



Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Full Sutton

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

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Introductory Sections 1 – 3

1. Statutory Role of the IMB

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

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

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

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

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

2. Description of the establishment

HMP Full Sutton is a category A and B men's high security dispersal prison, which forms part of the long-term high security estate (LTHSE). It is situated about 11 miles east of the City of York. It has a certified normal accommodation, CNA (the number of prisoners a prison can hold without being crowded) of 631 and an operational capacity/OC (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) of 594¹. At the end of 2023, the number of prisoners accommodated was 584.

Nearly all prisoners at Full Sutton present significant risks to security or the public at large. A small number of prisoners have committed offences connected with, or sympathetic to, terrorist goals and some have achieved significant criminal notoriety for other reasons.

HMP Full Sutton opened in 1987 as a purpose-built high-security establishment. There are six main wings: A, E and F are general wings, and B, C, and D wings accommodate vulnerable prisoners (prisoners are vulnerable due to the nature of their offence or for other reasons). The STEP unit is a reintegration wing for prisoners with complex needs who are leaving long-term segregation. There is also a segregation unit, close supervision centre (CSC), separation centre and healthcare unit.

The site also includes a kitchen, education department, workshop complex, chaplaincy, gym, library and visitors' centre. A reception area for prisoners' relatives is located outside the main gate.

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 findings

From the Board's observations, HMP Full Sutton generally appeared to be a calm prison. Governors and staff adopted a considered approach to security, safety and prisoner welfare.

We reported on tight staffing levels in 2021 and 2022, and this continued to be the case in 2023. The shortage of staff, which was a national issue experienced across the Prison Service, resulted in the continued rotational lockdown of wings and special units. For the most part, the lockdowns were accepted by the prisoners, but they had an effect on what the prison was able to deliver in some areas.

Nevertheless, from the Board's observations, a decent regime and a generally safe environment were maintained.

Safety

- Safety and security were maintained.
- There was an increase in the number of incidents of violence between prisoners.
- There was an increase in incidents of violence against staff, due partly to prisoner behaviour in the segregation unit.
- The prison held some very complex prisoners who self-harmed regularly, and there was an increase in the number of prisoners who self-harmed.
- Vulnerable prisoners, or those whose needs were particularly complex, were reviewed regularly and supported during the year.
- The prison sought to transfer prisoners to more appropriate establishments, where necessary.
- Fewer drug testing days were lost in 2023 than in 2022, but drug testing capacity remained reduced.

Fair and humane treatment

- Accommodation is of a good standard.
- The prison is clean and well decorated, but some work is needed in the shower areas.
- Rotational lockdowns were in place for most of the year due to staffing issues.
- Prisoners spent more time in their cells and were unable to attend education or work as often, due to the planned lockdowns.
- Wings and discrete units (the segregation unit, separation centre and STEP unit) maintained fair regimes despite the planned lockdowns.
- The segregation unit held high numbers throughout the year.
- There was some disruption by prisoners and dirty protests seen within the segregation unit.
- Treatment in the Segregation Unit remained fair and humane.
- Food in the prison was good.

Health and wellbeing

- Healthcare carried fewer staff vacancies in 2023 than in 2022.

- In the Board's view, prisoners' access to healthcare staff on site was, generally, similar to that experienced in the community.
- Regular meetings and support groups for prisoners - e.g. the elderly and those with alcohol-related problems - were re-established.
- The prison improved its focus on equality and diversity issues.
- Prisoners' access to the gym was maintained, despite the planned lockdowns.
- A neurodiversity support manager was appointed to enable a prison-wide approach to recognising and supporting prisoners with neurodiverse characteristics.
- The prison chaplaincy team was active and regularly kept in touch with prisoners.
- There were delays in searching and distributing prisoners' property.

Progression and resettlement

- The provision of education has improved, but prisoners' ability to attend was affected by rotational wing lockdowns.
- Prisoners undertook work in their cells, so they were still able to complete their courses.
- There remains insufficient work for prisoners to do.
- A total of 23% of the prison population who could work are unemployed because there are insufficient activity spaces.
- The available workshops fluctuated during the year, sometimes because contracts ceased.
- Long-planned woodworking workshops failed to open in 2023 due to national contract and budgetary constrictions.
- There was a shortfall in the number of qualified psychologists, despite ongoing recruitment campaigns.
- Critical and essential work was covered, but consultancy time in the prison's discrete units was restricted.
- Qualified facilitators were available to deliver offender behaviour programmes (OBP) and the majority were successfully completed.

3.2 Main areas for development

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

- How will the Prison Service support Full Sutton to achieve an increase in the number of workplaces for prisoners, so that the proportion of prisoners in work improves significantly?

TO THE GOVERNOR

- What action is being taken to ensure the woodworking workshops open in 2024 (previously planned to open in 2023)
- When will there be an increase in the number of workplaces available so that the number of prisoners out of work is substantially reduced?
- How does the Governor plan to improve the time taken to search and distribute new prisoners' property and ensure prisoners receive their property in a timely manner?
- When will there be an increase in drug testing capacity?

3.3 Response to the last report

Issue raised	Progress
Continue to develop the STEP unit and ensure its role in the pathway to progression programme is clear, and that it can resume its role of breaking the cycle of segregation.	Partially achieved. The progress in the STEP unit has been hampered by an increase in numbers and rotational lockdowns.
Ensure equalities meetings are held consistently.	Achieved. Equalities meetings are now held regularly.
Ensure that the focus on drug testing (random, suspicion, and reception) is maintained and takes place to the required levels.	Partially achieved. There has been an increase in the number of days available for drug testing.

Evidence sections 4 – 7

4. Safety

4.1 Reception and induction

During the year, new arrangements were put in place to try to ensure that new prisoners' health checks were carried out promptly. Depending on the time of reception and the availability of healthcare staff, prisoners are either given a healthcare screening in reception on arrival or by healthcare staff within 24 hours. The IMB will continue to monitor the promptness of healthcare checks in 2024.

4.2 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody

Prisoners with complex needs and those who present a risk because of vulnerability or violent behaviour are regularly reviewed. Complex needs/safety intervention meetings are held weekly, led by the Governor responsible for safer custody. The meetings are multi-disciplinary and attended by representatives from the safer custody team, equalities team, mental health team, healthcare, wing custody managers, residential and segregation governors, offender managers, neurodiversity support manager, chaplaincy and the IMB in its monitoring role.

The meeting reviews: particularly complex prisoners whose behaviour may be causing concern; monitoring and input from the wings, prisoners on challenge, support and intervention plans (CSIPs) and subject to assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) procedures. It also reviews prisoners of concern in the segregation unit, transgender prisoners, those aged 25 and under, and any violent incidents that have occurred in the previous week. In addition, it considers any relevant information about prisoners about to potentially transfer to HMP Full Sutton, or who have recently transferred in. The meetings are largely effective and the IMB has witnessed good sharing of information, thoughtful contributions from those attending, problems being addressed and solutions sought. The meetings ensure that staff from the relevant disciplines are regularly aware of the circumstances of particularly complex prisoners.

During 2023, the prison held some prisoners who self-harmed prolifically. These prisoners harmed themselves regularly and seriously. Some had been transferred to HMP Full Sutton during the year from secure hospitals and other establishments and were already subject to ACCT procedures when they arrived.

The number of incidents of self-harm rose from 208 in 2022 to 371 in 2023, and involved 65 prisoners, 34 of whom self-harmed on more than one occasion, and some on multiple occasion. These prisoners accounted for over 91% of the incidents of self-harm. The IMB is satisfied that appropriate steps were taken to support and care for such prisoners, and to make appropriate referrals for transfer to other establishments, where necessary.

A total of 167 ACCT documents, which identify and set out the actions needed to support men at risk of self-harm and suicide, were opened. The IMB observed very few ACCT reviews during the year, because of the reduction in IMB members. The number of Listeners (prisoners trained by the Samaritans to offer confidential and emotional support to fellow prisoners) in place ranged from 15 to 30, and ended the year at 22.

There were three deaths in custody during 2023. One was, apparently, self-inflicted, and two, apparently, of natural causes, as a result of long-term illnesses. As of 31

December, the Prisons & Probation Ombudsman (PPO) investigation reports into the deaths in custody are yet to be received.

The IMB has assessed that, overall, Full Sutton seeks to maintain a safe environment for prisoners and staff. The complex needs and safety intervention meeting ensures that, where necessary, there is proper liaison with other prisons and secure hospitals in advance of transfers in or out of Full Sutton.

In the IMB survey, 68% of those responding reported feeling safe in Full Sutton.

4.3 Violence and violence reduction, self-isolation

During the year, 33 CSIPs (used to support and manage prisoners who pose an increased risk of violence) were opened to investigate potential violence or bullying between prisoners. This figure has continued to fall significantly since 2020 and is the result of the regular review of the behaviour of identified prisoners and the suitability of the CSIP approach; the continued relevance of plans for individuals is also regularly reviewed.

Prisoner-on-prisoner assaults increased from 31 in 2022 to 52 in 2023, with six incidents classified as serious. Assaults on staff increased from 39 in 2022 to 67 in 2023, with five incidents classified as serious. A total of 35 incidents of reported assaults on staff occurred in the segregation unit. This reflects the high numbers of prisoners held in the unit and a spate of unrest at the end of the year. Overall, 11 incidents were classified as serious, compared with 3 in 2022. Despite these figures, the atmosphere within the body of the prison generally remained calm.

Three-quarters of those responding to the IMB's survey reported that they had not experienced bullying or victimisation by other prisoners.

4.4 Use of force

Incidents of use of force increased from 195 in 2022 to 228 in 2023.

Use of force (UoF) by prison staff continues to be reviewed at UoF meetings. The use of force scrutiny panel meetings, under which a sample of incidents of force was selected by the IMB for review with senior staff, have not been able to take place in 2023, due both to some unavailability of relevant staff and insufficient IMB members.

The IMB is satisfied that the prison's focus on security and safety was maintained in 2023. Security issues that arose during the year were, for the most part, low level and minor.

4.5 Preventing illicit items

During 2023, 68 potential weapons were found across all areas, compared with 24 in 2022. This includes all items that had the potential to be used as a weapon. Target searching continued where there was intelligence.

4.6 Substance misuse

Random tests

Drug testing was able to be undertaken more frequently in 2023 than in 2022. The drug testing team achieved the required level of mandatory random drug tests each month (353 tests in total). However, they were not always able to complete all those required at weekends, as the team was detailed to be on other duties on weekend afternoons. A total of 17 tests returned a positive result (just under 5%) with the drug

groups reported as: new psychoactive substances (NPS), cannabis, opiates, anti-convulsants and buprenorphine.

Suspicion tests

Suspicion testing is time-limited and must be carried out within 72 hours of the suspicion being reported. It is, therefore, heavily dependent on the balance between the number of reports at any one time and the availability of testing staff. In the 227 cases where staff had raised suspicions, 87 prisoners (38%) were subsequently tested, a similar level to the number in 2022. A total of 87 suspicion tests were carried out in 2023, of which 27 returned a positive result, with the drug groups reported as: NPS, cannabis, opiates and ketamine.

Reception tests

Testing in reception was carried out on new arrivals at the prison: five tests were carried out in 2023, with two tests returning a positive result.

Frequent tests

A total of 26 frequent tests were carried out in 2023 on prisoners found guilty of refusing or failing a drug test. Five returned a positive result, with the drug groups reported as NPS and opiates. Risk tests were carried out on prisoners whose behaviour was known to be triggered by drugs, had drug-related factors in their offence or who were required to have drugs tests as part of their progression to a different unit or regime: none was found to be positive.

While some testing across the required areas was carried out, the required volume of testing could not be achieved because of staff redeployment elsewhere.

From all types of testing, 51 tests were positive, with 33 of the tests having a positive indication for NPS. In the preceding years - 2021 and 2022 - the prison regime was still under Covid restrictions, with less contact occurring between prisoners and with the outside. It is not possible, therefore, to make any direct comparison between findings in 2023 and previous recent years.

The IMB was satisfied that the prison was aware of changes in behaviour on the wings, both of individual prisoners and collectively, which might have been drug related and that these were monitored and shared at relevant meetings including, when individuals were affected, the complex needs/safety intervention meetings.

Overall, 150.5 drug testing days were lost, due to staff shortages or staff being assigned elsewhere. Although this was a significant reduction compared with the number of days lost in 2022 (260.5 days), it remains the case that higher levels of drug testing could be achieved. The IMB will continue to monitor the position in 2024.

5. Fair and humane treatment

5.1 Accommodation, clothing, food

The standard of accommodation is generally good, and all prisoners occupy single cells. Overall, the prison is well decorated and clean. Low-risk prisoners from the wings were employed as painters and cleaners on the landings, corridors and in communal areas. This served not only to provide employment but was also effective in ensuring a decent standard of cleanliness.

The introduction of a 'self-help' team saw improvements to both prisoner and staff areas. Work has already been carried out by the 'self-help' team in relation to floor repairs, although the flooring in some cells and shower recess areas is still in poor condition. The 'self-help' team has established a flooring repair programme, which they will continue to work through in 2024.

In-cell telephony was introduced at the end of 2023 to all cells. Prisoners were able to make social calls to family and legal representatives (providing they have purchased sufficient phone credit) without queuing to use the public wing phones. This improvement was welcomed by prisoners.

In April 2023, HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) increased the daily allowance for prisoner catering from £2.02 to £2.70 per head. However, the overall increase in food prices has meant that managing the catering budget remains a challenge. About 100 prisoners can 'opt out' of servery food and cater for themselves on a budget of £12 per week. This option is a privilege based on a prisoner's incentives scheme status, and is an opportunity welcomed by many prisoners.

The IMB received no applications about the quality of food in 2023. In response to the IMB survey, 58% regarded the quality of food as good or reasonable.

5.2 Segregation unit

The number of prisoners held in the unit at any one time averaged 31 in 2023, higher than in the previous year (26). This was the result of several factors: prisoners refusing to locate onto a wing on arrival; new arrivals failing to pass through the body scanner to check for concealed items; and an upturn in the number of assaults on staff. However, there was an inability to transfer prisoners to other establishments, except on a one-for-one swap, because of the high number of prisoners held across the LTHSE and the consequent absence of capacity in other segregation units.

The average number of days a prisoner stayed in the segregation unit was 28 days, also a slight increase on last year.

The high segregation roll brought significant challenges for staff, as some prisoners were disruptive and there was a spate of assaults on staff and damage incurred to cells. There were eight incidents of dirty protest, a higher number than in previous years, one of which lasted over 100 days.

Despite the periods of disruption, the IMB is satisfied that the unit provided a decent regime for prisoners. We are satisfied that prisoners on dirty protest were asked regularly if they wished to have a shower and end their protest.

Special accommodation (cells or room where items such as furniture, bedding and sanitation have been removed in the interests of safety) was only used once in 2023 - for one prisoner for four hours. The IMB was properly informed.

The IMB observed all 26 of the fortnightly segregation review boards held during the year. We were satisfied that prisoners were given the opportunity to contribute to their review board, either in person if they attended, or through written submissions if they did not. The review boards were multi-disciplinary and included a member of the mental health team to assess a prisoner's suitability for segregation.

The segregation unit accommodation was, generally, of a good standard. A secure and private medical consultation and dispensing facility was added in 2023, and the exercise yard was been improved, with cardiovascular equipment available for use by some prisoners.

STEP unit

The small STEP unit has capacity for 18 prisoners in total (14 prisoners and four peer support prisoners). Part of the LTHSE's pathways to progression programme, it aims to break the cycle of long-term segregation and prepare prisoners to re-enter the mainstream location through a high level of purposeful activity and other psychology informed services. The unit offers a mixed regime for both general and vulnerable prisoners.

Within the unit, a prisoner is offered the services of a peer support prisoner (PSP) whose role is to engage with the prisoner and encourage them to participate in the regime and make progress.

The unit operated at full capacity for most of year and came under pressure to accept more prisoners more quickly. This put pressure on the PSP scheme and meant that prisoners had to be unlocked in two different cohorts, resulting in less time out of cell.

During the year, four prisoners progressed from the unit to normal location.

The aim of providing a varied regime supported by psychological interventions was only partially achieved in 2023. Rotational lockdown of wings and units, which occurred throughout 2023, curtailed the time available to the unit psychologist for intervention work. Some elements of the regime, such as education, were also restricted, although prisoners could still attend library and gym sessions. Towards the end of the reporting year, the only paid work available to unit prisoners ceased because the contract ended. This hampered the STEP unit's ability to progress prisoners out of long-term segregation; the Board will continue to monitor developments in 2024.

Separation centre

The separation centre is a national resource and specialist unit housing prisoners who were either involved in planning terrorism, pose a risk to national security or who are seeking to influence others. It is separated from other wings and is self-contained in all aspects, including for recreation and education.

From the Board's observations, the unit is well run and during 2023 prisoners progressively engaged more with staff and the regime that was offered. Eligible prisoners were able to attend library and gym sessions and began accepting the work that was available on the unit. Two prisoners have begun to use the Virtual Campus (a secure, web-based learning environment). Monthly community meetings take place between prisoners and staff. Prisoners raised very few concerns with the IMB during the year.

Close supervision centre

The close supervision centre (CSC), a small, self-contained unit situated away from other wings and units, houses prisoners who have committed very serious acts of violence in prison.

The prisoners are divided into two cohorts on separate regimes. Steps have been taken to try to ensure that prisoners receive the maximum time out of cell. However, scheduled rotational lockdowns, which have occurred across all wings and units, have increased the difficulty in scheduling some activities, as well as prisoner offender management, psychology and care management planning sessions.

The accommodation is decent, and a prisoner has undertaken the redecoration of the unit. It is well equipped for horticulture, wherein two prisoners are heavily involved, producing items such as hanging baskets in the summer and, for the first time, Christmas wreaths in 2023. These projects are self-financing. Prisoners are able to use the Virtual Campus and one prisoner is undertaking a horticulture course.

5.3 Staff and prisoner relationships, key workers

Staff and prisoner relationships were, generally, good and, in 2023, the IMB received fewer applications (prisoners' written representations) concerning staff relationships than in 2022. A total of 72% of respondents to the IMB survey were satisfied there were staff they could turn to if they had a problem.

The Board saw many instances of positive day-to-day interactions between staff and prisoners, including those with complex needs.

A lack of staff, which resulted in wing lockdowns, and staff being detailed to work on wings other than their own, affected the ability to conduct key worker sessions with prisoners. However, an improvement in staffing levels led to the reintroduction of fortnightly key worker sessions for all prisoners in October. Prisoners on ACCTs were seen at least weekly, as were all IPP (imprisonment for public protection) prisoners; newly arrived prisoners had weekly key worker sessions for the first four weeks after arrival.

5.4 Equality and diversity

Full Sutton has a diverse population in terms of age, ethnicity, faith, and other protected characteristics (which it is unlawful to discriminate against). In 2023, 39 prisoners (7%) were under the age of 25, some of whom have very long sentences. Overall, 35% of prisoners were under the age of 35. The prison also held 40 prisoners who were over 65, the eldest of whom was 87, as well as those with disabilities. All faiths are represented, with the Christianity (45%) and Islam (27%) being in the majority. A total of 20% reported having no religion. Foreign national prisoners made up just over 11% of the population. This mix represents challenges for care and equality of treatment.

The focus given to equality and diversity matters improved during 2023.

Equalities action group meetings between prisoners and senior managers re-convened on a bi-monthly basis and were well attended by both. The IMB monitored some of the meetings and found they covered information on all protected characteristics and equality strands and were useful and informative. Disability and older prisoners' meetings have been re-established and an LGBTQ+ forum meets bi-monthly.

There have been Pride and Black History Month events. In addition, a neurodiversity support manager has been employed to help identify neurodiverse prisoners, make adjustments, and raise awareness amongst staff. Plus, adjustments have been made to searching procedures to support transgender prisoners.

The IMB is satisfied that the re-focus on diversity and equality issues, which occurred in 2023, meant that the needs of different groups are receiving proper attention. In 2023, the IMB received fewer applications relating to equality than in the previous year.

Full Sutton commissioned an internal audit of equality and safety in July 2023, with some external input, which rated the prison at Level 3 and found that outcomes for prisoners were reasonably good. There will be a further safety audit, by HMPPS, in 2024.

5.5 Faith and pastoral support

The Chaplaincy team is active, visible throughout the prison and chaplains are regularly in contact with prisoners. Chaplains of all faiths contribute to Segregation Review Boards, ACCT reviews for vulnerable prisoners, and attend the Complex Needs and Safety meeting. Despite wing lockdowns, corporate worship was held regularly throughout the year.

5.6 Property

There were delays in searching prisoners' property in 2023, with some not receiving their property for up to seven weeks, due to several factors. First, the volume of property with which some new prisoners arrived, which far exceeded the national volumetric control limits, created searching and storage difficulties. Secondly, the dedicated search team (DST), which is responsible for all searching across the prison, was stretched. This was due, in part, to the number of prisoners in the segregation unit being held for secreted items, which required additional searching procedures, but also because of the number of occasions they were required to carry out other duties in the prison and at other establishments. Throughout the year, Full Sutton provided mutual aid to other prisons with staffing difficulties, which also reduced the number of staff available.

A decision was taken to try to reduce delays by allowing reception staff to undertake searches under the supervision of the DST, rather than searches always having to be undertaken by DST officers. But this was not implemented before the end of the year. At the end of 2023, 20 prisoners were waiting for their property.

In order to deal with the adverse effect on some prisoners of the absence of property, a stop-gap arrangement was put in place that allowed prisoners to be escorted to extract a few basic items from their property prior to a full search being carried out. The Board will monitor the timeliness of property searching in 2024.

6. Health and wellbeing

6.1 Healthcare general

Spectrum Community Health CIC provides or manages primary, general, psychiatric, and mental health services within the prison, including outpatient services, chronic disease management, the optician, health promotion programmes and referral to secondary care consultant services. These are provided for all residential wings of the prison, including the CSC and separation centre. Dentistry is provided by Smart Dental Care and commissioned separately by the local integrated care board (ICB)

Spectrum also operates the prison's nine-cell inpatient unit, comprising six healthcare cells and two safer custody cells, as well as a nursing suite.

The IMB monitored the prison's management of the healthcare contract through attendance at contract delivery boards and is content that healthcare for prisoners remained at an acceptable standard.

The IMB received 18 applications relating to healthcare in 2023, a fall from the 26 received in 2022. The applications were varied and did not highlight alleged poor care levels but related mainly to administrative aspects of healthcare, such as waiting times for external hospital appointments or consultations, for example.

6.2 Physical healthcare

At the end of 2023, there were five primary care nursing vacancies in the healthcare unit. In the IMB's prisoner survey, a majority of those who responded complained about the difficulty in accessing healthcare services, although access to a nurse was reported as being easy by 50% of respondents. The average waiting times for routine healthcare services varied but, at the end of the year, stood at: GP-23 days; nurse-up to two days; optician-1 month; and dentist-3/4 months. The IMB judged these to be broadly in line with waiting times in some parts of the community. However, each GP and dental clinic reserved appointment slots for urgent or emergency consultations, which allowed cases to be dealt with immediately, when necessary.

GP services were reviewed in 2023, resulting in a reduction from three GPs to two, but with no change to the level of cover.

Prisoners were referred to outside hospitals for treatment when needed and, as in the community, significant use was made of phone consultations. Chronic-disease management for at-risk prisoners was in place, including MRI scanning, with a mobile unit visiting the prison four times during the year, which avoided prisoners having to be escorted to hospital. However, the in-house X-ray facility ceased functioning towards the end of the year, having reached the end of its life, and has not been replaced. X-rays are now being carried out by appointment, using portable equipment that is brought into the prison.

6.3 Mental health

Prisoners with mental health conditions at Full Sutton are managed by the mental health in-reach team (MHIRT), with prisoners supported by mental health nurses, plus access to psychiatrists where necessary. At the end of 2023, their caseload stood at 96 prisoners (approximately 16% of the prisoner population). At the end of 2023, there was one mental health nurse vacancy, an improvement on 2022. However, the IMB survey indicated that prisoners who used the mental health services still regarded access to a mental health nurse as being difficult.

In 2023, four prisoners were transferred to Full Sutton from secure or medium secure hospitals (compared to 12 in 2022), and two prisoners were transferred in the opposite direction. A total of 21 prisoners were on the mental health register in 2023, two fewer than in 2022.

Mental health care provision appeared satisfactory in 2023, with the mental health team displaying a keen knowledge of prisoners with some particularly complex needs.

6.4 Social care

Satisfactory arrangements were in place to undertake social care assessments for prisoners in need of in-cell aids and adaptations. One prisoner had a social care plan at the end of 2023.

6.5 Time out of cell, regime

All wings were given advance notice of their rotational half-day lockdown dates and times. Prisoners in work or education were particularly affected as, during the lockdowns, they were not able to attend their timetabled activity. However, in September and December, the regime was relaxed for access to education, and then work, due to better staff availability, which meant that prisoners were able to leave their cells to attend.

At the end of 2023, 112 prisoners were neither in work nor in education. This was 23% of the prisoner population who were eligible for work. These prisoners remained in their cell during the day when work or education was timetabled. The Board believes this figure is too high and will monitor the plans in 2024 to provide more work opportunities for prisoners.

In late November, prisoners received access to in-cell telephones, which allowed them to schedule convenient telephone contact times with children or other family members. This has been welcomed.

Access to the gym, important for prisoners' fitness and mental health, continued, despite rotational wing lockdowns. The gym, apart from the usual weights, cardiovascular and indoor/outdoor sports, introduced courses for kettle bells, as well as for prisoner kettle-bell instructors, which offered accredited qualifications.

6.6 Drug and alcohol rehabilitation

The resumption of Alcoholics Anonymous groups, which ceased during the Covid period, did not take place until November 2023, with 11 prisoners participating. Narcotics Anonymous did not resume at all but is planned to do so in the first quarter of 2024. The Board will continue to monitor the progress of these services in 2024.

7. Progression and resettlement

7.1 Education, library

In 2023, Milton Keynes College provided courses in English, Maths, Business, Industrial Cleaning, Catering, Art and Design, Personal and Social Development Skills (PSD) and Mentoring in a college environment. The IMB witnessed good engagement with tutors, who held learners' interest in class.

A total of 416 courses were started in 2023 (with some prisoners undertaking more than one course), with 360 completed and only six failures.

On average, 108 prisoners per day were allocated an education place, 21% of the relevant prisoner population. Average attendance was 57%. The rotational wing lockdowns, which were in place for most of the year, meant that some prisoners were unable to attend their classes. The impact of this was mitigated as far as possible by extending the length of some courses so they could be completed, and by the introduction of in-cell work packs, which allowed prisoners to continue to study in their cells. Some prisoners were also able to sit planned examinations on an alternative date.

During the year, a head of education, skills and work was appointed to the senior management team to enable better co-ordination of the provision of work and education, which improved allocation arrangements.

The prison also appointed a neurodiversity support manager, which allowed a prison-wide approach to recognising, identifying and supporting prisoners with neurodiverse characteristics. The role comprises both on-wing support to individual prisoners, and raising staff awareness of prisoners' diverse needs, to improve recognition and understanding of some prisoners' triggers and behaviours.

Systematic work is now being carried out with prisoners on wings by key workers to identify specific educational needs. The Board will continue to monitor the results of this.

A prison-wide reading strategy was announced in late 2023, with the expectation that not just educators but also the wider body of officers and staff recognise the importance of encouraging prisoners to attain better skills and confidence in reading.

The IMB prisoner survey found that 60% of prisoners who responded found that access to the library was easy. More attention has been given to the provision of larger print, age-appropriate and dyslexia-friendly books for prisoners, alongside the provision of standard books, CDs and DVDs in the library. A roll out of books and other reading material in workshops to encourage prisoners to read started in late 2023.

The provision of education in the prison's small units continued to be limited in 2023. The Virtual Campus is available to use in both units, but scheduling of catering classes to the CSC and STEP units was limited to every six weeks due to rotational lockdowns. More access to tutors and courses is planned at the start of the new contract year in April 2024. The Board will monitor the success of this.

Maths and English courses, which are key to unlocking most work opportunities for those prisoners who have not attained Level 1 or Level 2 in these subjects, remained difficult to access, with waiting times averaging six months. This was because the college's contract only provided for one tutor in each subject. The Level 1 Maths course runs four times a year, with eight prisoners on each course. Success rates

were relatively high, with 84% of Maths starters and 88% of English starters successfully completing the course.

Education mentors were in place on wings, and the Board saw evidence of their participation in classes in their prisoner-support roles. There are 16 trained Shannon Trust reading mentors, who assist in the college and on the wings. The Board witnessed some of this support during wing visits.

7.2 Vocational training, work

The absence of sufficient workshop places for all who wish to work has been highlighted by the IMB in previous reports and remains a concern. There are high levels of unemployment. Many workshop places are part-time, with some exceptions in the DHL workshop and the prison kitchen. This is expected to continue into 2024. A total of 62% of respondents to the IMB Survey indicated a difficulty in obtaining employment.

During the year, a lighting production, textiles and packing workshop closed, and there were fluctuations in the capacity of the charity bicycle repair workshop. Some of these closed to allow for the preparation of new woodworking workshops, which have been planned for some years. However, these did not, in the end, begin in 2023, as intended. It is unclear when the woodworking workshops will be open and able to start offering places.

There was some new provision for work in 2023. A workshop to recycle cardboard and metal cans, and for the repair and refurbishment of damaged cell furniture, including some re-upholstery, started up. This has been earmarked for expansion in 2024 to create two separate workshops, which will increase the number of places available. Funding has now been secured, which will allow the resumption of the lighting production workshop in early 2024.

The Board will monitor the progress of these initiatives in 2024 and the prison's success in reducing the unemployment levels more generally.

7.3 Offender management, progression

The IMB has seen evidence of extensive prisoner offender management (POM) support for prisoners wishing to make progressive moves to other establishments or specialist treatment units.

There continues to be a shortfall in the number of qualified psychologists at Full Sutton, with the department carrying seven vacancies during the year. Whilst covering critical and essential work, availability of consultancy time for the discrete units was restricted as a result.

There was, however, a full complement of qualified facilitators to deliver the accredited offender behaviour programmes (Kaizen, Identity Matters and HII) and validated programmes (M&E Group; M&E Individual and Framework for Change). A total of 35 prisoners started these programmes, and 33 completed them, in 2023.

There were 15 IPP prisoners at Full Sutton at the end of 2023, 14 of whom were over tariff and have never been released, and one on licence recall. There is a structured bi-monthly system of review and discussion of these prisoners' engagement with interventions and sentence planning, completion of which will enable them to show evidence of their risk reduction. These meetings involve their POM and a psychologist. The Board has observed one meeting and received the minutes of others.

7.4 Family contact

In addition to regular social visits that are held three days a week, the prison continued to run monthly extended family days at which prisoners could maintain ties with adult family members and children. These extended visits lasted seven hours and were supported by the prison, with refreshments, structured activities and the opportunity to have a family photo taken.

Prisoners also had the opportunity to maintain family ties via the use of social video calls, which are provided free each month to prisoners who wish to book them.

Late in 2023, prisoners were able to make use of the newly installed in-cell telephones (see section 5) to make calls to family without having to queue for time on the wing telephones. Feedback to the Board has been overwhelmingly positive.

7.5 Resettlement planning

Only a small number of prisoners are released directly from Full Sutton. This occurs only when prisoners continue to need management within the High Security Estate prior to release and, therefore, cannot move to a lower category prison beforehand. In the Board's view, release planning and resettlement arrangements are appropriately managed for these prisoners.

8. The work of the IMB

Board statistics 2023

Recommended complement of Board members	17
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	8
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	4
Total number of visits to the establishment	183
Total number of segregation review Boards observed	26

Applications to the IMB

Code	Subject	Previous reporting year	Current reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	9	4
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives scheme, sanctions	10	17
C	Equality	10	7
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, time out of cell	10	14
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection, restrictions	14	10
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	4	8
F	Food and kitchens	3	4
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	26	18
H1	Property within the establishment	7	12
H2	Property during transfer or in another facility	13	6
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogues	5	2
I	Sentence management, including HDC (home detention curfew), ROTL (release on temporary licence), parole, release dates, re-categorisation	4	18
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	22	17
K	Transfers	8	1
L	Miscellaneous	16	31
	Total number of applications	161	169

Annex A

Service providers

The prison is part of the public sector, and although HMP Full Sutton is responsible for the operation of the establishment, the main service providers are:

- Milton Keynes College: learning and skills
- Spectrum Community Health CIC: healthcare services
- GEOAmey: escort provision
- AMEY: provision of facilities management and site maintenance

The prison also works in partnership with:

- The Samaritans: Listener training
- Origin: gym equipment supplier
- Sportsafe: gym equipment maintenance and repair

Annex B

IMB prisoner survey 2023

In August and September 2023, the IMB distributed 148 questionnaires to prisoners (25% of the total population) across all residential wings, as well as the segregation unit, STEP unit, and close supervision centre. Prisoner selection was random.

50 prisoners responded, a rate of 33%. By wing, the responses came from:

A wing: 18%	E wing: 12%	CSC: 2%
B wing: 16%	F wing : 8%	Wing not identified: 4%
C wing: 12%	Seg unit: 6%	
D wing: 20%	STEP unit: 2%	

60% of respondents were in the age group 26-50; 38% were 52 and over; and just 2% were 25 or under. All respondents had been in Full Sutton more than a year: 38% of the respondents classified their ethnicity as white; 10% as black; 6% as Asian; 6% as mixed or other; and 2% declined to identify their ethnicity.

Response to individual questions:

Do most staff here treat you with respect?

YES: 66% NO: 34%

Are there any staff you could turn to if you had a problem?

YES: 72% NO: 28%

In the last week, has any member of staff talked to you about how you are getting on?

YES: 40% NO: 60%

Is it easy to contact or talk to your key worker

YES: 52% NO: 48%

Are you able to exercise outside every day, if you want to?

YES: 74% NO: 26%

Is it easy or difficult to get into the following activities?

Education:	Easy: 18%	Difficult: 50%	Don't know: 28%	N/A: 4%
Prison job:	Easy: 20%	Difficult: 62%	Don't know: 14%	N/A: 4%
Library:	Easy: 60%	Difficult: 24%	Don't know: 14%	N/A: 2%

Is it easy or difficult to see the following people?

GP	Easy: 24%	Difficult: 70%	DK: 4%	N/A: 2%
Nurse	Easy: 50%	Difficult: 42%	DK: 6%	N/A: 2%
Dentist	Easy: 10%	Difficult: 62%	DK: 26%	N/A: 2%
Pharmacist	Easy: 30%	Difficult: 36%	DK: 32%	N/A: 2%
Mental health workers	Easy: 12%	Difficult: 44%	DK: 42%	N/A: 2%
Substance misuse workers	Easy: 12%	Difficult: 20%	DK: 66%	N/A: 2%

What do you think of the overall quality of the health services here?

Good: 10% OK: 12% Poor: 78%

Is it easy or difficult for you to speak to a Listener, if you need to?

EASY: 36% DIFFICULT: 6% DK: 60%

Is it easy or difficult for prisoners here to:

Get illicit drugs Easy: 24% Difficult: 16% DK: 60%

Get alcohol? Easy: 16% Difficult: 22% DK: 62%

Have you experienced any types of bullying/victimisation from:

Other prisoners here? YES: 24% NO: 76%

Staff here? YES: 48% NO: 52%

Do you feel safe at Full Sutton? YES: 68% NO: 32%

Do you feel you have been treated fairly in the IEP system YES: 56% NO: 44%

On your wing:

Can you shower every day? YES: 78% NO: 22%

Do you have clean sheets every week? YES: 80% NO: 20%

Are the shared areas clean? YES: 62% NO: 38%

Is your cell bell normally answered within five minutes? YES: 56% NO: 44%

Is it easy to make a complaint? YES: 68% NO: 32%

Can you use a phone every day (if you have credit)? YES: 54% NO: 46%

Have you had problems with mail? YES: 72% NO: 28%

Are you able to use social video calling? YES: 78% NO: 22%

Do you get visits from family or friends? YES: 54% NO: 46%

Is it easy to access the gym, if you want to? YES: 74% NO: 26%

What is the quality of the food like?

Good: 22% Reasonable: 36% Not good: 42%

Do you feel you receive enough information through the Community Notices and Newsletters?

YES: 46% NO: 40% DK :14%

Do you understand why the current lockdowns are happening?

YES: 56% NO: 40%



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