

Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Isle of Wight

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

Published July 2024



Contents

Introductory sections 1 – 3	Page
1. Statutory role of the IMB	3
2. Description of the establishment	4
3. Key points	6
 Evidence sections 4 – 7	
4. Safety	12
5. Fair and humane treatment	17
6. Health and wellbeing	23
7. Progression and resettlement	27
 The work of the IMB	
Board statistics	32
Applications to the IMB	33
 Annex A	
Service providers	34

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

Introductory sections 1 – 3

1. Statutory role of the IMB

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

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

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

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

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

2. Description of the establishment

HMP Isle of Wight is a category B male training prison and part of the Long Term and High Security Estate group (LTHSE). It primarily holds prisoners serving long-term sentences for sexual offences (categories B and C, with a small number of category D) and provides a remand unit serving the Isle of Wight Crown Court and magistrates' court.

The establishment comprises two sites – Albany and Parkhurst – both with separate perimeter walls. Parkhurst dates back to the 1830s, with most of its accommodation dating from the Victorian era. Albany opened in 1967. There is a single separation and reintegration unit (SARU) located in Parkhurst. Both sites have their own healthcare centres but share a single inpatient healthcare unit (IHU), located in Albany. The prison's administration offices, including the Governor's office, are in Albany House, which is outside both sites.

The prison has an 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) of 1,101 prisoners, distributed in 15 house blocks across both sites¹. The seven house blocks in Albany (excluding the inpatient care facility) have a certified operating capacity of 613. The seven occupied house blocks in Parkhurst have a certified operating capacity of 488. These DDC figures include the use of cell sharing in four house blocks in Parkhurst and one Albany.

Currently, Parkhurst is used to accommodate all category B prisoners (except those requiring social care or are in the IHU) and category C prisoners with more than three years to serve before their earliest release date. The remaining category C population is accommodated on the Albany site.

The prison's population increased significantly in 2022, from 688 to 995, and increased by a further 10% in 2023, to 1,089, of different categories as set out in the table below. At the end of 2023, foreign national prisoners made up around 10% of the population.

Category	2023		2022	
Category B	318	29.2%	306	30.7%
Category C	753	69.1%	660	66.3%
Category D	6	0.6%	7	0.8%
Remand	12	1.1%	22	2.2%
Total	1089	100%	995	100%
Of which are IPP prisoners (imprisonment for public protection)	41	3.7%	41	4.1%
Life sentences	104	9.6%	91	9.1%

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.

The population, as shown below, is generally older than the average for England and Wales. Almost one-fifth of the prisoners are over 60 years of age and over 5% are 70 years or older.

Age	% of population
20-29	14.6
30-39	25.9
40-49	19.6
50-59	19.4
60-69	14.0
70-79	6.1
80+	0.5

3. Key points

3.1 Main findings

Safety

- Thirteen deaths in custody occurred in 2023 compared with seven in 2022. Most were, apparently, due to natural causes. The Board notes the compassion shown to these prisoners and the work of the family liaison officers.
- The incidence of self-harm continued to decline. The 853 incidents reported in 2023 were 11.8% lower than in 2022 and 18% lower than in 2021.
- The number of reported violent incidents in 2023 was 31% higher than in 2022. Attacks on staff fell marginally in the year, but the number of prisoner-on-prisoner incidents increased by 72%.
- The frequency with which force was used increased by 44%. There was a marked increase in the frequency of planned interventions.
- Most incidents of self-harm, violence and the use of force involved category B prisoners on the Parkhurst site.

Fair and humane treatment

- From the Board's observations, relationships between staff and prisoners were generally positive. Constructive steps were taken through 2023 to improve staff skills and competence, but key worker (a member of prison staff who supports a prisoner throughout the custodial period) targets continued to be missed.
- In the Board's view, the separation and reintegration unit (SARU) provided a fair and safe regime. We note the introduction of multi-disciplinary care and progression plans and efforts to re-integrate prisoners to normal locations. The absence of mental health professionals at 14-day reviews has been addressed.
- The quality of food prepared by the kitchens remained good, but issues continued around its transportation to and distribution on wings.
- The age of the prison's infrastructure, combined with maintenance and repair issues, continued to have an adverse effect on conditions for prisoners, particularly in areas of Parkhurst.
- The central prison laundry remained out of use throughout the year and has been so for at least three years.

Health and wellbeing

- From the Board's observations, the healthcare requirements of prisoners seem to have been generally met. There were 30% fewer complaints than in 2022.
- The introduction of a new integrated approach to mental healthcare and substance abuse – while still new – appears to be a positive step.
- The number of unfilled vacancies amongst healthcare staff remains high, but gaps have been largely covered by agency staff.

- Improvements in staffing availability resulted in a more reliable regime in terms of work, education, library and gym access. However, the Board was concerned that older prisoners who were neither working nor in education were often locked up during the working day when wings were not fully staffed.

Progression and resettlement

- The number and proportion of prisoners in either education or work increased in 2023.
- Work opportunities, however, remained constrained by a lack of instructors and the poor state of repair of some workshops.
- Staffing shortages in the offender management unit (OMU) remain extremely high. This impacts on prisoners' progression, with limited contact between prisoners and prison offender managers (POMs) and delays in annual re-categorisation reviews.
- During 2023, the Board saw a marked increase in the delivery of programmes aimed at reducing offending behaviour. There was a 62% increase in the number of programme needs assessments completed; a 90% increase in the number of programmes started and a 78% increase in the number completed.

3.2 Main areas for development

TO THE MINISTER

- What will the Minister do about the impact of transferring prisoners from secure hospitals to an already full and stretched prison?
- When will the Minister take urgent steps to address the chronic shortage of qualified probation staff?

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

- When will the Prison Service prioritise funding to repair the central laundry? This issue has been raised in our last three reports.

TO THE GOVERNOR

- How will the Governor ensure translated induction material is always available and remove possible barriers to the use of translation services. This should include providing speaker telephones and training for health workers who cover reception health screening outside of core hours from the IHU.
- How will the Governor prioritise the repair of the heating plant in Parkhurst and the provision of washing machines and driers on all wings?
- Can the Governor look for innovative approaches to recruit workshop instructors and prioritise repairs to workshop facilities?
- How does the Governor plan to ensure a consistent and fair approach to unlocking retired prisoners during the working day?
- When will the Governor put in place an effective means to monitor the impact of the literacy strategy?

3.3 Response to the last report

Issue raised	Response given	Progress
To the Minister Outcomes for prisoners (including successful resettlement) unlikely to improve without addressing staff shortage matched by steps to improve confidence and competence of new staff.	None given	New recruitment and transfer of staff from other establishments has significantly increased wing staffing, leading to regime improvements. Continued shortages elsewhere – OMU, psychology and instructors – remain largely unchanged.
To the Prison Service 1. Need early decision on whether the prison will continue to hold significant number of category C prisoners, given time and resources put into making necessary adjustments to support their accommodation.	None given.	The prison has assumed it will continue to hold significant numbers of category C prisoners and acted accordingly by completing the separation of category B and C prisoners between the two sites and introducing different regimes.
2. Urgent need to strengthen mental health provision and carefully consider decisions about transfer of individuals with complex mental health conditions from secure locations to mainstream prisons.	None given.	Issues remain.

3. Need early funding decisions to support key infrastructure work.	None given.	Funding shortages for important repairs and maintenance continue to impact on outcomes for prisoners, despite local efforts to prioritise available resources.
To the Governor 1. Need to ensure timely and full compliance with requirements of assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) documents, used to support prisoners at risk of self-harm, and suicide, challenge, support and intervention plans (CSIPs), used to manage prisoners who pose an increased risk of violence and use of force (UoF) reviews.	ACCT and CSIP reviews are monitored daily to ensure compliance with the timelines of reviews and a focus has been applied to this through the Governor's morning briefings. ACCT version 6 requires further embedding throughout 2023 and the delivery of the new safety skills training to all staff is a commitment over the next two years. In addition, a new assurance process will be implemented for added assurances on ACCT quality and compliance. The use of force reviews and meeting will be reviewed, and a new focus applied to delivering better governance and oversight of use of force.	Continued efforts through established regular monitoring made to improve compliance.
2. Need early decision on location of category C and B prisoners. Key worker targets, in terms of their frequency, need to be met and their quality assured.	A prison-wide project was started to ensure that all prisoners had a clear progression through HMP Isle of Wight (IoW). The expectation being that shorter-term category C prisoners would be held on the Albany site and long-term category C and B prisoners on the Parkhurst site, with the	Separation completed. Increased staffing has allowed more time for key working, but targets remain unmet.

	<p>notable exception of the induction unit, remand and IHU. In addition to the physical locations, work will be conducted to implement cooking facilities in all units on the Albany site and to improve the physical appearance of all units and communal areas through decoration and additional works requests. Key work will be a focus with the increasing staffing levels and an expectation of all prisoners receiving two sessions per month will be undertaken; a new assurance process will also be implemented to drive up quality as well as quantity.</p>	
<p>3. Mental health department needs to be brought up to establishment strength. Efforts should also be made to prioritise staffing to escort prisoners for healthcare appointments.</p>	<p>HMP IoW has continued to work with Practice Plus Group (PPG), highlighting concerns around mental health provision. PPG continues to experience recruitment and retention issues, which remain out of the control of the prison. HMP Isle of Wight will prioritise staffing to escort prisoners to healthcare appointments, and this will be monitored through the local delivery quality board.</p>	<p>Gaps in mental health staff is covered through locums.</p> <p>Prioritisation was given to escorting staff.</p>
<p>4. Need for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new focus on meeting literacy targets • improving availability of programmes • restoring regular library access. 	<p>HMP IoW will recruit a head of education, work and skills, as well as a neurodiversity support manager to apply strategic managerial focus on improving our education skills and work</p>	<p>Reading strategy implemented.</p> <p>Programme delivery library access improved.</p>

	<p>outcomes. This will include an expectation that all prisoners have a target to improve their literacy as part of their progression. The library access will be a priority task and will be monitored through daily management briefings to ensure that library numbers return to the expected levels – as they were before Covid. The programmes team will expand delivery of programmes with the increases in staffing and regime within the prison.</p>	
--	--	--

Evidence sections 4 – 7

Safety

4.1 Reception and Induction

The Board regularly monitored the processing of arrivals and departures of prisoners and observed throughout the consideration and care shown by staff.

Arrival processes in normal core hours, and when reception is adequately staffed, were efficient and well managed. Prisoners were screened for immediate health needs and drug or alcohol abuse issues. All paperwork was checked, and existing ACCTs reviewed and new ones opened as necessary. All new arrivals had their medical needs reviewed by the doctor within 72 hours of arrival.

We did observe challenges for staff when prisoners arrived late, i.e. between the end of core hours, at 17.15, and reception closing at 19.00. On occasion, we observed (despite staff's best efforts) that processing appeared rushed or had to be delayed until the following day. We acknowledge that late arrivals are beyond the prison's control and note that late-arriving prisoners were always given the essentials for their first night, including shower access and a personal phone call. Nevertheless, we are concerned that rushed or delayed screening presented a potential risk.

We observed that when prisoners arrived outside of core hours, medical staff conducting initial health screening did not have access to a dedicated speaker telephone. This meant staff were unable to contact the translation service which, in any event, they had not been trained to access and use. We believe this put vulnerable prisoners with poor English at potential risk.

After initial processing, new arrivals spend two to three weeks in a dedicated induction wing before moving to a regular location. In the induction wing, material seminars are provided to new arrivals with information, advice and guidance (IAG) mentors playing a leading role. We regularly observed these seminars, and believe they were an important aspect of the induction process. We also spoke to prisoners within the induction process – some in prison for the first time – and received good feedback on its preparation for living in the prison environment. We observed that induction staff had a good awareness of, and access to, the translation service, which is used on that wing. Induction materials have yet, however, to be translated into other languages.

4.2 Self-harm, suicide and deaths in custody

During 2023, there were 853 self-harm incidents, with the data showing a steady monthly decline from a peak of 99 in August to 68 in December. The figure of 853 represented a fall of 12% compared with reported incidents of self-harm in 2022 (967), and a 35% decrease compared with 2021 (1309). These reductions, seen in the context of the prison's population increasing over the same period, provide an encouraging sign for the prison's self-harm strategy.

As we have observed in previous years, the incidence of self-harm is concentrated amongst a relatively small group of prisoners. In 2023, all reported incidents related to 123 prisoners (11%) of the total population, with seven accounting for 478 (56%) in total and a single prisoner accounting for 265 (31%) of all incidents.

At the end of 2023, a 'snapshot' of the distribution of self-harm across the prison indicated that out of a total prison population of 1,089:

- 27 (2%) were actively self-harming at the time
- 230 (21%) were recorded as having a history of self-harm (but not currently active)
- 836 (77%) had never self-harmed.

We observed that self-harm incidents in 2023 were not equally distributed across the prison – 436 (51%) were in Albany and 417 (49%) in Parkhurst. However, moderating the data for the influence of the prison's single most prolific self-harmer (who is located in Albany), a more accurate representation of the split across the prison is that:

- 20% of all incidents occurred in Albany, which accommodated 56% of total population
- 49% of all incidents occurred in Parkhurst, which accommodated 44% of total population
- one specific individual accounted for 31% of all self-harm incidents.

The top four identifiable triggers for self-harm in 2023 were recorded as mental health related issues, relationships, release/resettlement issues and location. It should be noted that location issues can cover a broad spectrum of concerns, such as the island location, remoteness from home, wing location, site location (Albany or Parkhurst) or cell-sharing problems.

During 2023 there was a weekly average of 9.3 active ACCTs in place in Albany and 13 in Parkhurst, with a peak figure of 18 and 22 active ACCTs in place in Albany and Parkhurst respectively. This reflects the higher prevalence of self-harm incidents in Parkhurst, which accommodates nearly all category B prisoners, including those serving life terms.

During the year, we saw the frequency of active ACCTs switch between the two sites. During the first quarter of 2023, there were more active ACCTs in Albany compared with Parkhurst. Around April the distribution steadily settled to reflect the current position, as category B prisoners were relocated to Parkhurst.

Once an ACCT has reached the point where it can be 'closed', it will then move into post-closure status. This is a period of six weeks, during which time it can be re-opened if deemed necessary. This does mean that a metric of the number of ACCTs opened in the year can be misleading, the key guiding metric being how long prisoners remain on active ACCTs.

The Board regularly monitored ACCT reviews and ACCT documents, checking for their level of completion. We note the steps taken by the prison to monitor performance in maintaining these records properly. Generally, levels of completion appeared to have improved during the year, but we continue to observe incidents where documentation is incomplete.

During 2023, there were 13 deaths in custody. Many were expected deaths of old or ill prisoners, including a number receiving palliative care in the IHU. We note the compassion shown to these prisoners in the final days by staff and the work of the family liaison officers.

During 2023, three Prisons & Probation Ombudsman (PPO) reports were issued in respect of deaths in 2023, and all are awaiting the coroner's inquest. A further four initial PPO reports were produced, which are awaiting final reports.

In terms of deaths before 2023, four PPO reports have been issued (two each from 2021 and 2022); also in 2023, four initial reports were produced (one in respect of a death in 2021 and three in respect of deaths in 2022).

4.3 Violence, violence reduction and self-isolation

A total of 191 violent incidents were recorded in 2023 – an increase of 32% from the 145 reported in 2022 and 66% more than in 2021. The increase in violent incidents over the two years is higher than the increase in the prison's population over the corresponding period. Reported violent incidents included:

- 78 assaults on staff – a reduction of one compared with 2022, although assaults on SARU staff increased from 8 to 27, an increase of 42%.
- 113 prisoner-on-prisoner incidents – an increase of 48 (71%) compared with 2022.

Violent incidents were not equally distributed across the prison. Of the 78 assaults on staff, 23 occurred in Albany and 54 in Parkhurst. As with the self-harm figures, these assault figures have been skewed by the actions of a particular prisoner accommodated in Parkhurst.

Safety intervention meetings (SIMs) and safety reviews are important mechanisms for the management and reduction of violence and self-isolation within the prison. The SIM is held weekly and addresses issues to promptly put in place actions to support prisoners and their safety. It considers incidents of violence (including self-harm and UoF), CSIP management progress, one-page plans, prisoner location management, security and ACCT assurance monitoring.

The SIMs also closely monitors incidents of social-isolation and prisoners of concern. Over the reporting period, there was a substantially increased focus on the cause and impact of self-isolation, with staff actioned to proactively monitor and address these issues.

Safety reviews are held monthly. Like the SIMs, these track cases of violence and self-harm, along with the effectiveness of the CSIP and ACCT processes. An important part of this meeting is the examination of data accumulated over a rolling 12-month period to assist in identifying trends and introducing process improvements to address any longer-term trends.

The Board observed a sample of SIMs and safety review meetings. All minutes and action plans were circulated to us. At both, we saw an active and multi-disciplinary approach to reducing violence across the prison. We also noted the specific attention given in these meetings to identifying and managing self-isolators.

4.4 Use of force

Use of force (UoF) can arise from either: (a) planned enforced transfer of a reluctant prisoner intended to de-escalate an existing situation; or (b) as an immediate and urgent response to an incident in the prison.

The prison monitors use of force with a monthly committee meeting to review incidents and collate information. This includes the reasons for the UoF; the location of incidents; breakdown by age and ethnicity; and the use of handcuffs or other restraints. Data is also collected and reviewed on the frequency with which individual staff members have used force. The Board observed a number of these meetings during the year and had full access to the records.

In 2023, there were 331 UoF incidents: 66 planned and 265 unplanned. In 2022, there were 230 UoF incidents: 28 planned and 202 unplanned. This represents a 44% increase in the number of times force was used, with the number of planned interventions more than doubling. In the SARU, there were 72 incidents compared with 27 in 2022. There was no use of pelargonic acid vanillylamide (PAVA), an incapacitant spray, during 2023, although it was drawn twice.

4.4.1 The Board's review of the data for 2023 further indicated that:

- the majority of incidents (83%) involved category B prisoners who were primarily located in Parkhurst, where 70% of all incidents occurred. This included the SARU
- the overwhelming majority (78%) of incidents involved prisoners aged between 21 and 40, although this cohort accounted for just 40% of the total population
- there was no evidence of any ethnic bias in the use of force.

The Board was routinely informed in advance of planned UoF procedures and attended when possible. The majority we observed were handled well, using clear explanations and negotiation with the prisoner beforehand, explaining where they were being moved to and why. This usually resulted in the prisoner co-operating without any force beyond that necessary to guide them through the move for the safety of all concerned.

As far as we were able to observe, it appeared that all UoF incidents were followed by the mandatory debrief meeting. Compliance with the requirement to record all incidents on an online database within 72 hours while still not fully met has improved over the 2022 performance. We note management's effort to improve this.

4.5 Preventing illicit items

Despite the screening of mail, visitors, arriving prisoners and staff, the presence of illicit items within the prison remained an issue. During the latter part of 2023, the frequency of mandatory drugs tests (MDTs) – previously disrupted by Covid – increased towards the required level of at least 5% of the population being tested each month.

Prescribed medications can trigger a positive initial MDT result. This requires a second test for results indicating opiate/amphetamine use to confirm whether illicit drug use occurred. We received several applications (written representations) from prisoners who had been adjudicated (appeared at a disciplinary hearing because it was alleged they broke prison rules) in a time frame consistent with the adjudication policy but prior to a confirmatory test showing the initial positive result was caused by prescribed medication. This led to stress and anxiety, which we believe was foreseeable and, therefore, could have been avoided.

The Board raised the inter-relationship between the MDT and adjudication policies with the prison. We noted the prison was not consistently exercising the opportunity to defer charging prisoners until receipt of the confirmatory second test result. This matter was addressed and the option to defer charging in cases involving opiate/amphetamine initial screening results formalised.

5. Fair and humane treatment

5.1 Accommodation, clothing and food

At the end of 2023, the prison held 1,089 prisoners, just 12 below the DDC certified capacity of 1,101. Housing this number of prisoners necessitated a return to double cell occupancy in some house blocks in Parkhurst.

While these cells are larger than others, they are not – in contrast to those in the social care wing in Albany – designed for multiple occupancy. Most of them contain toilets and the issue of inadequate screening, noted in previous HMIP reports has not been fully addressed. This is particularly concerning, as prisoners eat their meals in their cells.

Night sanitation is in place for most prisoners on the Albany site. During the reporting year, we received applications from prisoners complaining about breakdowns in the call system and the limited time allowed for toilet visits. While recognising the security issues involved in lengthening this allocated time, we note the difficulties this posed for older residents.

House blocks and communal areas were generally clean, and prisoners had the basic requirements of a bed, storage locker and chair. Through the year, we noted the steps taken to provide curtains. The system for prisoners (through staff) making repair requests (Planet FM, the database used to record all identified maintenance tasks) functioned reasonably well.

Throughout the year, we saw efforts to brighten up communal areas, most notably in Albany, with new flooring and murals. We also saw steps taken to provide cooking appliances (fridges, toasters and microwaves), particularly for category C prisoners in Albany.

Less positively, we observed several issues that negatively affected prisoners:

- Buildings in a poor condition, reflecting their age and a lack of consistent investment: external drainage issues in Parkhurst led to localised flooding, resulting in mould in some cells, while leaking roofs, particularly in workshops, limited job opportunities.
- As noted in our 2022 annual report, we received complaints about the heat in summer and the cold in winter. Problems with the heating and hot water system in Parkhurst were frequent.
- Washers and driers on house blocks were unserviceable and the central laundry remained out of service throughout the year. This last issue has been highlighted in our last three reports.

Financial constraints have clearly hindered the prison's efforts to address these matters. The Board, does, however, note the attention the Governor paid to addressing them, including through regular meetings between him, the area Property operations manager and Gov Facilities Services Ltd (GFSL) to prioritise available funding and bids for additional Ministry of Justice funds.

With respect to food, the prison kitchen consistently provided the required minimum of five choices, including at least one hot meal per day, on a menu cycle of four weeks. Vegetarian, vegan, halal and kosher options were almost always provided. Information was made available to help prisoners make informed decisions about

allergens and the nutritional breakdown of options. The kitchens also provided special meals for religious festivals, including a Ramadan menu approved by the Iman, and offerings to mark cultural events, e.g. Black History Month.

The Board observed the kitchen taking positive steps to engage with prisoners through regular catering meetings and surveys seeking prisoners' views and suggestions. Participation in both was disappointingly poor.

While the quality and quantity of food was generally good, especially as it operates on a daily food allowance of just £2.70 for each prisoner, its distribution to and on house blocks continued to present issues, principally:

- claims from prisoners that inadequate staff supervision at mealtimes was leading to favouritism and unfair portions
- servery staff working without hygiene certificates, which might suggest they had not received the required training
- a large number of the insulated trolleys used to hold food in transit from the kitchens to house blocks being unserviceable or badly damaged
- on occasion, poor separation of halal and non-halal food
- lack of sufficient or appropriate serving utensils, including temperature probes.

The continued absence of a dietician, following the departure of the sole qualified member of staff during 2022, remains a cause of concern, although this specialism is provided remotely.

5.2 Segregation

A single segregation unit serves both sites. It comprises 15 standard cells, one special accommodation cell (in which furniture, bedding and sanitation items have been removed in the interests of safety) and two dirty protest cells. While the number of segregated prisoners fluctuated throughout the year, the unit was often near to capacity, including with a number of residents who had complex mental health needs.

We observed that most segregated prisoners spent just a few days in the SARU and relatively few were there beyond 14 days. There were, however, several long-term residents. At the end of 2023, one prisoner had spent 407 consecutive days in the unit. Another was segregated for 182 consecutive days, up to mid-May 2023. This prisoner then returned to the SARU for two further, separate, stays in 2023. The first was 100 consecutive days followed by a further – and as of 29 February 2024 ongoing – segregation of 137 days.

During the year, we saw every segregated prisoner weekly and monitored all but one of the 14-day reviews. The unit appeared clean and consistently in good repair. Residents were seen daily by a Governor, healthcare and chaplaincy. We note the efforts taken to ensure that staffing shortages across the prison did not impact this unit. Residents were offered a decent regime, with a radio, access to the telephone, a daily shower, exercise and social video calls.

We observed that 72-hour and 14-days reviews were consistently undertaken and that the Deputy Director of Custody's agreement to segregation beyond 42 days was always sought. Staff and prisoner relationship were, generally good, although there were 27 reported assaults on staff in 2023.

We note the prison's introduction of multi-disciplinary care and progression plans to improve the management of segregated prisoners. These plans included positive efforts to re-integrate prisoners – including those segregated for self-interest reasons - back to normal locations. These plans were reviewed at the 14-day reviews by a multi-disciplinary team and we believe this has improved the quality of this important process.

The Board's main issue of concern during 2023 was the frequent absence of a mental health professional at 14-day reviews. This appears to have now been addressed.

5.3 Staff and prisoner relationships, key workers

Generally, we observed staff engaging with prisoners in a respectful and dignified manner. For the most part, staff worked hard to support prisoners and had a caring attitude. We note the continued steps taken to improve the confidence and competence of staff – including many newly appointed officers – through the competence and confidence toolkit and custody manager upskilling training programme. Where prisoners complained about staff, their complaints were followed up. When the Board raised issues about staff with the prison, they were treated seriously and promptly.

The appointment of a dedicated neurodiversity support manager was a welcome development in 2023, responding to the recognised gaps in staff understanding about behaviours linked to neurodiversity and how to engage with neurodivergent prisoners. We commend this appointment and the wider programme of initiatives introduced towards the end of the year to ensure that any staff member – irrespective of grade or role – will be better able to support neurodivergent prisoners. The available expertise is, however, very limited and we would encourage the prison to consider expanding this capacity.

Every prisoner should have a named key worker and meet with them for 45 minutes at least once each month. In 2022, we reported that this objective was not consistently met and, in addition, observed:

- delays in allocating key workers to newly arriving prisoners
- established prisoners reporting limited contact with key workers and, in some cases, a failure to appoint a replacement when their key worker moved wing
- staff telling us they did not have time to undertake this function.

While we observed improvements in the overall performance of key working in 2023, the key contact target remains unmet, despite the specific inclusion of key worker sessions in the new profile agreed in 2022.

5.4 Equality and diversity

The Board observed the equalities team regularly holding forums and resolving issues raised in them in a timely manner. Despite work pressures (equalities staff are also detailed for other duties) 77 forums were held across the prison in 2023. A prisoner survey showed favourable feedback: 77% of Parkhurst respondents found the forums useful and 68% in Albany said the same.

To better engage the prison's younger population, a day of activities was held in place of a forum. This appeared to be successful. We also note the equalities team's support for (Home Office run) immigration surgeries to advise foreign national prisoners keen to leave the UK (after the end of their sentence). Looking ahead, and with an eye to improving outcomes, the equalities team plans to reduce the number of individual forums and to prioritise action points.

During 2023, the equalities team also supported numerous significant events. These included: a Holocaust Memorial presentation; LGBTQ+ History Month; Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities History Month, celebrating Appleby Horse Fair; PRIDE; Black History Month; and World AIDS Memorial Day. We note the prison's success in securing the attendance of recognised people at these events, including Nelson Mandela's bodyguard and a relative of a Holocaust survivor. Staff and prisoners also raised £465 to support the Isle of Wight Alzheimer Café charity.

During the year, we also saw the team working to improve the liaison with outside bodies and also to develop staff diversity awareness and confidence. This included discrimination incident reporting form (DIRF) training for staff, engaging with the Isle of Wight Council for better support for buddies and prisoners needing social care and engaging with the local community for dementia support. We observed that the health and social care partnership board remained active and effective.

Around 45% of prisoners report a disability. Those with a physical disability were supported, with some cells adapted to meet their needs. Most prisoners with limited mobility were located in ground floor cells. House block 17 is a social care wing, which provided good support and had trained 'buddies' to assist prisoners with tasks. Disability liaison officers had been trained as trusted assessors and were able to identify and respond to some needs.

The number of DIRFs submitted in 2023 increased by about 25%, compared with 2022, more than the 10% increase in the prison's population. As in our 2022 report and, indeed in other, previous reports, race remains the top complaint, closely followed by religion. Parkhurst, again, submitted more DIRFs than Albany. It should be noted that staff also submitted DIRFs during the reporting period. Investigations did, unfortunately, often go outside of the timeframe. During 2023, the equalities team introduced a new triage scheme for DIRFs, to separate issues that should be treated as a non-DIRF type of complaint.

Albany

	2023	2022
Total submitted	108	73
Upheld	8	11
Partially upheld	15	4
Not upheld	38	22
Defined as complaints, not DIRFs	45	36

Parkhurst

	2023	2022
Total submitted	130	118
Upheld	12	13
Partially upheld	14	12
Not upheld	46	35
Defined as complaints, not DIRFs	58	58

Throughout 2023, the Board routinely scrutinised DIRFs for the standard of investigation, fairness and timeliness.

5.5 Faith and pastoral support

The chaplaincy team provided support for 25 recorded religions within the prison population. In addition to conducting weekly services of worship, we observed members of the chaplaincy team undertaking ACCT checks and regularly engaging with prisoners, including those segregated from the main population. During the year, we observed that vacancies for chaplains in several faiths remained unfilled. We have, on occasion, observed delays in providing escorting staff to allow prisoners to attend services, due to staffing shortages. We note the efforts of the prison to promptly remedy these situations and saw no evidence that attendance at religious services was given a lower priority in terms of allocating staff.

5.6 Incentive schemes

The proportion of the prison population on basic, standard and enhanced status is set out below. The 2023 distribution remained similar to that in 2022 and, indeed, 2021. The proportion of enhanced status prisoners remained relatively high – a fact noted in HM Inspectorate of Prison's (HMIP) 2023 inspection. Information on incentives scheme status – cross-referenced for ethnicity, sexual orientation and religion – is prepared monthly. The incentives scheme forum, which we noted as being established in 2022, continues to meet.

	2023 (year-end)		2022 (year-end)	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Basic	32	2.9	24	2.4%
Standard	190	17.4	156	15.6%
Enhanced	870	79.7	817	81.8%

5.7 Complaints

As set out in the table below, a total of 3,037 complaint were made in 2023. This is around 10% fewer than the 3,392 received in 2022, during a year when the prison's population increased by 10%. A significant proportion of complaints came from a relatively small number of prisoners. We note the efforts made by staff to engage with these individuals to understand the reasons for their frequent complaints and to respond to them. The expectation that complaints be dealt with within five working days was, again, not fully met in 2023.

Month	Total complaints	Percentage completed late (2023)	Percentage completed late (2022)
January	280	8%	5%
February	269	10%	4%
March	288	10%	5%
April	211	8%	5%
May	303	8%	5%
June	257	14%	4%
July	256	13%	8%
August	266	4%	9%
September	238	8%	13%
October	261	7%	14%
November	228	7%	14%
December	180	8%	8%
Total	3037		

The table below sets out the five most frequent issues raised in complaints in 2023. Between them, they accounted for 60% of all complaints and were the same top five complaint subjects as in 2022.

Issue	Number of complaints	% of all complaints
Residential	678	22.3%
Property	318	10.4%
Work	307	10.1%
Finance	294	9.7%
Staff	243	8.0%

Responses to complaints are checked by the business hub manager on a 10% sample basis each month. Learning and suggestions from these checks are fed back to the functional head or relevant section. Overdue complaints are monitored, and progress reported daily at the management team meeting.

The prisoners' survey for complaints was issued in September 2023, with results available from November. The 2023 survey response was more positive than that of previous years. This reflected the work staff have put in to build relationships with prisoners and improve the complaints system. An action plan has been devised to cover the issues raised, which includes the lack of digital means for prisoners to put in orders for canteen and other purchases.

5.8 Property

In 2023, property issues remained a significant source of formal complaints to the prison and IMB applications. Most were in respect of property lost or delayed in transit to HMP Isle of Wight from other establishments. We note and have challenged the 14-day turnaround for the prison to process all the property of newly arriving prisoners. We believe this could be swifter.

6. Health and wellbeing

6.1 Healthcare general

At the end of 2023, the total healthcare caseload – including mental health cases – was around 220, some 20% of the total population. A similar number of prisoners were on supervised medications.

Healthcare provides a comprehensive data set to the Governor each week. This includes information on the current caseload; appointments attended and missed; external hospital appointments attended and missed (and the cause for missing them); and the number of prisoners on supervised medications.

Healthcare issues are discussed each month at a local delivery quality board (LDQB). This meeting provides an opportunity for the head of healthcare to discuss healthcare performance (using the data noted above) with the Governor and to address issues, where necessary.

Additionally, each quarter a partnership board is chaired by NHS England at the prison. This meeting brings together commissioners of healthcare services, contractors and partners (including the local authority) to discuss quality and performance.

During 2023 the number of applications the Board received regarding health issues remained essentially unchanged – up by one to 55, compared with 2022. In both years, health represented around 11% of all applications. The specific issues that prisoners raised remained essentially the same, namely: the wait for appointments; cancelled appointments; slow responses to complaints; and medication problems.

In 2023, the number of complaints submitted directly to healthcare fell by 30%, from 355 in 2022 to 248. This is despite a 10% increase in the prison's population. A number of these were, themselves, complaints about the time taken to respond to an complaint that had already been made.

6.2 Physical healthcare

On average during 2023, healthcare staff provided around 600 consultations each week, some of which were to the same patient. The number of missed appointments was routinely between 5 and 10%. On average, 20 patients attended the local hospital each week in 2023. A number of appointments were cancelled during the year. Our review of the data indicates that most cancellations were at the request of healthcare or due to the prisoner declining to attend. Few appeared to be caused by an absence of staff to escort patients to the hospital.

The prison is not exempt from the long-term staffing challenges facing the wider NHS, and which are particularly acute on the Isle of Wight. The most difficult vacancies to fill are senior clinical positions, such as GPs, psychologists, pharmacists and senior nurses. Out of a full complement of 71.4 whole time equivalent (WTE) staff, the prison ended 2023 with 43.6 WTE. The Board notes, however, the efforts taken to fill the gaps with bank and agency staff to ensure the best possible service.

6.3 Mental healthcare

During 2023, responsibility for providing both mental health and substance abuse treatment services transferred to a new contractor. Recognising that substance abuse and mental health issues are often interrelated in prisons, the new provider began to introduce an integrated approach to managing both issues. Within this approach, the case lead for prisoners with both issues may be within the substance abuse team when substance abuse is assessed as the primary problem and vice versa when the reverse is true. In all cases, individual treatment plans have input from both specialisms. We recognise the benefits of this shift in approach, which ensures a patient-centred approach to management.

A significant number of prisoners at HMP Isle of Wight have confirmed mental health issues. At the end of 2023, the mental health caseload – that is, prisoners with a clear diagnosis – was around 160, just below 15% of the prison population. A similar number have a confirmed substance abuse issue.

Frontline healthcare staff have mental health awareness training, and all healthcare staff receive training on how to make a mental health referral. On average, around 50 mental health referrals were made each month during 2023. Each referral was assessed and those with a confirmed diagnosis (significantly less than the number of referrals) added to the mental health caseload.

During the year, the Board observed prisoners with the most serious mental health issues in the IHU and, because of their behaviour, the SARU. We note the efforts made by the mental health team to secure the transfer of the most seriously ill prisoners to high-security psychiatric hospitals under the terms of Mental Health Act.

The situation regarding staffing shortages in the mental health team, which we noted in our 2022 report, remained largely unchanged. Many key clinical posts remained unfilled at the end of 2023. However, we note the efforts made by the contractor to provide leadership, to fill vacancies and to cover vacancies with agency staff. While agency staffing is an imperfect substitute to full-time staff, it has enabled a mental health professional to be present at important processes, including GOoD reviews (when the prison determines if a prisoner should remain segregated) and the weekly SIMs.

6.4 Social care

HMP Isle of Wight has a relatively elderly population compared with the wider prison estate. The most elderly, and the majority of those with social care needs, are housed in a dedicated wing (house block 17). A relatively small number of the most seriously ill prisoners – including those who are terminally ill – are located in the IHU.

Throughout the year, we observed that the needs of this cohort of prisoners were met to a high standard. Prison staff performed their duties with respect and care, particularly towards those at the end of their lives, with excellent support to families (when appropriate) provided by family liaison officers when deaths occurred.

We also observed effective joint working among the prison's equalities, disability and social care team, the local authority social care providers and voluntary organisations.

6.5 Time out of cell, regime

In our 2022 report, the Board noted that the return to a regular regime, following the removal of Covid restrictions, was often hindered by staff shortages. This resulted in prisoners remaining locked up for substantial periods and, on occasion, being unable to attend education, vocational activities, the library and gym sessions.

The situation improved in 2023, mainly because the prison was able to offer overtime payments, which incentivised staff to cover staff shortages. This resulted in a more reliable regime for work, education, library and gym. The weekend regime, however, continued to be impacted by staff shortages.

We note the focus the prison has given to maximising the prisoners' time out of cell. This included changes to the core day and daily reporting and monitoring of unlock and lock-up times. Despite these efforts, the Board continued to receive applications and complaints from prisoners regarding:

- late unlock reducing the time available for them to shower, have breakfast, attend the gym or collect medications before movements for education or labour
- a more restricted weekend regime
- the locking up of senior prisoners (aged 65 and over) who are not obliged to attend education or labour.

This latter issue causes us concern. The prison has a significant number of prisoners over the age of 65. While HMIP reported in 2022 that senior prisoners who were neither working nor in education were always unlocked, we observed this not to be the general practice other than in the social care wing and IHU.

Our observations in relation to unlocking for senior prisoners revealed an inconsistent approach across the prison. Some wing managers routinely unlocked senior prisoners during the core day. Others rigidly relied on safe systems of work policies, which require full staffing levels to be in place before retired prisoners are unlocked.

Whilst this is an apparently neutral policy, in that it applies to all prisoners, it has an adverse impact on older prisoners who are less able to engage in work or education and for whom prolonged periods of lock up can be disadvantageous. This matter is of concern to us. We believe that the rigid reliance on a policy that fails to accommodate senior prisoners at times of fluctuating staffing levels has the potential to negatively impact on their wellbeing.

During the year, we raised this matter repeatedly with senior management, but have received contradictory responses about how the regime should accommodate older prisoners. We understand that new policies for specific accommodation for senior prisoners are in the process of being drafted. However, we are still waiting to hear of the outcome.

6.6 Drug and alcohol rehabilitation

As noted in section 6.3, during 2023 responsibility for providing substance abuse and mental health services transferred to a new contractor, which has implemented an integrated approach to the management of both issues. We recognise the benefits this offers. We also note that, within the prison's management structure, oversight for

substance abuse treatment falls to the Governor responsible for reducing reoffending. This is sensible in our view but adds to that Governor's already wide span of responsibility.

At the end of 2023, around 160 prisoners were on the reducing substance misuse team's caseload, some of whom will also have mental health issues. As the prison's population has increased, so has the caseload. We note that the team's staffing numbers were reduced under the new contract. However, the team is almost fully staffed and advises us that the caseload is manageable given the adoption of the integrated approach, which sees a sharing of case management responsibilities with their mental health colleagues.

A local substance and alcohol misuse strategy is in place with a multi-disciplinary approach to its management. We regularly observe team members at GOOD and ACCT reviews and note their role in prison safety meetings. We also note and commend the work being undertaken to strengthen links with substance misuse services outside the prison to ensure continuity of care a core principle of the national Harm to Hope Strategy.

6.7 Soft skills

Throughout the year we observed the important role played by social care buddies particularly in the high dependency wing. We also note Age UK's valuable contribution to the welfare of older patients and particularly those suffering from dementia.

7. Progression and resettlement

7.1 Education, library

At the end of 2023, 448 prisoners were enrolled in education, with 1,135 courses started and 911 (80%) completed. The comparable numbers for 2022 were 351 prisoners engaged with starting 826 courses and 756 (91%) completing them.

An important development during 2023 was the creation of a new role of head of education and skills. This post holder and the head of reducing reoffending work closely together to benefit the progression across the establishment. The Board commends the prison for this step and notes the use of an evidence-based approach to understanding why prisoners enter and drop out of education.

In last year's report, we noted that meeting Ofsted's recommendations would require a step change in the prison's delivery of education, particularly literacy and basic numeracy. During the year, we saw the prison responding to Ofsted's recommendations. We observed consistently high levels of attendance at education – around 80% between April and December – but still short of the Governor's target of 95%. Waiting lists to join some courses, however, remains high. For example, at the end of the year, 53 prisoners in Parkhurst and 78 in Albany were waiting to start Level 1/2 English. The department has achieved good success rates in functional skills English and Maths.

We also saw positive steps towards implementing a comprehensive reading strategy, although it is not clear how the prison intends to measure its impact. The appointment of a new Shannon Trust co-ordinator in May saw a marked uptake in the extent and impact of the charity's work in the prison. This peaked in October, with 350 reading sessions run by 35 mentors to 45 learners. Shannon Trust numeracy delivery commenced in November, with 30 trained mentors delivering 177 sessions in the first month alone.

Level 3 Business, Level 3 Painting and Decorating and Level 1 Citizenship were introduced during 2023. The new Level 3 Business course had direct claims status awarded at the first external moderation.

The art classes achieved particular success in the reporting year. Learners from the art class at the Albany site co-curated the 'Standing on the Edge' exhibition at the John Hansard Gallery in Southampton and learners from the Parkhurst site produced artwork for the online exhibition. Art learners have also produced art works for the creative writing group's *River of Words* book, published by Albany Print and Design. There were also 300 entries for the Koestler Awards for arts in criminal justice this year, with 63 awards, including five platinum awards.

The concern raised in our 2022 report regarding library access was addressed this year. A far greater importance was placed on providing an officer to take prisoners to the library and despite difficulties with staffing numbers, as the year progressed, libraries on both sites opened fully, with staff reporting much higher levels of use. We would, however, encourage the prison to look at how it measures the libraries' success. Currently, attendance is the only performance measurement. While these numbers are now encouraging, they don't necessarily equate to the quality of the provision. We would, therefore, encourage the libraries to look at additional metrics, such as loan percentages and/or the percentage of active borrowers.

A frustration raised with us by library staff relates to the Ministry of Justice's approved stock policy for books in an establishment for men convicted of sexual offences. This policy cuts out a significant number of books, e.g. Harry Potter, where a teenager is the main protagonist. Prisoners are, however, able to order such books to buy through reception.

Our most serious concern for the libraries in 2023 was the potential withdrawal of the local authority's support. Thankfully, this did not happen, in significant part due to the Governor's proactive engagement with the council, which has agreed to remain as the library provider until the end of the contract in April 2025.

7.2 Vocational training, work

In our 2022 report, we noted the gradual return to full-time vocational training as Covid restrictions were progressively removed. This continued during 2023 and workshops rolls – that is, those prisoners registered to work – reached 428 by the end of the year in 21 industries spread across both sites. Adding the numbers in education, this means that at the end of the year, 943 prisoners were either working or in education out of an unlock roll of 1,089. The difference was made up of five declared medically unfit, 52 over 65 years of age, 12 refusers and 55 unemployed and 22 others not working.

The total roll figure does not, however, mean there was work for all 428 registered workers every working day. To account for sickness and absences, the roll for each workshop is set at 20% more than its capacity. Consequently, on any one day, some prisoners enrolled and willing to work may not be able to do so.

As in previous years, the number of work opportunities available to prisoners in 2023 was limited, due to a shortage of instructors and maintenance issues in specific workplaces.

Positively, the number of unfilled instructor vacancies fell from 10.5 to six during the year and the prison deserves credit for its efforts to recruit. However, some vacancies remain hard to fill. The prison is now recruiting for a tailoring instructor for the fifth time. If this post were filled, the number of prisoners who could work in that workshop would double from 18 to 36.

It is disappointing to report that for the fourth successive year the central laundry has remained closed, due to the same problem with steam generation. In addition to the lost job opportunities, this entails the prison incurring the additional cost of sending laundry to mainland prisons. Elsewhere, the tailor workshop in Albany was shut between March and June to allow for roof repairs. A broken extractor fan in one of the two woodwork shops currently means only seven prisoners can work there at any one time. Print shops on both sites struggle to protect expensive equipment from permanently leaking roofs.

Where work was available, the Board often observed dedicated staff and motivated prisoners working purposefully and gaining practical skills and valuable qualifications:

- 70 of 85 enrolled prisoners in industrial cleaning achieved Level Industrial 1 Award in practical cleaning skills offered by the Chartered Institute of Waste Management

- the Parkhurst upholstery workshop produced excellent refurbishment projects
- concrete products in Albany provided good opportunities and a supportive environment for many older prisoners
- the woodwork workshop provided furniture for a new wing at HMP Full Sutton and is regarded by the IRCPE (Industries, Retail, Catering and Physical Education) national body as its number 1 manufacturer.

Other workshops have enrolled some prisoners for qualifications, but these have not progressed far. This is an area that should be developed in 2024. Similarly, we feel there is an opportunity to develop the Progress in Workshops: Employability Skills Workbooks, which were launched in 2023. A total of 295 prisoners made a start on these workbooks, which aim to assist prisoners to develop workplace skills. Disappointingly, just 25 completed the initial four-week first review and only four the three-month progress review.

7.3 Offender management, progression

In 2022, we noted that staff shortages in the OMU – particularly probation staff – had led to delays in the preparation of parole reports and annual re-categorisation reviews. These shortages persisted throughout 2023. At the end of the reporting year, the prison's OMU team comprised just 5.5 full-time equivalent staff compared with an establishment of 16.5. This meant that staff had caseloads of up to 180, three times the recommended number of 60.

Consequently, throughout 2023, we continued to receive applications from prisoners regarding delays in producing parole reports and annual re-categorisation reviews. In terms of re-categorisation reviews, the newly introduced requirement for a security input to be made in this exercise was an additional contributory factor to delays. Prisoners also regularly told us they were either unaware of their POM or had limited, if any, contact with them.

We note, however, the positive steps the OMU took to improve its engagement with prisoners. These included the appointment of specific officers on wings to facilitate prisoners' engagement with the OMU and holding sessions to explain the sentencing plan process, particularly for prisoners within two years of release.

We also received regular applications from foreign national prisoners regarding their possible removal from the UK. We understand these issues are for the Home Office, not the Prison Service, and note the steps the prison has taken to engage this cohort of prisoners. Nevertheless, given language limitations and the complexity of removal issues, we think there is a case for the prison to better support foreign national prisoners to understand their individual removal status.

Within the prison, the psychology department provides the clinical lead for programmes aimed at reducing offending behaviour. The prison's psychologists also input into the preparation of parole reports. This department remains short staffed, with 10 of 21 positions filled at a time when the volume of work is increasing due to the increase in the prison's population, particularly category C prisoners. We note the commendable efforts made during the year to recruit and to provide in-service (Masters' level) training to existing staff.

During 2023, we saw an increase in the delivery of programmes aimed at reducing offending behaviour. A total of 52 programme needs assessments were completed

compared with 32 in 2022, and a range of programmes offered to prisoners. Some were aimed at category C prisoners due for release within two years. These included Living as New Me. Others, including Kaizen (for men convicted of violent or sexual offences) and Becoming New Me + (for high- or very high-risk men with learning difficulties who have been convicted of a sexual or violent offence), were offered to both category B and C prisoners.

The number of programmes offered in 2023 compared with 2022 is set out below. In each case, the 'starts' figures represent prisoners commencing the programme in 2023 and the 'completed' figures show those who successfully completed the programme in 2023, which they may have started before 2023 (or completed in 2024).

Accredited programme	2023		2022	
	Starts	Completed	Starts	Completed
Horizon	29	20	15	14
Healthy Sex Programme	4	1	4	2
Kaizen	40	14	18	6
Becoming New Me +	15	15	10	5
New Me Strengths	9	2	0	0
Living As New Me	10	5	0	0
Motivation and Engagement	2	3	3	2
Foundation	30	27	20	17
Bespoke 1-1	6	6	6	6
Total	145	93	76	52

7.4 Family contact

Social visits resumed in 2022 and continued throughout 2023, although remaining below pre-Covid levels. The prison's location makes visits difficult. Many prisoners consequently have continued with social video calls.

The visitors' area outside the prison provides a place for visitors to spend time if they arrive early, offering light refreshments and toys for young children. We commend the steps taken to make visiting areas more welcoming, including the introduction of new coffee machines. Less positively, prisoners and staff have told us they sometimes faced difficulties contacting the visits office, which has just one telephone line.

7.5 Resettlement planning

HMP Isle of Wight is a training, not a resettlement, prison. Across the prison estate, resettlement needs would not generally be addressed until prisoners (category C) have 18-24 months left to serve. However, the majority of prisoners (around 80%) leave HMP Isle of Wight following a parole board recommendation. This makes resettlement planning difficult, as the time frame for release is never certain.

Following HMPI's 2002 inspection, the prison has started to give greater emphasis to resettlement. A resettlement facility has been established, which aims to offer courses that provide prisoners with the skills and advice needed to make a

successful return to society. During 2023, we saw concerted efforts to improve the content and delivery of this course. Courses that were initially led by peer mentors are now led by a dedicated staff member and the course's length has been extended from two to four weeks.

The work of the IMB

The IMB maintained a physical presence in the establishment throughout the year, making a total of 549 visits. Members have regularly observed important process, including segregation reviews, adjudications, ACCT reviews and wider prison management meetings, including those dealing with safety, health care, equalities and residential issues. They have had unrestricted access to the prison, prisoners and staff, including senior management. We acknowledge this with appreciation.

At the end of 2023, the Board comprised 11 members (including one member who also acts as a regional representative) against a full approved quota of 17. During the year, three members left the Board and two new members were recruited.

Board members dealt with a total of 493 applications compared with 463 in 2021 – a 6.5% increase, which is slightly less than the increase in the prison's population over the year. The frequency with which specific subjects were raised by prisoners in 2023 remained largely unchanged.

Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	17
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	12
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	11
Total number of visits to the establishment	549
Total number of shifts on the 0800 telephone line (created during Covid-19 pandemic)	0
Total number of segregation reviews observed	51

Applications to the IMB

Code	Subject	Previous reporting year	Current reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	62	31
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives scheme, sanctions	6	7
C	Equality	13	20
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	29	43
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection restrictions	29	36
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	11	19
F	Food and kitchens	11	18
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	54	55
H1	Property within the establishment	24	20
H2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	13	17
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	3	17
I	Sentence management, including home detention curfew (HDC)), release on temporary licence (ROTL), parole, release dates, re-categorisation	42	54
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	62	54
K	Transfers	44	45
L	Miscellaneous, including complaints system	66	60
	Total number of applications	469	496

Annex A

Service providers

- Maintenance: Gov Facilities Services Limited
- Education: Milton Keynes College
- Library services: Isle of Wight Council
- Escort Contractor: Serco
- Food: Bidfood
- Healthcare and pharmacy: Practice Plus Group
- Mental health: Inclusion
- Substance abuse programme: Inclusion
- Social care: Isle of Wight Council
- Safeguarding: Isle of Wight Council



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

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