



Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Swansea

**For reporting period
1 June 2021 to 31 October 2022**

Published January 2024



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Introductory sections 1 – 3

1. Statutory role of the IMB

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

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

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

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

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

2. Description of the establishment

HMP Swansea was built in 1861 to accommodate 219 prisoners and the residential block is structurally unchanged, although modernisation and upgrading has taken place¹. A new wing, G wing, was opened in September 2015, adding another 60 places. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the ever-increasing prison population meant that the operational capacity (the maximum number of prisoners that can held without serious risk to safety, security, good order and the proper running of the planned regime) of Swansea was set at 475. Most cells accommodate two prisoners, however there are a few cells accommodating three, along with a small number of single cells. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the prison population was reduced considerably to give more single cell capacity and allow flexibility in the way suspected or actual cases of Covid-19 could be appropriately managed.

There is currently an extensive programme of cell and infrastructure refurbishment.

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.

3. Key points

3.1 Main judgements

How safe is the prison?

- It is the Board's view, from its monitoring, that HMP Swansea was a safe prison.

How fairly and humanely are prisoners treated?

- The Board is satisfied from its monitoring that, generally, most prisoners were being treated fairly and humanely.
- The Board remain concerned about the length of time that prisoners were on remand and awaiting court appearances.

How well are prisoners' health and wellbeing needs met?

- Mental health provision continued to cause concern to the Board. The Board appreciated that arrangements are being made for HMP Swansea to receive its own Mental Health Service but progress has been slow.

How well are prisoners progressed towards successful resettlement?

- The Prison has made great strides in the development of workshops and activities to prepare men for release.
- The prison continued to support prisoners with their resettlement.
- However, the Education Department has improved significantly, and Swansea Prison Library has been identified as an example of best practice in collaborative and partnership working both internally and externally.

3.3 Main areas for development

To The MINISTER

The Board is concerned about the level of Home Office support for immigration detainees and in particular the delays in movement of overseas prisoners after the completion of their sentence (see paragraph 5.4.6) The Board asks the minister to raise this matter with the Home Office and provide it with a copy of the response.

TO THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

The Board continues to be concerned around prisoners leaving custody without accommodation in future. The good work being undertaken in preparing prisoners for release and with employment on release has the potential to be undone by the lack of suitable accommodation.

The Board remains concerned as to the mental health service offered to prisoners within HMP Swansea.

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

We reiterate our message to the prison service from last year's annual report, as the issues remain. The Board has been concerned with the number of times where prisoners from 'out of area' are being received into HMP Swansea, whether from transfer from other Welsh prisons or from prisons in England. We fully appreciate

that the Prison Service is often under pressure to accommodate prisoners but would ask that reducing the number of out of area prisoners be considered when making placement decisions.

TO THE GOVERNOR

We applaud the establishment in its efforts to provide education and training for prisoners and the moves that have been made to secure suitable employment on release.

Informing the Board about Care & Separation Unit (CSU) admissions and Good Order or Discipline (GOOD) reviews in line with the Memorandum of Understanding has been inconsistent (see paragraph 5.2.6). The Board acknowledges its absence from the prison for much of the reporting year but the requirement continued during remote monitoring and its previous report also highlighted this issue.

The Board acknowledges the prison's efforts to locate speakers of the same language on the same wings wherever feasible and especially during this period when there were no formal ESOL courses available. The Board has noted that whilst there has been an increase in the use of 'thebigword' interpretation service across the prison, its usage at relatively low levels and is primarily accessed by the Equalities Officer (5.4.5). The Board would wish to see this facility being used by a broader range of officers e.g. key workers to ensure speakers of other languages can communicate and understand effectively.

Evidence sections 4 – 7

4. Safety

4.1 Reception and induction

4.1.1 Throughout the covid period, prisoner numbers were low, they have now begun to climb. The inductions process appears to have kept pace with this increase and prisoners are provided with information and a chance to speak to an Insider, who are trusted prisoners who can share their experiences of custody, at an early stage of arrival.

4.1.2 Listeners are prisoners trained by the Samaritans to provide peer support. Although Listener recruitment has been difficult, not least due to the turnaround of prisoners, the training of men into the role has been successful. The Listeners work well together and a representative attends the initial part of the Safety Meeting each month as well as other meetings.

4.1.3 Listeners are called out regularly to prisoners. The main areas of concern are sentencing, first time prisoners, isolation, loneliness and family issues being the highest of matters. The majority of calls are short up to 15 minutes. The feedback forms the Listeners is that the prisoners feel that they have sufficient support from the prison.

4.2 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody

4.2.1 There have sadly been 2 deaths in custody during the reporting period. (One death occurred shortly after leaving custody). The IMB were informed, and the matters were investigated by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO). One report has been produced by the PPO and procedures have been put in place following this incident to assist men who are leaving prison. The other report is still awaited.

4.2.2 The Listeners reported that following the last death in custody the men were upset. They did report that the level of support provided by the prison and staff was good and they did not suggest any areas of improvement.

4.2.3 Since covid measures were removed there has been a change in the self-harm figures. This has also coincided with the reintroduction of the basic regime. Although the figures have increased during the reporting period many of the incidents have been carried out by small numbers of men who self-harm on a many occasions. The Board have been informed that all serious incidents are logged and thoroughly investigated.

4.2.4 The data show that a number of self-harm incidents came from a particular wing where a number of vulnerable men were housed. This was kept under review by the prison to determine whether it did produce a trend. There were also two incidents of self-harm whilst men were in transit. The data suggests that men aged 30-39 are more likely to self-harm and were classified as having an ethnic group of W1. This seems to be consistent in all the data for the reporting period.

4.2.4 During the reporting period there has been an increase in the numbers of Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) opened. Although there does not seem to be any noted reason for this, a large number have been opened in Reception. The majority appear to be precautionary in nature with a large number closing within a 24-hour period. The majority were opened due to previous noted behaviour or comments of self-harm/suicide having been made. The number of such ACCTs are being monitored, but the prison feels the increase could be due to increased training and awareness of staff.

4.2.5 Safer custody peer mentors have been introduced. this was slow to implement but all wings now have a mentor. The main area of concern surrounded debt, but also in distraction packs not being available. This is being addressed and at the end of the reporting period the issue surrounding debt has reduced but will always be present.

4.3 Violence and violence reduction, self-isolation

4.3.1 The data reflects that there is an increase in the number of violent incidents towards both staff and prisoners. However, when data from previous years is analysed and the increased number of prisoners taken into account, the increase is not disproportionate and is expected. During July no incidents were noted. However, there was a 100% increase in August, with most of the incidents being between prisoners. There is also a review of how assaults on staff are noted as the severity of the incident is not differentiated. One reported assault was being shoved with a plastic plate whilst another was an officer being bitten during a Use of Force incident. There are a number of men with high violence predictor (VIPER) scores in the prison. This has increased with the increased population. The establishment has been allocated a score of 2.5 as its threshold for automatic referral for CSIP. Data and surveys have suggested that there are a higher number of violent incidents between 8.30am and 11.00am. Any correlation to this and any other activity such as Adjudications or Medical Hatch which take place at these times, cannot be found.

4.3.2 The number of men on Challenge, Support and Intervention Plans (CSIP's) has increased. Staff training has increased in this area and this seems to have had a positive effect. More CSIP's are now opened for nonviolent incidents such as bullying and conflict. There is often a higher number of referrals than opened CSIPs as there are a number of men who come into prison or are transferred with open CSIPs.

4.3.3 Mercury Intelligence Reports (MIR) are high. These are investigated and either closed with no further action or referred to CSIP. During the reporting period staff training was introduced in this area and this has resulted in better identification of incidents and improved reporting, uniformity and matters being dealt with more efficiently. Despite the various reports and higher levels of perceived violence the prisoner reported in a recent survey (of those who took part) that they felt that overall, the Prison was a safe environment.

4.4 Prisoners with specific vulnerabilities

4.4.1 The data do not show any particular trend in respect to safety. The only trend was that those who were veterans were more likely to self-harm. Although, this is not true throughout the period of reporting.

4.5 Use of force (UoF)

4.5.1 There has been a rise in the UoF incidents. All incidents are reviewed weekly by the prison with various actions taken depending on the incident. The use of body worn cameras (BWC) has not been as good as it should and reinforcement of this has been given throughout the prison. There is ongoing training in this area and as the time of the report a new BWC system is being installed due to old equipment needing updating. One of the shortfalls has been accurate detailing of the time of an incident. It has been suggested that a note is taken at the start of an incident. It has also been suggested that better paperwork is provided following the incident which was a point made by the PPO following a recent incident.

4.5.2 Healthcare are to be trained and attend PAVA and rigid bar handcuff awareness training. Although PAVA (a synthetic pepper spray) is present it has not been used in any incident during the reporting period.

4.6 Substance misuse

4.6.1 The introduction of the body scanner in October 2020 seems to have been successful in reducing illegal substances being brought into the prison. The only issue is there can be no quality assurance of its success as it is unmeasurable to a greater extent when prisoners are released back into the general population.

4.6.2 There does seem to have been an increase in the numbers of prisoners with illegal substances being picked up on the body scanner. This and the increase in the use of drug dogs and the vigilance of staff seems to have increased the number of detections.

4.6.3 With the reduction in illegal drugs circulation in the prison this may have an impact on mental health of the prisoners and there has been a call for increased support in this area.

5. Fair and Humane Treatment

5.1 Accommodation, Clothing, Food

5.1.1 At the end of the previous reporting year, significant progress had been made in cell refurbishment. D and F Wings had been completed and a start made on B Wing. The work had been managed internally with the in-house Amey team carrying out the works or sub-contracting aspects of it. A budget of £185k was allocated for the 22-23 financial year. In May 22 a decision was taken by the MOJ to place cell refurbishment under their project management arm. By the end of this reporting period no progress had been made by the MOJ in appointing a project manager and none of the allocated budget spent. This decision has effectively brought cell refurbishment to a halt between May 2022 – October 2022 which is extremely concerning especially as there appears to be no capacity to carry forward the allocated budget. This delay has also had a knock-on effect on specific work opportunities for prisoners.

5.1.2 There continues to be poor disability access throughout the prison. An Equalities Act 2010 compliant cell has been completed on C Wing. However, this six-week project carried out by Amey Projects ended up taking a total of 29 weeks to complete. Most significantly the floor had been laid sloping towards the door of the cell and not the shower drain. There appear to be no penalties built into contracts for this kind of unacceptable delay in completing projects. Clearly, one compliant cell with a prison population of over 400 is not sufficient.

5.1.3 Upgrading showers has continued on a number of wings and new showers have been installed in the prison kitchen for the prisoners working there. These refurbishments, including booster pumps where needed, have considerably improved the experience of prisoners. There is no facility to adjust the heat in individual cells (flow and return system) and windows on some wings, in particular C Wing are long overdue for replacement.

5.1.4 During the reporting period the in-cell telephony project was completed so that all cells now have a phone. Prisoner representative meetings have provided feedback on the operation of the new system and helped to ensure a fair and workable system for making phone calls. Prisoners seem happy with the times that the phones are available and unless there are Public Protection orders in place there are no restrictions on call duration if the prisoner has credit.

5.1.5 From a population of under three hundred at times during the Covid-19 lockdowns, the prison has once again reached four hundred and above during this period with pressure on places. A multi-disciplinary team has been systematically reviewing cell sharing risk assessments with numbers of 'high risk' reduced. The Board has satisfied itself that this approach does not appear to be compromising prisoner safety.

5.1.6 The in-house laundry is working effectively providing employment for prisoners. Several wings also have their own washing machines and driers. Bedding and kit changes are at an acceptable frequency (kit changes four times a week) and the implementation of the clothing exchange in 2022 has enabled a process for exchanging clothes at visits for remand prisoners. A few teething problems were experienced and exchanges have to be pre-arranged and only on certain days but the policy/process now appears to be embedding well.

5.1.7 Following the Covid-19 restrictions the kitchen is now up to its full complement of prisoners i.e. 25, with 14 in work at any time. There are a number of Foreign Nationals (FNs) who undertake ESOL classes so are effectively part-time. The kitchen is observed to be a positive working environment, visited every week by Board members. Prisoners carry out a full range of tasks e.g. food preparation; cooking; cleaning; dealing with stock etc. Prisoners continue to have access to achieving a level 2 qualification in food hygiene. Delays in appointing an assessor has meant the 'Clink' charity hasn't been able to start a project which would train a certain number of men and help them to find employment on release. There have also been a number of 'physical' improvements this year e.g. new shower area; new flooring in some areas; upgraded lighting and refurbishment of the lifts area.

5.1.8 The increase in food prices has so far had no discernible effect on the quality and quantity of food. To a large extent the buffer of a relatively low population at the beginning of the reporting year has helped cushion the effects of rising prices. However, with the population back to pre-Covid-19 levels this will have ongoing budgetary implications. As illustration of this is that goods bought in June 2021 at £26k cost £29.6k in September 2022. There continues to be a high percentage of 'home-made' food produced.

5.1.9 The kitchen continues with its six-monthly prisoner surveys and takes feedback from prisoner representative meetings. It runs themed menus throughout the year (nine in 2022) and advertises on in-cell TV. The system for weekly meal selection seems to work well – a four weekly menu is in operation. Forms are issued on Sunday and collected on Wednesday. Non returns see men automatically getting the 'default' meal choices. Special diets are catered for (with no additional budget) including low lactose, vegan (now a separate menu), gluten free and celiac (healthcare are able to order some items for the latter on prescription).

5.1.10 Improvement to certain wing serveries has taken place and standards of cleanliness are observed to be good and mealtimes well ordered. However, it is still regrettable and unacceptable that men eat all their meals in mostly shared cells of (6ft x 9ft) with a toilet in situ. Though there are regular checks that 'decency' curtains are in place this does not detract from this fundamental hygiene and dignity issue.

5.1.11 In 2022, the 'snack' bar/shop at the visits centre was brought under Reducing Reoffending. Effectively this has provided opportunities for a small number of prisoners to be employed in this area. Managed by the prison advice and care trust (PACT), the kitchen now prepares the food and 'sells' it to the facility. While this has meant more work for the kitchen, feedback from prisoners and visitors has been extremely positive.

5.2 Segregation

5.2.1 The CSU has five cells and is adjacent to C Wing which houses 30 prisoners (incorporating a constant watch cell) and staff work between both. The wing has a higher staff ratio to cover the CSU and the more vulnerable/challenging prisoners located on C Wing. Board members have consistently visited prisoners in the CSU and during the course of the year there has been much improved communication/notifications of removals to CSU by officers via the 'Swansea Board' email address. Board members have been able to monitor some removals with use of force deployed as well as cell movement due to dirty protests. At these times, use of force has been observed to be proportionate and carried out professionally. Three

person unlocks requiring protective gear have also been observed and facilitated to enable Board members to speak with the prisoner(s) concerned. At least one of those prisoners was awaiting a medium secure mental health placement with unacceptable delays.

5.2.2 There were roughly the same number of authorised segregations in 2021 (247) and 2022 (237). For the reporting period June 2021 – October 2022 there were 319. Over 55% of the latter segregations were due to positive body scans (majority on reception) with men held on GOOD until a negative body scan is received. As there are only five CSU cells, men have been held on the reception wing under CSU conditions when numbers exceeded capacity. While the introduction of the body scanner has undoubtedly detected and stemmed the flow of prisoners bringing illicit items into custody, it is unclear what quality assurance and oversight is built into the process.

5.2.3 There were 66 men held in CSU on ACCTs during the reporting period (18 months) as opposed to 28 in 20/21 (12 months). This is slightly higher than might be expected but as so many of the segregations are first night in custody (positive body scans) this may account for part of the increase. There were 31 incidents of use of force in the CSU which is commensurate with the 20/21 reporting period (12 months) at 18. Average stay on CSU was just under 6 days with a few notable longer stays. During this period there were two men held for over 42 days – both wishing to remain in CSU and at that time could be accommodated there.

5.2.4 Board members attend adjudications, held on C Wing, wherever possible and can see prisoners prior to their adjudication if feasible. A governor chaired adjudications standards meeting is held on a monthly basis and a quarterly adjudication standardisation & management oversight meeting. The Board welcomes the latter and its role in ensuring consistency and fairness. Adjudications are observed to be carried out in line with the correct process. Awards are observed to be commensurate with offences heard with only a small percentage of adjudications resulting in cellular confinement. As a snapshot between June 2021 – Oct 2021 (inclusive) 544 adjudications were held with 26 awards (4.78%) of cellular confinement. During the same period 25 referrals were made for Police prosecution.

5.3 Staff/Prisoner Relationships, Key Workers

5.3.1 During the reporting period the prison averaged between 261 (June 2021) and 287 (October 2022) full-time equivalent staff. Sickness absence remained relatively low with peaks in January 2022 and April 2022 at 24.54 and 20.91 days respectively. Sickness absence has on occasion affected the regime – most notably association periods – but prisoners on the whole seem to accept this. HMP Swansea continues to enjoy a relatively stable workforce with only nine leavers during this time. The leadership team has also been stable though the present Governor leaves in January 2023.

5.3.2 This stable workforce, coupled with a high national re-offending rate and Swansea being a local prison, does contribute to staff/prisoner relationships as many prisoners will be known by staff from previous sentences. Visits to reception will often reinforce the fact that prisoners and staff already know each other. In general, there is observed to be a good atmosphere on most wings when prisoners are out of cell and officers out on the wings. The Board has observed some good examples of de-escalation and engagement with difficult or vulnerable prisoners in some

potentially challenging circumstances both in the CSU and on wings. Use of force/assaults which are low in comparative terms, may bear witness to this. Movement to work and education is observed to be relaxed and well ordered.

5.3.1 By September 2021, key worker sessions were back up to their pre-Covid-19 levels. While some fluctuations were apparent throughout the reporting period interactions jumped from 487 in June 2021 to 700 in October 2022. On average a key worker will have between 5 – 6 prisoners and the model expects a 45 minute discussion per week. This is not always achievable due to issues like staff sickness and competing demands. Key workers' prisoners are not based on their working wing – this is currently under review.

5.3.2 Quality assurance of key worker sessions is undertaken by the Custodial Managers with the Senior Probation Officer sampling 10% of those sessions. Key worker session notes can be accessed on the internal computer system by the Board and this provides the opportunity to see whether officers are covering key areas and signposting/referring on to prison offender managers (POMs) for example. A process is in place for prisoners to request a change in Key Worker which will be considered by the offender management unit (OMU) manager. The OMU manager does specifically try to match on the basis of first language wherever possible and other factors e.g. learning difficulties with officers who have relevant experience.

5.3.3 Key worker narratives as evidenced by session notes do vary in quality. Officers receive key worker training as part of their initial training but there is access to further training (this was severely curtailed during Covid-19). They also have access to a resource/information spreadsheet that covers a range of key areas such as Accommodation; Health; Substance Misuse; Debt; Resettlement etc. to inform conversations with prisoners. The Board has not received any applications on key working and it is largely introduced into conversation with prisoners by Board members e.g. "Do you know who your key worker is?" "How often do you meet?" rather than being raised by prisoners themselves. OMU does not currently seek feedback from prisoners on key working.

5.3.4 The prisoner representative meetings with the Governor and other officers have continued on a weekly basis throughout this period and are undoubtedly a contributor to positive staff/prisoner relations. Meetings are minuted and actions noted and progress fed back the following week. No areas are off limits and it is an effective way of dealing with issues that might potentially escalate to complaints. The chair of the Board monitors the meeting on a regular basis and all Board members have access to the minutes.

5.4 Equality and Diversity

5.4.1 An equalities officer is based in the safer custody unit and divides his time between equalities (60%) and broader safer custody duties (40%). Equalities meetings have continued to be held on a monthly basis, attended by a range of officers and chaired by a member of the leadership team. There is a manager lead (custodial manager or governor) for each protected group. Each Board member has an area of special interest including equalities and diversity and meetings are regularly monitored. A large amount of data is collected and presented including outcomes for protected groups. These cover use of force, segregation, adjudications, discrimination incident reporting forms (DIRFs), FNs, employment, LGBTQ+ etc. The data is observed to be critically scrutinised at these meetings and areas of concern

flagged up. Meetings are minuted, actions noted and progress reported at subsequent meetings.

5.4.2 The proportion of prisoners with an ethnic minority background ranged between 12% and 20% during the reporting period slightly lower and higher at times than previously (April 2020 – May 2021 15 – 17%). The Swansea community population percentage is about 8%. The higher percentage of prisoners with an ethnic minority background in the prison population is in part due to the number of FNs and out of area prisoners. As a snapshot in September 2021 there were 63 prisoners with an ethnic minority background, with 51 out of area, of which 28 were FNs. Monitoring against the categories outlined in 5.4.1. demonstrated no significant disproportionality. There are fluctuations but none that flag up significant concerns. For example, in terms of the incentives scheme process between November 2021 and January 2022 prisoners with an ethnic minority background accounted for between 15 – 17% of the population. Between 14 – 16% were on standard and 18 – 26% on enhanced. An identified governor has a lead in the incentives scheme process and meets with prisoner representatives to discuss.

5.4.3 While the gathering of data is critical it clearly doesn't provide the whole picture. The prison continues to hold a significant number of forums and focus groups for protected characteristics with feedback/outcomes fed back to the equalities meeting. As an example, a 'Race' forum held in October 2021 prisoners with an ethnic minority background raised a number of issues including:

- A lack of staff understanding of religious practices, inconsistency appeared to be an issue with the wearing of religious headwear;
- A perception that if they congregated on the exercise yard then they are targeted by staff and ultimately shipped out;
- A feeling that their specific needs are not considered. Reception packs were given as an example, they suggested having packs that addressed some of their own specific needs to be made available as an alternative to smoking packs and grocery packs;
- A feeling that staff lacked diversity/awareness training of other cultures.

Specific issues were picked up at the following equalities meeting e.g. clear guidance to staff on the wearing of durags; action to be taken on staff cultural training. Equalities prisoner representatives are identified throughout the prison with regular training – the turnover of prisoners can make it difficult to sustain numbers at times. The equalities officer also regularly attends the weekly prisoner representative meetings (5.3.4.) and tries to ensure prisoners with an ethnic minority background are represented on that group.

5.4.4 The lack of disability access was noted in 5.1.2 and remains of concern. Regular visits by a physiotherapist started in 2022 which is a welcome provision. There is a well attended over 50's club held weekly and men are do not lose any wages, if they are workers, whilst attending the club.

5.4.5 The number of FNs ranged between 17 (May 2022) and 35 (Aug 2021) monthly, averaging 24 over the reporting period. The majority of FNs have been Albanian nationals. Where possible and appropriate men of the same nationality are housed on the same wing and employed in the same workshops. For example, the kitchen has a high proportion of Albanian prisoners. They are released for ESOL

classes which are no longer limited to a six-week course. There has been an increase in the use of 'thebigword' interpretation service across the prison with use also made of staff who speak other languages. Regional guidance from the FN single point of contact (SPOC) now approves the use of other prisoners to translate unless the matter is sensitive. The Board has some concerns about the latter beyond conveying simple, instructional information. It will monitor whether 'thebigword' usage (although still at relatively low levels) reduces further.

5.4.6 While visits by the UK Border Agency representative became more regular following the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions, only sentenced men are now seen. While previously there were issues about the movement of overseas prisoners who had completed their sentence, if men can provide an address which receives approval they are frequently released on bail. By the end of the reporting period there were no long term detained men.

5.4.6 The number of DIRFs submitted remains low – there were 12 between Jan – October 2022. Focus groups, forums and weekly prisoner representative meetings may be picking up issues and dealing with them before escalation to a complaint/DIRF. The Board has welcomed the new quality assurance undertaken by the Zahid Mubarek Trust (ZMT) implemented in 2022 and the prison is up to date with respect to submission of completed DIRFs. The governor receives a copy and feedback is discussed at the Equalities meetings. On the face of it, feedback from ZMT on a number of DIRFs which were not upheld during 2022 does indicate room for improvement in the investigation process.

5.5 Faith and Pastoral Support

5.5.1 Individual chaplains within the prison have a broad range of duties with respect to faith and pastoral support. Of the 15 possible chaplaincies (Buddhist, Anglican, Christian Science, Free Church, Hindu, Humanist, Jehovah's Witness, Jewish, Muslim, Orthodox, Pagan, Quaker, Rastafari, Roman Catholic, Sikh, and Spiritualist) only five are specifically represented in HMP Swansea: Anglican, Roman Catholic, Free Church, Muslim, and Pagan. The two full time chaplains represent the Church in Wales and the Free Church (37hrs/week), the Roman Catholic one (18hrs/week), the Muslim one (15hrs/week), and the Pagan one (3.5hrs/week).

5.5.2 Equalities data indicates that roughly 60% of prisoners have no declared faith. Of the remaining 40%, roughly 31% are Christian in various forms, and the remaining 9% are Muslims. Services or prayer/worship opportunities are organised for prisoners off the wing at the in-house chapel and chaplains have a presence on the wings to meet with men and publicise the latter. Chaplains work with other parts of the establishment with respect to religious festivals e.g. the Imam collaborating with the kitchen regarding Ramadan/Eid.

5.5.3 The only issues that seem to have arisen over the period of this report relate to Muslim worship. Prayer mats have been available through the Canteen ordering system but have been purchased by non-Muslims to increase comfort in cells which is against prison rules. The Imam is arranging for these mats to be removed from the Canteen or for religious affiliation to be checked before purchases can be made. Suitable spaces for prayer have also been problematic but this seems to have been resolved. An ongoing problem has been the availability of showers before Friday prayers with wing staff not always ensuring that this is possible.

5.6 Incentives Schemes

5.6.1 During the Covid-19 restrictions the prison complied with the national approach of only putting prisoners on 'basic' in the most extreme of circumstances. Coming out of such constraints the incentives scheme has been fully implemented prisoners with an ethnic minority background are reported on at the monthly equalities meeting showing no disproportionality. The number of 'enhanced' men is relatively high and this is understandable in a prison that has relatively low incidences of violence towards staff or other prisoners and has worked hard to improve the number of employment opportunities.

5.6.2 With respect to fairness the governor for residential services meets with wing representatives at a monthly forum to discuss the incentives scheme where they can report on issues raised by prisoners on their wings. They are also encouraged to come up with ideas for making the enhanced level more desirable. A spend of up to £100 for a specific item (not clothing) has been introduced during the reporting period for enhanced prisoners, which is available every six months. Other incentives include extra gym sessions, visits and spends.

5.6.3 The application process for enhanced status relies to an extent on officers' adding case notes under the 'incentive encouragement' sub-category on the internal computer system. Staff are being encouraged to document positive examples to support these applications. Applications are reviewed by custodial managers and complaints by prisoners that staff are issuing warnings resulting in a loss of status are dealt with directly by the governor for residential services.

5.7 Complaints

5.7.1 In order to keep track of all complaints and the relevant response times, the Business Hub produces a comprehensive, monthly breakdown of all complaints data. It records the numbers of complaints received from each wing, the subject of the complaints, the ethnicity of complainants, the complaints response areas, and the numbers and areas of late responses. The top three complaint areas are then noted and month by month comparisons can be made.

5.7.2 Between June 2021 and end October 2022, over 700 complaints were received by the Business Hub. Over 90% were from White (W9) prisoners – those from prisoners with an ethnic minority background during this period (as noted in 5.4.2) vary between 12 and 20 percent. The greatest number of these went to security and the business hub and related mostly to home detention curfew (HDC), property, pin phones, finance, and canteen. Late responses to these complaints mainly related to security issues, OMU, prisoners from Wings D and F, and other external issues.

5.7.3 Over this same period, the IMB received 72 applications (written representations to the Board). These related mainly to property, medical issues, relocations to alternative prisons, pin numbers, bullying by officers, and canteen.

5.7.4 Property is a consistent feature in both complaints and applications. This often relates to 'lost' property on transfer from other prisons or the courts. The maximum number of bags (weight restrictions) – imposed by GeoAmey means that on transfer men have to rely on prisons forwarding additional property. Unfortunately, this is usually where the system breaks down.

5.7.5 With respect to the prison handling complaints in general, considerable efforts have been made over this period to ensure that the recommended complaints procedure is effectively administered. There have been a few occasions when prior to an adjudication a prisoner in the CSU has reported abuse by an officer to an IMB member. At the adjudication where the prisoner then reports this alleged abuse/assault, the matter is automatically referred to the police. On those occasions the IMB has not been advised of the final outcome and this is perhaps an area which could be addressed more effectively.

6. Health and wellbeing

6.1 Healthcare general

6.1.1 Healthcare services are provided by Swansea Bay University Health Board. Dental Services are provided through a contract with “Time for Teeth” and Optometry Services by The Prison Optician Trust.

6.2 Physical healthcare

6.2.1 There is no inpatient facility at HMP Swansea. Space within the prison for health care provision is limited and like other services the building was not designed to facilitate healthcare. Men requiring hospital treatment attend local hospitals. There is a daily visit by a general practitioner (GP).

6.2.2 Prisoners were able to access GP, dental and optician appointments. Waiting times for routine appointments with both the GP and dentist were within community norms. The new optometry service was managing the previous reported backlog of referrals.

6.2.3 Despite staff shortages, the healthcare team continued to have a high workload, with a large number of the prison population on medication, the team being involved in healthcare screening on arrival, involved with ACCT documents and responding to medical emergencies within the prison. However, in general, the healthcare team were observed continuing to provide a decent service with men receiving timely access to healthcare services.

6.2.4 It appeared that the management of external hospital appointments was good, with adequate provision.

6.2.5 Issues relating to healthcare remained a significant cause of applications to the Board. However, the majority were quickly resolved with explanations of where people were in the referral chain, and what they could expect. Healthcare staff continued to be very helpful in resolving issues brought to them by the Board. However, complaints are handled by the local health Board and are not reported to the IMB. The IMB would value this information.

6.2.6 The healthcare team were observed to have had excellent links with the mental health and a vulnerable housed persons outreach nurse, and with the doctors at the High Street surgery in Swansea where prisoners of no fixed abode could attend on release.

6.2.7 There was also access to the GP out-of-hours service. There were regular visits from a sexual health specialist.

6.2.8 A privately contracted physiotherapy service had been introduced and proved very successful. Unfortunately, the service was curtailed due to contract payment issues, which are being addressed.

6.3 Mental Health

6.3.1 The provision of mental healthcare services remained of high concern. The mental health nursing team is shared with HMP Parc and access to the service was limited. The provision of service and the level of manpower was insufficient to meet client needs. The needs of individuals with complex mental health issues were still

not met. Moves were made to address this and agreement has been reached for Swansea to receive its own share of the present service and the division of staffing levels had been determined. Unfortunately, the enactment of this is still awaited.

6.3.2 The prison also had one in-reach mental health nurse, providing the link between psychiatric and forensic psychiatric services to those who needed this service. Attendance at the prison by forensic psychiatrists was arranged through them. The crisis service operated seven days a week. The team attended all ACCT reviews, saw any prisoner in crisis and offered appropriate interventions.

6.3.3 The mental health homeless and vulnerable housed persons outreach nurse sat on the prison health partnership Board. Healthcare staff liaised with the homeless team prior to release, informing them of treatments and medication of the released prisoner: this was proven to be a very positive step in the majority of cases.

6.4 Social Care

6.4.1 The safeguarding panel comprised both internal and external stakeholders. Policies were reviewed and amended as appropriate, staff training was arranged, and current referrals discussed. The establishment endeavoured to ensure it maintained consistency of care for those who had been subject to social services interventions in line with current legal obligations. The safeguarding panel reviewed all referrals on a quarterly basis and referrals were tracked.

6.4.2 Screening at reception could highlight issues and a referral to social services could then be made. Elderly prisoners were automatically considered for referral.

6.4.3 Concerns were reviewed by collators and analysed daily before being referred on to the most appropriate agency.

6.4.4 Safeguarding handouts continued to be distributed. Adult and child safeguarding training was also available on e-learning, and presentations to staff were made.

6.5 Exercise, regime

6.5.1 Following the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions and the end of the restricted regime exercise has returned to normal levels within national standards.

6.6 Drug and alcohol rehabilitation

6.6.1 An integrated substance misuse service was provided by Dyfodol which delivered psychosocial interventions and Swansea Bay University Health Board which provided clinical services. A joint drug and alcohol strategy and action plan were supported by regular local meetings. Newly arrived prisoners with drug and alcohol problems were identified promptly and received a thorough assessment and support from the primary health care team. Meetings were carried out monthly.

6.6.2 The introduction of the X-Ray examinations for prisoners on entry to the Prison and also when returning from Court has proved a deterrent to the concealment of drugs into the prison.

6.6.2 The 12-step addiction recovery programme had been introduced and had been well received with positive feedback around the outcomes experienced. Pre-release planning, focused on relapse prevention, harm minimisation and continuing treatment if required, with referral to community services.

7. Progression and resettlement

7.1 Education, library

7.1.1 Strenuous efforts were made during Covid-19 lockdowns to ensure men were able to access education with 64% of those who responded to the IMB Survey (Spring 2021) agreeing that they had been able to continue with their educational course.

7.1.2 At the beginning of 2022 HMP Swansea learning and skills were carrying a large number of staffing vacancies, 5 out of a total of 9 teaching staff plus administration staff. This had a significant impact on the delivery of classes with some having to be cancelled due to insufficient cover. All the vacancies were in the Essential Skills Wales (ESW) and employability areas, this remained an issue for the first two quarters of the year.

7.1.3 The delivery of non vocational programmes remained strong throughout the reporting period. The well-being outreach programme has remained an integral part of the curriculum. It is popular with prisoners and a total of 1560 starts have been recorded. The programme has been reviewed to ensure it provides what the men want/need. It caters for those hard to reach and vulnerable prisoners who may feel unable to attend or access Learning and Skills provision and work areas.

7.1.4 The in cell learning format available to all men at HMP Swansea, offers a range of accredited programmes from entry level 1 to level 2. For the more able there are more challenging routes progressing from level 2 to level 4 and thence on to distance learning. The profile of the prison however, does limit the type of educational courses available in house.

7.1.5 A charity, Changing Tunes, delivers interactive music sessions twice weekly. Special provision is made for men residing on C Wing with the sessions being delivered on the wing. Weekly art classes and morning outreach support sessions are delivered in the well-being centre.

7.1.6 As part of induction all learners complete their 'plan' on the virtual campus. Staff members or mentors help identify short and long term goals and potential pathways for employment whilst in custody as well as long term aims for release.

7.1.7 A curriculum review supported by members of the Regional Team was undertaken in the Summer of 2022. It was based on the labour market information and information provided by employers via the employment hub. Several initiatives were singled out for praise; the employment hub, the work being done in the well-being centre with particular focus on those with additional learning needs, the use of laptops to gain qualifications. Several recommendations were made e.g. the information received from DoIT profiler (a screening and assessment tool for neurodiversity) should be used to inform the entire prisoner journey across the prison. Information, advice and guidance (IAG) support should be provided within the induction process to ensure the choices made and goals set are both realistic and challenging. There is a dynamic quality development plan in place to address the recommendations.

7.1.8 The library service, provided by the City and County of Swansea Council, is very well attended and supported by both prisoners and staff. Men in the workshops now have access to the library.

7.1.9 During Covid-19 70 boxes of withdrawn books were donated to the prison by the City and County of Swansea Library Service. These were located on the wings. A request and collect service was set up within the prison and this has been so successful, it has continued post Covid-19. The request service was facilitated by teaching staff who were doing outreach work. Course work was returned to tutors via the book boxes.

7.1.10 During the period 2021-2022 6,934 books/DVDs were loaned and there were 658 visits to the library.

7.1.11 The Library is well stocked with books focusing on diversity and equality. There are specific activities to support events in the calendar such as Black History Month and LGBTQIA.

7.1.12 Resources are provided in a number of languages depending on the population. The librarians are responsible for book purchasing. Men are trained as library assistants and complete Agored Cymru accredited courses in customer services.

7.1.13 The Shannon Trust is based in the library and there is an excellent selection of books for emerging readers. The group usually comprises 7 learners and there are 6/7 mentors.

7.1.14 Swansea Prison Library has been identified as an example of best practice in collaborative and partnership working both internally and externally. In 2023 the library celebrates its 75th anniversary.

7.2 Vocational Training workshops

7.2.1 Covid-19 restrictions impacted on purposeful activity with only essential services operating; laundry, kitchen, waste management, wing cleaners. One workshop, tailoring, remained operational with scrubs being produced for NHS staff. Cleaners, peer mentors, safer custody mentors and veterans' mentors were working in line with Covid-19 protocols.

7.2.2 Normal activities resumed as soon as appropriate with all workshops operating as before.

There are 386 places available for full time workers. There are 7 part time workers. These places include on wing roles such as veterans mentor, dyfodol mentor, safer custody mentor and the reducing reoffending representative.

7.3 Offender Management and progression

7.3.1 During Covid-19 parole hearings took place over the telephone initially. Laptops were then made available however, with the POM and the prisoner sharing

a screen it was far from ideal. A large screen was purchased and hearings now take place in one of the conference rooms. Legal representatives, probation officers and POMs meet in the prison and link up with the Parole Board. This is proving to be an effective way of working and the feedback from men and staff is good.

7.3.2 The early release scheme introduced during the Covid-19 lockdown led to one prisoner being released early.

7.3.3 The Bail information pilot which commenced in September 2020 has been extended and early indications are that it is working well.

7.4 Family Contact

7.4.1 During Covid-19 social video calls proved popular however, only 59% of those who responded to the IMB Survey (Spring 2021) agreed that they were easy to book.

7.4.2 From the survey of men carried out in April 2021 73% of men agreed with the statement that, 'it was easy to make a phone call every day.'

7.4.3 The baby group has not been as successful as in previous years. There are plans to extend an invitation to grandparents in 2023.

7.4.4 8 families with children up to the age of 11 were able to participate in the family days organised throughout the year. One day was set aside for older children and 2 days were organised specifically for those with additional learning needs.

7.4.5 Quiet visits on a 1-1 basis are also available. These are supervised by a custodial manager in the PACT waiting and play area. Feedback received to date is extremely positive.

7.4.6 The team regularly review and adapt their searching processes to make the process easier for children with specific needs.

7.4.7 The Newbridge volunteer visitors group scheme was introduced in 2022. Birthday cards will be sent to those who wish to receive one. 97 men did not receive any visits in December and steps are being taken to try to address this through the Official Prison Visiting scheme and through prison fellowship.

7.4.8 Weekly meetings take place between PACT, Families/Friends of Prisoners (FFOPS) and the family contact team.

7.4.9 There have been issues around prisoners being produced to attend hearings in the family court or to attend social services case conferences, these have now been addressed.

7.4.10 Responsibility for the visits shop has been transferred to the kitchen and is staffed by prisoners.

7.5 Resettlement Planning

7.5.1 No staff were furloughed and so support continued throughout the Covid-19 lockdown.

7.5.2 Staff from the resettlement team engage with prisoners during their first 3 days in custody. Assessment plans are agreed and practical issues e.g. pets at home, are resolved.

7.5.3 The team has 6 caseworkers with each carrying an average caseload of 60 men. Every man has an allocated caseworker. Once an assessment has been carried out the man remains on file. Access to caseworkers is via requests submitted on wings.

7.5.4 Contacts have been developed with outside stake holders and links have been developed with the local authority and private social housing providers to ensure men are supported with tenancies where necessary. Strong links have been established with Housing Options and CTI Crisis. Housing applications are processed 8 weeks prior to release. Probation officers are involved in carrying out risk assessments prior to referrals to housing support agencies.

7.5.5 The Forward Trust has an employee on site 4 times a week.

7.5.6 Finding enough appropriate accommodation is an ongoing challenge for the resettlement team. Some men are released without any accommodation.

7.5.7 Three months prior to release caseworkers meet with prisoners, the initial assessment plan is revisited and any outstanding issues are discussed.

7.5.8 The St Giles Trust contract commenced at the end of 2021. Due to Covid-19 restrictions face to face contact did not take place until 2022. As part of the well-being pathway they provide support on release for those who request it.

7.5.9 Two weeks prior to release prisoners meet with the employment and resettlement Board. The multi-agency Board comprises members of healthcare, dyfodol, OMU and the employment hub manager and works to ensure men are released with the right level of support and guidance so they can be rehabilitated into the community as swiftly as possible. The resettlement team have been working with the employment hub and plan to arrange debt awareness training.

7.5.10 The employment hub opened on 01/08/22 and every prisoner in the last 12-18 weeks of their sentence has the opportunity to attend. The hub operates on similar lines to a job centre where prisoners have conversation on a 1-1 basis about how they see their future. DWP staff are present to advise and right to work documents are created. The hub links up with Working Wales and they visit the prison twice weekly.

7.5.11 Advice is given around qualifications and funding for courses which is available from Careers Wales. Training is delivered on site for a CSCS card for those wishing to work in construction.

7.5.12 The hub has developed links with several companies involved in construction, hospitality and cleaning who come into the prison so relationships can be built pre-release.

7.5.13 CVs are written with support and advice from a Gower College work course adviser who will also provide mock interview sessions.

7.5.14 On average between 5-10 bank accounts are set up monthly.

7.5.15 The Boss Project (Wallich) supports men 2 weeks prior to release to discuss tenancy agreements and positive disclosures.

The work of the IMB

Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	12
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	7
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	7
Total number of visits to the establishment*	353

*Does include “virtual” visits when actual visits prohibited.

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

Code	Subject	Current reporting period	Previous reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	11	4
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives scheme, sanctions	2	0
C	Equality	0	0
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, time out of cell	7	3
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection, restrictions	21	0
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	12	1
F	Food and kitchens	0	0
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	28	4
H1	Property within the establishment	11	4
H2	Property during transfer or in another facility	9	1
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogues	7	1
I	Sentence management, including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-categorisation	14	2
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	14	9
K	Transfers	2	0
L	Miscellaneous	6	1
	Total number of applications	144	30



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