



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

**For reporting year  
1 May 2023 to 30 April 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**

HMP Stocken is a category C training prison (which hold prisoners whose escape risk is considered low but who cannot be trusted in open conditions) for men, with 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 1,071<sup>1</sup>. It is situated in a rural location close to the A1 in Rutland. Access to public transport is very limited, with the nearest trains and buses in Oakham (nine miles away).

Most prisoners serve medium- to long-term sentences (that is, four years or longer), but the prison also holds a number of prisoners serving life sentences and those serving indeterminate sentences for public protection (IPP).

There are seven wings: four house about 75-130 prisoners each, and three house nearly 200 each. An eighth wing was due to open during this year, but it is unlikely to open until summer 24.

There are 14 workshops and a substantial education section. There is a large, well-equipped gym, a library, a chapel and a multi-faith room, which are generally well used and attended.

Education is provided by People Plus (PP), and healthcare and mental health services by Practice Plus Group (PPG). Inclusion (drug rehabilitation) is part of the Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and are subcontracted through the overarching PPG contract. Library services are provided by Rutland County Council. Voluntary services include Lincolnshire Action Trust, Samaritans, Prison Fellowship, Shannon Trust and Sycamore Trust.

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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 Main findings**

##### **Safety**

In the Board's view, HMP Stocken is generally a safe place for both prisoners and staff.

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

In general, prisoners appear to be treated fairly and humanely. Reports of discrimination or unprofessional conduct by staff are investigated thoroughly and some are upheld.

From its observations, the Board is confident that the prison has continued to provide the men with as much time out of cell and work opportunities as possible and strives to improve its culture.

The Board sees the appointment of a neurodiversity support manager (NSM) as a positive move.

##### **Health and wellbeing**

Physical health is well catered for.

As in previous reports, we are concerned about the number of prisoners at HMP Stocken with mental health problems, although we recognise that this is a national issue. We still feel that it takes too long to transfer prisoners to secure mental health facilities, which is not good for the prisoner or the staff.

##### **Progression and resettlement**

As in previous reports, the number of prisoners being transferred to the category D estate has increased.

However, the number of prisoners being released directly from HMP Stocken has also increased which, given that HMP Stocken is not a resettlement prison, continues to be a concern for the Board.

The Governor and his senior leadership team are continuing to do their best for prisoners being released from HMP Stocken. This includes work done by the employment hub and Lincolnshire Action Trust.

However, the prison is not funded as a resettlement prison and the Board still believes that it is not acceptable for establishments such as HMP Stocken to have to bid for funding and resources in order to ensure prisoners are resettled properly on release.

#### **3.2 Main areas for development**

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

- Although the Board appreciates that work needs to be done on old, Victorian prisons, the remedial work required on prisons such as HMP Stocken, which

was built in the 1980s, should not be forgotten. How and when will the Minister address the renovations required at HMP Stocken?

- It takes too long to transfer mentally ill prisoners to secure mental health facilities. This often means that they have to be held in the Care and Separation Unit (CSU) for their own safety for extended periods of time. What is the Minister doing in conjunction with the Department of Health to address the shortfall in secure mental health places?

### **TO THE PRISON SERVICE**

- What is the Prison Service doing to ensure that when men are transferred between prisons, their property goes with them? The Board has received a number of applications concerning property that has not been transferred with the men when they come to HMP Stocken.
- Although another new wing is due to be opened at HMP Stocken, no refurbishment, renovation or enlargement has been planned for the CSU. When will this be addressed?
- With the pressures on the prison population, the Board is seeing an increase in the number of prisoners held 'out of area', with the negative impact this has on family ties. What will the Prison Service do to address this matter?
- As the prison still continues to release prisoners back into the community despite it not being a resettlement prison, what is the Prison Service doing about funding this activity?

### **TO THE GOVERNOR**

- When Board members observe R45 reviews for prisoners held on security intelligence, the Duty Governor has little information to pass on to the prisoner and it often appears to take a long time for the security department to visit the prisoner. There was talk of the prisoner being sent a 'holding' letter, but we have seen no evidence of this being used in practice. How are you planning to address this?

## **3.3 Response to the last report**

Suggested table:

Issue raised	Response given	Progress
The number of inappropriate transfers has risen over the last year. This includes prisoners who are transferred on open assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) documents (which are used to support prisoners at risk of self-harm and suicide) and those who have only been in	In the face of ongoing population pressures across the entire adult male prison estate, HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) continues to strive to maintain offender flows by balancing the prison estate to hold prisoners in the right place at the right time, where possible. 87% of the prison population is	The offender management unit (OMU) cannot influence who the population management unit (PMU) sends to HMP Stocken.

<p>prison for a few days or weeks. Hence, prisoner flow is not working as it should.</p>	<p>aligned to Configuration Ambition 2025. The offender categorisation and assessment team at HMP Stocken does everything within their remit to ensure they receive appropriate prisoner allocations. However, due to prison capacity issues, this is not always possible.</p> <p>With regard to the Board's comment about prisoners entering HMP Stocken on open assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) plans and without appropriate handovers, when prisoners are due to be transferred, an urgent case review must be completed before the transfer and as soon as possible after at the receiving prison. In addition to this, those being supported by the ACCT process will meet with a member of staff on arrival at HMP Stocken. It is not a justifiable reason for receiving prisons to not accept prisoners with an open ACCT.</p>	<p>Prisoners are still being received on open ACCTs without an urgent case review having been carried out at the sending prison and a handover given to HMP Stocken.</p>
<p>Whilst the situation regarding the transfer of prisoners to category D establishments has improved, the transfer of prisoners to category B establishments takes too long.</p>	<p>The remand population has grown to unprecedented levels as a result of the Crown Court backlog and industrial action by the Criminal Bar Association. This impact is being felt considerably in the training estate. The</p>	<p>The transfer to category B establishments has not improved. The Prison Group Director has just put in a new local process, so we hope to see an improvement in the coming year.</p>

	<p>convicted and unsentenced population has also had a direct impact on the spaces in reception prisons. HMPPS is trying to maximise capacity in reception prisons in order to serve the courts, which means that moving category B prisoners from reception prisons into the long term and high security estate (LTHSE) remains a key priority. We acknowledge the importance of transferring prisoners who are re-categorised from category C to category B to the most appropriate prisons as quickly as possible and the LTHSE and HMPPS Population Management continue to work collaboratively to support the category estate.</p> <p>It might be useful for the Board to note that, over recent months, more prisoners have been re-categorised to category B due to their poor behaviour. As soon as a prisoner is made category B, the work within the OMU begins to get the individual moved into an appropriate establishment. However, category B prisons are often reception prisons, which are running to full capacity, so organising a move is not always as straightforward as we would like.</p>	<p>It is the Board's view that this is partly driven by the population pressures, meaning that more prisoners are being moved further away from home and their family contacts. The prisoners, therefore, believe that their poor behaviour will get them to a category B prison nearer home.</p>
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<p>Our view is that the population management unit (PMU) is ineffective and a significant contributing factor to the issue of transferring prisoners mentioned above.</p>	<p>There are complex and wide-ranging issues involved in transferring and locating prisoners, and allocation decisions must reflect both the specific needs and circumstances of the prisoner, as well as the operating environment and the range of services at the receiving prison. Although operating within these constraints, HMPPS is committed to ensuring that, where practicable, prisoners are moved in a timely fashion and in line with the published offender flows. Prison staff are doing what they can to support colleagues in local establishments who are receiving increased demand from the courts. Likewise, prisons are encouraged to support offender flows as much as possible and to ensure that prisoners' rehabilitation needs are met and protected.</p>	<p>We have not observed any improvement.</p>
<p>The waiting times for programmes is too long, when prisoners are required to complete programmes as part of their sentence plan. We understand that this is a national issue, but it causes prisoners aggravation when they have been transferred to Stocken to complete a programme.</p>	<p>Accredited programmes are prioritised on risks and relevant date and staff are currently assessing prisoners 18 months or more before their relevant release or parole date. HMP Stocken currently has 92 prisoners eligible and waiting for places on the Thinking Skills Programme (TSP). We are due to deliver 10 TSP groups, comprising 100 spaces over the</p>	<p>There are still long waiting lists for the courses and the changes to the new accredited courses have further increased prisoners' anxiety.</p>

	<p>coming months. In addition, 12 prisoners have been assessed as eligible and waiting for Kaizen. Kaizen Interpersonal Violence are on track to deliver 16 spaces and Kaizen General Violence four spaces. HMP Stocken does have a high number of referrals awaiting assessment, who are being prioritised based on their relevant release or parole date, in line with national guidance. In rare cases, some prisoners are transferred elsewhere to enrol on a programme. The waiting list is monitored nationally and locally. Attendance at an offending behaviour programme (OBP) is one way to demonstrate a reduction in risk, and prisoners being reviewed for re-categorisation should be considered based on their wider risk and rehabilitative opportunities, not only their OBP attendance. Programme teams are funded by a centrally OBP budget. This investment has been maintained by HMPPS and is fully allocated across all accredited programme delivery sites. We do, however, keep accredited programmes delivery under regular review, based on local demand, and HMPPS is currently</p>	
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	<p>testing a 'next generation' of accredited programmes. This aims to simplify and streamline assessment processes for accredited programmes.</p> <p>The Governor is looking at non-accredited interventions. Victim awareness continues to run personal social development modules. Other projects are being explored at HMP Stocken: one is a partnership with the violence reduction network, to design bespoke materials to enable prisoners to be trained in peer-led violence reduction interventions. In addition to this, work is taking place with domestic violence charities to explore initiatives that address the increasing number of prisoners with previous history of domestic violence. A comprehensive needs' analysis of HMP Stocken's population has been completed, including an OBP specific needs' analysis.</p>	
Wing-based electronic kiosks should be provided on the wings.	<p>Kiosks are no longer being rolled out in establishments. In-cell technology is now the focus. The Governor is in contact with the Ministry of Justice digital team to explore enhancing HMP Stocken's IT offer. Although HMP Stocken is not on the list for in-cell</p>	<p>The Board was disappointed with this response, particularly as HMP Stocken is being expanded. Some prisoners see the move to HMP Stocken as a backward step, with its rural setting and lack of in-cell technology, which they have been used to in their sending prison.</p>

	technology in the near future, the Governor will keep the Board informed of any developments.	
With the rise in the cost of living, particularly food, the food allowance allocated to feed each prisoner needs to be increased.	Food budgets are determined locally by Governors in public sector prisons (or Directors in privately managed prisons) and kept under review as part of the normal budget allocation planning. Prison rules require that prisoners are provided with three meals a day that are varied, nutritious and meet the religious, cultural and medical needs of all. The HMPPS catering team has been providing support to all prison establishments to help address the rising cost of food. They are working closely with local catering managers to understand issues and share good practice ideas with our food suppliers to look at supply and sourcing options. They are also working closely with the Department of Health and Social Care and, the Office of Health Improvement and Disparities, following Government guidelines, to provide supplementary advice to prisoners and staff across the estate on eating healthy meals. The kitchen manager at HMP Stocken offers a wide range of daily choices so that prisoners can have a varied diet.	22% increase

	Whilst acknowledging the challenges of increasing inflation, the daily food allowance has been increased from £2.21 to £2.70. This is a reasonable increase.	
The education provider is still not providing a good service (as also reported in last year's annual report) and the education contract needs to be reviewed.	The education contract has been reviewed and a new extension to the contract was launched in April 2023. The contract includes increased financial penalties for non-delivery and poor-quality teaching, learning and assessment. It should be noted that Ofsted feedback is generally positive on contracted delivery and most areas of concern are associated with non-contract related issues.	<p>The education provision has improved - see section 7.1. However, we were surprised to see the response (left), as Ofsted made the following assessments about the education, skills and work provision:</p> <p>Overall effectiveness: Inadequate</p> <p>Quality of education: Inadequate</p> <p>Behaviour and attitudes: Requires improvement</p> <p>Personal development: Requires improvement</p> <p>Leadership and management: Inadequate</p>
We are pleased to see that the staff attrition rate has reduced, but continued effort is needed to address staffing and recruitment levels.		The staffing level has continued to improve. We are particularly pleased to see the recruitment that has taken place in anticipation of the opening of the new wings. We are also pleased to see the improvement in retention has also continued. This has, however, led to an increase in the proportion of the staff on the wings with less than two years' service.

## Evidence sections 4 – 7

### 4. Safety

#### 4.1 Reception and induction

The reception department generally works well but, as with the rest of the establishment, it was impacted by the staff shortages at the beginning of the reporting year.

Screening and testing have further improved as, after the introduction of the whole-body X-ray scanner last year, a new X-ray scanner for screening prisoners' property has been installed.

Peer supporters are present in reception to help the men arriving to understand the processes at HMP Stocken, particularly with regard to what happens in reception. Prisoners have two private interviews, one in reception and one on the induction wing, and healthcare staff carry out a health screening to identify any immediate issues.

As mentioned elsewhere in this report, property on transfer still remains an issue, if the volumetric controls have not been applied. This can result in delays if there are not enough staff in reception to search all the property. This may mean that the prisoner may not be able to take all his property with him onto the wing. The excess property then needs to be stored in reception and screened at a later time. On occasion, men are arriving without any of their property, which causes problems for them.

Prisoner induction takes place on F wing and is a two-week programme, starting on a Monday. As a result of it always starting on a Monday, depending on when the prisoner arrives at HMP Stocken, there will be a delay to when they begin the programme, which can be unsettling.

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

HMP Stocken is sitting mid-table within the comparator group for self-harm. There has been an increase in self-harm incidents since late 2023, predominantly due to multiple self-harmers.

A sample of self-harm incidents:

Month	No. of incidents	No. of individuals involved	No. of multiple self-harmers
August 2023	39	21	7
December 2023	51	25	10
February 2024	59	27	12

#### Deaths in custody

Three deaths in custody occurred at HMP Stocken, one each in September and November 2023 and another in March 2024. Two were, apparently, from natural causes, but the inquests are still to take place. One of the deaths occurred after the prisoner had been released but, as it happened within 28 days of release, it is classed as a death in custody.

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

Similarly, in February 2024, Stocken was the second lowest for assaults on staff and the lowest for prisoner-on-prisoner assaults in the comparator group.

A sample of violent incidents:

Month	No. of incidents	Assaults on staff (serious)	Prisoner fights (serious)	Assaults on prisoners (serious)
August 2023	15	5	4 (1)	6 (1)
December 2023	11	4	4	3 (1)
February 2024	8	4 (2)	2	2 (2)

Serious violent incidents are: if there are potential life threatening injuries such as serious head injuries, serious fractures, stab wounds or deep slashes requiring outside hospital treatment, scalds, or burns, or injuries requiring treatment such as cuts that require stitching, bites, severe bruises, loss or broken teeth, potting incidents, temporary blindness and spitting striking the neck or above.

### 4.4 Use of force

All incidents involving the use of force (UoF) are reviewed weekly to identify if it was appropriate and establish any learning opportunities. A member of the IMB attends this meeting as an observer, approximately every four weeks.

### 4.5 Preventing illicit items

New body scanners and an X-ray machine for screening property have been introduced. Staff are still finding illicit items on prisoners arriving on transfer from other prisons.

Targeted cell searches based on intelligence regularly take place, along with searches by an illicit brewed alcohol detection dog (IBAD). Despite the best efforts of the staff, illicit items still manage to get through. As staff close off one route, another opens up, often driven by organised crime groups (OCG); the latest threat is from drones dropping packages of illicit items into prison grounds.

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

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

There are seven wings: F wing houses 90-100 prisoners; H wing houses 100-120 prisoners; and K wing houses 120-130 prisoners.

I wing (The Hive) is reserved for men on drug or alcohol recovery pathways. However, due to population pressures, there has been a delay in fully populating this wing with appropriate prisoners. There about 75 prisoners on the wing, all of whom have in-cell showers and who find its facilities, common purpose and calm atmosphere very helpful. All the staff on the wing, especially the custodial manager (CM), are enthusiastic about making the wing effective.

The three large wings, L, M and N, hold nearly 200 prisoners each, across two spurs. N wing is populated largely with enhanced-status prisoners. Some showers on N wing have not worked properly since the building was constructed.

One spur on H wing houses general population prisoners. The other spur is the incentivised substance free living (ISFL) wing.

A new wing of a similar design and size to N Wing is in the process of being constructed and should open during the next reporting year (summer 2024) rather than this one as originally planned.

Towards the end of the reporting year, the OMU moved into new-build offices.

Although the construction of new wings is a step in the right direction, there are older parts of the establishment, such as the main corridor, that require extensive renovation. The Board appreciates there are older Victorian prisons that require rebuilding or replacing, the prisons built in the 1980s (such as HMP Stocken) should not be ignored.

### **Food**

Food is provided by a central kitchen, which offers one hot and one cold meal each day. Breakfast packs are provided so that each man can make his own breakfast. The menus are regularly reviewed, with input from the prisoners. Special menus and arrangements are made for major religious festivals, such as Ramadan and Christmas.

Each wing is also provided with sandwich makers, toasters and microwaves, so men can supplement their meals with items they buy through the canteen (where prisoners can buy items such as food, drinks and toiletries). We get occasional complaints about the equipment not working and that it can take some time for the prison to replace them. As they are used by the whole wing, it may be the case that the men do not always look after them.

The kitchens receive very few complaints in relation to the number of meals produced and all the complaints are well handled by the kitchen manager. A good proportion of the complaints received refer to special diets.



## **Clothing**

Prison-issued clothing is washed in an on-site laundry, which also holds a stock of replacement clothing items. In addition, each wing has washing machines and tumble dryers for prisoners to launder their own clothes. There are some issues with equipment breaking down and, as above, fixing broken equipment and procuring replacements seems to be a difficult and lengthy process. However, this has improved during this reporting year.

### **5.2 Segregation**

Men are placed in segregation in the CSU for mainly one of two reasons: 'own interest' (OI) or Good Order or Discipline (GOoD). OI can include being in debt or under threat for another reason. GOoD is mainly for those men who have allegedly been carry out bullying, threats and violence or are suspected of being involved in the 'drug culture'. The unit has been close to full on a number of occasions during the year and as men are moved on or back to wings then a new group of men are segregated.

A man held in the CSU has to have a review at least every 14 days to decide if it is appropriate to keep him segregated and to determine an action plan. The maximum time allowed in segregation without further authorisation is 42 days. For a man to be held longer than this requires authorisation from the Prison Group Director (PDG). The Board monitors most segregation reviews and evaluates all the necessary paperwork, including the PGD authorisation if that is required.

In our previous report, the Board noted concerns over men being held in segregation for more than 42 days, when they had been recategorised to category B and were waiting to be transferred. This continued during this reporting year, but the Prison Group Director has just put in a new transfer policy, so we expect to see an improvement next year.

One of the chaplaincy team visits the CSU every day, while the GP visits on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The gym staff provide a gym session in the CSU every Wednesday.

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

The Board's frequent observations of staff and prisoner interaction suggests a high level of professionalism. However, we do have concerns over the interpersonal skills of some of the new and young prison officers. We were pleased to see that the prison Governors recognised this and increased the length of time that new prison officer are mentored. Prisoners with challenging behaviour are dealt with consistently and with the minimum of confrontation possible in the circumstances.

We are pleased to see that the ethnic diversity of the prison officers has increased.

The consensus seems to be that key working is effective if both parties want it to work. An intelligent progression plan, sensitively drawn and conscientiously worked at, is a useful tool and a worthwhile document. Good key working can also reduce the number of wing applications and complaints.

Key working was seriously impacted by staff shortages at the beginning of the reporting year. Therefore, the prison concentrated on delivering key work to the most

vulnerable prisoners, as determined in the safety intervention meetings (SIMs), e.g. self-isolators and prisoners on ACCTs, etc.

## **5.4 Equality and diversity**

The prison has a full-time equality advisor, with responsibility for leading on the provision of advice on equality issues and ensuring compliance with legislation. They are assisted by a full-time business administrator.

A neurodiversity support manager has been appointed to the education, skills and work department.

There is an equality, diversity and inclusion plan in place.

The staff diversity and equality action team (DEAT), made up of the senior management team (SMT) and function heads, has an essential role in monitoring and discussing a broad range of data at bi-monthly meetings. The human resources business manager plays a crucial part in supplying staff data and ensuring improvements in provision relevant to equality and diversity.

The prison monitors equality and diversity through the protected characteristics, as listed in the Equality Act 2010. These include, among others, race, age, disability, religion, sex and sexual orientation, which it's unlawful to discriminate against.

A named member of the SMT is the lead for each characteristic and focuses on the characteristic for a month during the year. The Governor and Deputy Governor led on 'age' at the beginning of the year. Examples of what are reviewed and monitored for any disproportionality for each characteristic group are the incentives scheme and the use of force.

There is also a quarterly prisoner DEAT forum, comprising function staff, or their representative, and prisoner equality reps drawn from each wing. In-depth data packs are provided, which prisoner reps can make available to the wider prison population. One equality issue highlighted by prisoners, for example, involved a disproportionality in the number of black prisoners on some wings, which was addressed by moving prisoners between wings.

The equality adviser manages the discrimination incident reporting form (DIRF) process, following the guidance. Initially, investigations are carried out by non-operational managers, from band 5 and above, before scrutiny by the equality adviser. All investigations are quality assured every month by the Governor. In the year January 2023 to December 2023, 37 DIRFs were submitted, the outcomes of which were as follows:

- Five prisoners made complaints about other prisoners: 60% were upheld
- 27 prisoners made complaints about staff: 11% were upheld
- Five staff made complaints about prisoners: 60% were upheld

The highest number of DIRFs were regarding race, with the second highest being disability.

Throughout the year, various event days have been held. Successful events have included an Armed Forces Day, monthly Veterans' breakfast club meetings and Black History Month.

## **5.5 Faith and pastoral support**

At the end of the last calendar year, the managing chaplain was able to recruit to fill vacancies in the chaplaincy team so that they were fully staffed. This has, in the short term, put extra pressure on the managing chaplain, as he has had to mentor the new staff. However, this has now meant they have been able to provide additional support to men who are on ACCTs and to attend ACCT reviews.

The team is led by an Anglican priest, but includes many faiths. The department holds services in the chapel and multi-faith room. A member of the team visits everyone held in the CSU daily.

An important role of the chaplaincy is to support anyone who has suffered a bereavement or loss and the team has held services for the men who have died in custody.

As a result of the very good work carried out by the chaplaincy, which they undertake in a quiet and understated way, the Board has not received any applications in respect of the chaplaincy during the reporting year.

## **5.6 Incentives schemes**

The prison has a local incentives scheme called the 'Rewarding Good Behaviour Policy' which is regularly reviewed in line with the Incentives Policy Framework. There are three levels: basic, standard and enhanced. A typical breakdown is 6.3% on basic, 33.7% on standard and the remainder - 60% - on enhanced. This shows an increase in basic prisoners over last year's figure of 2.2%. It is probably due to the population pressure increasing the number of out-of-area prisoners, who may react in a negative way to try and get moved nearer home. The scheme is intended to reward good behaviour, and staff are encouraged to issue warnings rather than rushing to use the adjudication system (a disciplinary hearing held when a prisoner is suspected of having broken prison rules) or place them on report.

Prisoners being recalled to prison are placed on the standard level when they arrive back at HMP Stocken, and prisoners transferring from another prison generally keep their already earned incentives scheme status.

## **5.7 Complaints**

The prison employs a dedicated complaints clerk so that all complaints are recorded and chased, if they are approaching the time frame in which they should be answered (which includes chasing other prisons if the complaint concerns them). The prison monitors all internal complaints that are due that day or the next at the morning meeting.

The Board carries out a random sample of complaints to assess if they are being answered to a sufficient standard.

## **5.8 Property**

Property still makes up the majority of applications to the IMB, particularly those concerning missing or lost items during transfer from other prisons.

If the application refers to property being transferred from another establishment, we usually advise the prisoner to contact the Independent Prisoner Complaint

Investigations (IPCI) team, which is part of the Prison and Probation Ombudsman (PPO). One of the issues is still prisoners transferring with their property being above the volumetric controls. We have seen an increase in applications about property. This mainly concerns catalogue items, allowed items and clothing parcels. The issue with catalogue items generally involves the time taken for the item to be processed through stores and reception in relation to the return period the vendor allows.

## **6. Health and wellbeing**

### **6.1 Healthcare general**

It is the Board's view that the healthcare provided at HMP Stocken is at least as good as that provided in the local community.

### **6.2 Physical healthcare**

The healthcare contract was due to change during the reporting year. However, at the last minute, the contract was retained by Practice Plus Group. This new contract started on the 1 March and early indications are that they have started to recruit against the new structure. We look forward to seeing the benefits during the next reporting year.

The healthcare unit has continued their focus on preventative measures, including screening and vaccinations.

Video technology is also used to facilitate remote consultations with local hospitals.

### **6.3 Mental health**

There have been a number of staff changes in the mental health team during the reporting year. As with mental healthcare in the community, the team has been impacted by a shortage of staff trained in mental health. Towards the end of the reporting year, the team had to focus on acute cases.

The Board is concerned about the number of seriously ill patients and the time it takes to get them transferred to secure facilities. This means that, for their own safety, they are often held in the CSU on constant supervision. The period they are held in the CSU can often be in excess of 42 days (the limit allowed without external authorisation), which is not good for the patient or staff.

Recruitment has improved towards the end of the reporting year, with a number of staff due to start, and it is expected that staffing numbers will improve during the next reporting year.

### **6.4 Social care**

Social care is led by the Wellbeing function, and referrals and equipment are monitored and provided in conjunction with the healthcare team. There are no prisoners with formal social care plans, however there are over 20 prisoners with recommended occupational therapy support aids in situ.

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

Despite the reporting year starting with low staffing levels, the staff have all worked hard to maintain a high level of out-of-cell time for the prisoners. During the year, the number of prisoners in part-time work has continued to fall.

The regime has also been reviewed several times during the year so that all men, including full-time workers, were getting time for domestics (time spent phoning family, etc) and association.

## **6.6 Drug and alcohol rehabilitation**

The inclusion team based on I wing is the substance misuse service in HMP Stocken. The team is comprised of psychosocial intervention staff, and are subcontracted through the overarching healthcare contract (who deliver the clinical elements of substance misuse services). They run programmes for both drug and alcohol abuse. They work closely with the Hive (the drug recovery wing, also located on I wing) and the incentivised substance free living wing (ISFL).

The concern that prisoners on methadone were not being seen regularly enough has now been addressed with the employment of a specific substance misuse non-medical prescriber.

Subutex is now available, as well as methadone and espranor, giving doctors a choice of medication to help treat opioid addiction that they can prescribe when appropriate.

If prisoners are released and are identified as potentially being at risk of overdose, they are prescribed naloxone, which can be used to help counteract an opioid overdose.

## **6.7 Soft skills**

The leadership's clear vision and its aims and values provide direction for the prison and are at the heart of its day-to-day business. They are frequently reiterated in practice and in both written and oral communication, such as in the weekly staff newsletter and at prison meetings, for example. They create the culture of the prison and its operation for the benefit of staff and prisoners.

The ethos is evident throughout the prison, where pride in achievement is fostered and people and progress are valued. The displays of prisoner artwork and photos of prison events permeate the prison, where good work is widely shared, appreciated and celebrated.

The strong channels of communication encourage voice and openness, with representative meetings for both staff and prisoners. As mentioned in section 5.3, the prison has recognised the need for a longer mentoring period for new staff. This has resulted in improved relationships between staff and prisoners.

Learning and continuous development are also evident in the additional opportunities provided for prisoners, using links with the community: for example, a successful construction event (see section 7.5) attracted employers and generated hope for prisoners on release. Wates has organised an employability course and Iceland and Galliford Try have visited to speak to prisoners in preparation for future opportunities.

## **7. Progression and resettlement**

### **7.1 Education, library**

An Ofsted inspection last year rated education at HMP Stocken as 'inadequate'. The new head of college for People Plus (PP) started in August 2023 and has already made huge improvements. Unfortunately, they will be leaving at the end of August 2024.

The curriculum last August was woefully short: no art, Wamitab (a qualification for those wanting to work in waste management and recycling, cleaning, facilities' management and parking), PSD (Personal and Social Development) or business studies. But the department is now able to offer all these courses, as well as art for wellbeing and skills for life. The latter two are not accredited but are aimed at individuals who are hard to reach and will, hopefully, rehabilitate to more traditional Maths and English courses. However, these two courses present more security risks, because the nature of the learners tends to be those with challenging behaviours and addictions.

Open University (OU) and distance learning is flourishing and about to move from one day each week to five each week in July 2024, provided a suitable room can be found. A total of 19 men at the end of the reporting year were studying OU courses and nine are doing prisoner education trust (PET) courses, with 18 more waiting to be processed through OU. One man is doing a PhD. Most learners have Coracle laptops, with more on order.

The library continues to be well-resourced and well-integrated into the education department's courses. As well as the usual library services, which are provided by Rutland County Council, the library runs such things as Storybook Dads (whereby prisoners record stories on CDs or DVDs to send to their children) and the Shannon Trust scheme to help with reading.

Prisoners in the CSU can still access books through the small selection held on the unit, or orderlies can fetch books for them from the library.

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

Vocational training (VT), delivered by People Plus, is well catered for, with qualifications delivered in barbering, bricklaying, plumbing and tiling, motor mechanics, and catering. Prison industries deliver qualifications in cycle repairs and waste and environmental management (WAMITAB), and food safety. Most of the training courses are fully staffed, enabling prisoners to work towards qualifications at Levels 1 and 2, and several of the workshops (such as bricklaying, painting and motor vehicle repairs, for example) can also offer Level 3 qualifications, which require a lot of study from the prisoners.

New workshops were established during the year to repair/refurbish Karcher equipment, as well as a workshop where electrical items provided by Bakers Waste are stripped down into their components. It is intended that, in time, the Bakers Waste workshop will start to use these parts to repair items. The motor workshop has been provided with hybrid cars and equipment from Toyota so that prisoners can be trained on more modern technology.

A small number of prisoners from the catering workshop also work in the 'Stockpot', the prison mess. This gives them an opportunity to interact with all grades of staff on a professional basis.

There is also a workshop where they produce breakfast packs, plus two DHL workshops, where they fulfil the canteen orders for a number of prisons.

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

Staffing numbers in the OMU are still challenging but they have improved over the reporting year. However, they still have a heavy case load, which may result in prisoners complaining that they haven't seen their OMU worker for some time. But the Board believes that staff are correctly prioritising tasks based on how near the prisoner is to their release date.

A backlog in processing prisoners through the offender assessment system (OASys), which is a risk and needs' evaluation, has reduced. However, there is still a significant amount of work, due to many prisoners arriving at HMP Stocken without a completed OASys assessment.

Transferring prisoners to category D prisons (open conditions) has continued to improve this year and the Board is receiving fewer complaints from prisoners about delays. However, prisoners who have been re-categorised to category B being transferred to a suitable establishment still takes far too long. The Prison Group Director has recently put in place a local procedure for re-categorised category B prisoners, and we look forward to seeing improvements during the next reporting year.

Two offending behaviour programmes are offered by the programmes team: the Thinking Skill Programme (TSP) and Kaizen (for those assessed as high or very high risk). A new programme is being trialled nationally, which will replace Kaizen and TSP.

### **7.4 Family contact**

Social visits have taken place throughout the year. Visits are on Tuesday, Thursday and at weekends, but are being expanded to include Monday to Thursday afternoons, as well as morning and afternoons at weekends as the prison population increases in size. Lincolnshire Action Trust provide activities for the younger children in the visits' hall.

Social video calls are also offered, which can help maintaining family contact, as many of the prisoners are a long way from home and HMP Stocken is in a rural location.

All cells on the wings have in-cell phones, which allow prisoners to call family and friends at more convenient times. There have been some technical/reliability problems with the system, but these seem to have largely been ironed out.

### **7.5 Resettlement planning**

As in previous reports, we must repeat that HMP Stocken is not a resettlement prison. However, 252 prisoners were released direct from HMP Stocken in the last



year, compared with 202 in the previous year. OMU and Lincolnshire Action Trust continue to help prisoners to the best of their ability and resources.

The employment hub continues to run successful jobs' fairs, including a construction fair, and visits by Toyota, which have resulted in a number of prisoners being offered employment on release.

They also have noticed boards in the employment hub where job vacancies suitable for men approaching release to see and apply for.

## The work of the IMB

### Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	16
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	12
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	10
Total number of visits to the establishment	435

### Applications to the IMB

Code	Subject	Previous reporting year	Current reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	10	12
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives scheme, sanctions	20	19
C	Equality	9	5
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, time out of cell	18	8
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection, restrictions	9	23
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	18	18
F	Food and kitchens	6	3
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	33	39
H1	Property within the establishment	17	27
H2	Property during transfer or in another facility	52	52
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogues	4	11
I	Sentence management, including HDC (home detention curfew), ROTL (release on temporary licence), parole, release dates, recategorisation	47	38
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	40	27
K	Transfers	25	16
L	Miscellaneous	3	5
	<b>Total number of applications</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>303</b>

## **Annex A**

### **Service providers**

- Education is provided by People Plus.
- Healthcare, mental health and drug rehabilitation services are provided by the Practice Plus Group.
- Dental health is provided by Time for Teeth.
- Library services are provided by Rutland County Council.
- Voluntary services include the Samaritans, Lincolnshire Action Trust, the Prison Fellowship, the Shannon Trust and the Sycamore Trust.
- Anita Keene Senior Counselling services



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