



# **Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Featherstone**

**For reporting year  
1 November 2022 to 31 October 2023**

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# Contents

<b>Introductory sections 1 – 3</b>	<b>Page</b>
1. Statutory role of the IMB	3
2. Description of the establishment	4
3. Key points	5
 <b>Evidence sections 4 – 7</b>	
4. Safety	8
5. Fair and humane treatment	10
6. Health and wellbeing	13
7. Progression and resettlement	15
 <b>The work of the IMB</b>	
Board support	17
Applications to the IMB	17

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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

2.1 HMP Featherstone is a public sector, closed, category C training and resettlement prison for adult men, situated eight miles north of Wolverhampton. It opened in 1976 and occupies part of the same campus as HMPs Oakwood and Brinsford. It receives prisoners mostly from local prisons HMPs Hewell and Birmingham.

2.2 The prison has a baseline certified normal accommodation of 671<sup>1</sup>, with an operational capacity of 687. The majority of cells, apart from those on house block 5 (the induction wing), are single occupancy.

2.3 The accommodation comprises seven residential house units. House block 1 to 4 are two-stories, with a maximum capacity of 120 on each. A drug recovery wing was established on house block 2 during the period of this report. House block 5 is three stories, with a capacity of 100, and is used for induction. House block 6 is now a drug-free house, with a capacity of 35. House blocks 7 has a capacity of 72 (plus one constant watch cell) and house block 2 has a capacity of 88, these blocks are usually occupied by prisoners on the enhanced level of the incentives scheme. The care and separation unit (CSU), for segregated men, holds up to 10 prisoners in standard cells, plus a special cell.

2.4 The prison serves the Warwickshire and West Mercia areas for resettlement purposes. Prisoners are expected to improve their education levels, work and train in preparation for release in the final part of their sentence. Prior to the Covid-19 restrictions, over 75% of prisoners were involved in activities.

2.5 Key providers of services are:

- Physical healthcare provider: Practice Plus Group (PPG)
- Mental health provider: Inclusion (Midlands Partnership NHS Trust)
- Learning and skills provider: Novus
- Escort contractor: GeoAmey
- Catering services: Bidvest
- Medication: PPG - HMP Oakwood Pharmacy
- Library service: Staffordshire Library Service
- Ordering and delivering of canteen items: DHL
- Maintenance: Amey

2.6 There is a gym, healthcare department, kitchen, education department, library, chaplaincy, reception and visits' hall, as well as extensive workshops and horticultural areas. Other departments are located either in the main administration block or elsewhere around the prison. The visitors' centre is located separately, at the front of the main prison, and was operated by Barnardo's until 30 September 2023, when the charity Prison Advice and Care Trust (PACT), took over the contract.

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

### **3. Key points**

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

3.1.1 This report presents the findings of the Board at HMP Featherstone for the period 1 November 2022 to 31 October 2023.

#### **3.2 Main findings**

##### **Safety**

3.2.1 From its observations, the Board believes levels of violence, self-isolation and open assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) are decreasing slightly, although there is some increase in self-harm. The Board is concerned that body worn video cameras are not sufficiently used within the prison. We are aware that management recognises this issue and is making increased use a priority.

3.2.2 The Board states that members were not challenged or searched properly when entering the prison. The enhanced gate security pod doesn't pose as a deterrent for the smuggling of illicit items into the prison. Due to during the period of the report, it was frequently out of use, generally due to the lack of available trained staff. Because of this, the level of security at the gate was judged to be a grave concern. Staff members were also aware when the gate was fully manned or not.

3.2.3 Compared to much of the prison, the reception area is welcoming and generally works well, even though pressures of the prison population meant that there were large numbers of late arrivals. This was due to transport having to move prisoners from police cells, then courts and, lastly, prisons.

3.2.4 Property, both on transfer and within the prison, remains a significant issue. The Board frequently receives applications (prisoners' written submissions) regarding missing property during prisoner transfers. This has been exacerbated by poor staffing in reception, leading to insufficient time to deal properly with property. Also, there is not a set capacity of property allowed: it differs from prison to prison.

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

3.2.5 Featherstone was built in the 1970's and as stated in many previous annual reports, is showing its age. Much of the prison is in poor condition and significant investment is needed to bring it up to modern standards. There is hope that some of these issues may be addressed in 2024. Rodent infestation was a problem in many parts of the prison throughout the reporting year. Prisoners were encouraged not to throw food and rubbish out of the cell windows, and cleaning teams were allocated to clean up outside the wings.

3.2.6 The quantity and quality of the food were issues for prisoners. Some problems may originate in menu choices and could also be dependent on how food is distributed from the serveries. Prisoners complained about portion sizes, which vary among the house blocks, depending on the supervision of the staff. The quality of the food seemed variable, various complaints of cold food, but perception may also be affected by changes forced on the kitchen by suppliers.

3.2.7 Staff and prisoner relations are generally satisfactory. However, the Board believes there remains a cultural problem with a small group of staff. Senior

management take these matters seriously and appear to address them appropriately when they occur.

3.2.8 Issues with staffing levels in the healthcare department and the offender management unit (OMU), plus consistently incorrect roll call disrupted the regime, as well as many aspects of prison life, including employment, education, the work of the OMU and healthcare. At the very end of the reporting year the situation had improved considerably and it seems essential it does not reoccur.

### **Health and wellbeing**

3.2.9 It was another challenging year for healthcare within HMP Featherstone. Staffing levels have been an issue, which has meant that medication sometimes could not be dispensed without disruption to the regime. This has been a problem for some time and thought should be given to how the dispensing system can be changed to enable medication to be given out or ordered. Often, a healthcare professional was not present during a GOoD (good order and discipline) review, at a time when their expertise was needed. Also, there were problems with prisoners being able to get dental appointments.

3.2.10 As highlighted in last year's report, segregation in the CSU appears to be the best option for some prisoners suffering severe mental health difficulties. In the case of complex prisoners, there seems to be a reluctance from other areas of the prison/healthcare services to take on problem cases. One prisoner spent over 245 days in the CSU (the limit allowed without external authorisation is 42 days), as the exact reason for his illness could not be determined.

3.2.11 Delivery of an acceptable dental service has been problematic during the reporting year due to the detection of legionella in the water system. Services then had to be suspended on several occasions.

3.2.12 There was no wheelchair available for any prisoner who required it.

### **Progression and resettlement?**

3.2.13 The resettlement clinic is well established, and more prisoners have a bank account open on release.

3.2.14 The offender management unit (OMU) had significant issues during the year, predominantly due to lack of staff. A further issue towards the end of the reporting year was the lack of leader for the department. This exacerbated the pressures caused by the low staffing levels.

3.2.15 Prisoners are given help with completion of CVs, a history of work or study and achievements, accommodation, birth certificates and driving licences. One prisoner explained that forums were held, which involved mock interviews. This helped take the anxiety out of applying for jobs, as prisoners were guided through the whole process. This also helped him to explain how he had come to be in prison.

3.2.16 Prisoners have been doing some painting to tidy up the prison. But, in the Board's opinion, this is just like putting a sticking plaster on to cover up the poor condition of the prison.

3.2.17 Discussions are in place to create a central hatch for dispensing all medications, as the system is not working on each individual wing.

### **3.3 Main areas for development**

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

- As previously reported over several years Featherstone is in a dilapidated state and does not provide the facilities expected in a modern prison. The cells and wings are in poor condition, temporary repairs are only acting as a sticking plaster and not resolving the underlying problems.

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

- Mental illness is a serious issue within prisons. At Featherstone, the compassionate answer appears to be to locate some of these prisoners in isolation in the CSU, where largely untrained staff attempt to deal with them in a humane way. This is not acceptable and there needs to be a way of speedily transferring these prisoners to more appropriate accommodation that can better cater for their health needs.

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

- Issues with low numbers of healthcare staff have, on occasion, meant that the regime has been disrupted because of delays dispensing medication. This has been an ongoing issue and consideration should be given as to whether the system can be changed to increase its reliability and consistency.
- The culture amongst staff remains problematic in some cases. We believe this issue is understood by the Governor, but continued vigilance is necessary to ensure these issues continue to be addressed.
- The use of body worn video cameras (BWVCs) needs to be increased to ensure staff are not subject to unfounded allegations.

### **3.4 Progress since the last report**

3.4.1 Dilapidated state of the prison: as detailed in this report, little progress has been made, except for some minor cosmetic changes.

3.4.2 Transfer of contracts causing significant problems: no significant problematic contracts have been transferred.

3.4.3 Property: both within the prison and for incoming prisoners, property remains a significant issue.

3.4.4 Prisoners arriving with contraband: this has fallen during the reporting year, although it remains an issue. This has been identified by the full body scanner, used on entry to reception, and is dealt with accordingly.

3.4.5 Provision of healthcare: healthcare continues to have many problems, but the Board believes the department is working hard to rectify them.

3.4.6 Staff culture: from its observations, the Board felt there was a problem with the culture of a small number of staff last year. This continues to be the case and continued vigilance will be necessary by senior staff to eliminate these issues.

3.4.7 Code reds (emergency code for when a prisoner is bleeding) and code blues (emergency code for when a prisoner is not breathing) were increasing.

## **Evidence sections 4 – 7**

### **4. Safety**

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

4.1.1 The use of the enhanced gate security modular building appears to have decreased during the reporting period. However major red flags were raised in terms of a major security breach and are a cause for much concern.

4.1.2 The reception area is a clean, welcoming space for both newly arrived prisoners and those being discharged or transferred to other establishments.

4.1.3 When fully staffed reception works well. But staff are frequently redeployed, particularly at weekends, which at times has caused an unsatisfactory build-up of property and issues for prisoners.

4.1.4 There were significant population pressures on the Prison Service throughout the reporting year, resulting in prisoners coming from a much wider geographical location than would usually have been the case. HMP Fosse Way opened and we were receiving prisoners in the wrong category, i.e. those with less than 10 weeks left to serve.

4.1.5 The induction process appears generally satisfactory with medical screening as standard. Newly arrived prisoners usually go to the induction wing on house block 5. However this unit consists of double cells so some high-risk prisoners are sometimes transferred directly to other house blocks, where a single cell can be provided. There is a risk in these cases of induction procedures not being fully completed. Showers are usually available on arrival but are dependent on arrival time. Prisoners spend their first night on the top floor and are observed hourly. Initially, they are kept separate from the rest of the house and only gradually integrated. Usually, they spend 5-6 weeks on house block 5 before being moved to general accommodation. Induction for gym, education and healthcare are completed during their first week.

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

4.2.1 The ACCT process was not adhered to by all staff, the result of which was that there has been more staff training around the ACCT document.

4.2.2 There has been some increase in self-harm reported during the reporting year.

4.2.3 There was an increase in the use of the constant watch cell on house block 7 in the reporting period.

4.2.4 There was one death in custody during the reporting period.

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

4.3.1 The year again saw progress in the reduction of violent incidents in the prison, which contributed to a generally safer atmosphere.

4.3.2 In June the prison started to deliver the Kaizen-accredited offender behaviour programme for adult men who are assessed as high or very high risk. It is for people



who have been convicted of violent or sexual offences. During the reporting year, only a small number of prisoners have accessed the course.

Prisoners identified as violent are managed and supported through challenge, support and intervention plans (CSIPs). The Board is satisfied that investigation and management of CSIPs are generally of good quality and consistency for both perpetrators and victims of violence. Any new prisoners who have a VIPER (violence in prisons estimator) score of three or higher are seen by safer custody to ensure that they have the appropriate support. There are, in the reporting year, no VR (violence reduction) prisoner representatives operating in the prison. However, some prisoners are being security checked before consideration for this role.

4.3.3 The Board is concerned that prison officers do not activate their BWVCs appropriately. HMP Featherstone has one of the lowest take up rates across the Prison Service. This meant that, on several occasions, prisoners told the Board they felt force had been used unnecessarily. However, there was no evidence either way to review. The Governor has prioritised increasing the use of BWVCs, and it is hoped the success of this initiative can be seen in the next reporting year. The use of BWVCs is variable: some officers did not want to use the cameras as they felt the footage could be used against them. It has not been as successful as expected.

4.3.4 The number of prisoners choosing to self-isolate has fallen. Typically, the prison has 4-6 prisoners a month who choose to isolate (usually due to debt, threats, mental health issues, being forced to hold illicit items and issues around their offences). Most were reintegrated into the regime quickly.

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

4.4.1 The Board monitored the use of force, both by attending planned interventions and observing use of force meetings. This indicated that use of force was proportionate.

4.4.2 The full body scanner is used to scan prisoners on entry to reception when they first come into the prison. This is a valuable machine and many suspect illicit packages have been found.

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

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

5.1.1 The prison in general continues to be in poor condition, consistent with its age, and needs significant refurbishment or replacement.

5.1.2 The lift is now operational. The Board hopes to see evidence of effective use to the benefit of prisoners with mobility issues. There appears to be no method for disabled prisoners to access the lift.

5.1.3 The house blocks coped as best as they could during the heat waves in the summer with extra fans and open window/doors, but it was extremely hot and proper ventilation is needed.

5.1.4 There continues to be a general feeling amongst prisoners that food portion sizes are too small and often not very appetising. Some items are consistently rejected by the prisoners, e.g. soup, salads and fruit, and consideration should be given as to whether the menu can be amended while maintaining appropriate nutritional standards. Members are frequently shown meals by prisoners with the comment 'do you think this is enough to last a grown man to the next meal?'. The quality of food does vary according to menu choices and seems dependent on the level of supervision at the servery. Food comments' books are not easily available on all house blocks and do not appear to be well used. It is hoped that these issues can be addressed in the future. The main kitchen has old and worn-out equipment. During our weekly monitoring visits we were reporting damaged and unsuitable equipment which is a constant concern. The Board has also monitored the use of the servery and the comments' books to find they are ineffective, which needs to be addressed.

5.1.5 Prisoners were unhappy about food/menu substitutions at late notice. Much of this was felt to be due to unannounced order substitutions by food suppliers. There are old menus on all the house blocks, which need updating and replacing.

5.1.6 HM inspectorate of Prisons' (HMIP) inspection report in May 2022 stated that the range of canteen items was too limited and too expensive. Attempts are being made to address this issue.

5.1.7 Clothing is an issue with lack of clean kit for the prisoners. Lack of bedding has been a problem on some of the wings with prisoners just sleeping on a plain mattress with no bedding at all. Also whites for the servery are not consistently being given out and used.

### **5.2 Segregation**

5.2.1 The CSU, where men are segregated, continues to be in a dilapidated condition. It has consistently been occupied almost to capacity. On occasion, maintenance was poor with for example, a prisoner describing how he had to eat his meals in a cell with a toilet leaking dirty water, which had been reported more than a week previously. Prisoners may be sent to segregation straight from reception due to arriving 'packed' with contraband from the transferring prison.

5.2.2 As previously stated, for their own safety, the CSU frequently houses prisoners with mental health issues. The Board may concur that, in Featherstone, this may be the best place for them to be housed, but it seems inhumane for

prisoners with mental health issues to spend prolonged periods in the CSU. One prisoner was in the unit for all the reporting period, during which time his deterioration was noted by many IMB members. The Board escalated the matter to Commissioner level in the previous year, then to both Ministerial and Commissioner levels in the reporting period, until his eventual transfer. The Board's view is that the CSU is not a suitable location for prisoners with significant mental health issues. There needs to be a mechanism where prisoners can be transferred easily to more appropriate provision. There were also complaints about the lack of bedding and kit.

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

5.3.1 Key worker activity during the reporting period was concentrated on the most vulnerable prisoners. The Board found that key workers were inconsistent while completing apps. Other prisoners were not seen by a key worker for most of the reporting year.

5.3.2 During the reporting year there were not enough equality and diversity leaders, at one point it was down to just 1 running the program.

### **5.4 Faith and pastoral support**

5.4.1 The judgement of the Board is that chaplaincy continues to provide a decent quality service to prisoners of all faiths who want their support.

5.4.2 Both Roman Catholic and Anglican ministers are in place and contributing fully to the department.

5.4.3 There are 12-13 different religions in the prison, and all are being supported.

5.4.4 Chaplaincy staff visit all new prisoners within 24 hours of arrival, as well as seeing all prisoners before they are discharged and visiting the CSU daily.

### **5.5 Incentives schemes**

5.5.1 Initially in the reporting year, the prison ran the incentives scheme without a basic (lowest) level classification. The three-tier system (which also includes 'standard' and 'enhanced') was reintroduced in January 2023. The Board felt this was a positive move.

### **5.6 Complaints and applications**

5.6.1 The complaints' system caused issues during the reporting year. There seemed to be frequent problems getting timely responses about complaints, which needed to be forwarded to other prisons. There was also a lack of timeline and dating on the applications. The complaints system broke down for a while due to short staffing levels.

5.6.2 Further attempts were made during the reporting year to improve the applications' system. There was some improvement noted, particularly due to improved staffing levels in the business hub.

### **5.7 Property**

5.7.1 Property continues to be a major issue for prisoners in Featherstone. Problems often start when a prisoner transfers to another establishment. Property often does not seem to follow promptly, resulting in complaints about missing

personal items having to go back to the prison they came from. Featherstone's property allowance is not consistent with that of other establishments: for example, one prisoner arrived with 17 bags of property, and we are only allowed 2.5 kgs. extra prop had to be sent out to a storage facility.

5.7.2 At times during the reporting year, there has been a large build-up of property in reception. This has been the result of staff being reallocated to other areas due to personnel shortages. This has meant that, sometimes, property has taken an unacceptably long time reaching the house block accommodation. Delays have been reduced by targeting the backlog and this has on occasion, resolved the problem.

## **6. Health and wellbeing**

### **6.1 Healthcare general**

6.1.1 This has been a challenging year, particularly regarding staffing levels.

6.1.2 The NHS national strikes did not seem to have an adverse impact on the health and wellbeing of prisoners at Featherstone.

### **6.2 Physical healthcare**

6.2.1 Staffing levels have undoubtedly been the major issue over the reporting year. It was noted that the staffing model for healthcare does not allow all for all seven hatches to be opened at once. If there are staffing problems, disruption to the regime may occur. On occasion, staffing problems have also meant that prisoners failed to be properly medicated.

6.2.2 There has been a significant amount of drug use in the prison during the reporting year. The number of code blues called has on occasion been disruptive to the provision of healthcare services.

6.2.3 The healthcare department has done a lot of work regarding safer prescribing. This has resulted in a reduction in the number of prisoners being prescribed Gabapentin (a pain killer), which has been accompanied by an increase in complaints and IMB applications from disgruntled patients.

6.2.4 The waiting list for the dentist has always been long, despite additional sessions. One reason for this was the fact that dental sessions had to be cancelled due to the presence of Legionella in the water system (no sessions were held for the month of March). This situation reoccurred and was exacerbated by low staffing issues.

### **6.3 Mental health**

6.3.1 Mental health services have been limited by both staffing problems and the high incidence of psychoactive substance use, creating significant additional workload.

### **6.4 Exercise, regime**

6.4.1 There was, again, disruption to the regime in the reporting year, initially due to staffing shortages in the healthcare department. Attendance at work and education was affected by the need to dispense medication using a much smaller number of staff than usually employed. The staffing model also does not allow for all seven medication hatches to be open at the same time.

6.4.2 In July, a new number one Governor came into post at the prison. Almost immediately it was apparent that he wanted to end part-time working for prisoners and move to a more 'regular' working day. Implementation was not easy, but the general principle was welcomed by staff, prisoners and the IMB. The regime was therefore in a period of flux at the end of the reporting year.

### **6.5 Drug and alcohol rehabilitation**

6.5.1 During the reporting year, both a drug-free wing and a drug-recovery wing were opened. The drug recovery wing has had many more problems. These seem to

be caused by the fact that its capacity is too large. This means that the upstairs is used for drug recovery, but the downstairs accommodation is for a variety of regular prisoners. Therefore, acknowledged drug dealers and drug recovery prisoners are on the same house block and are not effectively prevented from mixing. On house block 6, prisoners are tested once a month for alcohol and twice a month for illicit substances. Officers on house block 6 are providing an excellent drug-free environment and, in the Board's view, should be commended for their efforts. Activities include competitions and events that contribute to the welfare of the prisoners

## **7. Progression and resettlement**

### **7.1 Education, library**

7.1.1 Members of the IMB observed lessons throughout the reporting year. These were mostly positive. We were impressed by the content of the lessons, the teacher's awareness of the individual learner's needs, and the differentiation used. All staff members welcomed the interest of the IMB in the education unit.

7.1.2 In May 2022, an HMIP inspection found that senior leaders did not have an effective strategy for improving prisoners' skill levels in English and Maths. Subsequently, Maths and English were integrated into work within the workshops, using a blended learning approach, covering entry levels 1, 2 and 3.

7.1.3 The prison also introduced an assessment for all prisoner inductions to evaluate their Maths and English levels on entry. This was placed on a sequencing document and prisoners were encouraged to join the relevant Maths and English courses to follow their chosen routeway, ready for progression.

7.1.4 All other prisoners' education levels, information, advice, and guidance (IAG) assessments, routeways and sentence plans are identified. This is to ensure that they are allocated the correct courses/workshops for individual progression. prisoners.

7.1.5 For much of the second part of the reporting year difficulties with roll call caused problems for education and the workshops. The excessive time taken on many occasions resulted in men arriving late or not at all sometimes, which was very disruptive.

7.1.6 Course uptake improved and because of the strategies put in place, results were improving. The pass rate in functional skills qualifications in English was 95%, while it was 100% in Maths.

7.1.7 Staffing levels have been problematic at times this year, but they are now more stable.

7.1.8 The library has continued to provide an excellent service throughout the year. It is a very pleasant area, with new shelving and constantly changing displays to keep up with current events.

7.1.9 Storybook Dads, where prisoners record a story on a CD or DVD for their children, continues to thrive, and a Christmas Storybooks for Dads was being organised for November/December.

7.1.10 Prisoners are allocated a time to visit the library fortnightly during their association time. The inefficient roll call meant prisoners frequently failed to visit the library at the correct time.

7.1.11 The library makes extensive use of orderlies, who also mentor learners for the Shannon Trust and Storybook Dads mentor courses in the education hub.

7.1.12 The library had to close for part of the reporting year due to a flood. A temporary library was opened quickly and efficiently, together with an outreach programme, so there was minimal disruption to services.

## **7.2 Vocational training, work**

7.2.1 For much of the reporting year most of the prison has been working half days, with a small number of prisoners working full-time. As reported elsewhere, the new Governor started to look at a return to full-time working in the later part of the reporting year. As in the previous reporting year many vocational courses proved impossible, as recruitment of instructors proved to be a challenge. Alternative provision has been provided with the Get Set for Success and CSCS card courses, to access site work. These have been successful and have waiting lists.

## **7.3 Offender management, progression**

7.3.1 The OMU has had significant problems throughout the reporting year. It has been hit by a lack of staff and for some of the reporting year a leader for the area was not in post. Functions were therefore being prioritised, resulting in a poor service to prisoners and a consequent rise in complaints, which exacerbated the problems.

## **7.4 Family contact**

7.4.1 Family contact has been encouraged through social visits, social video calls, family days and Storybook Dads. The Board feels the prison exhibits a compassionate attitude when family emergencies arise. Visitors booking a visit found that when they arrived, they were often not on the list, even though they had received an email saying they were booked in. There were also complaints about prisoners trying to book visits, as they were kept on hold for a period that used up all their phone PIN credit. It was also noted that visitors were often late being allowed in to visit prisoners, which meant they spent less time with them.

## **7.5 Resettlement planning**

7.5.1 The head of reducing re-offending chairs a monthly resettlement clinic. All prisoners within 12 weeks of release are reviewed. Any requirements for a successful release are highlighted, discussed and actioned. The Board welcomes this team approach and has seen an improvement in the number of prisoners leaving prison with suitable arrangements for release. First night accommodation has improved.

7.5.2 More prisoners are leaving the prison with access to a bank account.

7.5.3 The process for the release of prisoners itself is thorough, organised and a positive experience for them. Prison officers meticulously check paperwork and explain each prisoners' post-sentence conditions in a clear, concise way.



## The work of the IMB

Coincident with the end of the reporting year, two experienced members left the Board. Although two newly recruited members were settling into the role, the Board is in a weakened state compared with the start of the reporting year.

### Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	14
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	6
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	4
Total number of visits to the establishment	288
Total number of segregation reviews observed	95

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

Code	Subject	Previous reporting year	Current reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	1	9
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives schemes, sanctions	1	6
C	Equality	2	5
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	1	4
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection restrictions	3	10
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	3	7
F	Food and kitchens	0	6
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	20	16
H1	Property within this establishment	15	16
H2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	23	28
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	1	12
I	Sentence management, including HDC (home detention curfew), ROTL (release on temporary licence), parole, release dates, recategorization's	18	26
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	10	9
K	Transfers	4	16
L	Miscellaneous, including complaints system	7	20
	<b>Total number of applications</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>190</b>



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