



# **Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Long Lartin**

**For reporting year  
1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023**

**Published May 2024**



# Contents

<b>Introductory sections 1 – 3</b>	<b>Page</b>
1. Statutory role of the IMB	3
2. Description of the establishment	4
3. Key points	5
 <b>Evidence sections 4 – 7</b>	
4. Safety	10
5. Fair and humane treatment	13
6. Health and wellbeing	17
7. Progression and resettlement	20
 <b>The work of the IMB</b>	
Board statistics	22
Applications to the IMB	22
 <b>Annex A</b>	
Service providers	23
 <b>Annex B</b>	
Tables: Incidents of self-harm since 2020	24

**All IMB annual reports are published on [www.imb.org.uk](http://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

HMP Long Lartin is a long-term high security (LTHSE) prison, near Evesham in Worcestershire. Built in 1971 as a category C prison (for training and resettlement), it was upgraded to a dispersal prison (which accommodates the highest security-risk prisoners) in 1973. Perrie wing and the care, separation and rehabilitation unit (CSRU), both with in-cell sanitation, were built in 1999. Two further modern wings were added in 2009.

The prison accommodates predominantly category A and B male prisoners. The operational capacity (the maximum number of prisoners that can be held without serious risk to safety, security, good order and the proper running of the planned regime), is 609<sup>1</sup> (currently 584, due to cells being out of use).

Prisoners are accommodated in single cells in six mainstream wings, two support wings and the CSRU. A small number of prisoners live in a preparatory psychologically informed planned environment (pre-PIPE) unit, designed to motivate and engage prisoners and prepare them for transfer to an appropriate therapeutic community (where prisoners are housed separately to the population and take part in intensive rehabilitation) or a PIPE unit elsewhere. The four original wings, accommodating approximately 280 prisoners, lack in-cell sanitation and running water.

---

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

### **3. Key points**

#### **Background to the report**

The reporting year has been another challenging period, particularly for prisoners but also for staff. Serious shortcomings had already been identified by HM Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) at the end of 2022. The shortage of uniformed staff was eased considerably by the arrival of detached duty staff, which enabled the lifting of some of the previous restrictions made necessary by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Nevertheless, prisoners' day-to-day lives remained unpredictable. Safety, fair and humane treatment, health and wellbeing, routine purposeful activity, prisoners' progression and staff training continued to be adversely affected. A safe and decent environment for prisoners was hindered by a deteriorating and unsatisfactory infrastructure and very poor maintenance support.

A request made by the Board in July 2022 for a Ministerial visit was achieved in August 2023, when Minister of State Damian Hinds was able to see some of the serious concerns raised by the Board. Disappointment was expressed by prisoners that an opportunity was not provided for him to engage with them. A new Governing Governor was appointed in December, providing some hope for improvement for prisoners in 2024.

#### **3.1 Main Findings**

##### **Safety**

- The increased prisoner roll, from 480 to 584, has included the arrival of many younger prisoners with more non-associates (prisoners who cannot mix for their own interests or for the maintenance of good order or discipline in the prison), which has adversely affected overall stability.
- From the Board's observations, continued uncertainty with daily regimes, due to shortage of experienced staff, has increased prisoner frustration, mental health issues and levels of self-harm.
- Access to mobile phones and drugs, now regularly delivered by illegal drones, poses a serious risk to safety and control, fuelling the illicit prisoner trading culture, which leads to bullying, debt and increased violence.
- Investment is urgently required to maintain safety and stability in the establishment, specifically to upgrade obsolete and faulty security systems and raise the standard of property services' maintenance to an acceptable level.

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

- As a result of the unpredictable regime, prisoners spent far too much time locked in their cells.
- The very poor state of the infrastructure and inadequate level of maintenance support have failed to provide a safe and decent environment for prisoners.
- The cells on four wings lack running water and sanitation, which falls below modern standards of decency for nearly half the prisoner population.
- The number of key worker sessions has been minimal.
- There has been no significant improvement in property management, and many responses to prison property complaints continue to be unhelpful.

## Health and wellbeing

- In the Board's view, outpatient care continues to be generally satisfactory.
- Waiting lists have mostly been well-managed but some last-minute cancellations of specialist clinics have delayed appointments by up to six months. Cancellation of hospital escorts due to staff shortages continue to cause lost appointments.
- Prisoner health champions provided an excellent service, especially for elderly and unfit prisoners, but training and evening clinics ceased on losing the patient engagement lead (PEL).
- Mental health services have struggled to meet demand and, in the Board's view, there is need for better training in this area for uniformed and offender management unit (OMU) staff.
- The integrated substance-free living unit (ISFL) unit has not functioned as expected and has failed to fulfil its purpose.
- In-patient accommodation is in poor repair and cannot accommodate disabled prisoners. It is understood that essential minimum refurbishment is imminent but, to properly aid patients' recovery, better facilities and regime are required.

## Progression and resettlement

- Education and library provision improved considerably, with several new initiatives. When the unpredictable regime allowed, prisoners engaged well.
- Vocational training and work have been severely restricted as a result of workshop closures due to operational staff shortages. Attendance has been poor and engagement has been variable.
- More prisoner contact with prisoner offender managers (POMs) would achieve a greater understanding of their sentence plans. The pre-PIPE unit functions well and there is a waiting list for places.
- Management and staff continue to work hard to facilitate social visits and family days (these bring together prisoners and their families in a more informal setting).

## 3.2 Main areas for development

### ***TO THE MINISTER***

- **Drones.** The increasing quantity of illicit items carried into the prison by drones is a cause of raised levels of violence. What action is the Government taking to prevent drone incursions in prisons?
- **Security systems.** Much of the existing surveillance technology is obsolete or unserviceable, increasing the vulnerability of prisoners and staff. Will the Minister confirm that funds to provide a modern, fully operational surveillance system will be authorised and allocated within the next 12 months?
- **Prison infrastructure, maintenance and projects.** Will the Minister acknowledge that the prison infrastructure is now so degraded that effective routine maintenance is no longer possible and that a major modernisation project is required in the near future?
- **Lack of in-cell sanitation.** Short-term modifications to the night sanitation system (Nightsan) on four wings continue to require prisoners to use the 'slopping

out' process, which falls below modern standards of decency. When does the Government intend to provide all cells with running water and sanitation?

- **Prison visit.** Will the Minister visit the prison in 2024 to meet prisoners and listen to their concerns?

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

- **Drones.** Frequent drone incursions are delivering dangerous illicit materials. What preventive measures are being taken and when will they become effective?
- **Security systems.** The maintenance contractor, Amey, has been unable to restore or maintain the ageing surveillance equipment to enable it to provide the prison with adequate security cover. What measures are being taken to install and maintain effective and reliable electronic surveillance?
- **Prison infrastructure, maintenance and projects.** To which specific building and maintenance projects has funding been allocated in the next three years and in what order of priority?
- **Amey performance.** The 2022 annual report cited repeated serious failings in the performance of Amey. The Prison Service responded that 'the contract is managed and monitored through a range of metrics and escalation processes'. The Board has found no evidence to support this claim. How will the Prison Service ensure that Amey provides a satisfactory maintenance service?
- **Healthcare Centre (HCC).** What full programme of measures is planned to provide an acceptable level of care for inpatients?
- **Management of property.** The rules for possession of property vary among prisons. Are rules covering transfer and possession of property belonging to prisoners in the LTHSE to be standardised?

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

- **Self-harm.** What further measures can be taken to reduce self-harm?
- **Security.** The current unreliable and faulty security systems pose a serious safety risk. Is high priority to be given to enable repairs and improvements?
- **Prison infrastructure, maintenance and projects.** Will high priority be given, during 2024, to restoring the damaged kitchen fabric and replacing unserviceable appliances to an acceptable standard for hygienic food production? Will Amey maintenance priorities be set and monitored by prison management?
- **Litter and waste.** The current cleaning process is not keeping the prison clear of litter and waste. What measures are in hand to remedy the situation?
- **Prison staffing.** Will the improved staffing situation enable the return to a full and consistent regime and regular key work sessions?
- **Management of property.** Will the Governor review and clarify the local rules, process and responsibilities for ensuring that property reaches its owner without unreasonable delay?

### 3.3 Response to the last report

The responses, below, from the Minister and the Prison Service were provided in a letter from Damian Hinds, Minister of State for Justice, dated 11 May 2023.

Issue raised	Response given	Progress
<b>To the Minister</b>		
A request by the Board for a ministerial visit. This was originally requested in July 2022.	Ministerial visit agreed but no date given.	Ministerial visit took place in August. Matters raised were security, building and infrastructure projects, including healthcare and the kitchen, continuing poor performance by Amey and lack of in-cell sanitation on four wings.
The Board has annually repeated requests for provision of in-cell sanitation and running water in four wings.	The Night sanitation project has been completed but no remedy for lack of in-cell sanitation was proposed.	None. Apparent acceptance by the Minister of the existing situation.
Is the CSRU to be used only as a short-term measure?	Segregation will always be an exceptional measure, but circumstances will require its extended use.	There has been limited improvement. Now more Rule 45 prisoners (those who are kept apart/segregated from others) are being returned to mainstream wings.
Will action be taken to reduce secure hospital waiting times?	Escalation processes in place and data collection exercise set up for NHS to act on.	The average waiting time has reduced from 79 to 48 days, but is still too long due to the insufficient number of hospital beds.
<b>To the Prison Service</b>		
Request for agreement to provide a sufficient number of detached duty staff.	Recognition of the significant staffing shortage and commitment given to provide support. Improvements in retention and recruitment planned.	Staff shortages continue but improved recruitment has reduced the need for detached duty staff.
Will HMPPS (HM Prison and Probation Service) monitor and manage the Amey contract to achieve improved performance?	Monitoring processes detailed. Workforce to be supplemented with contractors.	No improvement in Amey performance. The situation remains extremely unsatisfactory.
Will the CSRU population be limited to 26?	Stated intention to reduce the CSRU to 24 spaces.	Achieved intermittently. Overflows have been housed on wings.
Is the HCC (healthcare centre) in-patient unit to be refurbished and the stairlift replaced?	A range of required improvements is due for delivery in this financial	No confirmation of start date at year end. No plan to refurbish the very inadequate association room.



<b>Issue raised</b>	<b>Response given</b>	<b>Progress</b>
	year. Stairlift has been repaired and is working.	Stairlift still unreliable.
Will rules for transfer of prisoners' property be standardised across LTHSE in 2023?	The Prisoners' Property Policy Framework will standardise and strengthen processes. Digital improvements will not be included.	No improvement. There has been no decrease in prisoners' property applications (prisoners' written representations to the Board) and prisoners are very critical of the system.
Request that wheelchair users will not be transferred in when no suitable cells are available.	The assessment process will keep transfers of wheelchair users to a minimum.	No wheelchair users were transferred in during the reporting year. The option to house them in the HCC would leave them without adequate facilities and isolate them from a normal regime.
<b>To the Governor</b>		
Will higher priority be given to repairs and improvements to the security systems?	Project to replace main security systems but funding suspended pending a national re-bid.	Minimal attempts have been made to repair obsolete equipment. At times use has been made of outdated components removed from other prisons.
Will the kitchen fabric be renovated and faulty appliances repaired to enable an acceptable standard of food production?	No response	No renovations have taken place. Failures to repair or replace faulty appliances continue.
What measures are to be taken to reduce the importation of illicit items?	No response	No reduction in illicit items is apparent. It is understood that measures to prevent drone incursions are currently being addressed locally.

## **Evidence sections 4 – 7**

### **4. Safety**

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

The roll increased from 480 to 584 over the reporting period, due mainly to the re-population of D wing. Most prisoners arrive at Long Lartin from other prisons and have some knowledge of prison regimes. First nights are spent on dedicated wings, where peer support is provided. The history and vulnerabilities of new arrivals are reviewed at the weekly safety intervention meeting (SIM). Inductions with regimes, Inclusion and education departments are held weekly but are sometimes subject to change and cancellation.

Delays in reuniting new prisoners with their property continue to be a source of distress for prisoners.

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

No deaths in custody were recorded in 2023. By contrast, there were four apparently self-inflicted deaths in 2018 and one in each of the following three years.

There have been 525 recorded incidents of self-harm in 2023. Since 2020, incidents have increased by 179%, and by 26% during the reporting year (see Annex B). However, surprisingly, the number of assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) plans (used to support prisoners who are at risk of self-harm or suicide) opened, has fallen to 135, compared with 164 in 2022.

IMB members monitored 40 ACCT reviews in the reporting period. Most reviews were conducted well, with good interaction between prisoners and case co-ordinators. However, some 20% of reviews monitored did not include a complete multi-disciplinary team (MDT). Reviews have, too frequently, been postponed at short notice due to the non-availability of case co-ordinators, which can be distressing for prisoners and disruptive for staff. The Board has concerns that POMs seldom attend ACCT reviews.

Reasons for self-harm include deterioration of mental health, property issues and lack of access to Listeners. Surprisingly, no reason was recorded for 14 of the 23 self-harm incidents in December.

Listeners can now walk the wings to offer support for prisoners without the need for appointments. They are trained by Samaritan volunteers who meet with them weekly for training, which has been well received. Listeners report poor co-operation from some wing staff and there is concern that the lack of understanding of the Listeners' role is denying opportunities or facilities for them to meet and help prisoners who need their support.

After a long period of absence from the programme, suicide and self-harm (SASH) training has now recommenced for staff.

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

The population increased by 22% in 2023 against a 32% increase in recorded incidents of violence. Prisoner association has increased but staff shortages have restricted regime and purposeful activity, resulting in boredom, frustration and violence. In 2023, there were 90 assaults on staff, a 29% increase on 2022. There

were 69 recorded prisoner-on-prisoner assaults. The effect of changing regimes on the number of violent incidents is shown in Annex B.

In the reporting year, there were 275 challenge, support and intervention plan (CSIP) referrals, used to support and manage prisoners who pose an increased risk of violence, of which 55 were opened and reviewed weekly. By contrast, in 2022, there were 142 CSIP referrals, of which 36 were opened.

Drone deliveries of illicit items have undoubtedly widened access to drugs and mobile phones, causing an increase in trade between prisoners and debt, leading to bullying and instability, in the Board's view.

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

All use of force (UoF) incidents, including assaults on prisoners and staff, threatening and abusive behaviour, damage to property and resistant non-compliance, are analysed monthly by committee, using video and body worn video camera footage. Meetings are normally observed by an IMB member. The Board is satisfied that UoF has been limited and appropriate.

In 2023, UoF incidents occurred in CSRU (17%); mainstream wings (41%); vulnerable prisoner wings (34%); PIPE/HCC (6%); and other areas (2%). All locations experienced an increase, except CSRU and E wing. A comparison of 2023 UoF incidents with 2022 is in Annex B. There were no obvious patterns in terms of ethnicity, religion or age.

Training in control and restraint, including the use of rigid-bar handcuffs, PAVA incapacitant spray and SPEAR (spontaneous protection enabling accelerated response) system, which has fallen behind in recent years, has improved but still falls short of the HMPPS target of 60%. Deployment of UoF statistics can be found in Annex B.

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

Regular voluntary and mandatory drug testing has continued, with 131 drugs' finds recorded. A total of 161 mobile phones and related accessories were found on entry and in the prison. This is a significant increase on the previous reporting year and may partly be due to the re-population of D wing. Comparative statistics with 2022 are in Annex B.

Some illicit items have been carried in by staff, either inadvertently or deliberately. Every incident is fully investigated. Items have also been recovered in the visits' hall, where search procedures have been improved this year. In February, the prison began to experience drone incursions. The number of deliveries of packages containing drugs and mobile phones has increased during the reporting year and is a major security concern. A total of 86 drones have been heard or observed and 31 packages intercepted.

#### **4.6 Security systems**

Much of the existing surveillance technology is obsolete or unserviceable, resulting in the emergency control room (ECR) being unable to properly monitor wings. This limits its ability to deploy timely assistance in emergencies and seriously compromises the safety of both prisoners and staff. Drone incursions further emphasise the deficiencies of the surveillance system.

Regular meetings are held between prison managers and Amey, the contracted maintenance provider, to review and prioritise upgrading and repair works. However, little progress has been made, nor can it be, without complete modernisation of the system and an effective maintenance contract. Meetings are normally observed by an IMB member.

It is understood that a planned HMPPS project to renew and upgrade the main security systems has been postponed.

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

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

Maintenance by Amey of the buildings, plumbing, heating, electrical systems and appliances fails to keep the prison in a decent state, bringing regular justified complaints from prisoners at wing forums, prisoner consultative committees (PCC) and to the IMB. Plumbing and drainage failures often result in unhygienic conditions. Amey's response is invariably slow and unreliable. The air extraction system on E and F wings, which has not worked for most of the year, is still awaiting repair. Grassed areas have been left uncut for long periods, concealing much litter and perishable waste thrown from cell windows, encouraging vermin and causing a health hazard. On average, 30 cells were out of use throughout the reporting year, half of which were due to cell door/Nightsan problems. (Nightsan involves prisoners pressing a button to join a queue so they can leave their cells, one at a time, to use the toilet. When there are issues, prisoners resort to the 'slopping out' process, where they use a bucket in their cell that they empty in the morning.)

Many essential appliances in the kitchen have frequently been out of action, resulting in limited choice of meals, wasted food and risks to food safety. The badly leaking roof has made all fat fryers inoperative and limited the use of two food stores. During December there was no heating in the kitchen for long periods, making it necessary to issue warm clothing to enable prisoners and staff to continue to work there.

Despite significant sums spent on modification of the Nightsan system, regular breakdowns continue, resulting in prisoners having to use buckets and bottled water to 'slop out'. The Board continues to maintain that the lack of running water and in-cell sanitation on four out of nine wings constitutes inhumane treatment and that those wings should be properly modernized, with no further delay.

Amey requires a permanent maintenance staff of 30 and is currently nine trades' people under strength, due to difficulties in recruitment. In a meeting with IMB members in January 2024, senior Amey managers acknowledged that maintenance of Long Lartin is unsatisfactory and is the worst in their prison portfolio. They attribute this to:

- the age and dilapidation of the site, which urgently needs substantial investment to replace structure and infrastructure
- wasted expenditure on futile projects such as the recent unsatisfactory modifications to Nightsan
- ongoing difficulties for staff and contractors in gaining access to the site while awaiting counter terrorist checks, which is significantly more onerous than in other high-security prisons
- the MoJ limit of £750 on normal maintenance items, beyond which they require local or MoJ authorisation, which is often delayed or refused.

Amey managers seem resigned to the fact that essential Government investment is unlikely to be forthcoming in the near future and also to their inability to prevent the frequent turnover of disillusioned site managers. This results in poor continuity, low staff morale and inadequate performance, which seriously impacts the daily lives and wellbeing of prisoners and prison staff.

The Board is concerned that major long-term projects, which require significant capital investment, including a new kitchen and renewal of the leaking roof over the centre of the prison, will be indefinitely delayed.

## **5.2 Segregation**

The CSRU has cells to accommodate 38 prisoners but has been limited by HMPPS to a maximum of 28 to enable improvement of the segregation regime. Due to the shortage of segregation cells across the LTHSE, the number of Rule 45 prisoners often exceeds this limit and some have to be lodged on mainstream wings, unsettling their regimes.

The population of the unit is inflated by prisoners who regard segregation as shelter from perceived or real threats, a route to transfer or to avoid the indignity of Nightsan. As such, they will commit acts of violence on wings to achieve segregation.

The HMPPS Pathways to Progression team advise on segregation management. Their assistance with arrangements for progressive transfers, together with wing supervisors' co-operation in managing challenging prisoners on wings, helped to reduce the CSRU population to 24 at the end of the reporting year. Each prisoner has a pathway to progression plan, which depends on improved behaviour. Plans are discussed at multi-disciplinary Rule 45 reviews (which determine whether or not a prisoner needs to remain segregated). IMB members monitored 740 reviews in 2023.

Limited transfer options and refusal by some prisoners to attain targets to locate on wings has led to those with complex needs and poor mental health remaining in an unsuitable environment for long periods, leading to deterioration in their condition.

A total of 41 prisoners were on open ACCTs in the CSRU during the reporting year.

Special accommodation cells (where one or more of the following items are removed to prevent a prisoner hurting themselves: furniture, bedding, sanitation) are used rarely and only if a prisoner is demonstrating extreme violence and posing a threat of serious injury to himself or staff. In 2023, a special accommodation cell was used once, for a period of two hours.

At the end of the reporting year, there were 100 outstanding adjudications (disciplinary hearings held by the adjudicating Governor when a prisoner is suspected of having broken prison rules). The Board is concerned that the adjudication process has often been used inappropriately, weakening its effect as a deterrent to bad behaviour. Annex B shows that 57% of adjudications during 2023 were unproven. Uniformed staff are now being encouraged to make appropriate use of the incentives scheme system before resorting to adjudications.

A summary of prisoners in CSRU with protected characteristics (age, ethnicity and religion, against which it is unlawful to discriminate) is in Annex B.

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

Applications to the IMB suggest that the serious shortage of uniformed staff has damaged staff-prisoner relationships, highlighting a lack of willingness to help and dismissive responses to complaints. Departments and prisoners complain of frequent delays in reaching appointments and activities after unlock.

Monthly PCC meetings have continued, though often starting late and with incomplete representation. Monthly wing forums, which should allow prisoners a voice on wing issues, have frequently not taken place.

Plans to restore prisoners' twice-monthly sessions with their key worker have largely failed. Only 200 sessions were held in January and this had fallen to fewer than 80 by December. Prisoners complain that the quality of sessions has been poor. An initiative has now been taken to train a small group of officers to deliver better-quality sessions to those prisoners most in need.

#### **5.4 Equality and diversity**

At the beginning of the reporting year, only 50% of wings had nominated equality and diversity representatives but most vacancies have now been filled. Equalities meetings have been held quarterly, but not always with wing representatives present. Separate management meetings and prisoner representative meetings will now take place monthly.

The analysis of protected characteristics has been expanded to cover adjudications, work placements and incentives scheme status. No significant concerns have yet been revealed.

Active forums have now been established for minority ethnic groups, young adults and armed forces' veterans.

An external agency, the Zahid Mubarek Trust charity, is advising on equality and diversity data and processes, including scrutiny of all discrimination incident reporting form (DIRF) investigations.

In 2023, a total of 169 DIRFs were received, of which 123 were investigated. This compares with 153 received and 64 investigated in 2022. The increased number of investigations in 2023 followed the appointment of a new equalities manager.

The welcome appointment of a neurodiversity support manager (NSM) is aiding progression for prisoners with neurodivergent needs.

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

The chaplaincy team is well staffed, well led and has a very visible presence in the prison. They were rated highly in the HMIP inspection of December 2022.

Regular religious services are held for the major faiths, festivals are celebrated and chaplains provide diligent individual practical and pastoral support to prisoners suffering from bereavement or personal crises. They also attend all Rule 45 reviews of segregated prisoners and ACCT reviews.

From the Board's observation, staff co-operation is reasonably good, but services are often delayed by prisoners arriving late due to unsatisfactory time-keeping on the wings. Moreover, ACCT reviews have been too frequently delayed or postponed by the unavailability of case co-ordinators, causing stress to prisoners and wasting the time of chaplains and other MDT members.

The badly leaking roof of the chapel (referred to in 5.1) has resulted in damaged, unsightly walls and reduced lighting, which impacts on the ambience of religious services.

## **5.6 Incentives schemes**

More prisoners were placed on a Basic level in the reporting year, owing to an increase in refusals to attend work, the increased level of violence and the high number of illicit items being brought into the prison by drones.

The average figures for incentives scheme privileges for the reporting year were: 50% on the Enhanced level; 40% on the Standard level; and 10% on the Basic level. (Of the three levels, Enhanced is the top, and prisoners can earn extra privileges by following prison rules.)

## **5.7 Complaints**

The Board continues to be concerned by the management and handling of complaints, including quality and timeliness of responses and the large numbers of rejections.

There has been some improvement in response times but the quality remains mixed and a sample revealed that approximately 20% of responses failed to meet the HMPPS guidelines, which require issues to be conscientiously addressed.

The Board has noted that the weakest responses to complaints have been those regarding property, both during transfer and within the prison.

## **5.8 Property**

There has been no apparent improvement in the system for managing prisoners' property. Delays and loss of property remain a major source of discontent, generating 30% of prison complaints and 17% of applications to the IMB. The importance to prisoners of respect for their property by the prison is underestimated. Long periods of separation from their property can affect prisoners' morale and wellbeing, and statistics show that it can lead to incidents of self-harm.

In the Board's view, reasons for poor property management include unclear HMPPS guidance, the unwieldy system of tags and hand-written property cards (a list of everything the prisoner has with them when they arrive at the prison), the quantity and high value of property owned by some prisoners, inexperienced staff conducting cell clearances and a lack of storage at Long Lartin and Branston (where excess prisoners' property is stored).

It is understood that HMPPS has no plans to introduce property bar coding.



## **6. Health and wellbeing**

### **6.1 Healthcare general**

Staffing levels were adequate until the end of the reporting year, when there was a new head of department and both the deputy head and the patient engagement lead (PEL) left without immediate replacements. A new clinical lead started in December.

The departure of the PEL meant that the input of the health champions reduced. Their evening wing drop-in sessions, which covered mental health, psychology, drug misuse and physical healthcare, were cancelled. New health champions to replace those who have transferred out cannot be trained until there is a new PEL.

### **6.2 Physical healthcare**

The inpatient facility and end-of-life cell are not fit for purpose. There is no shower suitable for disabled prisoners and several cells have been out of use for much of the reporting year. It is understood that a programme of partial refurbishment of the cells and showers is planned for 2024. The siting of healthcare on the first floor, with no lift and an unreliable and inadequate stairlift, makes the facility unsuited to prisoners with mobility issues.

Regime for prisoners, most of whom suffer mental illness, is poor and not conducive to preparing them for a return to a wing. For several months, only one prisoner has been allowed out of cell at a time while risk assessments are prepared. The recreation room is cramped and in poor repair.

The four remaining health champions continue to carry out wellbeing sessions on referral from nurses and Inclusion. They also run designated sessions in the gym for men who, for various reasons, do not usually attend. No progress has been made to enable health champions to work with CSRU prisoners.

Frequent regime changes and inaccurate roll checks have destabilised planned healthcare provision. This has resulted in cancelled and missed appointments, including those with specialist clinicians who only visit two or three times a year. Specialised medical equipment has, on occasion, been refused entry to the prison on security grounds, despite permission being requested well in advance. This has caused cancellation of specialist clinics.

Morning hospital appointment delays have, too often, resulted in escorting officers being unable to return for afternoon escort duty, resulting in prisoners missing afternoon appointments. Prisoners will continue to lose long-awaited places on hospital waiting lists unless better understanding and liaison between managers and healthcare staff can be achieved.

### **6.3 Mental health**

Inclusion is an integrated NHS team providing care for prisoners with poor mental health and drugs and alcohol rehabilitation needs. There is close co-operation with other healthcare staff working in the prison.

There has been a marked increase in mental health referrals and ACCTs remaining open during the reporting year. These factors, combined with some understaffing in key positions, has severely stretched the team's ability to help prisoners with the greatest need.

Better understanding of mental health and personality disorders by both discipline and OMU staff would bring benefits to prisoners and ease pressure on mental health

professionals, allowing them to provide better care for prisoners with the greatest need. Inclusion are able and willing to provide training and are hoping that it will be included in the training programme for officers and POMs in 2024.

Inpatient facilities have been almost exclusively occupied by mental health patients and continue to be totally inadequate for this purpose.

There have been 238 psychiatric assessments during the reporting year and 15 prisoners have been referred to secure hospitals, of whom 10 have been accepted. The average waiting time of 48 days from referral to hospitalisation continues to be unsatisfactory, but it is a slight improvement on the previous year.

#### **6.4 Social care**

Social care is delivered by the safety and equalities team. The memorandum of understanding (MoU), which outlines how the parties will work together but is not legally binding, between HMP Long Lartin, Worcestershire County Council (WCC) and Practice Plus Group (PPG) remains in place. Cases are raised at weekly SIMs but the WCC representative rarely attended during the latter part of the reporting year, making it difficult to ensure that suitable and timely support arrangements were provided. Quarterly social care steering group meetings have often been cancelled due to the non-availability of delegates.

A total of 26 social care referrals were made in the reporting year. Fifteen occupational therapy assessments were carried out, with specialist equipment recommended for nine prisoners. However, at the end of the reporting year, responsibility for equipment purchase was still under discussion and four assessment reports remained outstanding.

WCC staff visit prisoners needing social care but have, on occasion, been refused entry on security grounds, in spite of appropriate prior arrangements. 'Buddy' prisoners assist with housekeeping tasks such as fetching meals, laundry and tidying cells.

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

The gym staff have provided a comprehensive regime this reporting year and the sessions have been extremely popular, with full attendance. The prison has prioritised this facility and the staff have rarely been redeployed. Gym provision continues to contribute significantly to positive prisoner outcomes. The unit has raised over £4,000 for local charities.

Regime on wings during the reporting year until September was poor, with very limited time out of cell. This was due primarily to the declining retention rate of uniformed staff, although the arrival of detached duty officers eased the situation later in the reporting year. There was rarely better than a 50/50 unlock level and at weekends the prisoners were frequently not unlocked at all. During this time, there was very little purposeful activity on the wings.

#### **6.6 Drug and alcohol rehabilitation**

Positive drug tests, regular finds of drugs and alcohol and now frequent drone deliveries (some of which have been recovered), all indicate that drug use and alcohol production are widespread and regarded by many prisoners as the only relief from the monotony of very long sentences.

The Inclusion substance misuse caseload at the end of the reporting year was 55. There is currently no integrated substance misuse service nurse, but prescribed treatment is administered by a GP. Regular one-to-one and group therapy sessions with Inclusion recovery workers are now held when accommodation and discipline staff are available.

The future of the ISFL unit on Perrie Blue wing is under review. Covid-19, a ready supply of drugs, staff shortages and regular use of the unit to house overspill from the CRSU have contributed to the failure of the current model.

## **7. Progression and resettlement**

### **7.1 Education, library**

The education department is now fully staffed but has required the support of occasional workers. Prisoners have generally engaged well during a year of unpredictable regime. By December, attendance reached the expected level of 80%. A broad curriculum is offered and some subjects are taught to NVQ Level 3. More prisoners have studied English and Maths in the reporting year, with 38 Maths exam successes and 55 in English. The department supports the MoJ initiative 'Careers in Custody' to train prisoners for jobs in the prison and the reporting year saw the introduction of Level 2 qualifications in catering and cleaning.

Art classes are particularly popular and prisoners produce some excellent work. The Koestler Arts charity encourages prisoners to change their lives through art and has an annual programme of awards. In 2023, Long Lartin prisoners won 40 Koestler awards and the prison received a platinum award.

The library has provided meaningful support to prisoners. Storybook Dads (where prisoners can record stories on CD or DVD for their children) was introduced and is proving popular, while Reading Ahead (to encourage less confident readers) was re-launched in May. Attempts to re-introduce sessions for retired men were unsuccessful, but there is a new initiative for a weekly reading group for beginners, which is planned to start soon. Education classes have begun to make greater use of the library in the reporting year and, in response to the changing demographic, materials are now available in a wider range of languages.

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

The prison has seven workshops and a creator centre to develop IT skills. These provide capacity for 16 sessions per day, four days a week. Prisoners' progress must be evaluated and tracked but the quality of record-keeping is inconsistent.

When there is a shortage of operational staff, workshops are among the first facilities to be closed. During 2023, they were open for an average of only four to five sessions a day. The laundry is permanently closed, because the unserviceable boiler is deemed uneconomic to repair. Building maintenance has also been a cause of workshop closures.

Workshop attendance throughout the reporting year has been poor, with a high level of refusals. Prisoner engagement depends on the quality of work available. When it is educational or creative (such as woodworking), prisoners engage well but, too often, it involves mundane and repetitive tasks that require little skill. Disengaged prisoners are regularly observed chatting and neglecting to do their work.

The unpredictability of delivery times for completed work makes it difficult for the prison to arrange commercial contracts.

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

The Offender Management Unit (OMU) has been slowly recovering from pandemic restrictions and there is still a backlog of offender assessment system (OASys) reports, which has been further hindered by incomplete reports received from other establishments.

Long sentences should be no bar to prisoners' progression in the system and throughout 2023 the Board was concerned about insufficient contact between prisoners and POMs. More recently, POM-prisoner meetings have included an invitation to key workers, but their attendance is infrequent.

A plan to institute OMU surgeries has not yet materialised. More regular contact with POMs would bring prisoners greater awareness of their sentence plans and could relieve their sense of frustration and lack of hope for progression.

Long Lartin is not a suitable location for category C prisoners (those who are a lower risk and are unlikely to escape but who cannot be trusted in an open prison). During 2023, 20 prisoners were re-categorised from B to C and 16 category C prisoners were transferred out. The overall number of prisoners remaining on Category C is nine. These prisoners are anxious to progress with their sentences. However, transfers are prioritised, not by waiting time but by availability of appropriate programmes, facilities and space. A location close to home is only considered if a prisoner is near the end of his sentence.

The PIPE unit achieved three successful planned moves during the reporting year and supported an average of 10 prisoners, including some of those imprisoned for public protection (IPP). There continues to be a waiting list for places. A popular initiative in the reporting year was the introduction of a reading/literature group. Also, the garden provides meaningful work and the prisoners enjoy the regular animal therapy sessions.

The staffing situation improved towards the end of the reporting year. A forensic psychologist now attends the unit two days each week and the recent appointment of a designated POM should improve morale.

Prisoners and staff have periodically been challenged by the presence of prisoners from the CSRU lodging on the unit, which has disrupted the regime.

#### **7.4 Family contact**

There were 3,500 social visits in 2023 and visiting families continue to receive valuable support from the Prison Advice and Care Trust (PACT) staff and volunteers. It became apparent that the inexperience of some officers, temporarily assigned to visits, reduced consistency of good supervision. Staff have recently received training to enable them to challenge inappropriate behaviour by prisoners and visitors with more confidence. Late arrival of prisoners to the visits' hall, previously reported by HMIP, continues to occur.

A total of 1500 social video calls were made during the reporting year. In October, the installation of new terminals resolved frustrating connection issues and the duration of calls was increased to 45 minutes.

In June, an initiative to support those who do not receive visitors gave some prisoners the opportunity to enjoy tea and cake in the visits' hall with a friend from their wing. This was well received and further initiatives are being explored.

## 8. The work of the IMB

### Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	15
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	10
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	11
Total number of visits to the establishment	544
Total number of segregation reviews observed	740

### Applications to the IMB

Code	Subject	Previous reporting year	Current reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	11	22
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives scheme, sanctions	15	26
C	Equality	12	3
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, time out of cell	15	15
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection, restrictions	19	19
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	9	11
F	Food and kitchens	8	8
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	25	30
H1	Property within the establishment	27	30
H2	Property during transfer or in another facility	21	20
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogues	12	11
I	Sentence management, including HDC (home detention curfew), ROTL (release on temporary licence), parole, release dates, re-categorisation	22	15
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	37	38
	Staff/prisoner concerns, other	Included in the figure above	21
K	Transfers	6	16
L	Miscellaneous	10	18
	<b>Total number of applications</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>303</b>

## **Annex A**

### **Service providers**

- Canteen: DHL Group
- Education: Milton Keynes College
- Healthcare and pharmacy: Practice Plus Group (under contract to NHS England)
- Maintenance: Amey
- Mental health: Inclusion - Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
- Substance misuse programme: Inclusion - Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
- Social care: Worcestershire County Council
- Visitor centre: Prison Advice and Care Trust (PACT)

## Annex B

### Tables

#### Incidents of self-harm since 2020 (see 4.2)

Year	Incidents recorded	remarks
2020	188	
2021	371	
2022	414	
2023	525	26% increase on previous year

#### Effect of changing regimes on the number of violent incidents (see 4.3)

Year	Incidents recorded	Remarks
2019	183	Full regime before Covid-19.
2020	62	Restricted association. Illicit trading and consequent debt minimized.
2021	93	Covid-19 restrictions eased. Increased association
2022	114	Further Covid-19 restrictions relaxed.
2023	151	Regimes remain limited due to staff shortages.

#### Use of force incidents (see 4.4)

Year	Incidents (overall)	Incidents (CSRU)
2022	291	62
2023	337	57



#### Deployment of use of force (see 4.4)

Occurrences	Number	Remarks
PAVA used	10	During serious incidents of disorder.
Baton draws/strikes	1	For de-escalation.
Assaults on staff	90	70 assaults in 2022.
Injuries to staff	24	
Injuries to prisoners	14	

#### Illicit items recovered (see 4.5)

Year	Total number of items recovered	Drugs' finds	Phones' and accessories' finds
2022	335	122	54
2023	480	131	161

#### Adjudications' statistics (see 5.2)

Year	Adjudications held	Adjudications proven	Remarks
2022	1421	496	35% proven
2023	1377	598	43% proven

#### Summary of prisoners in CSRU with protected characteristics (see 5.2)

Number of prisoners: 24  
 Open ACCTs: 2  
 Unlock level: L1: 19; L2: 2; L3: 3  
 Incentives scheme status: Enhanced: 3; Standard: 10; Basic: 11  
 Age: Average: 31.5 years.  
 Youngest: 24 years.  
 Oldest: 44 years  
 Ethnicity: White: 18; black: 3; mixed ethnicity: 2; Asian: 1  
 Religion: Muslim: 10; Church of England: 5; Roman Catholic: 4;  
 Jewish: 1; Atheist: 1; Scientologist: 1; none: 2  
 Time in segregation: Average (24 prisoners): 154 days  
 Longest (3 prisoners): 625 days; 569 days; 438 days  
 Shortest (3 prisoners): 6 days; 26 days; 39 days



This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit [nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3](https://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3)

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications>

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at [imb@justice.gov.uk](mailto:imb@justice.gov.uk)