have not yet had their causes determined.

4.3 Violence and violence reduction, self-isolation

Assaults on staff have reduced during this reporting year so that on average there were 10.3 assaults on staff per month compared to 14.3 the previous year, a reduction of 28%². However, this is still 40% higher (measured as incidents per 1000

² Please note that any improvement/deterioration numbers and percentages are skewed by the increase in the prison roll between the start and end of the reporting period, which saw an increase from 530 to nearly 680.

prisoners) than the average for Winchester's comparator group, although it is better than the previous year when Winchester averaged more than twice the comparator group.

Six assaults on staff resulted in serious injuries compared with ten the previous year.

Assaults on other prisoners have increased over this reporting period. In July 2022 the level was 10 incidents/month/1000 prisoners, considerably below that in the comparator group of prisons. However, by May 2023 it had risen to 40 incidents/month/1000 prisoners, well above the comparator group. There was a total of 212 such assaults during the year, of which 21 were serious.

The principal causes of trouble between prisoners are:

- Gang culture; to counter gang violence, the prison has implemented detailed assessments of individuals' gang affiliations and limited possible conflict by putting them on different wings or, if that is not possible, giving them regime at different times.
- Debt; debts are fuelled particularly by drug use, and frequently have to be paid off by carrying out an assault.

The Board mentioned some of the violence reduction measures taken by the prison senior leadership team in last year's annual report. Since then, they have continued to implement further actions:

- Prisoner representatives are being trained in Restorative Justice and Conflict Resolution.
- Debt Forums have been started, one of the actions from which was to open a new tuck shop on A-Wing to allow new arrivals to purchase items immediately rather than borrowing tuck from other prisoners and getting into debt which in turn can lead to violence.
- A Risk and Trigger forum has identified drivers of violence and self-harm.
- Young adults (YAs) are disproportionately involved in violence in the prison. To improve relations between YAs and staff and between each other, YA forums have been started; a Winchester football world cup was held involving staff and YAs; a YA day was held with invited speakers.
- Reinforced observation panels have been trialled, and while they were found to be effective in reducing the opportunities for prisoners to initiate a violent incident by breaking the previous, less sturdy design, the cost of these panels has proved prohibitive to a general introduction.

4.4 Use of force

There were 310 occasions when force had to be used to control or restrain prisoners. On the basis of incidents per thousand prisoners, this is 4% fewer than the average for the rest of the comparator group for the current reporting period and 17% fewer than Winchester's own figure for the previous reporting year.

Only 33 of the 310 occasions where force was used were planned, for example to move a prisoner known to be violent. The majority were unplanned, in response to disturbances.

Measures adopted by the Safer Custody department in an attempt to manage and reduce the use of force included:

- Implementation of a weekly Use of Force (UoF) scrutiny meeting where every occasion when force is used is reviewed with lessons being fed back to the wing staff.
- Identifying officers who seem to be readier to use force than their peers and working with them to use non-physical interventions where possible.
- Roll-out of PAVA (an incapacitant spray similar to pepper spray) and SPEAR (an acronym for Spontaneous Protection Enabling Accelerated Response). In some cases, just the appearance of an officer carrying PAVA has been enough to defuse a disturbance without having to deploy or activate it.
- Acquisition of new digital body worn video cameras (BWVC) with better definition, in numbers sufficient for most officers to wear one routinely.

4.5 Preventing illicit items

According to Practice Plus Group who hold the contract for the Substance Misuse Service (SMS) at HMP Winchester, approximately a third of men have a substance misuse habit on admission to the prison. The prison management have reported improvements in preventing the entry of illicit substances. Throughout the reporting period there have been occasions of large quantities of hooch being seized (20 litres October 2022, 16 litres in December 2022) which the prison viewed as a sign that hooch is being used instead of other drugs, pointing to reduced availability of other drugs in the prison. Mandatory Drug Testing (MDT) was reintroduced in November 2022 and a referral pathway is in place between the MDT and the SMS.

5. Fair and humane treatment

5.1 Accommodation, clothing, food

Overcrowding in the prison is an ongoing problem with many cells originally designed for a single prisoner now being certified to house two. However, there has been some improvement as more of the cells now have decency screens for toilet privacy.

The unreliable operation of various elements of the heating system has led to cold conditions and/or lack of hot water in the Hearn, B-Wing, D-Wing, the Chapel and E-Wing. On several days over the winter months the prison failed to keep prisoners and staff comfortable. Rats are still to be seen in the prison, but the regular pest control procedures have reduced the prevalence.

The conversion of the old CSU in the basement of A-Wing to house enhanced status wing workers represents a commendable improvement in the accommodation of at least some prisoners. They live in a more open and personalised space with single occupancy cells, a lounge area, and pool table. Feedback to the IMB from the men held there has been positive.

The state of the fabric of HMP Winchester overall presents a significant challenge to prisoners, officers and Gov Facility Services Limited (GFSL) responsible for building maintenance and repair. Between January and April 2023 alone GFSL carried out a total of 2,660 tasks including pre-planned maintenance. This included problems through neglect and decay, but also damage to prison cells and other areas being vandalised by prisoners. During the year of this report, the IMB has noted some significant issues and defects affecting the accommodation and the overall operation of the prison

- Water ingress has caused a number of operational issues throughout the prison (Main, Admin Block, Healthcare, Westhill, Workshops). For example, the roof of the main gym (right) has been leaking for some time creating slip hazards for users and requiring a jury-rig of pipework and buckets to remove water.



- The Control Room was badly damaged by a water leak; its basement location puts it at risk of flooding again so the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) has agreed it must be replaced.

- The ceiling of the passageway from A-Wing to Education and the Gym is crumbling (right)



- The ceiling in the staff toilet in reception leaks and the staff have rigged up a framework of broom handles and plastic to remove water (right).



- The steps leading to Reception are still inaccessible to wheelchair users and are now crumbling.
- Various roofs around the establishment are breaking up and need renewal or repair.
- Bits of masonry have recently fallen off the side of the main gym next to Reception creating an injury hazard due to falling debris.

The MoJ recently commissioned a survey of asbestos hazards in the prison. There are three areas of concern currently requiring prohibitive or restrictive access: Westhill plant room, Old CSU plant room on A-Wing and the old administrative basement. Some B-Wing cell floors contain asbestos – which is dangerous when damaged. Vandalism has necessitated some such cells being temporarily put out of action for renovations.

Staff have reported to Board members that their efforts to supply prisoners with necessary kit such as bedding, clothing and towels, are frustrated by issues within the computer system used to monitor and re-order stock. Necessary articles are sometimes in short supply or non-existent, particularly bedding and T shirts, the last point confirmed by a member's personal observation as part of the verification of these reports. New prisoners cannot always be issued with all the kit they should receive, and there are regular shortages on the wings. This causes irritation on the

wings and orderlies using washing machines for dirty, used, scarce kit that should be being sent out for laundering.

The current daily allowance for providing prisoners with three meals per day has recently risen to £2.70 per person. It is still demanding to provide adequate food within this budget. However, the IMB receives few complaints about food – five during the whole year – mostly relating to specially required diets rather than food quality or quantity. When members of the Board have sampled meals, they have found them palatable.

5.2 Segregation

The care and separation unit (CSU) has a total of 13 cells including one holding, one special accommodation and 2 constant watch cells. One cell has been permanently out of action due to damp problems.

CSU occupancy (including cellular confinement on the wing) has fluctuated between 4 and 13 occupants this year with an overall average occupancy of 7. The IMB raised the cases of a number of prisoners whose length of stay on the unit exceeded 42 days. CSU staff responded well to those enquiries and offered reasonable justifications. The IMB observed several discussions regarding the re-integration of these individuals into the normal regime on the wing. In the latest Segregation Monitoring and Review Group (SMARG) report to March 2023 there were no prisoners whose stay exceeded 3 months. Good order or discipline (GOOD) reviews, observed by the IMB on 33 separate occasions, were conducted thoroughly and fairly.

The holding of prisoners on cellular confinement (CC) on the ordinary wings due to insufficient availability of cells on the CSU has continued to prove problematic on occasion: as in previous reporting periods, the record-keeping on the wing as well as the delivery of the CSU regime has been inconsistent, to which communication failures between CSU and wing staff have contributed. There were several instances where a prisoner on CC was observed in a cell shared with a prisoner not on CC, leading to removal of privileges not being implemented.

The management of the CSU by a group of officers dedicated to staffing the unit continues to offer real benefits. A more consistent approach to the often troubled and challenging prisoners held on the unit has resulted in better outcomes. The IMB were able to observe this in the feedback from prisoners on the unit during their CSU reviews.

Following the strenuous efforts by the prison, supported by the Board over many years, to have the previous inadequate CSU relocated, the planning and delivery of the new-build project appears to have run into further difficulties and delays. This has resulted, as reported by the governing Governor, in an extended delivery time and additional costs as arguments about the suitability of its design bounced between the prison and responsible departments within HMPPS. There is as of now no confirmed date for when the building work on the purpose-built CSU will be completed.

5.3 Staff-prisoner relationships, key workers

Efforts at national level have resulted in increased recruitment which means HMP Winchester is slowly benefitting from an increase in prison officers with currently 186 on roll and 164 operational at any one time. The recruitment pipeline is also robust with 60-70 officers at college/training prior to taking up a post. New recruits bring a number of relevant skills with approximately half having experience of teaching, experience as care workers with knowledge of Mental Health and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and an increase in diversity and foreign languages. The remainder are younger, coming straight from education. The average attrition rate for leaving employees across all grades, for any reason, from June 2022 to March 2023 was 13%. As staffing levels have increased the attrition level is decreasing, from a high of 14.94% in June 2022 to 6.73% in March 2023.

Confidence and competence have been growing amongst staff but still have a way to go. Prisoners have reported their frustration that some staff do not know their way around the 'system'. The culture at HMP Winchester appears to be changing positively. Initiatives that support the change include the introduction of the competence and confidence toolkit, and an external team providing 'standards coaching'. Newly formed staff forums and focus groups lead the approaches taken and feedback from prisoners has been that the wings are becoming more friendly, helpful and 'less shouty'. Officers have been observed adopting a more coaching, friendly and informal style, developing relationships with individuals. HMP Winchester has developed its own ethical framework and code of conduct with positivity, holding people accountable and being more compassionate at its heart. Evidence of the approach working is the reduction in prisoner assaults on staff, incidents at height and deliberate fires. The IMB observations suggest that prison disorder has been reduced. This impression has been further reinforced by the fact that the Prison Performance Support Programme (PPSP), which has been supporting HMP Winchester after replacing Focussed Support (which replaced Special Measures), ceased its activity early as it considers that the prison has met its requirements. Indeed, PPSP has recommended that some other establishments visit HMP Winchester to see how a Victorian local prison deals successfully with the challenges it faces.

The Prison Council was reintroduced post-Covid using a different approach following feedback from prisoners. Each wing now has a separate group where wing specific issues are dealt with directly and locally. Prisoners report feeling more involved and feel staff are listening to their issues. The Head of Residential collates information and deals with cross-prison issues. Property, visits and phone PIN updates have been key issues across the prison, which an allocated officer is tasked with improving. The IMB notes an improvement in the organisation of visits and a reduced but still unsatisfactory time to upload PIN numbers. The process to deal with property was changed in the latter quarter of the reporting year and the IMB observations show improvements are yet to be seen in practice.

Although only recently re-introduced (February 2023), key working has risen every month to May 2023. The policy is that prisoners should have 45 minutes per week with a key worker. At the end of the reporting period approximately a third of prisoners receive a weekly session from their key worker, with plans to improve this ratio. New prisoners with no contacts in the community are allocated key workers as a priority because of their vulnerability and risk levels.

5.4 Equality and diversity

The Board welcomes the appointment of an energetic new manager for Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) who has spearheaded a renewed focus on minority groups in the prison. However, the role is not specifically funded and is a secondment.

The D&I team's spotlight in recent months has been on young adults, foreign nationals and older prisoners. Forums have highlighted problems, such as that those with physical disabilities are struggling to access legal visits and education or activities and have problems reaching D-Wing exercise yard as frequently there are no staff to operate the necessary ramp.

Recent analysis of statistics has found that there is an over-representation of white British employed in jobs, and that violence among young adults has continued to rise. Both of these trends are being looked at and ways are being sought to address these.

Events designed to increase understanding and break down barriers between different cultures and groups have included big-screen games in the football World Cup, where over 100 prisoners attended 12 sessions with discussions at half time, followed by Winchester's own World Cup, where teams comprised staff and prisoners, aimed at helping participants to engage on common ground.

There was a move to improve access to discrimination incident reporting forms (DIRFs) and procedures linked to these. Promotion of the system has coincided with a large increase in reports - 86 for the year compared with 52 for the previous year, mainly linked to allegations of racism. Residential staff are now participating in forums to enhance their understanding of the prisoner perspective and how poor communication can lead to feelings of discrimination.

An autism awareness event and mental health awareness training have also been staged. Over half of prisoners with a disability at Winchester also have mental health issues.

5.5 Faith and pastoral support

Overall, it has been a good year as faith and other Chapel services have geared up coming out of the pandemic. Although attendance is good at services, occasional disruptions and poor behaviour from some prisoners spoil the experience for genuine worshippers. Unlock issues on wings often result in services starting late.

The chaplaincy service remains understaffed when compared with similar establishments with lower populations, and this places pressure on the team in what is now a near capacity population. However, some support comes from volunteers from their own faith community, such as Jehovah's Witnesses and the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints, although delays in vetting impact on their recruitment.

After a long search, there is a Pagan Chaplain covering from Guys Marsh. It remains virtually impossible to find a Hindu Chaplain, but this is a nationally recognised situation.

5.6 Incentives schemes

As staff levels increase, the incentives scheme is being reintroduced. Currently all prisoners who fully engage with the induction process leave A-Wing as "enhanced", meaning they have extra privileges to encourage their good behaviour.

5.7 Complaints

The average monthly number of complaints received by the prison for the reporting year was 97, compared to 129 last year, a reduction of 12%. Complaints about residential (key issues being PIN number transfer/upload and visits), property transfer, and the loss or misplacement of personal property, were the most common. Other matters that were raised frequently were issues with canteen, reception into the prison and relationships with staff. Across the year 18% of complaints were not resolved within the time limit, a small rise from 16% last reporting year. As with the previous reporting year, approximately one third of complaints were resolved in the prisoner's favour. Following recovery from the impact of Covid, the number of prisoners met with face to face as part of the complaint investigation rose steadily, with an annual average of 30%.

5.8 Property

The Board did not see any significant improvement in the handling and management of prisoner property, either on transfer between establishments or within the prison itself. Property continued to be amongst the foremost reasons for complaints to the prison and applications to the IMB.

The prison has dedicated an officer to improving property issues and a new process for screening and logging property on arrival in the prison was initiated in March 2023. The impact is yet to be seen.

6. Health and wellbeing

6.1 Healthcare general

Healthcare at HMP Winchester continued to be provided by the Practice Plus Group (PPG). PPG worked collaboratively with HMPPS towards the 'prisoner induction pathway' with plans to develop an integrated well-being passport for prisoners to track them through their sentence journey.

The roll-out of the latest version of Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT V6) was a significant exercise, but feedback suggested that it created additional administrative pressure on custody staff.

Feedback on healthcare performance from prisoners showed a mixed picture. There was a larger number of concerns (178 compared with 112 in 2021-22) but, as a result of improved face-to-face engagement, fewer complaints (13 compared with 26 in 2021/22) were submitted. However, figures for 2022/23 were not complete limiting the scope for any firm conclusions.

Of some 50 Healthcare-related applications received by the IMB the largest proportion (28%) related to 'medication'. The rest were spread across various issues including sexual health, mental health, Yoga/exercise, weight loss, dentistry and general healthcare.

Staff shortages were significant at the start of the reporting period with the PPG's on-site staff numbers running at 45.9% of full complement. The shortage was covered by agency and 'bank' staff. By February 2023 there were 18 staff vacancies and, while more than half of these posts had been recruited, there were significant delays getting candidates into roles as a result of local vetting lead times. These problems introduced additional challenges for management and inevitably impacted on service provision.

6.2 Physical healthcare

Issues around the provision of the on-site General Practitioner (GP) service resulted in routine work, such as dealing with chronic conditions like epilepsy and heart conditions, not being attended to in a timely manner, and this, combined with irregular pharmacist cover when prescriptions were not screened, prejudiced the delivery of optimum healthcare. GP locum cover was described as 'erratic'. For example, during the GP's four weeks' leave during 2022 there was no locum coverage despite four months' advance notice having been given. This, despite other provision being in place, resulted in a one-month waiting time for routine appointments on the GP's return.

There was a specific effort to alleviate the issues associated with the escorting of prisoners in a timely fashion to attend internal and external medical consultancy appointments with the aim of improving attendance figures.

In November 2022 in HMP/YOI Winchester there were 5,587 appointments booked (across all health-related services) and of these there were 103 incidents of 'Did Not Attend' (DNA) where prisoners did not attend for their own reasons and 339 so-called No Access Visits (NAVs) where there was failure of enablement by the prison establishment - either through lack of escort or lockdown. By contrast, in May 2023 when the number of appointments was recorded as 6,080, the DNA figures were 101 but the NAV figures were much improved at 165.

As regards dentistry, the longest waiting times for an appointment ranged from 6 weeks 3 days in June 2022 to 19 weeks (close to five months) in March 2023. These 'at worst' figures were not encouraging although average wait times apparently moved from around five weeks in 2022 to between three to four weeks in 2023.

6.3 Mental health

The three key performance metrics for mental healthcare (MH) are the caseload, referrals/waiting times and transfers. In March 2023 the Mental Health caseload stood at 34.

While urgent MH referrals were seen within 48 hours, success in meeting the target of five days for routine referrals ranged between 68.6% in June 2022 and 42.9% in May 2023, the shortfall being mainly due to enablement issues, staff shortages and other factors (for example, leave). Waiting times for urgent psychiatric appointments were up to five days, but those for routine referrals were typically two to three weeks. The waiting time from being referred to seeing an MH practitioner was equivalent to that in the community. The service is generally equivalent, given that the prison population is at higher risk of MH conditions than in the wider community.

An on-site talking-therapy service has been offered five days per week through two assistant psychologists and a psychologist. There was access to a psychiatrist five days per week and on-site three days per week.

6.4 Social care

Social Care Board meetings were re-established in February 2023. The prison stated that a social worker and occupational therapist visited routinely and person-centred care plans had been kept up-to-date.

Social care peer supporters have been trained to undertake simple tasks such as helping those in need to make their beds and take wheelchair users to their place of work, as well as being a point of contact on each wing.

6.5 Exercise, regime

The prison had started to return to pre-pandemic norms in May 2022 through the resumption of association and enhanced by the introduction of freeflow. Education, workshops and other activities have slowly become more available and there has been greater availability of activities as prison staff numbers increased throughout the year.

6.6 Drug rehabilitation

Approximately a third of all prisoners have engaged with the Recovery Service offered by Practice Plus in the last 6 months. The numbers rose sharply from 113 to approximately 200 in the first six months of the year and have since remained at this level.

The service noted a significant increase in the rate of released prisoners who had been receiving support and treatment in prison for substance misuse commencing a treatment episode with a community treatment provider within 3 weeks of release - from 26% to 39% within a year.

Alcohol misuse needs have increased and although the reason is unknown it is suggested to be as a result of the total number of prisoners screened and accessing the service.

Substance misuse support groups are being introduced using volunteers as facilitators:

- Alcoholics Anonymous was re-introduced in April 2023 and has been consistent throughout May.
- Narcotics Anonymous and Cocaine Anonymous volunteers are awaiting security clearance.

6.7 Soft skills

In 2023 a group called BearFace Theatre started working with a group of prisoners to explore writing and performance in an ensemble setting, which culminated in a show in front of an invited audience. The initiative proved to be a positive experience for the prisoners involved who also demonstrated commitment to the process.

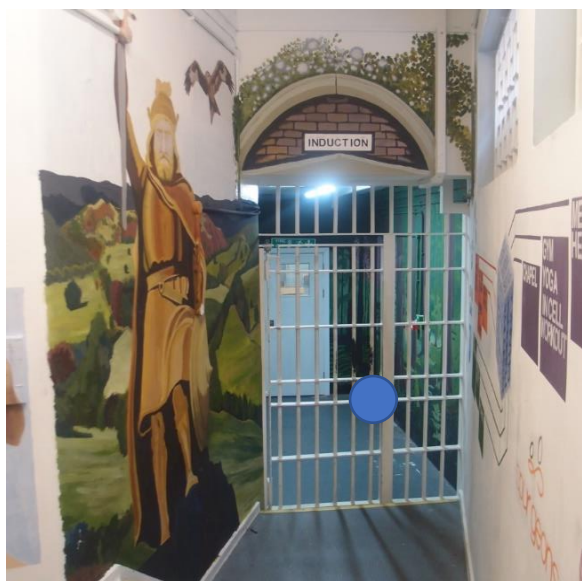
7. Progression and resettlement

7.1 Education and library

The funding model has changed this year from a flat rate model, based on students attending, to a performance-based model. The implication of this change in a prison where the average period of stay is less than 12 weeks is that many prisoners do not have time to complete an accredited course, thereby financially penalising Milton Keynes College (MKC), the education provider. As a result, music and film classes were cut to fund more Learning in the Workplace, particularly for those with learning disabilities.

Instead of Education, Prisoners in West Hill now have an Employment Hub, where they can access all the agencies in preparation for release.

Two prisoners won awards from the Koestler Art Scheme. A further example of the impact of art making on the prison featured the creation of impressive murals which made a noticeable difference to an otherwise drab corridor (see right).



Issues with IT have had a knock-on effect on what MKC have been able to deliver to prisoners. Prisons nationwide are served by a company called XMA, offering a virtual campus. The system is designed, among other features, to allow a prisoner to build on their employability by, for example, uploading and improving their CV which they should be able to access once released. However, as often as not, the platform has been inaccessible when prisoners try to log on. There has been some improvement since the installation of a new server in April.

There has been an increase in library book orders following the promotion of “inclusivity” reading lists. The library service of delivery to the cell ceased in April. Prisoners are now encouraged to attend the library in person. West Hill library reopened in September with three sessions per week when staffing allows.

7.2 Vocational training, work

Work and Workshops include Tailoring (prison clothes), Textiles (sandbags), Waste & Recycling, Wing Cleaning and various Orderly jobs (Chapel, Reception, Kit, etc). The Assembly workshop was closed in October due to the lack of outside contracts.

Vocational training includes Painting and Decorating (now available to the whole establishment, not just the Cat C prisoners), kitchen work, Biohazard cleaning and gardening. The prison is still advertising for a horticulture tutor.

As of January 2023, there were 295 work placements available to prisoners, which is too low for the prison's population, but with no contracts with outside industries there was not enough money in the budget to offer more placements. Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) was only made available to two prisoners.

7.3 Offender management, progression

The offender management unit (OMU) continues to suffer from staff shortages. As a result, the completion of offender assessment system (OASys) assessments were behind schedule, and earlier in the reporting period prisoners on West Hill and the Hearn Unit complained about the lack of OMU staff visiting their area. The setting up of an Employment Hub for those units in January with the ability to book OMU appointments is intended to alleviate the latter problem.

The IMB attended a Regime Management Planning (RMP) meeting in February 2023 where the OMU engaged with multiple agencies (such as Mental Health etc.) to discuss the upcoming release of prisoners with known issues. The meeting was conducted well and the process appeared thorough and well-coordinated.

In an effort to connect prisoners with prospective employers the prison held a number of fairs for Catering & Hospitality (November), Construction (January) and Logistics (May). Of those the Construction fair was the most impressive, attracting ten representatives from the Construction Industry for prisoners to talk to about work after leaving prison. 42 prisoners attended, two prisoners received firm offers of a job, and more were invited to interview at a later date.

7.4 Family contact

For a large number of families and prisoners, maintaining contact has proved a negative and frustrating experience. Throughout the year the IMB has received many complaints about the constant and repeated difficulties encountered when trying to book visits, due to confusing processes and inconsistent information as well as inadequate staffing levels. Another issue was the delay in uploading PIN phone numbers, required to allow prisoners to make calls, at one point with a wait of four weeks in early 2023. At the latter end of the reporting period improvements were observed and these continue.

The number of days available to book a social visit has risen from two to five days a week with the telephone booking line now open six and a half hours a day, increased from one hour which was entirely unsatisfactory and caused much frustration with families who tried for many days, weeks in some cases, to get through. In addition, the national website can now be used to book all visits and the local HMP Winchester website has been updated with helpful information to facilitate an easier booking experience for families and friends.

Family services are provided by the charity Spurgeons, who have secured three-year Lottery funding as well as a five-year MoJ contract, enabling them to increase their staff and a team of up to 80 volunteers. They are now attending daily induction for new arrivals, helping to ensure that each prisoner has support in the form of visits.

Spurgeons' innovative work includes a pilot scheme called Behind the Wall/Beyond the Gate. Offering a whole-family approach to strengthen relationships, it provides an intensive 12 week pre- and post-release support programme. Other initiatives include Storybook Dads recordings, Homework Club with children, Parenting courses for fathers, and the launch of monthly Baby and Toddler visit sessions.

7.5 Resettlement planning

Resettlement planning is carried out within the establishment by staff who are part of the Probation Service. Just like in the previous reporting year, staff have stated that there are low staffing levels with currently 3.5 full time equivalents (FTE), two of whom will leave the role at the end of June 2023. Resettlement work now only covers the initial prisoner assessment, setting up of bank accounts and help with linking prisoners due for release with accommodation providers.

The contracted service to assist with the provision of accommodation on release (provided by Ingeus) is not seen as effective, in the Board's view. The Service Level Agreement requires a lead time of at least 12 weeks for any referral, but as the prison works with much shorter notice periods for prisoners there is a reduced likelihood of being able to engage with the service. Coupled with the scarcity of accommodation suitable for released prisoners and the impact of unplanned, sudden releases (such as remand prisoners set free following court proceedings) which are not covered by the Resettlement team, this has resulted in significant numbers of men having been released homeless. In March 2023 this affected half of all releases (custodial and sudden releases) according to information shared with the Board as part of a Local Delivery Quality Board meeting.

Contrast this with the officially reported resettlement outcomes, where it has been reported that on average 70.9% (vs. 67.5% for 2021-22) of custodial releases from HMP Winchester were housed on the first night, a figure in line with prisons in the comparator group. The omission from these figures of the impact of not finding housing for prisoners being suddenly released poses a serious question to the way resettlement is categorised within the prison service.

An encouraging trend is suggested by the figures for prisoners in employment six weeks after release. On average 20.7% (vs. 11.9% for 2021-22) were in employment, a percentage consistently above that of prisons in the comparator group.

The work of the IMB

The Board had to manage the majority of the reporting period without the dedicated part-time support of a clerk provided by the prison's business hub due to leave. It is hoped the clerk's recent return will ease the administrative burden on other Board members.

Attrition remains a concern for the Board, especially the low level of new member retention. The Board has experienced three resignations during the current reporting period, from members who had been in post for less than three years. Following recruitment early in 2023 new candidates have been selected and are currently going through the vetting process. Unfortunately, this process, provided by contractor SSCL, has been frustratingly slow and arguably inefficient as candidates have struggled to submit details and get timely responses. As in the most recent years, the integration of new members will place a considerable extra burden on Board members to provide training and mentoring.

Board statistics

Recommended complement of IMB members	13
Number of IMB members at the start of the reporting period	12
Number of IMB members at the end of the reporting period	9
Total number of visits to the establishment	402
Total number of segregation reviews attended	32

The content of this report has been based on the observations recorded by the Board over the period. Of the total of 480 observations recorded in the Board's Observations Log, 329 were members' personal observations with the remainder coming from staff or prisoner reports, official documents and notifications.

Applications to the IMB

There has been a 10% increase overall in applications, with the categories of accommodation, purposeful activity, finance, health, property within the establishment and sentence management seeing the most significant changes. In terms of the observations by the IMB the significant fall in applications regarding accommodation is a surprising change.

A significant change in the way prisoners present their applications to the IMB has been the reduction in the use of the 0800 IMB Applications line; these have fallen to 37 during 2022-23 compared to 110 for 2021-22.

Code	Subject	2021-22	2022-23
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	35	21
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives scheme, sanctions	7	3
C	Equality	7	5
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, time out of cell	12	18
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection, restrictions	35	39
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	13	28
F	Food and kitchens	3	5
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	63	52
H1	Property within the establishment	26	34
H2	Property during transfer or in another facility	17	20
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogues	3	5
I	Sentence management, including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-categorisation	30	50
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	30	27
K	Transfers	7	10
L	Miscellaneous	16	17
X	Confidential access request	2	0
	Total number of applications	306	334



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