



Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Swinfen Hall

**For reporting year 2022-23
1 May 2022 – 30 April 2023**

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All IMB annual reports are published on www.imb.org.uk

Introductory sections 1 – 3

1. Statutory role of the IMB

The Prison Act 1952 requires every prison to be monitored by an independent board appointed by the Secretary of State from members of the community in which the prison is situated.

Under the National Monitoring Framework agreed with ministers, the Board is required to:

- satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody within its prison and the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release
- inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom authority has been delegated as it judges appropriate, any concern it has
- report annually to the Secretary of State on how well the prison has met the standards and requirements placed on it and what impact these have on those in its custody.

To enable the Board to carry out these duties effectively, its members have right of access to every prisoner and every part of the prison and also to the prison's records.

The Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT) is an international human rights treaty designed to strengthen protection for people deprived of their liberty. The protocol recognises that such people are particularly vulnerable and aims to prevent their ill-treatment through establishing a system of visits or inspections to all places of detention. OPCAT requires that states designate a National Preventive Mechanism to carry out visits to places of detention, to monitor the treatment of and conditions for detainees and to make recommendations for the prevention of ill-treatment. The IMB is part of the United Kingdom's National Preventive Mechanism.

2. Description of the establishment

Prisoner comment at a March 2023 prisoner forum:

"The prison has come a long way in a good way since I first came here two years ago".

From the Governor, September 2022:

The ambition and focus for Swinfen Hall are to operate as a Cat C training prison. This will mean increasing the amount of work available in the prison through refurbishment of workshops and looking at other ways to make effective use of all our spaces. The focus will be on every prisoner having at least a part time job. In achieving this we also need to have robust process to deal with prisoners who refuse to go to work.

HMP/YOI Swinfen Hall is a public sector prison comprising an integrated young offender institution (YOI) and category C training prison for young men. The prison is defined as a 'national resource', so receives prisoners from all over the country. The Governor's aim is that 25% of the prisoner population will have convictions for sexual offences to aid stability and provide the right demographic for the delivery of the offending behaviour programme model at Swinfen Hall¹.

2.1 Profile data for the establishment are as follows:

	30 April 2020	30 April 2021	30 April 2022	30 April 2023
Total prisoner population	556	570	583	614
Serving four years or more	98%	<90%	93%	>98%
Serving life sentences	38	56	78	106
Serving indeterminate sentences for public protection (IPP)	2	3	0	0

At April 30 2023 there were:

- 51 men aged 18 to 21 serving a sentence of 10 years or more
- 49 men aged 22 to 27 serving a sentence of 10 years or more
- 86 men aged 18 to 21 serving a life sentence
- 20 men aged 22 to 27 serving a life sentence

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.

29% of the population at the end of the reporting period were MCOSO (men convicted of a sexual offence).

The population has been 600 or more for most of the year, with 40% (fluctuating slightly) being aged 18 to 21.

3. Key points

This report presents the findings of the Board at HMP Swinfen Hall for the period 1 May 2022 to 30 April 2023.

Findings are based on a combination of conversations with prisoners and staff on residential units and in work places, reviews of wing forums, attendance at and review of minutes for safer custody, use of force, and other meetings.

Overall, the Board has noted much evidence that the prison is moving forward in a positive way and is focused on increasing support for every prisoner.

The Governor and the SLT (Senior Leadership Team) share a vision for the future. The Board considers that the current plans, if delivered, are expected to improve outcomes for prisoners at Swinfen Hall.

The Governor has shown a commitment to ensure all staff 'buy in' to this vision and has tackled occasions where a staff culture indicated reluctance to accept change.

The first 6 months of the year were very challenging for prisoners. A shortage of uniformed staff hindered the prison from providing a reasonable regime with most prisoners provided a restricted regime. 23-hour lock up was not unusual and still is the case for most prisoners at weekends. At this time the prison was supported by several staff on detached duty. Both the regime and time out of cells during the core week have since improved for most prisoners.

The SLT have worked consistently to provide a safe and decent environment although failures to meet basic humane requirements (such as the supply of toilet covers, toilet rolls, and curtains) have frustrated prisoners.

Nevertheless, under robust direction from the Governor which was adopted by the SLT, the vision to provide work places (many initially being part time) for up to 85% of the population appears to be a realistic target for the coming year; The Board will monitor this ambition closely.

The residential function has created a wing model that encourages good behaviour with an enhanced wing with additional benefits to prisoners. A more rewarding incentives scheme has been introduced across the prison with 4 bands (bronze, silver, gold, and platinum). One wing is now devoted principally to lifers and long sentenced prisoners and is set up to provide additional support to those who may be

From the Lifer Wing forum, March 2023

'It was noted around the changes to allow Gold and Platinum prisoners access to the ED (Evening) association is a massive incentive and now India Wing has a running kitchen for the wing and an Xbox and tv on the landing, prisoners feel it will settle the unit and add extra encouragement for people to gain Gold and Platinum status.'

Note India wing is the enhanced living wing

at Swinfen Hall for up to 10 years. The recognition that a prisoner who may not leave Swinfen Hall for many years, whilst seeing others successfully transfer to resettlement prison, was stifling what hope they may hold.

During the year the Board has been satisfied that the many functions related to safety and reducing self-harm and to EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) provisions the prison is tasked to provide have been met.

It should be noted that Swinfen Hall's role is to take prisoners aged 18 to 28 years of age with a sentence of 4 years or more from all corners of England and Wales. As a result, the prison holds some of the most challenging young men in the prison system. For the reporting period, sentence length ranged between four years and life. Over one third were care experienced.

3.1 Main findings

Safety

- a) Assaults by prisoners on staff and other prisoners have reduced since last year.
- b) Self-harm incidents have reduced since last year.
- c) The use of PAVA (pelargonic acid vanillylamide) has reduced since last year, although statistics for reported use have been adversely influenced by incidents involving multiple prisoners Physical.

Fair and humane treatment

- d) The Board considers the treatment of prisoners at HMP Swinfen Hall to be consistent with the expectations of the United Nations Optional Protocol (OPCAT) overall, although:
 - 1. A regime that requires 23 hours a day to be spent in cell for many has been a continued concern.
 - 2. the provision of basic items and access to property in a reasonable time frame has been a continued concern.
- e) With less time out of cell, it has been difficult for the Board to assess the effects of the restricted regime on most prisoners.
- f) With the co-operation of staff, Board members did however have access to any prisoner on any wing to discuss any concerns or applications raised. Face to face contact by most prisoners with the IMB was limited to where the restricted regime coincided with an IMB visit to the wing or their place of education/work.
- g) The Board has noted that those who chose to self-isolate have been supported well by wing staff, and through the weekly MASH (Multi Agency Self Harm) meeting reviews.

Health and wellbeing

Whilst the Board has serious concerns over the availability of appropriate mental health support for those in need who should be placed in NHS secure mental health units, other aspects of health care observed have raised no serious concerns.

Progression and resettlement

- h) Of concern is that for many prisoners, access to purposeful activity remains limited despite the situation improving.
- i) Prisoners' progression with offender assessment system (OASys) requirements and interaction with offender management unit (OMU) staff has been adversely affected with probation prison offender managers (POMS) — who hold the most serious cases — carrying a case load of up to 90 prisoners when usually tasked with 60.

3.2 Main areas for development

TO THE MINISTER

1. Can the Minister liaise with other departments to create a detailed and funded plan for sufficient spaces in secure mental health units to reduce the number of seriously mentally ill being held in prison, especially in segregation units?'
2. Will the Minister explain how provision can be increased to ensure that waiting times for approved transfers to secure hospitals are reduced?

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

1. Will the prison service set and monitor national, publicly shared, targets for educational and training outcomes in young offender institutions, backed by professionally informed practice and proper data analysis?
2. Will the prison service set and monitor effectively high-quality targets, and appropriate penalties, in third-party contracts for education, training and vocational skill delivery?

TO THE GOVERNOR

In last year's report (2021-2022) the Board asked questions that remain of concern this year:

1. What action will be taken to improve the internal processes for the reception and onward delivery of prisoners' property within Swinfen Hall?
2. What action will be taken to improve the handling of the clothing parcel process from initial application to safe delivery of the parcel?
3. What action will be taken to reduce the backlog of OASys reports that impacts negatively on outcomes for prisoners?

4. What action will be taken to improve the detection of weapons in the prison?
5. When will the Business Hub be fully resourced such that it can function adequately? (see para 6.7)

Questions 1-4 are questions repeated from last year's report (2021-2022) as they remain of concern. Whilst we recognise that question 4 has been addressed, it has only been partially resolved.

3.2 Response to last report

Safety

Concern/issue last year (2021-22 report)	Current assessment
The use of weapons has increased. The Board has a concern that searches of men as they leave residential areas and workplaces are failing to detect weapons.	Limited improvement based on monitoring wing and workshop searches.
A concern is that many Custodial Managers fail to supply support plans for those identified as in need in a timely manner.	No change as detailed in minutes of MASH and safety intervention meetings.
Have increased levels of safety felt by vulnerable prisoners been maintained?	The self-isolator engagement in wing regimes is improving with only two Tier-1 isolators at end of reporting year.
Concerns over safety of newly arrived prisoners.	A safety analyst now researches possible prisoner conflicts and advises safer custody team prior to arrival.
Concerns over a disproportionate number of young adults in the segregation unit, Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) - disproportionate use of PAVA on black and ethnic minority prisoners, disproportionality on the incentives scheme for black and ethnic minority prisoners	Reviews and data analysis by the EDI manager indicate that these concerns are being tackled. Data indicates the imbalance is reducing.

Fair and humane treatment

Concern/issue last year (2021 Report)	Current assessment
Concern over clothing parcel distribution issues.	Unresolved despite reassurance noted in the HMPPS response to last year's report.

Concern that OASys reports were delayed; prisoners felt unable to access resettlement provision.	Partially resolved but delays on OASYS provision remain at least 5 months.
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Health and wellbeing

Concern/issue last year (2021-2022 report)	Current assessment
Insufficient out of hours GP service.	The Board is not confident out of hours GP service will carry out night visits. This is still a concern.
Dentistry – reduced capacity.	Clinic capacity has increased but more initial appointments has led to a greater backlog of treatment required.
Difficulty recruiting Mental Health Nurses.	Situation has improved.

Progression and resettlement

Prisoners fell behind with educational studies.	The Board cannot accurately assess this concern but have concerns that little has improved, beyond that achievement levels have returned to pre-pandemic level.
Pandemic and reduced regime restricted staff and prisoner attendance.	Resolving satisfactorily.

Evidence sections 4 – 7

4. Safety

Board attendance at meetings showed that individual CSIPs (Challenge, Support, and Intervention Plans) are well documented, and interventions generally consistently targeted at prisoners' needs. The weekly SIM (Safety Intervention Meeting) is well attended and there was evidence of multidisciplinary care planning for the most complex prisoners designed to support their needs.

4.1 Reception and induction

Reception processes to accept men into and transfer men from the prison have, where monitored, been carried out courteously with limited delays.

Observation of the first night orderlies are very positive, there is a great deal of information for new arrivals to take in and staff/orderlies are aware of this and break it down to essential items for first night. Secondary items follow during the first week.

Where concerns over safety or threats are known for newly arrived prisoners the safer custody team have provided face to face support and reassurance.

Those transitioning from the youth estate on or around their 18th birthday have had additional care and support provided.

4.2 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody

There was one death in custody in the year. The death was recorded as self-inflicted, subject to confirmation by the coroner. The Prisons and Probation Ombudsman will investigate the background prior to the death. The Board note that the care offered from the SLT to prisoners, to staff, and to the family was of a high standard with due consideration given to all. The aftercare provided on the day of the death and also on the day of the funeral by chaplaincy to the friends and colleagues of the deceased, and to the family, was exemplary.

Weekly safety meetings (SIM and MASH) are held to review management of individual prisoners at risk to and from others. Monthly safer custody meetings manage performance. Generally, these meetings are minuted in detail and actions are followed up comprehensively. In addition, safer custody staff attend weekly inclusion multi-disciplinary team meetings to consider complex cases.

The level of awareness and support provided raises no concerns to the Board.

However, too frequently, responses from residential staff to create support plans have been slower than the Board considers reasonable to ensure timely positive outcomes for prisoners.

ACCT documents reviewed have usually been up to date with satisfactory entries.

The management of ACCT reviews, including reasons why opened, and the closure and post closure follow up of ACCTS is robust. There is no link between incentives scheme status and self-harm, with the majority of self-harm acts carried out by those on silver status. (IEP Status ranges from Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum)

The prison identified that on some wings entries in ACCT documents were made more regularly by female staff and that they 'feel relied upon' whilst 'some male colleagues don't want to provide care or feel incapable of providing a caring response'. The implication was that male officers prefer to resolve the more challenging incidents only. The prison responded with training for custodial managers with coaching support from safer custody staff for those worried about providing this care.

4.3 Violence and violence reduction, self-isolation

The number of violent acts per month has reduced as the year progressed, support work by peace keepers on residential units has assisted this improvement.

The number of self-isolators remained constant and mostly reflects prisoners' concerns over their own safety due to the nature of their offence.

At the end of the year in response to several violent incidents, a new daily razor hand-in policy has been introduced. Early analysis over 4 weeks records no injuries as a result of violent incidents to prisoners, and self-harm incidents where a razor is used reducing.

From a weekly briefing February 2023

'A self-isolator was very reluctant to engage since arriving. At times he felt too anxious to collect his meals or use the SI (self isolator) regime to access the showers. Until a few weeks ago this individual had only left his cell on a handful of occasions. However, over a period of a few months we have continued to support and encourage him. Recently, we have sought to extend this support by incorporating the peacekeeper on the wing who has played a significant role in his progress. Yesterday the peacekeeper was able to encourage the isolating prisoner out of his cell in order for him to access the showers and play a game of chess. Further to this, we also supervised him in meeting with another self-isolator who has made progress in reintegrating himself.'

4.4 Use of force

Anonymised examples noted from daily briefings this year:

- 1. On X wing, a prisoner punched the wing office window causing damage to the window and a laceration to his right hand. He proceeded to gain access to the netting. Peacekeepers attended the scene and were able to de-escalate the situation within minutes, with prisoner coming off the netting.*
- 2. Peacekeepers were given a briefing and then deployed to talk with the prisoner. After a couple of minutes they successfully managed to convince him to compliantly return behind his door*
- 3. A prisoner accessed the pool table, he was only up there for a few minutes, spoken to by the peace keepers. good work from these and he got down and walked to his cell.*

The use of prisoners as peacekeepers on each wing has been valuable to mitigate potential use of force incidents. The Keep the Peace strategy and impact that peer led support has provided has been instrumental in reducing acts of violence.

In the autumn Board members had concerns over staff behaviour in relation to correct use of force (UOF), including use of BWVC, timely return of paperwork, passing incident details to the police in time, attendance at UOF meetings. This was addressed by appointed UOF instructors from March onwards and the concern is reduced now.

Use of force meetings are attended by staff and SLT members from across the prison. Minutes of meetings and follow up conversations by members confirm that, where needed, suitable training or challenge was made to staff when a review of BWVC images of staff use of force indicated training or instruction was needed.

The terms of reference for the weekly use of force meetings are usually met. These include completion of paperwork post incident (on too many occasions completion of paperwork has been late), review of BWVC footage of incidents, identifying learning points and good practice and analysis of hot spots and trends.

Support to new staff through the prison's Core Skills training and from NCM (New Colleague Mentor) has resulted in staff stating they feel confident in how to de-escalate potentially difficult or violent incidents.

There were 4 occasions when the command suite was opened. Members attended 2 incidents. On both occasions the decision making in how to handle the incident was excellent. The checks made with health care, psychology, and staff who knew those involved meant the incidents were dealt with safely with a satisfactory conclusion.

The command team ensured the prison operated as near to normal as possible. Medications were supplied, meals provided on all wings, and those on programmes continued their program. One incident was not observed as it was the implementation of a care plan post the death in custody. The other incident was followed up on in subsequent visits and the documentation and outcomes for the prisoners concerned raised no concerns to the Board.

4.5 Preventing illicit items

Illicit items continue to reach prisoners through various routes including staff, contractors, or others with clearance to enter the prison. The challenges posed are being addressed by the prison.

The prison does not have in use any daily search or scanning facility for those entering the prison beyond a clear bag policy for staff entering the prison.

The Board is aware of the Governor's recent focus on this concern and there have been staff actions taken relating to importation of illicit items during the reporting year.

5. Fair and humane treatment

5.1 Accommodation, clothing, food

Wing forums with staff and prisoners have recorded repeated concerns over access to basic items in a timely manner including paint and brushes to redecorate wings and cells.

Cells have little ventilation and living conditions, especially on top floors of accommodation, can be unreasonably stifling during periods of high temperatures.

Notwithstanding frustrations for prisoners and staff over a lack of essential items (toilet covers, curtains) accommodation provision is satisfactory. Repairs mostly take place in a timely manner.

Board members (and wing-based staff) fail to understand why HMPPS could not supply the prison with toilet covers for prisoners for months on end.

The Board considers the failures to supply basic items to create decent living surroundings is unnecessary and unacceptable.

5.2 Segregation

Where Board members attended prisoner reviews for R45 /R49 placement in segregation, those reviews were fully informed, including plans for return to wings, detailed and explanatory to the prisoner, and completed robustly but courteously where needed.

Segregation stays were usually between 8 and 15 days with very few extending over 42 days. Those stays over 42 days had good reason to be held in segregation.

Staff in the segregation unit work well with prisoners placed there and frequently de-escalate the volatile behaviors of residents to settle them down prior to a move to a wing.

PSO 1700 also requires that prisoners held in segregation should have a designated personal officer and should have welfare checks once in the morning, once in the afternoon and once in the evening. Members note that these checks are completed daily.

Prisoners in segregation often expect to be transferred to another prison following an episode (or frequent episodes) of violent behaviour to staff or other prisoners. At reviews SLT members advise prisoners clearly that transfers for poor or violent behaviour will not take place. Due to mental health needs, there were infrequent occasions when this directive was not followed but the Board agreed that it was in the best interest of the prisoner.

In line with the stated policy that 'only in exceptional circumstances' will segregated prisoners be placed on ACCTs, there have been very few prisoners in segregation on open ACCTs throughout the year. Members were satisfied that those who have been in segregation on open ACCTs were placed there with good reason as being

the most suitable location within the prison to meet their needs and behavioral issues.

Where Board members attended adjudications, the correct processes were followed, and outcomes awarded were explained clearly and fairly to the prisoner. The prison analysis for areas of disproportionality related to protected characteristics of adjudication outcomes indicated no trends or bias that cause concern. However, the increase in adjudications in the last 3 months of the year reflected a spike due to an increased numbers of men involved in incidents. Adjudications that were dismissed were less than 7%. Adjudications not proceeded with were less than 4%.

5.3 Staff and prisoner relationships, key workers

Earlier in the year the quality of relationships between staff and prisoners varied between wings. A lack of staff continuity, and knowledge of individual prisoners had caused prisoner irritation. The regime restrictions had led to increased levels of frustration for prisoners which at times undermined previously good relationships with staff.

By the end of the year the situation was much improved due to a combination of better communication advising prisoners of wing closures, a reduction in wing closures and a more settled staff group.

Whilst the prison could not supply minutes for forums on several wings, the minutes available plus prison council meetings and a lifer forum attended by members indicated a willingness of prisoners to voice concerns in a legitimate way. The SLT responded positively making changes where needed.

In April the SLT recognized that key worker sessions were not meeting targets and so created priority groups of prisoners for key work sessions, including

- Those prisoners in the last 7.5 months before release due to the prison having no resettlement services.
- Transition prisoners from the juvenile estate.
- Full time unemployed prisoners with a focus on getting them into employment.

The business hub has been understaffed. The Board are concerned that the business hub is the gateway for prisoners to access many of the processes that are important to them (PIN credit, approval of telephone numbers, property, canteen purchases, finance, complaints, IMB applications et cetera) and did not have the resources necessary to keep up with demand.

5.4 Equality and diversity

The Board has confidence that the Governor is aware of and forthrightly challenges behaviours that do not meet the high standards set in relation to being a prison officer or prisoner at Swinfen Hall.

The Band 6 EDI Lead prepares an analysis of EDI issues. The monthly meeting identifies concerns and creates plans to address those concerns. The Board has seen that those plans are actioned and outcomes reported.

The whole ethos within the prison SLT related to equality and diversity strands has improved significantly in the year. As in other areas of this report the Board considers the key task now is to embed the whole ethos with staff based on wings and in work areas.

Functional heads each lead on work for one of the protected characteristics. Regular forums took place with all groups. These were tracked and monitored by the EDI Lead. The records of the forums that we viewed showed good attendance and that leaders were using them to identify areas of concern and develop ideas from those present about how to improve things that were not working well.

A Board member observed comments made by a staff member that were derogatory towards a transgender prisoner. The SLT member responsible took the consequent complaint seriously, investigated the complaint and advised the outcome to the Board.

5.5 Faith and pastoral support

The Board have observed that Swinfen Hall has an effective chaplaincy team who are very visible and supportive around the prison.

Post Covid restrictions the Board is pleased that chaplaincy and security have worked closely to support prisoners attending funerals of close family members either virtually or directly to the external service.

The chaplaincy also supported the Sikh prisoners on the death of their chaplain with a special service.

The chaplaincy currently provides weekly services to most faith groups with the exception of Muslim services which take place on a two-week cycle. This was introduced in consultation with prisoners during Covid. The chaplaincy provides pastoral support to all faith groups upon request, and caters for their festivals.

Monitoring checks confirm statutory duties such as contact with prisoners in reception, discharges, segregation unit and applications are carried out daily. Access for prisoners who wish to attend virtual funerals has worked well. This facility is not replacing in-person attendance, rather it is aimed at those who are not eligible to attend outside funerals.

Prisoners subject to an open ACCT are visited weekly.

The chaplaincy provides valuable pastoral care for both staff and prisoners.

Festivals have been celebrated as per 'Festivals Action Plan 2023'.

The chaplaincy continues to work with external organisations who support prisoners and their families.

Volunteers - the managing chaplain is the prison's volunteer coordinator.

The prison continues to have approximately 100 volunteers attend the prison.

5.6 Incentives schemes

The incentives scheme and facilities list has been reviewed and refreshed. Prisoner consultation around what works and what they would like to see was carried out, covering a range of ages and ethnicities. A new incentives scheme was launched on 25 September with four bands; Bronze, Silver, Gold and an additional Platinum level being added to motivate continued positive behaviour.

Members noted from conversations with prisoners that the incentive of access to additional digital provisions has been a positive driver of behaviour by enhanced level prisoners.

5.7 Complaints

Throughout the year, the Board conducted three dip tests involving 20 complaints on each occasion. The quality and fairness of the responses varied significantly. Approximately 40% of the complaints were either left unanswered or received responses lacking the seriousness they deserved. Compounding the issue, handwritten replies posed challenges in terms of legibility, especially for prisoners with limited reading skills. Additionally, the illegibility of some staff signatures further hindered effective communication.

To address these shortcomings, the prison has taken steps to create a comprehensive database of all complaints and replies through the introduction of scanned copies. Encouragingly, some staff members have embraced a computer-based system that offers legibility and traceability. The Board strongly believes that adopting a computer-based method of response should be mandatory for all replies to complaints, ensuring clear accountability and communication throughout the process.

5.8 Property

Both internal and external property management continues to be unsatisfactory. The Board receives a disproportionate number of applications about property from prisoners.

22% of all applications in 2022/2023 were about property, however, there were significantly less about property outside the establishment (down 74%).

Board members are not at all confident that the policy that allows an annual clothing parcel to be released to a prisoner where the prisoner has been compliant is followed correctly.

Prisoners do not trust the policy to be adhered to correctly, and rota reports have recorded long time frames where property is not released, or the reason why property is not released to the prisoner. Custodial managers have also expressed this concern.

The Board has raised this issue at several Board meetings and in last year's report.

The policy was reviewed and rewritten in February 2023 but was not implemented at the time of submitting this report.

6. Health and wellbeing

6.1 Healthcare general

Healthcare is provided by Practice Plus Group and integrated with mental health and psychosocial substance misuse services contracted to Midland Partnership National Health Service Foundation Trust provided through its 'Inclusion' team.

Healthcare and their subcontractors/visiting specialists are currently delivering a full service post-Covid. The Board is satisfied that prisoners have good access to urgent medical care and can access routine clinics in a reasonable timeframe. However, ongoing treatment can be subject to variable waiting times which were exacerbated as more prisoners came forward for treatment.

The IMB received 14 applications relating to healthcare up from 8 in the previous year. The Board is satisfied that issues raised by prisoners were dealt with effectively.

A prisoner with an unusual dentistry issue (which accounts for more than one application) received sympathetic help regarding his treatment plan.

In the same period, prisoners raised 22 concerns with PPG (Practice Plus Group) up from 14 in the previous year, all of which were satisfactorily resolved with none going to stage 1 or 2 complaints. Of the concerns raised, 11 were in September/October when waiting times for clinics were highest after which the number reduced to an average of 1 per month.

Since June 2021 the out of hours GP service has provided healthcare night cover. The Board continues to monitor this provision as there is a concern that provision does not include actual visits where appropriate.

6.2 Physical healthcare

Service	Urgent appts	Routine appointment wait			Actual 30.4.23	Clinic utilisation		Did not attend (DNA)	
		Shortest	Longest	Average		Average	at 30.4.23	Average	at 30.4.23
G.P.	2 days	4	27	15	27	68%	67%	7%	12%
Dentist	2 days	4	65	42	27	69%	74%	17%	15%
Optician	n/a	3	18	9	9	78%	80%	12%	0%
Physio	n/a	10	65	37	27	67%	46%	10%	23%
Podiatry	n/a	0	35	16	0	65%	57%	6%	0%

Statistics for May 2022 – April 2023

As in the previous reporting year, backlogs for all clinics varied across the year but typically peaked in June, July and November, however, with the exception of the G.P., all other clinics had an equivalent or shorter waiting list at the end of the period than the average.

Dentistry is a particular concern as initial appointments often lead to follow up treatment so there is a paradoxical effect where the waiting list for ongoing treatment grows the more patients that are seen. However, the delays experienced during the pandemic due to the required deep cleaning and fallow time between appointments have since been alleviated.

Hospital appointments	May-22	Apr-23	Highest	Lowest	Average
Appointments booked	28	31	58*	26*	35
Emergency escorts	16	10	21*	8*	13
Escorts delivered	44	41	66	36	48
Total cancellations (patient)	8 (3)	6 (4)	16 (5)	5 (1)	7 (4)
Bed watch nights	1	2	31	0	10
Bed watch hours	31	51	700	0	233

There was an overall increase in the number of secondary care appointments when compared to the previous year, the monthly average of booked appointments up from 28 to 35 and emergency escorts from 9 to 13. The Board will monitor the trend on emergency escorts and reason for them. The number of cancelled appointments remained static despite the increase in appointments, however, there is a concern that prisoners will go 'back to the start of the treatment queue' should they transfer to another establishment whilst awaiting a hospital/treatment appointment.

Bed watch hours increased massively during the reporting year from a monthly average of 64 in the previous year to 233. It is difficult to draw conclusions from this as a large number of hours relate to a seriously ill prisoner. It is pleasing to note that less bed watch hours relate to self-harm injuries.

6.3 Mental healthcare

Mental health referrals show a small increase on the previous year, the monthly average increasing to 38 from 36. Monthly referrals vary from a low in December of 21 to a high in March of 55.

Substance misuse incidents recorded have increased across the year from a previous average of 10 incidents recorded to 35 in the last 6 months. This increase is attributed to the increased ingress of drugs and corresponding increase in mandatory drugs tests (MDT) undertaken.

6.4 Social care

There have been no social care referrals in the reporting year and 3 safeguarding referrals.

Conversations with prisoners who are care experienced and who have statutory entitlements from their home local authority have a very mixed level of support based purely on post code.

6.5 Time out of cell, regime

Attendance at gym sessions has almost returned to pre-Covid levels with evening provision for prisoners working full time.

The regime has been sensitive to fluctuating staff numbers, sickness levels and the diversion of officers to other duties. Wing closures have been shared out on an equal basis and been communicated clearly in advance.

Checks with the orderly officers, who allocate staff to their work detail for the day, have shown that key functions proceeded despite staff shortages, e.g. prisoners' attendance for programs and courses was protected, library visits were rarely canceled in the last 6 months, and family visits went ahead.

6.6 Drug and alcohol rehabilitation

Although towards the end of the year there was an increase in prisoners recorded as under the influence and an increase in security reports regarding availability of cannabis, overall, the prison does not have a significant population who require ongoing drug and alcohol rehabilitation support.

6.7 Soft skills

Multiple support events have been provided to prisoners this year, of note were;

- A presentation by a firefighter from the Grenfell Tower fire
- Challenging Talks by Natalie Queiroz about the impact of knife crime that have encouraged much critical thinking about knife crime outcomes and victims
- Theatre sessions provided conflict resolution workshops with prisoners
- Want to Achieve continue to work with those who have been involved in violence that is driven by peer or gang affiliation
- Critterish Allsorts with exotic pet therapy sessions
- Food Behind Bars continue to support men working in the bistro to develop their culinary skills
- Greenhouse project where food for the bistro is grown and harvested
- Yoga sessions
- PAT (pets as therapy) dogs to provide therapeutic support to those in crisis
- The prison choir provides a valuable community feeling to those who choose to participate and have sung at various events in the year
- Monthly family days have resumed
- The prison held a music evening where the quality of performance was very high showing how much talent there is hidden in Swinfen Hall
- Social prescribing
- Changing Tunes
- A visit from an ex prisoner who has lived experience on being in custody. He came to share his story with prisoners to highlight that there is future hope for them despite serving a prison sentence. His talk was well received and inspirational to those who attended.

7. Progression and resettlement

The library now offers session to all wings and is active in sourcing books to order.

Education offers around 100 places, although this number varies depending upon the day of the week and whether the courses are part time or full time. Attendance for these sessions can be reduced by prison activities, however, attendance is still reasonable when measured against number of prisoners allocated.

Maths	16
English	20
Cookery	9
Plastering and Carpentry	8
Forklift	3
Digital Skills	9 (PT)
Mentoring	9
Business	5
Art	8 (PT)
ESOL	5

Responses from prisoners in the year states that they 'feel safer in education' and due to the change in ethos are happier to attend, as they feel staff and management are more supportive. As a result, they are more likely to want to do another course, Data for the year records 940 'starts' for 508 individuals demonstrating more than one course per prisoner.

For the reporting year May 2022-April 2023 the success rate is expected to be 88% (currently 81% but will increase when missing results are returned from awarding bodies).

7.2 Vocational training, work

The Governor recognised that visible leadership for vocational training was essential. Priority is now given to focus on developing the training role of the prison and leaders are now more visible and active within the prison's workshop and classroom environment.

Workshops and classrooms are open and attendance as recorded by the prison is increasing daily with near 75% attendance in the last months of the year. Attendance can be reduced by other prison activities, e.g. visits, health care appointments, wing forum and council meetings.

A lack of instructor meant the Rail Track workshop closed. Two other workshops closed temporarily at year end as staff shortages caused instructors to be redeployed.

The SLT plan to reopen a further 2 closed workshops once refurbished and create up to 30 new jobs, principally for men on the lifer wing.

April 2023

'This week our full time unemployed was 23% of the population down from approx. 36% some 8 weeks ago'

The Board notes the steady progress made in developing the training opportunities within the prison. The recent increase in employment rates among prisoners is undoubtedly a positive development, as it provides them with routine, distraction, purpose, and a sense of hope.

7.3 Offender management, progression

Prisoners remain critical of responses to concerns raised related to progression. A backlog in preparation of OASys reports, waiting lists and delays in access to required programs, have been frequent topics of conversation with prisoners all year. Prisoner wing forum minutes also support this concern.

OMU staff have been adversely affected with probation POMS who manage the most serious cases. The workload has meant the OMU staff set priorities. OASys reports can take up to 6 months to be produced. The increase in life-sentenced prisoners and in others with longer sentences has increased the number of high risk cases to be managed.

Board members have carried out many reviews of individual concerns raised. Those reviews indicated that prisoners in most need of support and plans as close to release or to transfer to a resettlement prison were robust.

Where the Board looked into individual concerns raised, the Board found that prisoners closest to release or transfer to resettlement (i.e. those at top of list) were being prioritised and actioned.

There were several cases of good practice where arrangements were made to ensure prisoners moving to an approved premise were able to meet hostel staff in advance. On occasion prisoners on release were met at the gate by probation or approved premises staff.

Although the prison has no formal resource or funding to support prisoners on release, no prisoner was released homeless.

7.4 Family contact

Visits have continued throughout the year with successful family days held, and a specialised forum for families of prisoners living on the neurodiverse wing funded by the NHS (E wing). Prisoners are offered the option of social video calls, although take up is below capacity.

The reps stated that social video calls were poorly organised and often they were escorted late or equipment didn't work properly.

7.5 Resettlement planning

Swinfen Hall as a Cat C training prison does not have funding to provide support for men on release.

During the reporting period up to 10 men were released from the prison each month. The prison expects to release directly at least 70 men in the next 10 months, as these men are less than 10 months from release and so cannot move to a resettlement prison. A further 134 men are due to transfer to resettlement prisons as they are in the 24 to 10 month resettlement window.

Population pressures indicate many of these men will not move to their resettlement prison.

The prison is not resourced to support prisoners on direct release. Swinfen Hall takes money from other budgets to fund an employee to assist with applications to open bank accounts, source identity documents including driving licences, National Insurance numbers, and birth certificates.

OMU staff also liaise with organisations across the country and local probation staff to ensure no one leaves Swinfen Hall homeless.

Support was provided to those in their final 2 weeks at Swinfen Hall. Prisoners due to be released felt these conversations happened too close to release date and so caused unnecessary worry. Their worries mostly related to location of approved premises, and to licence conditions which some felt were 'sprung' on them in the last 2 weeks of sentence.

8. The work of the IMB

Board statistics

The Board have 2 experienced members, and 3 commenced training in the year

Recommended complement of Board members	14
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	6
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	5
Total number of visits to the establishment	190

Applications to the IMB

Code	Subject	Previous reporting year	Current reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	6	7
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives scheme, sanctions	8	7
C	Equality	1	0
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, time out of cell	9	20
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection, restrictions	15	5
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	18	14
F	Food and kitchens	3	2
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	8	14
H1	Property within the establishment	36	37
H2	Property during transfer or in another facility	23	6
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogues	0	9
I	Sentence management, including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-categorisation	33	23
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	15	22
K	Transfers	37	26
L	Miscellaneous	5	1
	Total number of applications	217	193



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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at imb@justice.gov.uk