



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

**For reporting year  
1 March 2022 to 28 February 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 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

HMP Onley is an adult male category C training and resettlement prison on the border of Northamptonshire and Warwickshire between Daventry and Rugby. The prison is part of the East Midlands group, but the population is predominantly from London (80%).

The certified normal accommodation is 742.<sup>1</sup> During the reporting year, near capacity was reached. Prisoners are housed in 12 wings: wings A – L, including F wing (the care and separation unit [CSU]). The wings radiate from a single corridor in

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

the main block which also includes the kitchen, gym, education unit, chaplaincy and healthcare. Wings J and K are in a separate block as is L wing which is the newest.

### **3. Key points**

#### **3.1 Main findings**

##### **Safety**

- Illicit substances were still prevalent in the prison despite enhanced security measures.
- The enhanced gate security (EGS) was not always operational due to staff shortages. This meant staff and visitors were not always searched.
- Poor mental health, frustration with the regime and debt issues were main triggers for self-harm.

##### **Fair and humane treatment**

- The Board observed positive relationships between staff and prisoners. However, the key work system was severely affected by officer staff shortages.
- Food supply chain issues and kitchen staff shortages raised concerns over food quality, healthy options, portion sizes and choices.
- The Board was concerned about the amount of time prisoners remained in their cells.

##### **Health and wellbeing**

- The health and wellbeing requirements of prisoners were generally being met although there were complaints concerning medication and the availability and accessibility of appointments.
- The shortage of prison officers impacted on the regime and therefore the daily life of the prisoners.
- There was an absence of in-cell lockers for prisoners taking in-cell prescription (ICP) medicines.

##### **Progression and resettlement**

- Access to education, library services and workshops was affected by officer staff shortages and a part-time working regime.
- Instructor staff shortages contributed to a lack of available workspaces for the prison population.
- Officer shortages on the wings meant that prisoners did not always receive regular key work sessions.

### **3.2 Main areas for development**

- ***TO THE MINISTER***

- Staff shortages had an impact on all areas of the establishment and the daily life of the prisoners. What further assistance can be given to recruitment in an area where employment levels are high and salaries are slightly above the national average?

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

- The capital bid for replacement windows was approved in 2019. Can a date be given for when this work will be carried out?
- The food budget appears insufficient to ensure that prisoner meals are of a sufficient quality and quantity. Will there be any review of the budget?
- A lack of instructors had an impact on available workshop spaces. What additional support can be made available to increase the number of qualified instructors?
- What further support can be provided to ensure key work is delivered consistently and to a high standard for all prisoners despite the shortage of prison officers?
- The loss or delay of prisoner property is a problem and a main area of complaint despite the introduction of the Prisoners' Property Framework. How will you ensure that the situation is improved?

#### ***TO THE GOVERNOR***

- When is it envisaged that a full and sustainable regime will be available to all prisoners in HMP Onley?
- What action can be taken to ensure there is improvement in the management and processing of property and that it is issued to prisoners in a timely manner?
- When will there be a return to full mandatory drug testing (MDT)?
- Prison officer shortages impacted on the daily life of prisoners and on the implementation of key work as intended in the offender management in custody (OMiC) model. What local actions are underway to improve officer staffing levels?

### 3.3 Response to last report

Issue raised	Response given	Progress
<p><b>Minister</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There is a pressing need for increased capacity in category D (open) prisons.</li> <li>2. The shortage of officers and probation staff needs to be addressed. Recruitment and retention of staff is an ongoing issue at HMP Onley. Can serious consideration be given to adding HMP Onley to the enhanced payment scheme?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 660 additional category D spaces through expansion of the category D estate.</li> <li>2. Declined, 4% pay award to all prison staff, significantly more for operational support grade (OSG) staff and officers who are on modernised pay arrangements. HMP Onley has an 'always on' recruitment approach using a variety of channels.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Board believes progress has been made.</li> <li>2. Officer staffing is still 50 plus below required numbers. Increase of OSG positions achieved. Although probation did at one point become fully staffed there are now only 3.2 WTE probation officers against a requirement of 5.5 WTE.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Prison Service</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There needs to be more prompt action in moving non-category C prisoners from HMP Onley, prisoners are often waiting too long to move to open conditions.</li> <li>2. Those recategorised from C to B should be moved within 72 hours but often remain in the care and segregation unit (CSU) for a significant period.</li> <li>3. The Board has serious concerns over the lack of access to programmes which leads to a prisoner's ability to reduce their risk of reoffending.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Several accommodation blocks in the open estate were closed due to not meeting fire safety standards. £3.8 billion over next three years to deliver 20,000 additional modern prison places including 660 category D spaces.</li> <li>2. The National Allocation Protocol (NAP) was introduced to support national offender flows. Prisoners who have been re-categorised from C to B and have more than 28 days' time left to serve should transfer to a prison in the Long Term and High Security Estate. If a transfer cannot be secured, the escalation route within the NAP should be followed.</li> <li>3. As the Resolve programme winds down, guidance to prisons was that the Thinking Skills Programme (TSP) would be the medium risk</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Since the introduction of the national initiative to free up spaces in prisons, category D prisoners have been transferred promptly.</li> <li>2. No progress made. Recategorised prisoners are still waiting in the CSU far too long prior to a transfer to a B category establishment.</li> <li>3. Some progress although still some delays in prisoners gaining access to TSP</li> </ol>

<p>4. The management of prisoner property remains a significant problem. There are often long delays in property being received from the sending prison even after the complaints process has been followed.</p> <p>5. The Board in previous reports has mentioned the poor state of the windows in the older parts of the prison. Can HMPPS please advise when this essential work will be carried out. We are of the opinion this has a detrimental effect on decency standards.</p> <p>6. The Board wishes to be advised when the enhanced gate security (EGS) bag scanner will arrive on site and be operational.</p> <p>7. The Board would ask that HMP Onley be added to the list of establishments given a market supplement to attract and retain staff.</p>	<p>offer or, the New Me Strengths (NMS) course for those with learning disabilities. High risk prisoners should be considered for Kaizen or Becoming New Me (BNM +) for those with learning disabilities and challenges. If not delivered in HMP Onley, can be referred to a relevant delivery site. HMP Onley continues to offer TSP in the interim.</p> <p>4. The new Prisoners' Property Policy Framework was published on 1 August 2022 with implementation by 5 September 2022. The framework is the result of extensive consultation including with the IMB.</p> <p>5. A major capital bid to replace all the windows on A to E wings and G and H wings was given initial approval in January 2019. This will be considered for delivery when the programme of works for 2023/2024 is developed.</p> <p>6. Rollout of the scanners to HMP Onley (ESG) sites will start late summer/early autumn to be completed at the end of the financial year.</p> <p>7. See response from the Minister point 2.</p>	<p>which is delaying D category eligibility.</p> <p>4. Introduction of the new property framework has made little/no difference to delays in the prison obtaining prisoner property.</p> <p>5. No progress. The works department have undertaken temporary repairs but replacement windows, as previously identified, are needed.</p> <p>6. EGS operational and in use subject to prison staffing levels.</p> <p>7. No progress made.</p>
<p><b>Governor</b></p> <p>1. The Board is of the opinion there would be considerable benefit in finding a way to integrate the reporting of complaints to healthcare with general prison complaints providing confidentiality is maintained. This</p>	<p>1. None.</p>	<p>1. No progress made.</p>

<p>would provide a more comprehensive overview of prisoner concerns across the establishment.</p> <p>2. It is vital that the purpose of HMP Onley, as a training and resettlement prison, retains priority. More workshops and instructors need to become involved with the prison to support successful resettlement.</p> <p>3. The Board raised in their previous report that professional counselling services or talking therapies would be beneficial.</p> <p>4. The Board raised in their previous report concern about the absence of in cell lockers for prisoners with ICP medicines.</p>	<p>2. None.</p> <p>3. None.</p> <p>4. None.</p>	<p>2. A full-time regime is to recommence in May 2023. However, with current instructor staffing levels fewer than 50% of prisoners will have access to education or work.</p> <p>3. No progress made.</p> <p>4. No progress made.</p>
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## **Evidence sections 4 – 7**

### **4. Safety**

#### **4.1 Reception and induction**

The Board evidenced that prisoners in reception and induction were treated with professionalism and care. All the relevant checks, processes and assessments were in place. Assessments that were unable to be completed on induction due to reduced staffing levels were followed up on the induction wing. The Board evidenced delays in property reaching prisoners due to staff shortages. Often, the reception team were deployed elsewhere in the establishment.

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

The number of assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) documents opened in 2022 was reported at 185 compared to 188 in 2021. The quality of ACCT documentation appeared adequate, however occasionally the Board noted that paperwork was filled out at the end of a shift rather than at the time of interaction and sometimes an ACCT was closed when issues were outstanding.

The induction wing (H wing) had the highest number of ACCTs opened due to men transferring in to HMP Onley on an ACCT.

Self-harm incidents were recorded as 223 by 76 individuals compared to 227 incidents by 75 individuals last year. One hundred and thirty-four prisoners were responsible for 160 of the incidents with two prisoners self-harming 25 times. The Board believes the most prolific self-harming prisoners were supported with care. The main triggers were mental health, frustration at the regime and debt. The establishment relaunched the debt management process to ensure that prisoners who were in debt to other prisoners were supported.

On average, 15 Listeners were available and continued to offer an important and valuable service. Access to the Listeners was good. On rare occasions, access to the Samaritan phone was delayed due to staffing issues on the wings.

The Board can advise that there were no deaths in custody. However, there was a 'near miss' in the CSU in October 2022, averted by the CSU staff (see section 5.2).

Cell bell response times were an issue of concern in 2021. The Board is pleased to report that the situation improved during the reporting year following continuous focus on this issue by the establishment.

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

Incidents of violence were recorded as 148. Twenty-three of these were serious compared to 146 incidents and 20 serious in 2021. Six prisoners were responsible for several incidents that included staff assaults. One prisoner was transferred to a secure mental health facility and the others were transferred to other establishments or recategorised to category B and transferred to appropriate establishments.

Non-compliance (towards staff) and bullying or debt (prisoner on prisoner) were the main reasons for incidences of violence.

There were 67 staff assaults and 80 prisoner assaults compared to 70 staff assaults and 83 prisoner assaults the previous year.

Overall, the levels of violent incidents within the establishment remained about the same as 2021.

The challenge, support, and intervention plan (CSIP) process, was used as a violence reduction strategy with particular focus on the 21-24 age group.

Self-isolating prisoners were monitored and their needs generally looked after. Debt issues were the main reason why prisoners chose self-isolation.

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

Use of force (UOF) incidents were reported at 343 compared to 332 incidents 2021. Most incidents were control and restraint. There was an improvement in the use of body-worn video cameras (BWVC) with only 59 incidents of UOF not recorded on BWVC in 2022. This was 17% of all incidents compared to 40% of incidents not recorded in 2021. The detached duty officers were not able to have access to BWVC which accounts for the majority of the 59 incidents not recorded. The establishment took a robust approach to make sure as many cameras as possible were activated.

Refusing direct orders accounted for over 30% of the incidences of UOF.

A Board member regularly attended the UOF meetings. From the evidence presented at these meetings the Board considered use of force was reasonable and proportionate. No disproportionality was identified.

PAVA incapacitant spray was not used in this reporting year.

In a drive to further protect prisoners and prison officer safety the establishment embarked on a commitment to staff training that involved the upskilling of all officers in personal safety.

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

Enhanced gate security for staff and visitors was successfully introduced in 2022. When staffing levels allowed, everyone entering the establishment was subject to additional security measures.

All prisoners transferring in were routinely body scanned and their property X-rayed prior to issue and wing allocation.

Drone activity significantly increased in the reporting year with many substantial finds due to staff vigilance. This increase appeared to become a significant issue for HMP Onley.

Regular dog teams and intelligence led searches were effective. Mandatory drug testing (MDT) was not reinstated post Covid due to staffing pressures.

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

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

Accommodation repairs were managed well by the provider who gave an excellent service and worked closely with the Governor and senior management team (SMT). Several issues of boiler failure were addressed quickly.

Cells were generally in good order although during the summer months the accommodation became very warm. Cell windows remain not fit for purpose and their replacement is needed.

A full shower refurbishment was completed which was welcomed.

The central exchange scheme (CES) for clothing generally worked well. However, there were issues regarding the supply of clothing to recently arrived prisoners as the establishment ran out of basic items and common sizes of t-shirts and trousers. The Board can report that this issue, by the end of the reporting year, had improved.

Frustration existed among prisoners regarding the time it was taking for clothing to be transferred from other prisons. Prisoners were also not aware of the 'no black clothes' policy at HMP Onley and misunderstandings existed regarding the quantity of clothing that they could keep in their possession. There was a significant backlog of clothes and parcels being processed through the reporting year.

The Board received complaints about clothing. Often prisoners' clothing parcels were in reception but there were delays with them being issued due to staff shortages.

The introduction of in-cell telephony was well received by prisoners. There were issues and delays with installation due to asbestos being found in some roof spaces.

The Board received complaints concerning the quality of food, portion sizes, food choice and temperature. During a monitoring visit a prisoner opened his pie and stated it contained more 'fresh air' than filling. Staff shortages in the kitchen, challenges with the daily food budget and supply chain issues affected menu choices and food quality.

At the end of the reporting year the kitchen was almost fully staffed.

### **5.2 Segregation**

The CSU has 14 cells. Where possible, prisoners left the CSU within a few days. A small number of prisoners were challenging and violent, presenting staff with difficult judgements about whether it was safe for them to return to a wing.

Good order or discipline (GOoD) reviews observed by the Board were conducted in a correct and respectful manner with the prisoner being given time to express himself. All residents in the CSU were seen by a Board member weekly. There were prisoners on an open ACCT in CSU.

The CSU was visited daily by a governor. Healthcare and mental health nurses, medical staff and chaplaincy regularly visited the CSU.

During the reporting year approximately four prisoners had extended stays over 42 days.

In October 2022, there was an attempted suicide by a prisoner whose life was saved by quick action from two experienced CSU officers (see section 4.2).

The unit was staffed by experienced officers with appropriate aptitude and understanding for the challenging and special environment of segregation. They were regularly observed by Board members displaying patience and professionalism in their work.

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

The Board evidenced many incidences of staff building productive relationships with prisoners. Due to staff shortages, however, officers often moved wings and this disrupted their opportunity to build positive constructive relationships with prisoners.

Key work sessions and the implementation of a more structured approach to key work were hampered by the regime and the shortage of prison officers. In February 2023 the monthly percentage of key work sessions achieved across 11 wings was between 12% and 48%. The Board often spoke to prisoners who had no knowledge about the key work system or no contact with their key worker.

### **5.4 Equality and diversity**

The equalities action team (EAT) and the race equalities action team (REAT) meetings were held regularly and attended by a Board member when possible. The meetings scrutinised comprehensive and detailed data collated from all departments of the prison concerning protected groups. Where any disproportionality was noted, an investigation was conducted and, if necessary, appropriate action was taken. This was documented and reported back at the next meeting.

The Board did not observe any persistent significant trends of disproportionality relating to any of the protected characteristics throughout the reporting year.

One hundred and nineteen discrimination incident reporting forms (DIRFs) were submitted during the period January 2022 to the end of December 2022. Ten of these were upheld. The largest number of complaints related to ethnicity, but the number was slightly lower in comparison to the previous reporting period (see Annex B).

HM Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) reported on its visit to HMP Onley, during May and June 2022, that the quality of responses to DIRF complaints was good. One hundred percent (100%) of all DIRFs were audited by the governor.

Transgender issues were given attention during the reporting period.

The Board was pleased to learn the establishment is looking into services that can support the communication needs of prisoners with hearing loss.

The Board was satisfied that the needs of prisoners with mobility issues or a disability were effectively and respectfully managed.

A forum was held for older prisoners aged 65 years plus. Black History month and the LGBT + month were celebrated. The Board would welcome more focus on other sections of the population, for example, foreign national and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) prisoners, young adults (21 – 24 years) and prisoners with disabilities.

### **5.5 Faith and pastoral support**

Weekly corporate worship generally was taking place for all the main denominations by the end of the reporting year depending on chaplain availability. A lack of staff for some of the numerically smaller faiths continued to be addressed as part of a wider national recruitment strategy. The team was actively striving to recruit a Buddhist and a Rastafarian chaplain.

The Sycamore Tree course resumed in August due to the prison fellowship volunteers who run the course offering to work flexibly around the regime. Some religious classes and groups, however, were not able to resume due to the complexities involved in holding them in accordance with the regime.

During Ramadan, all prisoners were able buy an extension lead and a heated food box. Significantly, this meant that where two prisoners of the Muslim faith were sharing a cell, they could now both eat a hot meal at a time of their choosing.

### **5.6 Incentives schemes**

The prison incentives policy resumed in 2022 following the removal of the basic regime as a result of the Covid pandemic. Forty-nine percent of prisoners were on enhanced, 49% on standard and two percent on basic incentives. In December 2022, an additional protocol to encourage men to attend work or education was introduced. The Board reviewed the incentives data for the period January 2022 – December 2022 and no disproportionality was identified.

### **5.7 Complaints**

The total number of complaints received by the prison for the reporting year (excluding healthcare and DIRFs) was 2757 compared to 1876 last year, an increase of 881 (47%). There was an increase in the number of complaints in all areas except for those relating to security (27% decrease) and those categorised as miscellaneous (47% decrease).

There was a significant increase in the number of complaints about property. They accounted for just over a quarter (26%) of all complaints. Property not being received in a timely manner following transfer continued to be a main area of complaint. There were also complaints from newly transferred prisoners who were having to wait for their property from reception. This was mainly due to staffing issues (see section 5.8).

The complaints process was managed well and 97% of complaints were responded to within five working days.

## **5.8 Property**

Property remained a significant issue at HMP Onley during the reporting year. Much of the Board's time was taken up trying to track down property that had not arrived from the sending establishment. Routinely, property took over a month to follow the prisoner but sometimes it could not be traced.

Staff shortages and reception not having a dedicated team of staff meant that once property arrived at HMP Onley it could take weeks for it to be X-rayed and issued.

Missing property causes significant frustration for prisoners. The head of operations did all he could to reduce delays in issuing prisoner property but staff shortages constantly hindered the process.

## **6. Health and wellbeing**

### **6.1 Healthcare general**

The Board was aware that a joint inspection by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and HMIP in May/June 2022 issued a 'requirement to improve' notice to the healthcare provider at the time. This related to the governance of safe medicines management by the pharmacy, and for subcontracted services (for example dentistry) to provide greater oversight to ensure wait times were being managed effectively and addressed. These issues were being addressed by the new healthcare provider whose contract commenced in October 2022.

The change of contract provider created a period of uncertainty and a large depletion of staff resulting in many clinical and administration vacancies. The transition was managed effectively by an acting head of healthcare who undertook a review and needs analysis and initiated a recruitment campaign.

Staff shortages impacted the effective management of prisoners with long-term conditions and the delivery of the flu, Covid 19, measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) and hepatitis B vaccination programme.

By the end of the reporting period, vacancies remained for a practice nurse with a focus on long-term conditions, an advanced nurse practitioner, a mental health lead, a clinical psychologist, assistant psychologists and administration staff.

The new substantive head of healthcare was expected to take up post in March 2023.

The Board was advised healthcare complaints mainly related to medications and access to services. The Board, however, were unable to obtain data on the number of complaints made as the information was not transferred by the previous to the new healthcare provider. A new system for recording, processing and responding to complaints commenced in January 2023.

Since October 2022 new initiatives included the introduction of a bi-monthly healthcare newsletter, a calendar of health promotion events mirroring the national health awareness days, the appointment of a patient engagement lead, the recruitment and development of the health champions role on the wings and the introduction of a neurodiversity team. The healthcare forums were being reintroduced.

### **6.2 Physical healthcare**

Waiting times improved throughout the year but remained long. In June 2022 the waiting time for an initial dental assessment was 22 weeks and for a routine follow-up appointment 12 weeks. Fifty-two prisoners were waiting to be seen.

The optician waiting list had also reduced from 45 weeks to 18 weeks although 62 prisoners were waiting to be seen. The optician ran a clinic once a fortnight and dental services were available three days a week. The waiting list to see a general practitioner (GP) was approximately two weeks.

Due to the shortage of prison officers, dental and healthcare were unable to run clinics in the evenings and at weekends.

The shortage of wing officers directly had an impact on the uptake of healthcare appointments. A significant number of appointments were either cancelled or missed because prisoners were unable to be escorted. The number of available appointment slots was also reduced at times by healthcare if wing officers were needed for hospital escort duties.

The average waiting time for an initial referral appointment to an outside healthcare service was long, at around 40 weeks dependent on the specific health issue. The Board was informed that one prisoner had been waiting for two years for his appointment. Prisoners were often seen within days, however, following a referral for a scan or Xray.

The absence of in-cell lockers for prisoners taking in-cell prescription (ICP) medicines remains a concern of the Board.

### **6.3 Mental health**

The mental health team continued to work effectively with the alcohol and substance misuse service and the integrated drug treatment system (IDTS) to provide support for prisoners with substance dependency and misuse needs. The team also continued to work effectively with safer custody and the Samaritans in implementing trauma focused care, despite the absence of a trauma lead.

By the end of the reporting year the team were short of one full-time equivalent registered mental health nurse (RMHN) and a band 7 RMHN team manager. The prison had appointed a neurodiversity support manager. A neurodiversity team was in the early stages of implementation.

### **6.4 Time out of cell, regime**

The Governor and senior management team (SMT) regularly reviewed the regime with a weekly predicted regime notification sent to all prisoners. This allowed them to plan their association time more effectively.

The day was structured with two cohorts on each wing. Weekdays, prisoners worked either a morning or an afternoon and had their association time in the other part of the day. Those who were not working spent approximately 2 hours out of their cells per day.

Staff shortages caused significant issues throughout the reporting year despite having up to 18 detached duty officers. During weekends and evenings, wings were routinely in patrol state with prisoners behind their doors for prolonged periods.

The Board believes the duty governors did all they could to redeploy officers around the establishment at short notice to keep wings open.

## **6.5 Drug and alcohol rehabilitation**

There was a change of service provider last October. Subsequent staff shortages and recruitment difficulties had an impact on service provision and delivery. Psychosocial groups, directly related to care plans, were unable to run and most prisoners were seen on a one-to-one basis. Alcohol Anonymous (AA) had restarted and acupuncture and art therapy were being offered.

There was little development in the progress and potential of J wing, the recovery unit for prisoners who may still be using illicit substances but want to work on recovery, and K wing, the incentivised substance free living (ISFL) unit. The team was awaiting direction from the prison drug strategy which, by the end of the reporting year, had not been operationalised, and leadership from the recently appointed strategic drug lead who is due to start in May 2023.

## **6.6 Soft skills**

There was a prison information document (PID) worker on each wing. Information regarding wellbeing resources was available in written format. Leaflets and posters were visibly displayed on the notice boards.

The establishment supported all national peer-to-peer initiatives.

## **7. Progression and resettlement**

### **7.1 Education, library**

The education department had three managers during the reporting year. Capacity was 261 spaces of which 85% were allocated.

Attendance levels were a significant issue at 54% from April 2022 to March 2023. This was due in part to staffing issues within the establishment and the ability to escort prisoners to education, in addition to the number of part-time only courses and the relevance of the courses prisoners were allocated to. In December 2022, education and activities introduced an improved match-up process, following the personal learning plan of the prisoner. In January, attendance increased to 61% and in February was 57%. The Board will continue to monitor attendance rates.

There were 17 tutors and one vacancy as of February 2023.

From January 2022 to December 2022, 627 men completed and achieved an accredited qualification and 185 men completed and achieved a non-accredited qualification.

Face-to-face delivery recommenced in March 2022 alongside the in-cell courses.

Courses included: maths, English, barbering, drylining, carpentry, lock Inn, motor mechanics, painting and decorating, health and safety, art therapy (non-accredited). In-cell courses included: substance misuse, drug awareness, family relationships, budgeting, alcohol awareness, understanding emotions, introduction to mental health.

Additional accredited courses from April 2023 were peer mentoring, catering (level 1 and 2), information and technology (IT) digital skills and employability.

The Board received complaints concerning the availability of education spaces and the part-time regime which was inhibiting the achievement of an accreditation.

The Board was aware that a joint inspection by Ofsted and HMIP in May/June 2022 judged the quality of education to be poor.

The library was open during the week and weekends. It was well stocked with a variety of books, including audio books, self-help resources and books in different languages. There were approximately 540 members but not all were active. Where staff shortages inhibited escorts to the library, the orderlies delivered requested books to the wings.

The library introduced a chess club. This is popular and has a waiting list.

### **7.2 Vocational training, work**

There were insufficient workspaces for the prison population. At the end of the reporting year there were 457 full-time workspaces with a population of 740.

Vocational work included accredited courses in barbering, catering, concrete, waste management, industrial cleaning, dry lining, painting and decorating, flooring,

carpentry, motor mechanics, cycle academy and health and safety. Non-accredited work included recycling, kitchen and wing workers.

Access to workshops was hampered consistently across the year by the lack of instructor staff. During the reporting year, the prison had 12 instructor vacancies. Only a part-time regime for work was available, which hampered the ability of some men to achieve a qualification. Not all the available spaces were allocated (approximately 80%) due to the shortage of officer escorts to the workshops. Attendance rates were approximately 65%. In December 2022, an improved match-up of men to workshops was introduced (see 7.1). This resulted in a small increase in attendance to approximately 70%. The Board will continue to monitor.

### **7.3 Offender management, progression**

The Board was aware of increased concern from prisoners regarding plans for sentence progression, court and release. There were backlogs in OASys completion and sentence planning but where plans existed there was sometimes a lack of communication with prisoners.

Despite only 54% of prisoners arriving at HMP Onley with an OASys assessment in place, the number of completed OASys did improve, with outstanding assessments falling from approximately 100 in June 2022 to 26 by February 2023. By February 2023 60% of prisoners had an up-to-date OASys.

The number of prisoners waiting for transfer to a category D establishment also improved, falling from approximately 50 in June 2022 to 17 in February 2023. Throughout the reporting period there was a total of 176 category D transfers compared to 151 in 2021, an increase of 16.5%.

Bi-monthly forums were being held for imprisonment for public protection (IPP) prisoners and those serving a life sentence.

A return to group sessions in April 2022 enabled the thinking skills programme (TSP) to run regularly. The final Resolve programme, before its national withdrawal, ran during October and November 2022. A combined total of 72 prisoners, by the end of the reporting period, had completed these programmes. There was a waiting list for the TSP of approximately 80.

A needs analysis for Identity Matters and the Kaizen programme was carried out. The Board was informed there were no firm plans in place to offer either programme.

### **7.4 Family contact**

Social video calls were available to prisoners but only approximately 30% of the capacity was used. There were insufficient laptops for all wings which meant a laptop was not always available. In addition, the shortage of officers to supervise video calls and technological issues with face time recognition impacted on usage. These issues often resulted in booked video calls being cancelled. This caused much prisoner frustration.

Family days resumed in 2022. The visits centre has good facilities for families.

In-cell telephony made family contact easier. Initially, there were delays in allocating personal identity numbers (PINs), some technical issues and a cut off at 11.pm. These issues were all resolved.

## **7.5 Resettlement planning**

The resettlement wing established itself on G wing. The team continued to adjust to the new model of working introduced in June 2021. Depleted staff numbers had impacted on the collection, collation and analysis of data and other functions including the consistent opening of the departure lounge.

Initial assessments continued face to face, except for prisoners self-isolating, but staffing issues meant that prisoners could only be seen nine to 10 weeks prior to release rather than at 12 weeks. Most prisoners were released to the London area, therefore most partnerships were with London-based agencies, such as St Mungo's. During the reporting period, 80% of prisoners released moved into either settled or temporary accommodation.

A strategic housing specialist was appointed and is currently writing an action plan to address identified strategic accommodation issues that are impacting on prison leavers from HMP Onley.

A Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) advisor assisted with finance, benefits and debt, the opening of bank accounts and obtaining of proof of identity.

The employment hub opened on G wing and an employment lead was appointed. By the end of the reporting year partnerships had been made with Iceland, Greene King, Pret A Manger, McGinley's, RMF Group Reliable Contractors, NIS, UZIN Utz UK Flooring, National Association Scaffolding Confederation & PHD Access, Bounce Back & PSR Solutions.

Between June 2022 and the end of January 2023 a target of getting 20% of prisoners into employment within six weeks of release was achieved. The average for this period was 16%. Achievement of this target, in the context of the many challenges HMP Onley faces in getting prisoners work ready, is commended by the Board. The Board will monitor the employment hub's progress over the coming year.

Forty basic, non-smart mobile phones were purchased by the prison for distribution to vulnerable prisoners on release who were ready for employment.

## 8. The work of the IMB

### Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	13
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	388

### Applications to the IMB

Code	Subject	Previous reporting year	Current reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	18	10
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives scheme, sanctions	10	3
C	Equality	0	0
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, time out of cell	22	11
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection, restrictions	17	17
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	3	3
F	Food and kitchens	12	12
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	44	34
H1	Property within the establishment	24	33
H2	Property during transfer or in another facility	146	107
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogues	11	8
I	Sentence management, including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-categorisation	67	49
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	37	61
K	Transfers	34	24
L	Miscellaneous	52	87
	Confidential Access	12	8
	<b>Total number of applications</b>	<b>509</b>	<b>467</b>

## Annex A

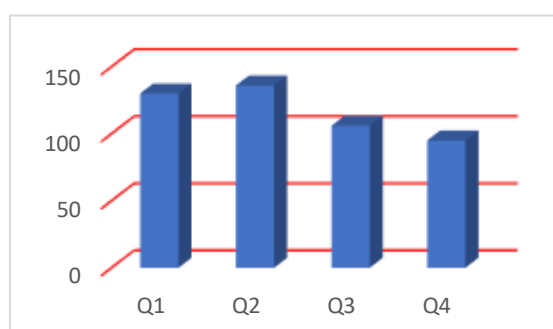
### List of service providers

- Maintenance: Amey Estates
- Education: PeoplePlus
- Library: PeoplePlus
- Escort contractor: Amey
- Healthcare and pharmacy: Practice Plus Group
- Opticians: Prison Optical Trust
- Substance misuse programme: Forward Trust
- Visitors' centre: Prison Advice and Care Trust (Pact)
- Resettlement support: East of England

## Annex B

### IMB applications per quarter

Number  
of applications  
to the Board



Q1 January – March

Q2 April – June

Q3 July – September

Q4 October – December

### Recorded violence

	2022	2021	Change	% change
<b>Prisoner on prisoner assaults</b>	80	83	(3)	(3.7%)
<b>Prisoner on staff assaults</b>	67	70	(3)	(4.3%)
<b>Total</b>	147	153	(6)	(4%)

## HMP Onley DIRFs

Category of DIRF	submitted 2022	submitted 2021
Ethnicity	67	74
Religion	29	22
Disability	15	9
Age	4	2
Sexual orientation	4	1
Gender reassignment	1	0
Total	120	108
Total number of DIRF forms submitted	119	92
Upheld	10 (8%)	18 (19%)

There were no DIRFs submitted during 2022 for the following protected characteristics: gender, marriage /civil partnerships and pregnancy and maternity



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