



Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Berwyn

**For reporting year
1 March 2023 to 29 February 2024**

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Introductory sections 1 – 3

1. Statutory role of the IMB

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

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

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

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

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

2. Description of the establishment

Berwyn is located on Wrexham Industrial Estate in North Wales. It was envisaged as a reception, category C resettlement and training prison, but currently also accommodates remand and category B prisoners and has two vulnerable prisoner (VP) communities. It is a modern prison, with an operating capacity of 2000¹. The prison consists of three main houses: Alwen, Bala and Ceiriog, and Ogwen, a care and separation unit (CSU), which can hold 21 prisoners. Each house is divided into eight wings. On average, 30% of cells are single occupancy and 70% are double occupancy. The double occupancy cells were designed as such.

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

Background

The data shows the following: 40 % of band 3 officers in post have less than 12 months' service; and 30% of band 2 officer support grades (OSGs) have less than 12 months' service.

Regime delivery is the new Governor's policy, in which the vision and priorities for staff, prisoners and partners are as follows:

- Creating a safe and decent environment for everyone who works and lives here.
- Enabling employment and accommodation for everyone after release.
- Providing good-quality training, development and support for all.
- Giving meaningful and purposeful activity to everyone, enabling people to be their best.
- Making and keeping good-quality and productive relationships.

The delivery of the published regime is steadily improving, in line with increased staffing levels. Over the reporting period, the number of occupants in Berwyn has increased significantly, from 1823 in 2023 to 2000 in 2024. The improvement in delivery regime is evidenced by the fact that the number of applications (prisoners' written representations) submitted to IMB regarding purposeful activity, including education, work, training and time out of cell, has remained static, at 20.

Important issues during the reporting period:

- Gradual improvement in regime, available activities and staff retention.
- Coming out of Covid.
- Change of purpose.
- Should be fully staffed by April 2024, so can deliver as planned.
- Prisoner numbers have settled at 2,000.
- Food complaints have risen from 8 in 2023 to 16 in 2024.
- Complaints about medication have risen from 43 in 2023 to 44 in 2024.
- All the above figures should be viewed against an increase in population, from 1,823 in 2023 to 2,000 in 2024.
- During the reporting period, the Governor Nick Leader retired and was replaced by Becky Hayward. The Board has a very positive working relationship with the new Governor (as we did with previous one), the managers and staff, and the Governor attends our monthly Board meetings. This relationship is key to the successful work the Board undertakes.

Areas of concern for the Board:

- Inexperienced staff.
- The time it takes to fix things.
- Heating: see section 3 notes to the Prison Service.

3.1 Main findings

Safety

- In the Board's experience, the prison is safe. However, the prison population has changed since the last reporting period, the change is an increase in prisoners coming from England via out of area court redirects.
- Incidents of violence and self-harm are recorded and investigated at Governor level, in compliance with Prison Service guidelines on prisoner safety.
- There is significant churn: in 2023, 2,904 prisoners received in Berwyn, including many remand prisoners who had been in up to nine other prisons during their remand period. Numerous prisoners were vulnerable due to disruption, first-night anxiety, and delays in receiving PINs for contacting their families. As a result, incidents of self-harm were relatively high.

Fair and humane treatment

- Care delivered by the chaplaincy is comprehensive.
- There are multiple education and training opportunities.
- Property, reception and food are managed well.

Health and wellbeing

- Healthcare provision has improved to a point where it is comparable with that in the community.
- Exercise and activities contribute to prisoners' wellbeing.

Progression and resettlement

- There is a range of education and training facilities, many bringing qualifications. There are also opportunities to work for outside construction companies.
- Resettlement was managed well, with above-average figures for employment on release. However, with the Government's early release scheme, this has become more difficult.

3.2 Main areas for development

TO THE MINISTER

- The Board continues to be concerned about the waiting times for men with severe mental health issues or personality disorders to be transferred to a secure unit. This is evidenced by 26 men being transferred in 2022-2023 compared with 36 in 2023-2024. To exacerbate this situation, transfer to a secure unit can take many months to accomplish. How does the Minister plan to tackle this very serious issue?

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

- The Board continues to be concerned with the ever-increasing numbers of prisoners with severe mental health problems in the segregation unit. More

mental health nurses have been allocated to this area, but on an hour-by-hour basis staff in segregation have to manage the situations. There is no specific training given to staff in how to deal with these problems. The Board considers that extra, targeted training would be appropriate. Does the Prison Service agree with the Board's recommendation? And, if so, what steps will it take to make this happen?

- We have reported over several years that the heating system has not been fit for purpose. Our monitoring, as well as applications received from men, indicate that heating in the cells was inadequate. It is now good to record that the heating system has been refurbished and we will record any improvement in the coming years.
- There has been a serious problem with paint peeling off the walls in cells. A programme of refurbishment was started on the wings, with a capacity of 88 cells being taken out of use at a time. This, however, has been stopped due to the increase in the prison population, which means the capacity is needed. A small number, four at a time, are being refurbished. Given the scale of the problem, this is inadequate. What will the Prison Service do to address this issue?

TO THE GOVERNOR

- During our monitoring, we recorded many instances of men not attending medical appointments. The Board recommends putting in place measures to radically improve the take up of internal appointments.
- Again, during our monitoring, we recorded many instances of men not knowing that they have a key worker. How will the Governor improve the situation?

3.3 Response to the last report

Issue raised	Response given	Progress
Medication	No change	None
Dementia training	Still a Problem	none
Out-of-area transfers	Still a problem	None

Evidence sections 4 – 7

4. Safety

4.1 Reception and induction

The reception area is clean, bright and well organised. Orderlies prepare files in advance for prisoners who are expected. They engage with each prisoner appropriately, offer advice and serve food. There are options for dietary or cultural requirements, and these are on a heated trolley for late arrivals. Orderlies give each prisoner a canteen pack and a book, so they have something to read. All prisoners are scanned, using the body scanner, as per the risk assessment agreed in the security committee

Increased roll means it is more difficult to house certain prisoners separately – they are not known to prison staff, as they now come from Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham. Cells are allocated at the outset, but currently this is more complex due to the increased number of organised crime group (OCG) members.

4.2 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody

Incidents of self-harm have been around 110 per month over the reporting period. Each incident is thoroughly investigated and discussed at senior management meetings and the safer custody group, which is also observed by the Board. Causes are mainly protests and self-harm by individuals with mental ill-health, who account for the majority of the incidents. There was one death in custody during the reporting period, apparently, from a suspected drug overdose. The incident is still under investigation.

4.3 Violence and violence reduction, self-isolation

The paperwork for adjudications is not always properly completed, so cases have to be dismissed as the paperwork is correct but issued incorrectly. New guidance and training on assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT, of which there were 737) plans have been delivered, but this is a long learning process for inexperienced officers. Incidents of violence are not always reported correctly. Numerous reminders are sent out to staff to record incidents quickly and accurately. Now that the establishment is almost fully staffed with better staff retention, the Board will monitor progress. Challenge, support and intervention plans (CSIPs, of which there were 310), used to support and manage prisoners who pose an increased risk of violence, are held on the wings and generally have been completed in a timely manner.

During the period under review, 558 prisoner-on-prisoner assaults and 173 prisoner-on-staff assaults were recorded.

4.4 Use of force

The reporting period showed a consistent increase in the use of force incidents (UoF) almost every month, compared with 2022, with two serious peaks, in March and June. The number of individual prisoners involved in UoF in 2023 was 741, a significant increase from the 546 in 2022. However, the population has increased, meaning the rates per 100 prisoners have stayed broadly the same. Batons were used in 36 incidents. Any incidents where baton strikes are noted by the UoF team, are investigated, through statements and CCTV and body worn video camera on all

occasions where the baton is drawn as well as when deployed. BWVC footage is used to determine the accuracy of the report and if strikes were actually delivered. If this is the case, a decision log is completed and the footage is retained. Inappropriate use of force reduced over the reporting period.

PAVA (an incapacitant spray) was drawn 16 times in the period (16 draws with 8 leading to deployment of the incapacitant). All use of PAVA is reviewed via a decision log and is viewed externally by the regional safety lead, who will raise any concerns, if necessary.

Data are now being collected on prisoner post-incident debriefs because rates are low, mainly due to management oversight: in February 2024, there were 43 returns for 121 incidents, a return rate of 35.54%. House senior officers or community managers are responsible for chasing up debriefs. Staff debriefs were also low in February: 41 of the 121 incidents, or 33.88%

4.5 Preventing illicit items

All prisoners are scanned via a body scanner on arrival and passive search dogs are sometimes present. There have been cases of intercepted passes in the visitors' centre, some leading to prosecutions. Attempted passes are increasing, but this may be thanks to anti-drone netting and faster action on sealing broken windows to prevent drones delivering illicit drugs. All non-rule 39 mail (legal correspondence) is scanned. Staff and sniffer dogs search cells.

5. Fair and humane treatment

5.1 Accommodation, clothing, food

The heating system has now been repaired, but to accommodate the increased prisoner numbers refurbishment of cells has been reduced, as it is not possible to close entire wings.

A living conditions audit was carried out in February 2024, with a moderate rating, which means the establishment is mostly compliant with the expected standards of living conditions. The Board will continue to monitor this.

In November 2023, the Board raised the issue of the cleanliness of the serveries. Berwyn management responded well and an audit was carried out by the regional catering manager, which produced some positive and some negative findings. Board members sample the food available at the serveries and find it tasty.

The wellbeing hub is now operational. It provides good-quality food and can be used by staff, the Board and selected prisoners and their families. The Christmas dinner received praise. The Board receives few complaints about food.

5.2 Segregation

The care and separation unit, or CSU, Ogwen, is now regularly full. The Board has raised concerns about delays in transfers to secure units. The Chair has highlighted this in section 3.2.

More work needs to be done on adjudications. Staff are still not sure how to conduct them and can be uncertain about which charges should be recorded, so cases have to be abandoned. Officers do not submit information on time, which means that Ogwen does not have time to process them. Training is being given, but more is needed. Ogwen is well maintained, with experienced staff.

The Board observes adjudications and GOoD (good order or discipline) reviews (where the prison determines if the prisoner should remain segregated), which are sympathetically handled.

5.3 Staff and prisoner relationships, key workers

The Board notes that many officers show commitment and empathy in their work.

The staffing situation is much improved, but by January 2024 over 40% of band 3 officers had less than 12 months' service. Training is being delivered, but more needs to be done. This has resulted in failures to carry out various tasks properly, such as prompt incident reporting, turning on BWVCs and completing adjudication documents correctly. New staff need more mentors. In recognition of this problem, more officers are helping with adjudication paperwork.

The IMB board development officer (BDO) attends initial staff training and gives a presentation on the role of the Board.

There was a successful increase in capacity to 2,000 places in late 2023, and a reduction in the rate of Band 3 to 5 prison officer resignations, from 16.69% in April 2023 to 13.29% in February 2024.

Although many prisoners know who their key workers are, others say they don't, even when NOMIS (national offender management information service) shows they had meetings. Sometimes, key workers don't document that they have spoken to prisoners, so they are not aware they met them. There is an issue of clarity for both prisoners and staff. A new key worker strategy will be introduced in June 2024.

5.4 Equality and diversity

The monthly equalities meetings are attended by the leads for all protected characteristics (these include race, religion, sex, gender reassignment and sexual orientation, which it is unlawful to discriminate against), as well as for foreign national prisoners, those from the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community, care leavers and Welsh language and culture prisoners. Three prisoners attend and participate. Each meeting receives regular updates and identifies and follows up issues and necessary actions.

The young adults' wing has been discontinued, since far more 18-25-year-olds came into the prison than originally anticipated. Staff are using a bespoke package from the charity, Adult Learning Wales (an education provider). In December 2023, there were 259 and 373 in the 18-25 and 26-30 age groups, respectively, a significant proportion of the total prison population.

Care-experienced men continue to be supported by a small group of prison offender managers' (POMs) monthly forums and a 12-month calendar of activities. Some are aiming to enter 'lived experience' work in the charitable sector on release, to support others in their situation.

There have been improvements for transgender prisoners at reception, with an appropriate reception pack and clothing. The transgender lead says the prisoners themselves often help and teach the staff how to respond to them.

As of December 2023, there were 46 foreign national prisoners in Berwyn, the majority (34) on a single wing. The group is largely self-supporting, and difficulties with food have reduced. The Big Word, a translation service, is available for all prisoners. There are also 22 Irish national prisoners. A handbook has been produced for foreign national prisoners.

Employment and education opportunities for black, Asian and minority ethnic prisoners are closely monitored. Of the 295 men who make up this cohort, 75% are employed or in purposeful activity and the reasons for those not included or actively excluded are followed up and reported. Berwyn's overall population is consistently around 85% white British.

Notable events and days are celebrated, such as Black History Month, Ramadan and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Month, for example, as well as events for the LGBTQ+ community.

There were 283 ACCTs in total during the reporting year. Most related to race, religion/belief, disability and sexual orientation. The number of DIRFs (310) was raised during the period of the report.

5.5 Faith and pastoral support

The Board BDO attends peer mentor training.

There are 14 paid staff in the chaplaincy and more than 35 volunteers. The chaplaincy is well organised and respected by prisoners and staff. Attendance at funerals of immediate family members is facilitated, when possible, and chaplaincy staff act as bereavement counsellors. There has been an increase in deaths of prisoners' relatives.

Two chain breakers work full-time in chaplaincy. These are trusted prisoners who deal with applications and liaise with Listeners (prisoners trained by the Samaritans to offer confidential emotional support to their peers). They contact every prisoner the day before their release, to check that all is in order and that they do not have last minute-queries.

The chaplaincy cares for prisoners of many different religions: Christian, Jewish, Quaker, Buddhist, Islam, Jehovah's Witnesses, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Rastafarian and Pagan. All of these groups have regular services. There is a Catholic service in the large chapel on Saturday morning, and on Sunday mornings a Free Church service, which is repeated later in the morning for the VPs. All of these services are attended by up to 100 prisoners. Afterwards, coffee and biscuits are served, with an opportunity to chat with chaplains and lay staff. At Christmas and Easter, there is a choir of about 20 prisoners. The choir is usually formed three months prior to the performance and rehearsals are weekly. This is a sought-after activity, and the prisoners enjoy participating.

All prisoners are seen (unless they decline) by a member of chaplaincy on their day of reception. Every prisoner in the segregation unit is seen by a member of chaplaincy each morning between 8-9am.

5.6 Incentives schemes

The purpose of the incentives scheme is to encourage prisoners to comply with community rules and engage in activities to support rehabilitation. The scheme rewards positive behaviour, while privileges can be taken away from those who behave poorly or refuse to engage.

The Berwyn scheme has three levels:

- Enhanced: for prisoners demonstrating positive behaviour, e.g. by demonstrating proactive and self-motivated engagement with the requirements of their sentence plans; engaging and co-operating with the prison regime by attending activities as required; following instructions and guidance from staff; and complying with reasonable additional expectations.
- Standard: the expected standard of behaviour is to comply with the regime; partake in keywork and sentence plans; engage in activities; and abide by rules.
- Basic: for prisoners who have demonstrated insufficient commitment to rehabilitation and purposeful activity or behaved badly.

The incentives scheme policy is explained on induction and includes a booklet. Staff assist prisoners who cannot read or write to understand and participate in the scheme. The Board believes that the system operates fairly and effectively.

5.7 Complaints

Prisoners can make complaints only on paper forms. Sometimes, there are no complaints or applications forms on the wing. The Board raises this regularly with the wing managers. All complaints and applications are recorded, generally accurately.

At the morning managers meeting, attended by the Governor, there is a breakdown of complaints, including time outstanding and the source (e.g. activity, offender management unit/OMU, etc).

From its observations, the Board believes the speed and quality of responses and communication to prisoners could be improved.

5.8 Property

Property is stored in a dedicated room situated behind reception. Each prisoner's property is boxed, tagged and placed on shelves. A filing system identifies each prisoner's located property. The number of complaints regarding internal property has reduced from 59 in 2023 to 42 in 2024. Complaints about property going missing during transfer have broadly stayed the same, with 32 in 2023 and 31 in 2024. However, these figures should be viewed as a big improvement, given the population increase.

6. Health and wellbeing

6.1 Healthcare general

The healthcare centre is clean, modern and well-maintained.

There is no in-patient provision at HMP Berwyn. Healthcare is provided by the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board. A monthly health delivery group meeting is attended by representatives from Betsi Cadwaladr, pharmacy, social care, GPs and HMP Berwyn managers.

Because of late arrivals at reception, the healthcare centre is only able to complete the screening process using night staff, with limited availability for health care to respond to any medical emergencies as they arise.

6.2 Physical healthcare

Staffing levels have improved, but there are no dietetic or speech and language specialists on site, although community services are available when required. Therapy services are performing well, and the Board has no concerns about waiting times for dental appointments, which are similar to those in the community.

The number of men not attending healthcare appointments had increased to 13.2% by February 2024. Officers have been reminded to unlock prisoners in time for their appointments. The health peer mentors call every prisoner who has missed an appointment to find out why. The healthcare department has issued feedback surveys to identify reasons for missed appointments.

The Board receives regular complaints from prisoners who have had their medication stopped. In most cases, this is because prisoners have tested positive for illicit substances, but they fail to understand this.

6.3 Mental health

The Board is concerned about the number of people waiting for long periods for transfer to secure units. The mental health and learning disability units have been placed on the Berwyn risk register (a register of priority risks, discussed by the senior management team and updated every month), as these services are understaffed.

6.4 Social care

Wrexham County Borough Council, which has an office on site, provides social care equivalent to what would be available in the community. There are two social workers and one part-time social care assessor. The offender assessment team makes sure that all who need it have a right to participate in an assessment to identify their needs.

Prisoners can self-refer through Unilink, or they can use the internal phone system. Others are referred via family and professionals. The social workers see prisoners face to face and monitor how they are managing.

There are currently two commissioned care packages from Wrexham's home care and reablement team, to help with personal hygiene, washing and dressing. Personal independence and care are strongly encouraged, so that prisoners' health does not deteriorate and to ensure they can transition back into the community when appropriate.

Several prisoners use wheelchairs, which are measured up and sourced through the NHS, as are aids, equipment and adaptations. Currently, there is not a large elderly population in the prison. The Board would like to see more dementia training for staff (see section 3.2). At present, a few prisoners have lower-level vascular dementia.

6.5 Time out of cell, regime

Regime delivery is the Governor's priority for 2024. There is more association time on the wings, with comfortable chairs, chess boards and pool tables. However, due to sudden calls for escorts (for hospital visits, for example), there are often not enough officers to allow time out of cells. There have been numerous complaints, particularly from orderlies and cleaners (trusted prisoners who take on work and services that contribute to the running of the prison) that they are locked up as soon as their shift finishes, which means they have no time on the yard. This was also an issue in the previous reporting period.

There are weekend park runs and the soccer pitches are in regular use. Attendance at the gym is also good.

6.6 Drug and alcohol rehabilitation

There is a large substance misuse (SMS) team, which delivers therapies. Mental health peer mentors are available on all wings to provide advice and guidance. Workshop 11 is a dedicated SMS unit. There are opportunities to work – toilet roll distribution, joinery, recycling materials and CDs, sanding, painting, etc, and a gym area, coffee centre and library and a barber. Classes help with mental health management, covering hepatitis B awareness and SMS. The workshop is generally well-attended – around 30 out of 40. There are four SMS peer mentors, who support and chat with the prisoners. The prisoners generally say they enjoy being in the workshop, as it distracts them from drug use.

6.7 Soft skills

HMP Berwyn has several courses promoting soft skills. These are managed in the gym, wellbeing centre, education unit and through the charity, Barnardo's. They include mental health courses, music, crafts, physical exercise, vocational courses, yoga and mindfulness. There is a peer support system with Listeners, mental health peer mentors, healthcare peer mentors. See sections 5.4, 5.5, 6.5, 6.6, 7.1 and 7.4.

7. Progression and resettlement

7.1 Education, library

Education is provided by Coleg Cambria. There are classes on art, warehousing (with a forklift truck simulator), independent living, creating podcasts, music, maths, English and street soccer; plus, there is a library. Some prisoners attend to gain qualifications, such as technical qualifications through the National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health (NEBOSH), or Northern Council for Further Education (NCFE) qualifications in art and design, or to study for Open University degrees, while others attend for pleasure and/or mental health support.

There is generally a good atmosphere in the education building. Attendees at the classes appear happy and show a good attitude and work. At the end of the two-hour session, there is time to do puzzles and chat with the tutor and the mental health nurse, who is in attendance.

7.2 Vocational training, work

There are places for 747 prisoners in the workshops, which include:

- recycling
- gardening (in July 2023, HMP Berwyn won the Windlesham trophy for best prison garden/grounds)
- scaffolding course relaunched in November 2023; all nine who completed the course passed
- SMS workshop
- welding
- modular housebuilding.

There are links with external employers, including release on temporary licence (ROTL) placements. The Employment Advisory Board meeting is every 2 months on Fridays is chaired by an established employer, John Murphy Construction, which helps co-ordinate strategy to help prison leavers into employment. The monthly employment event is attended by potential employers and covers the five academies in the prison: construction, manufacturing, further and higher education, catering, and the green academy (waste management and recycling).

7.3 Offender management, progression

Staffing has improved in this area during the reporting period. The offender management unit (OMU) is fully staffed, but the end of custody supervised licence (ECSL) release schemes, introduced nationwide at short notice, have increased pressure. Home detention curfew (HDC) is a top priority and applies to prisoners with sentences between 12 weeks and four years. The Board has received numerous applications about this category. In drop-in sessions on the wings, OMU and prisoner offender managers (POMs) advise prisoners and staff how the system works, as written communications are not always effective, given literacy and learning difficulty problems. Around 1,000 men came into Berwyn and a similar number were released during the reporting period.

There is a full quota of officer POMs and there are vacancies in the probation officer POM team. There are 9.6 full-time Probation Service officer equivalents, where there should be 17. Probation Service officers seconded to the prison assist with

workloads and hold cases, while community offender managers (COMs) have responsibility for prisoners being released. The prison offender management unit takes on some Public Protection work (issuing notices to prisoners relating to risk to children and non-contact, etc). Under the case management support model, higher risk cases are held in a hub until they reach a point 12-18 months from the end of their sentences, when they are allocated to a POM (around 60 cases per POM).

The OASys (risk assessment tool) backlog was 29 as at the beginning of February 2024, which is not an outlier. The timeline for an assessment is 12 weeks. Some prisoners are transferred from other prisons without an assessment, so the time available to do it can be much reduced.

There has not been the anticipated reduction in remands and short-term sentencing. The 18-day early release scheme is creating pressure on community probation services, mental health teams and other services and there is some evidence of men being recalled quite quickly.

There are more than 50 IPP (imprisoned for public protection) prisoners at Berwyn.

7.4 Family contact

Barnardo's has continued to develop the services it provides in the prison. A family day (which brings together men and their families outside of their statutory entitlement, usually in more informal settings) is held every month, each with a special theme. There are also three sports family days in July and August and two Christmas family days, with donated gifts from Father Christmas and the option for each family to have a photo taken in his grotto. In addition, there is also a monthly veterans' breakfast club, at which Barnardo's is available to help with family matters, contact and advice about support on release.

'Not A Visit' sessions are held for prisoners with no family contact. A total of 430 prisoners have never had a visit and an estimated 1,300 do not have family contact. Barnardo's acts as a mediator to enable prisoners to re-establish contact. Although these men do not have visits, Barnardo's staff sit with them, talk or play games with them. They are provided with drinks and snacks. This work is much appreciated by prisoners, as well as the prison, as it can mitigate violence. A 'neurodiversity' day helps children who wouldn't usually be able to attend a visit because the sheer numbers make it overwhelming. There is a play area in the visits' hall and a sensory corner for children who feel overwhelmed

There is now a Berwyn safeguarding protocol and Barnardo's delivers training to staff.

The current court work caseload is 43, down from 55. This supports men going through the Family Courts in particular, and Barnardo's staff can act as a McKenzie Friend in court to help prisoners understand and contribute to the process. There have been problems with late delivery of court papers.

7.5 Resettlement planning

There are various workshops and education courses in Berwyn (see section 7.2). The OMU and resettlement teams have been expanded and probation vacancies within the prison have been filled, although in some cases with less qualified officers.

The ECSL scheme is being managed adequately at present, with the main issues being less time for prisoners to complete qualifications and community probation officers not providing data in time.

A total of 23.93% of prison leavers were in employment six weeks after release (above target) and 43% at six months. A total of 93.39% of prison leavers were housed on the first night after release (above target). An average of 18% were recalled.

Transition back into the community generally seems to be smooth for Wrexham residents and there is liaison with other Welsh local authorities. However, the assessments, funding streams and placement processes are more problematic when liaising with English authorities, which operate under a different system from the Welsh authorities.

There has not been the anticipated reduction in remands and short-term sentencing. The 18-day early release scheme is creating pressure on community probation services, mental health teams and other services and there is some evidence of men being recalled quite quickly.

8. The work of the IMB

Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	18
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	6
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	7
Total number of visits to the establishment	402

Applications to the IMB

Code	Subject	Previous reporting year	Current reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	44	38
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives scheme, sanctions	14	21
C	Equality	10	9
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, time out of cell	20	20
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection, restrictions	64	41
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	13	17
F	Food and kitchens	8	16
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	43	44
H1	Property within the establishment	59	42
H2	Property during transfer or in another facility	32	31
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogues	17	11
I	Sentence management, including HDC (home detention curfew), ROTL (release on temporary licence), parole, release dates, re-categorisation	57	44
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	78	58
K	Transfers	50	12
L	Miscellaneous	43	58
	Total number of applications	552	462



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