



Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP/YOI Winchester

**For reporting year
1 June 2023 to 31 May 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, and
- 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 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 Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) is part of the United Kingdom's National Preventive Mechanism.

2. Description of the establishment

HM Prison/Young Offender Institution (HMP/YOI) Winchester is an all-male reception and resettlement (local) prison operating within the south central group of prisons. Approximately 18%¹ of the prisoners are young adults aged between 18 and 25. The prison serves the criminal courts of Aldershot, Basingstoke, Bournemouth, Portsmouth, Salisbury, Southampton and Winchester.

The main fabric of the prison was built in 1846 in a radial design, whereby wings emanate from a central area. The prisoners are either on remand, charged, sentenced, or awaiting sentence. The prison reported 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 649.

In a separate block from the main building, 120 (123 operational capacity) category C prisoners are accommodated in two resettlement units, West Hill and The Hearn. These units are adjacent to, but separate from, the main prison. While the prison is designated for category B prisoners, it holds B and C category prisoners on the four main wings. The lower ground floor of D wing temporarily houses the care and separation unit (CSU) until a purpose-built facility is completed.

A healthcare unit (HCU) is also situated on the prison complex, accommodating 17 beds in a separate unit from the wings. E wing houses administrative services, the Governor's and other offices, the chapel and the control room.

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

Overview

It is the Board's overall assessment that HMP/YOI Winchester continues to make progress in its drive to improve conditions and outcomes for prisoners. However, the Board has observed the following set of challenges that make consistently high standards difficult to achieve and sustain:

- The number of prisoners arriving and leaving the establishment has increased and this issue is exacerbated by the end of custody supervised licence (ECSL) early release schemes. Men have been released without adequate preparation and are returned to the prison after breaching their licence. ECSL has increased the workload for all staff involved in rehabilitation, resettlement and the offender management unit (OMU).
- Overcrowding is a constant problem. HMP/YOI Winchester's cells were designed for single occupancy, but they now house two occupants. With beds, basin, toilet, cupboard and only one chair, conditions are cramped, resulting in challenging living conditions. All but a small number of cells are too narrow to admit wheelchairs, so some disabled prisoners must be carried in. Parts of the prison accommodation, in particular on the main wings, continue to be a concern to the Board, as there are clear signs of dilapidation. This includes leaking roofs and ceilings, erratic heating and water systems, rat infestation and degraded brickwork, which prisoners have previously been able to dig through using plastic cutlery.
- As a result of the successful recruitment of newly qualified officers, staff levels are now higher than in recent years. However, this has brought its own challenges, with further mentoring and coaching required from the more experienced staff and external resources. The Board was told by a recently qualified officer that initial college training had not come near to preparing them for the realities of the job they were being required to undertake.
- Many prisoners exhibit challenging behaviour and/or mental health problems. These are often exacerbated by poor accommodation, illicit drug use, debts to other prisoners, gang rivalry, boredom, the restrictions of the daily regime and, occasionally, negative interactions with inexperienced officers.
- Organisations such as BearFace Theatre, Saints Foundation and the Samaritans, as well as the chaplaincy, deliver outstanding work to support and develop prisoners. In addition, the Spurgeons charity is inspiring in its efforts to keep prisoners in touch with their families.
- Prison staff are to be commended for their hard work during the reporting year and, in particular, for the recent statistics showing a gradual reduction in the previously high levels of violence.

The senior leadership team at HMP Winchester deserves praise and recognition for its drive towards continuous improvement in the face of an increasingly challenging set of circumstances.

3.1 Main findings

Safety

- There were 795 incidents of self-harm, representing an increase of 47% on the last reporting period; 405 prisoners self-harming, representing an increase of 25%; and an increase in the gravity of self-harm of 34% (measured by needing hospital treatment). (See section 4.2)
- There were 232 prisoner assaults on staff, an increase of 85% since the last reporting period. Prisoner-on-prisoner assaults have also increased by 35%, with 284 incidents. (Section 4.3)
- There were 1,039 occasions during the reporting year when force had to be used to control or restrain prisoners, which was an increase of 43% compared with the previous year. (Section 4.4)
- Increased numbers of prisoners have produced positive body scans for both metallic (phones) and non-metallic/organic (drugs) items, although the number of incidents has fallen recently due to security efforts. The prison has regularly used rule 39 (which allows a prisoner's correspondence with the courts and their legal adviser to be opened, stopped or read in specific circumstances), to prevent legal papers impregnated with new psychoactive substances (NPS) entering the prison. (Section 4.5)

Fair and humane treatment

- Significant issues and defects with the fabric of the buildings continue to affect the accommodation and the overall operation of the prison. (Section 5.1)
- High staff turnover has led to the recruitment of younger officers, with a lack of experienced staff on the wings to guide them. Mentoring schemes and training and coaching to support development are in place. (Section 5.3)
- Only 55% of prisoners have a regular session with a key worker. (Section 5.3)
- The Board observed a 25% reduction in the number of property-related applications, (prisoners' written representations to the Board), which may be linked to the appointment of a dedicated officer to the processing of property issues. (Section 5.8)
- The number of prisoner complaints continues to fall, showing a reduction of 16% on the previous reporting period. (Section 5.7)

Health and wellbeing

- Staff shortages continued to be identified as an issue within Practice Plus Group (PPG). Staffing areas affected included general practitioner (GP) cover, the senior leadership team and management. (Section 6.1)
- The Prisons Act requirement for a GP to visit the CSU every 72 hours was not met several times throughout the reporting period. The Board's monitoring revealed that this included a whole week in September and the entire month of November 2023. (Section 6.1)
- Once a mental health patient is assessed for transfer, the mental health team psychiatrist reports that 'the vast majority' exceed the 28-day time limit, due to limited availability in specialist facilities. (Section 6.3)
- A positive change was noted in that the number of prisoner healthcare complaints fell from 175 to 139. (Section 6.1)

Progression and resettlement

- Overall, prisoners in some form of purposeful activity rose slightly – to 62% by the end of the reporting year. (Section 7.2)
- Between January and May 2024, 124 prisoners were released under the end of custody supervised licence (ECSL) scheme. Of these, 32% were raised as risk concerns; 21% breached their licence and were recalled; and 38% were released as homeless because no accommodation could be arranged in the timeframe. (Section 7.3)
- The ECSL scheme has placed the OMU and probation staff under significant pressure, as they now lack the resources to manage releases effectively. (Section 7.3)
- Family services, provided by Spurgeons, have been expanded both in terms of staff and service offerings, making more help available to prisoners. (Section 7.4)
- HMP Winchester is resourced to manage 55% remand prisoners and 45% sentenced prisoners. Excluding Westhill (category C accommodation), the remand proportion was 81% in May 2024 for which the prison is not resourced. (Section 7.3)

3.2 Main areas for development

TO THE MINISTER

- When will further resources be provided to prison and probation services to lessen the effect on staff and prisoners of the administration, as well as the lessen the impact of ECSL and any further short-notice capacity management initiatives?
- What can be done to support and reduce the high number of men on remand who are released immediately from court on bail, licence or as time served?

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

- When will the much-delayed construction of the new CSU restart?
- When will the funding for the construction of a new emergency control room and modernised CCTV system be approved?
- What can be done to further hold to account Practice Plus Group's activities for the purposes of monitoring delivery of healthcare services under terms of contract and PSO1700?

TO THE GOVERNOR

- What are the plans to reduce the level of violence in the prison as it appears to be an unsafe environment for both prisoners and staff?
- What can be done to ensure all prisoners can access purposeful activity more quickly with all the benefits purposeful activity brings?

3.3 Response to the last report

Issue raised	Response given	Progress
<p>To the Minister</p> <p>1. What support can be provided to help remand prisoners with release planning, as they are not eligible for probation services?</p> <p>2. Given the issues associated with the Victorian infrastructure of the prison, what alternative provisions are being considered for the increasing numbers of elderly and disabled prisoners?</p>	<p>1. Remand prisoners have the support of the probation delivery unit and pre-release team and are also eligible for commissioned rehabilitative service (CRS) support after release.</p> <p>2. An Ageing Population Strategy is in development, with a view to publishing proposals later this year.</p>	<p>1. Immediate release from court is an ongoing issue with prisoners who have been on remand. These prisoners do not receive any direct support to re-engage in the community.</p> <p>2. No changes in local accommodation and prison capacity issues impact on availability of specialised units for elderly and disabled prisoners. Social care provision and support is adequately resourced locally. Strategy not published during current reporting period.</p>
<p>To the Prison Service</p> <p>1. When will the much-delayed construction of the new CSU restart?</p> <p>2. When will the finance be approved for the modernised CCTV system and when will the necessary cameras, connectivity and software be installed?</p>	<p>1. The construction of the new CSU has been delayed due to rising costs and design concerns raised by HMP Winchester. The provisional date for resumption is April 2024, subject to agreed design and finance agreement.</p> <p>2. Issue linked to need for new control room. This is a significant capital investment, and the prison is working proactively with MoJ Property and Gov Facility</p>	<p>1. As in last year's report, there is at the time of writing this report, still no confirmed date for when the building work on the new CSU will be completed.</p> <p>2. The Ministry of Justice has yet to sanction the funding for the complete replacement of all the broken cameras. Some broken cameras have been repaired.</p>

<p>3. What is the timetable for repairing/replacing defective/dilapidated fabric and when will the required finances be approved?</p>	<p>Services Ltd (GFSL) to expedite this work.</p> <p>3. A number of projects to improve the fabric (boilers, leaks, roofs) have been either delivered, are in progress or have been costed and are awaiting funding.</p>	<p>3. Progress has been slow and incremental. Major issues with the fabric remain unaddressed.</p>
<p>To the Governor</p> <p>1. When will key working be fully up and running?</p> <p>2. What is the plan to improve the service to resettle prisoners?</p>	<p>1. Prison management recognises the value of key work and is working hard to ensure it has sufficient staff to achieve its key work aims. These plans are often frustrated by the operational realities and competing demands placed on the resource available. Those prisoners with the greatest need are prioritised for key work.</p> <p>2. Despite the volatility in the prison population, the prison has worked hard to improve the initial needs assessments of newly received prisoners. This ensures the correct referrals are made to support services for prisoners in preparation for their release. The prison ensures that all are transferred to appropriate category prisons to deal with their sentence plans.</p>	<p>1. Only 55% of Winchester's population have a key worker session scheduled.</p> <p>2. The service has deteriorated mainly due to the pressures of ECSL scheme.</p>

Evidence sections 4 – 7

4. Safety

4.1 Reception and induction

Reception staff were observed to be professional, engaging with prisoners and having an overall calming effect on arrivals, to facilitate the transition into HMP Winchester. All prisoners were put through an airport-style X-ray security scanner to reduce instances of illicit items being smuggled into the prison. The prison has confirmed prisoners returning from court are also scanned. The amount of exposure to radiation is well within the safe parameters.

Reception staff reported to Board members in December that, over several weeks, Serco prisoner transports had arrived late in the evening at HMP Winchester. This resulted in reception staff working long after their shifts had ended to process the new arrivals, which was exacerbated by shortages in reception staff. The resultant delays were affecting the distribution of property and parcels to wings or being sent on to other prisons. At the May 2024 prison council meeting, reception staff reported that property parcels were only being distributed over the weekend, due to staffing pressures.

Board members have also attended, for monitoring purposes, five induction sessions on A wing. These are known as Level 2 induction, where services such as Ingeus (provision of accommodation post release), Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), Spurgeons and gym staff relay information to new arrivals at HMP Winchester. It was observed that although the material presented contained a great deal of relevant information, delivery relied on wing workers from A wing and varied in quality, depending on their training on the material.

Only one officer on A wing is trained to carry out the basic custody screening tool (BCST) 1 and this leads to a backlog in completion, which is due within 72 hours of reception. In April, Ingeus commented that the implementation of the ECSL (end of custody supervised licence) increased their waiting list from 12 to 18 weeks and that their caseload per member of staff is now 240-250 men.

4.2 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody

The number of assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) documents (used to support prisoners at risk of self-harm and suicide) opened in the prison fell from 673 in 2022-2023 to 600 in 2023-2024. The number opened in any one month ranged from 33 in August to 67 in November, with an average of 50 opened each month.

Self-harm incidents are recorded as having increased from 540 in 2022-23 to 795 in 2023-2024, with reported self-harm per 1,000 prisoners up 35% on the previous reporting year, and 25% more than the comparator group² compared with 10% last year. The number of individuals involved in self-harm increased from 323 in 2022-23 to 405 in 2023-24. A total of 43 incidents of self-harm needed hospital attendance,

² The comparator group of prisons is used to compare the performance of similar prisons. For HMP/YOI Winchester, this group comprises HMPs Bristol, Chelmsford, Durham, Lewes, Lincoln, Liverpool, Norwich and Preston.

34% more than last year. HMP Winchester had 64% more hospital trips per 1,000 than comparator group compared with 35% last year.

The increases in the total number of self-harm incidents, the number of prisoners who are self-harming and the gravity of the self-harm is of great concern to the Board. This is compounded by the relative worsening of the position of HMP Winchester within the comparator group.

The Board notes that the prison provides support such as access to, for example, Samaritans, Listener suites, and induction packs to address self-harm issues.

There was one death in custody during the reporting period. The Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) report and the coroner's inquest are awaited, which will establish the cause of death.

4.3 Violence and violence reduction, self-isolation

There were 232 assaults on staff over the reporting year, 85% more than during 2022-23 (when there were 126), peaking at 28 in November 2023. Since that time, the monthly number of assaults on staff has reduced but remains much greater than the average for the comparator group.

Based on a measure of incidents per 1,000 prisoners, these violent assaults on staff occurred at HMP Winchester at two-and-half times the rate experienced by the rest of the comparator group of prisons.

A total of 26 assaults on staff were designated as serious, i.e. needing hospital treatment, compared with seven for the previous year.

Prisoner-on-prisoner assaults also increased, with 284 during the reporting year (a 35% increase), of which 44 were serious. Again, these occurred at a rate of 35% higher than in the rest of the comparator group.

Young Adults (YAs) aged 18-24 are disproportionately involved in violent incidents. They make up around 18% of the population but are the subject of 28% of charges at adjudications (disciplinary hearings when a prisoner is alleged to have broken prison rules). It is worth noting, however, that prison managers have noticed an increasing trend for violence among prisoners aged 40 years and over, thought to be the result of the stress related to family, accommodation, schooling, finances, etc.

During the reporting year, the safer custody team implemented further measures aimed at reducing violence, notably by training eight prisoners as violence reduction representatives, in November 2023, to replace a previous cohort who had dropped out of the programme. This may have contributed to the fall in assaults on staff after the peak in November 2023, as described above.

Individual acts of violence can have serious and long-lasting effects on safety in the prison. For example, during an incident, two prisoners managed to pull the handrail from the stairs between floors on B wing, creating a serious safety hazard and necessitating the closure of some cells in the vicinity.

4.4 Use of force

There were 1,039 occasions during the reporting year when force had to be used to control or restrain prisoners, 43% more than in the previous year. This peaked in March 2024, when force was used on 122 occasions.

Based on the measure of incidents per 1,000 prisoners, this is 75% greater than the rest of the comparator group of prisons (compared with 60% greater last year).

While force can be necessary to control and prevent violence, it is disappointing that its use is so much greater than in other, comparable prisons. At least some of the incidents where officers felt they had to use force are thought by the safer custody team to be a result of the relative inexperience of many of the wing officers, leading them to be reluctant to first use de-escalation techniques.

Every occasion where force is used is subject to scrutiny at a weekly meeting where body worn video camera (BWVC) evidence, and the associated reports by officers involved, are scrutinised in detail. The IMB attends a proportion of these meetings and has observed occasions when officers involved in incidents were not wearing BWVCs, or where officers have been wearing them but have neglected to turn them on at the start of an incident. These numbers have improved somewhat from the start of the reporting year, as lessons from scrutiny are fed back to the officers concerned.

4.5 Preventing illicit items

All prisoners entering or re-entering the prison were subjected to X-ray scans to detect whether they were carrying any illicit items. Detection rates vary but, on average, around 6% of scans were positive over the reporting year, compared with 5% in the previous year. This compares with an average of 11-12% in the rest of the comparator group of prisons. Various routes were used to convey illicit items, including prisoner reception, visits to prisoners and correspondence. There had been regular use of rule 39 (legal letters) to convey new psychoactive substances (NPS) into the prison.

Illicit items discovered through searches continued to include large quantities of 'hooch', which is alcohol illegally brewed in the prison, (45 litres in December 2024), together with phones, drugs, weapons and other items. Drugs' finds have typically been between 20 and 40 per 1,000 prisoners each month, with drugs increasingly being linked to raised levels of violence, self-harm and other serious incidents.

Mandatory drug testing (MDT) was abandoned in November 2023, with HMP Winchester redirecting resources towards improving its handling of illicit substance situations and plans to create a dedicated area within the prison for prisoners seeking to follow a substance-free lifestyle.

5. Fair and humane treatment

5.1 Accommodation, clothing, food

HMP/YOI Winchester was built 178 years ago and is dilapidated and unfit for purpose. Cells were designed for one person, but most have had double, cramped occupancy for years. Capacity issues for the accommodation leads to inappropriate prisoners sharing cells, which creates risk and hampers the normally effective running of the wings. The prison was not designed with older or disabled prisoners in mind and doorways to most cells are not wide enough for wheelchair access. There is some progress on long-term maintenance issues including:

Photo 1: the prison tower has had the buddleia removed, as it was causing the brickwork to crumble.



- A wing external staircase, also a fire escape route, which was roped off for some months, has been replaced.
- The reception roof has been temporarily fixed.
- The leaking roof in workshop 4 has now been mended. However, because of machinery issues and difficulties with vetting new staff, it has not yet re-opened.
- The leak that caused part of the chapel ceiling to collapse has been fixed and there have been no further falls of masonry, although the area is still cordoned off.

Photo 2: the ceiling in the reception staff toilet has been repaired (before and after photos)



However, there remain numerous examples of how the HMP Winchester estate is unfit, including:

- The control room remains infested with rats. Plans are progressing slowly for a new electronic control room.
- The current X wing is a small basement area for prisoners on the enhanced (top) level of the incentives scheme. They frequently observe rats both in their common room and some cells. In May, the Board observed a loaf of bread on top of the fridge that had the plastic wrapper chewed off and a deep crevice dug into the loaf by burrowing rats. Pest removers have attended but to no avail.
- There have been at least 10 incidents of prisoners removing bricks and parts of window frames from their cells, as well as one case of a prisoner removing a CSU cell door. It is unsuitable for people to live in such conditions and the inadequate state of the fabric provides extra risk of escape.
- A recent incident on B wing resulted in metal bars from the protective bannisters being wrenched off. The damage was considerable and left that section of the landing unsafe, with some cells unusable. The repairs are still outstanding due to the complexity of fixing such damage in an operational environment, which has resulted in a reduction of 23 beds.
- The fabric of the CSU is under serious strain. Further details are documented in section 5.2.
- The roof of the main gym has been leaking for several years, making usage difficult and creating a slip hazard (see photo 3). The Board has regularly reported this, but no action has been taken.

Photo 3: water ingress damage in the gym in May 2023 and continuing in May 2024.



There are many examples of decay in the fabric of the estate of HMP Winchester (see below), with slow progress on repairs.

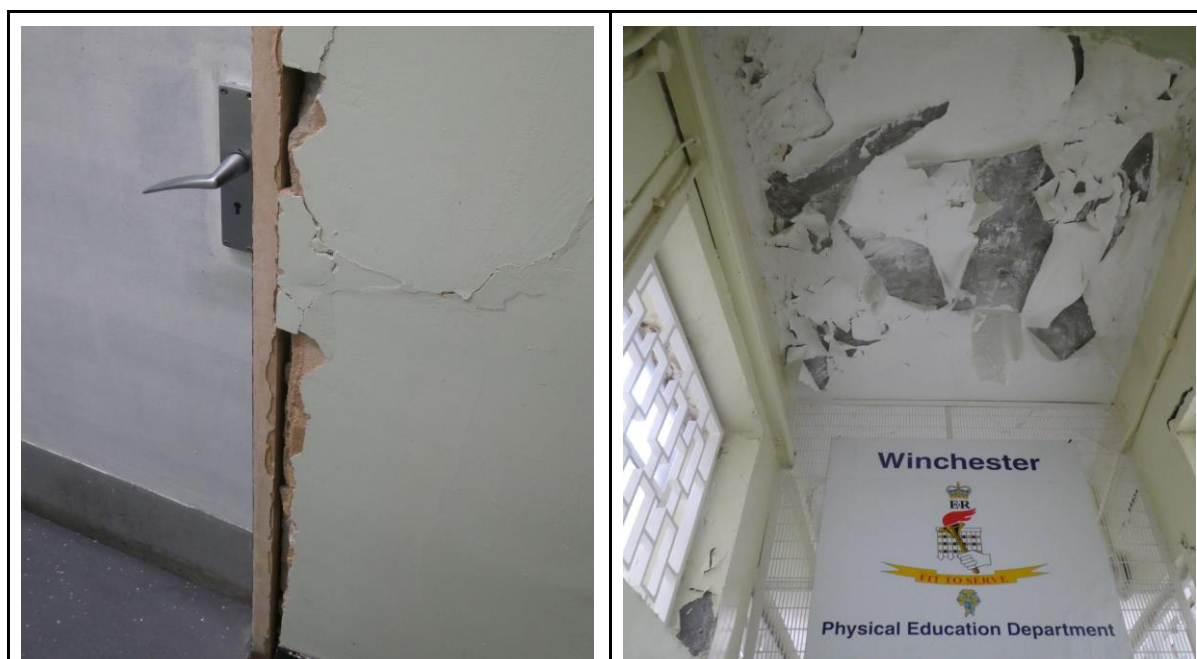


Photo 4: cracked masonry around the door to a toilet.

Photo 5: ceiling of A wing corridor.

The provision and supply of prisoners' kit, such as bedding, clothing and towels, has improved this year, with support now coming from the business hub. Supplies arrive fortnightly but, at the time of writing this report, with the kitting-out of the many extra

prisoners arriving and leaving, this is not sufficient. This extra churn of people is caused by the lack of cells across the prison estate and implementation of ECSL. Each new prisoner should be issued a set of kit immediately. The Board, therefore, recommends that a weekly delivery is required.

Kitchen

The daily allowance for providing prisoners with three meals each day is £2.83 per person at the time of writing this report. Kitchen managers find it impossible to keep to this budget but try their best to stay under £3 per day. The Board received few complaints about food and food we sampled food was found to be palatable. The kitchen should be applauded for successfully serving 2,100 meals each day when often short of the necessary numbers of prisoners to help. Meals are eaten in cells. Prisoners have, traditionally, been given breakfast packs with their evening meal. However, in May 2024, a trial was started on B wing, whereby packs were prepared the previous evening by prisoners and delivered in the morning by staff supporting welfare checks. This method ensures that prisoners will have welfare checks first thing and still get their breakfast on time. The new system is being extended to A and C wings.

Gov Facility Services Ltd (GFSL)

From the Board's observations, GFSL is generally effective and prompt in the services they provide for repair and maintenance. In the nine-month period from June 2023 to February 2024, GFSL's charge for repairing vandalism would have been higher were it not for a group of enhanced-level prisoners, known as the residential assurance team, (the RATs) reducing the bill by doing minor repairs whilst learning skills useful for obtaining work on release.

In the reporting year, around 460 glass observation panels have been replaced, as they have been deliberately smashed. Part of D wing has been fitted with unbreakable panels on a trial basis. Although successful, they cannot be installed elsewhere in the prison, as the budget is not available.

West Hill (category C accommodation) and The Hearn (category D accommodation)

Leaks and problems with water ingress are experienced in Westhill during heavy rain. Two cells are out of action as water has exposed the wiring. The lining board in some showers is peeling, leading to the formation of mould.

The ECSL scheme causes difficulties in both units, in terms of resettlement planning. All prisoners in The Hearn are required to have jobs to prepare them for release, but this is not always achievable, as ECSL can cause a mismatch between The Hearn population and the available jobs.

5.2 Segregation

The care and separation unit, or CSU, where prisoners are segregated, has a total of 12 cells, including one holding cell, one special accommodation cell (where items such as furniture, bedding and sanitation are removed in the interests of safety) and two constant watch cells. One cell has been permanently out of action due to damp problems, with another one out of action during the reporting period due to an issue with replacing its door. This latter issue has been ongoing for over a year. The CSU

has, therefore, a nominal capacity of eight cells for accommodating prisoners. This capacity has been reduced on several occasions, due to some cells being out of action. The Board has observed a good number of staff (typically three and never more than eight), enabling a better targeting of prisoners' specific needs than is available in the rest of main prison.

The management of the CSU by a group of dedicated officers continues to offer real benefits. A more consistent approach to the often troubled and challenging prisoners held on the unit has resulted in better outcomes. The Board was able to see this in the feedback from prisoners on the unit during their CSU reviews.

In the latest segregation monitoring and review group (SMARG) report, up to early May 2024, CSU occupancy has fluctuated between five and 18 occupants (total individuals in any given week) this reporting year. The Board raised the cases of prisoners whose lengths of stay on the unit exceeded 42 days (the limit allowed without external authorisation). CSU staff responded well to those enquiries and offered reasonable justifications. We observed discussions regarding the re-integration of these individuals into the regular regime on the wing. The SMARG reports record no prisoners whose stay exceeded three months. Good order or discipline (GOoD) reviews (where the prison determines if the prisoner should remain segregated), observed by the IMB on 19 different occasions, were conducted thoroughly and fairly.

In September 2023, the prison stopped holding prisoners on cellular confinement (CC) on the ordinary wings, which was a major change in the CSU operational mode. It was explained that this would help reduce the complexity of administering the CSU regime, which had led to inconsistent delivery and repeated failures in the correct administration of the regime. This was something the Board had highlighted in last year's annual report.

When the change was introduced, concerns were raised by the Board and the CSU staff that the limited capacity of the unit could lead to anomalies in the awarding of CSU as punishment. This was something the Board had observed on at least one occasion, when a prisoner was given a non-CSU punishment due to the lack of cell capacity on the unit. However, there has been no direct evidence that the change has affected prisoners' behaviour.

The Board has observed, on at least four separate occasions, the impact of the CSU being used to manage prisoners with significant mental health challenges. Anecdotal evidence suggests there has been an increase in the use of the constant watch cells on the unit to manage vulnerable prisoners. While prisoners regarding their mental health issues is sometimes deployed by them as a means to an end, the Board has observed at least three incidents when prisoners on the unit have presented as being in real crisis (confirmed by the mental health practitioner). CSU staff have reported feeling overwhelmed by the responsibility (they receive little or no specialist training), and elements of the CSU accommodation used to locate vulnerable prisoners were identified by the mental health practitioner as unsafe.

It is hoped that the planned purpose-built CSU will address some of these challenges. Progress on the construction of the new unit has been slow, hampered by delays in construction due to design revisions and budget availability. As reported in last year's report, there is, at the time of writing this report, still no confirmed date for when the building work on the new CSU will be completed.

5.3 Staff and prisoner relationships, key workers

It is disappointing to report that HMP Winchester continues to be an increasingly violent place (see section 4.3, 4.4). This is despite the range of measures implemented by the prison and described in last year's report. See section 4.3 for more details. Prison management reports that this may be linked to the regime: not getting a job (38% of prisoners have no purposeful activity) so having a low income, which leads to borrowing and debt, and boredom. In addition, the high turnover of staff has led to the recruitment of younger officers, with a lack of experienced staff on the wings to guide them. A colleague mentor has been appointed, and an apprenticeship scheme launched to support new officers.

Key workers

Every prisoner is allocated a key worker as they arrive in reception at HMP Winchester. However, only 55% of the prison population have a key worker who carries out a weekly one-to-one discussion and support session. Priority is given to prisoners who are considered as more challenging or complex, as well as all young adults, who make up 18% of the caseload.

5.4 Equality and diversity

The proactive manager responsible for diversity and inclusion was promoted to be a Governor during the latter part of the reporting year. Their post was unfunded and all the initiatives they had set up ground to a halt. But, at the end of May 2024, money was found to fund the post for another year.

HMP Winchester has the second highest proportion of young adults in any UK adult prison, forming 18% of Winchester's population but being responsible for 50% of the violence committed. A 'young adults' summit was staged, bringing stakeholders into the prison to form links and increase awareness and understanding among staff to learn from research into the differing needs of young adults, and to help staff work in a trauma-informed way. There was a focus on learning from the experiences of care leavers to improve support and understanding for those working with them. Various forums, including those to support people with protected characteristics (these include race, age, disability, religion, sex, gender reassignment and sexual orientation, which it is unlawful to discriminate against) were suspended, as well as other activities, such as sports events with staff and prisoners competing, and a drama course for young adults with impulsive behaviour.

The prison council was relaunched with a fixed agenda and minutes, with representatives from each wing, who were selected by officers. However, attendance by senior staff has been patchy, because of operational demands.

A new role, head of drug strategy, has been appointed, to spearhead the creation of a landing on C wing dedicated to helping prisoners who are trying to avoid drugs and alcohol, called incentivised substance-free living (ISFL). On the same wing, the lower landing is being turned into a supportive environment for neurodiverse prisoners. The newly appointed neurodiversity support manager has started bringing a therapy dog into the prison several days a week, and staff report improved mood among the prisoners who are able to have contact.

5.5 Faith and pastoral support

Overall, the chaplaincy service has been bolstered by the recruitment of several volunteers, with one person winning the HMPPS National Volunteer Award for his work in resettlement. Volunteers are key to the chaplaincy offering services such as visiting men who receive no other visits. However, HMP Winchester's chaplaincy team is under-resourced compared with other prisons. It is hoped that, with national reprofiling, additional chaplaincy provision can be made up to at least 0.80 full-time equivalent (FTE) in the future.

Highlights this year have been the Eid celebrations in April, where approximately half of the prison's Muslim population were able to attend a service in the chapel, followed by lunch where the kitchen had supplied a choice of four dishes. Friday prayers are held each week in the chapel, with prisoners on C wing reporting in October that access to showers as part of their cleansing ritual ahead of prayers was being restricted due to staffing shortages. The prison has confirmed that men are able to clean their feet, hands and face at the sink in their cells and access to showers is made available when staffing levels allow.

The Alpha course, covering the basics of Christianity, is run as a rolling programme, and about 100 prisoners completed it during the reporting year. A six-session restorative justice and victim awareness course, Sycamore Tree, runs three times a year and 50 people have graduated.

In May, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Portsmouth visited the prison to celebrate Mass: 18 prisoners attended the service, despite the chaplain expecting double that number (it was held on a Thursday morning instead of the usual Saturday morning) and the bishop subsequently visited a prisoner in the CSU and the healthcare unit. The movement of prisoners between wings and the chapel remains difficult without officers allocated to oversee it.

5.6 Incentives schemes

The incentive scheme is designed to encourage and reward good behaviour. Each prisoner starts on the same level but can earn more privileges by displaying good behaviour or lose them by breaking rules. For example, one sanction is the loss of an in-cell TV. This rule is difficult to apply in a prison with double occupancy cells, when one 'misbehaving' prisoner should lose the TV but the other has done nothing to warrant the loss. The system is not working well in HMP Winchester and is not helped by the rapid prisoner turnover. The Residential Governor is rewriting the policy, which includes a plan to open an incentivised substance-free living zone on the top landing of C wing.

5.7 Complaints

The average monthly number of complaints received by the prison for the reporting year was 80.2 compared to 96 over the previous reporting year. This represents a reduction of 16%. Over the same period, the comparator group (see footnote to 4.2) saw 4.5% increase in complaints. This fall has been consistent over two years.

Confidential complaints comprise a large share of the total number. The subject matter of these complaints is only available to the No.1 Governor. The most common complaints concerned residential issues, property transfer and the loss or misplacing

of personal property. Other matters that were raised frequently included issues with canteen³, reception into the prison and relationships with staff.

Across the year, 18% of complaints were not resolved within the time limit, a small rise from 16% in the last reporting year. Like the previous reporting year, 35% of complaints were resolved in the prisoner's favour.

Around 9% of the prison population logged a complaint, compared with 12.5% in the previous year and 14.9% in the comparator group.

5.8 Property

Loss of property, either on transfer between establishments or within the prison itself, has, for years, been amongst the most frequent reasons for complaints to the prison and applications to the IMB. This year, the prison has dedicated an officer to processing property on arrival and release. The Board had an informative discussion with the officer and we feel reassured that the prison is carrying out its duty to its best ability. This may have contributed to a 25% reduction in the number of property-related applications to the IMB this year since 2022-2023.

³ Canteen is the local product list (LPL) of items available in a particular prison, which men can buy. Prisoners can order items such as food, drink and toiletries using a paper form.

6. Health and wellbeing

6.1 Healthcare general

Practice Plus Group (PPG) continued to be the healthcare provider commissioned to operate at HMP Winchester. The prison's self-contained healthcare facilities were continuously monitored by IMB members and were found to be of clean and tidy appearance, with the healthcare orderly (a trusted prisoner who provides services that contribute to the running of the prison) taking pride in the upkeep of the facilities.

During 2023-2024, PPG identified several priority areas of focus for development, which have been initiated to improve care and outcomes for prisoners. These include: patient safety incident review group, local quality assurance group, medication management group, and a death in custody/end-of-life pathway group.

Staff shortages continued to be identified as an issue within PPG. Staffing areas affected were GP cover, senior leadership and management, and advanced nurse practitioners. Those work shifts affected were covered by bank and agency staff. As a result, access to timely care, affected by the staffing shortages, had been reported to Board as an issue by prisoners. In addition, reduced staff numbers had a negative impact on attendance at key prison meetings by healthcare staff.

It was noted that, following the departure of the long-standing and permanent GP in late summer 2023, PPG found it difficult to reappoint a GP to post in HMP Winchester. As an interim measure, locum GPs were engaged to provide cover. However, the waiting list for men requiring GP appointments lengthened. Furthermore, the Prisons Act requirement for a GP to visit the CSU every 72 hours was not met several times throughout the reporting period. The Board's monitoring revealed that this included a whole week in September and the entire month of November 2023.

Formal complaints to healthcare, which are dealt with in a two-stage process, dropped during the reporting period. In 2022-2023, there were 175 recorded 'concerns', of which 13 progressed to stage 1, whereas, in 2023-2024, there were 139 'concerns', resulting in 11 stage 1 complaints. This was a positive change.

In May 2024, PPG installed a new GP (lately from HMP Lewes) to address the issue of reducing the waiting list for GP consultations. The GP is not a permanent employee of PPG but is temporarily employed in the capacity of a management consultant. Their remit is to provide GP cover, as well as implement change and new systems of working to improve efficiency.

By May 2024, against a full complement of 80 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff, there were 44.49 staff in post in the healthcare unit. In May 2024, the overall staff vacancy rate was running at 46.89% – slightly worse than at the start of 2022-2023.

6.2 Physical healthcare

It became clear that prisoners' accidental injuries were not routinely shared with the health and safety team. However, where necessary, an assessment by a healthcare professional was initiated and reported. Custodial managers' report any prisoner accident by recording it on Sphera (the HM Prison and Probation Service/HMPPS

accident and incident reporting system for health and safety matters). In the reporting year, the health and safety office noted 21 incidents recorded to Sphera.

Several medication-related issues were the subject of applications to the IMB by prisoners during the reporting year, focusing specifically on delays linked to community prescription verification and onward prescribing on arrival to the prison. There are different processes in place to manage such issues, depending on the circumstances of the prisoner, which healthcare staff are responsible for managing. The care for those prisoners on medication, if life critical or related to a detox programme, was prescribed/dispensed without waiting for verification, but reviewed once verification was available.

As a result of GP shortages, assessment of prisoners was described by healthcare professionals as 'harder', because there was usually only a limited knowledge of a prisoner's personal history.

With regard to dental provision, staffing levels comprised three-day cover by a dentist on site, with a dental nurse working five days a week. A triage system was in place and capacity for eight appointments per session (24 in total). The proportion of prisoners breaching the six-week standard for a dental appointment has risen from 10% in May 2023 to 22% in May 2024, but there have been examples of higher proportions breaching during the reporting period (e.g. 49% in April 2024).

6.3 Mental health

Mental health staffing levels increased within this team from five to six. An exercise to review and manage the waiting list resulted in a reduction of active referrals by 50%. The main area of difficulty reported had been in the provision of continued support to prisoners.

The mental health (MH) nurse caseload was around 40 for the reporting period. While urgent MH referrals were seen within 48 hours, success in meeting the target of five days for routine referrals averaged 25-30%. The majority of non-urgent referrals were eventually seen within seven days. The shortfall was mainly due to an ability to get men escorted to appointments, both internally and externally, due to staff shortages and other factors (such as staff being on leave, for example). Once a patient is assessed for transfer, the vast majority exceed the 28-day time limit, due to limited availability in specialist facilities. One man with complex needs has been waiting for a transfer to an appropriate care setting since June 2023.

The service is supported by a consultant psychiatrist four days a week and a full-time assistant psychologist guided remotely by a psychologist in the community. Where a further referral to a psychiatrist is needed, waiting times for urgent appointments have been up to five days, although routine referrals typically take 2-3 weeks. The psychology resources have been reduced from 2023-2024 by a whole time equivalent (WTE) psychologist and WTE assistant psychologist. Recruitment is ongoing.

Support is offered at the individual level through the Talking Therapies programme and Sleep Hygiene Packs, and at the group level through the Emotional Coping Skills and Making Sense of My World programmes. Up to four men participate in each group programme, but attendance is poor and the approach to the group programmes is being developed to try to achieve greater prisoner engagement. The

consultant psychiatrist considers that the patients in HMP Winchester require more support than can be offered, including more one-to-one support.

Studies suggest that the proportion of prison populations who are neurodiverse may be significantly higher than in the general population⁴. PPG notes that they are not commissioned to diagnose nor treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or autistic spectrum disorders. In 2023, HMP Winchester appointed a neurodiversity support manager. The role works on an identified needs basis and focuses on supporting prisoners to manage their environment and improve staff knowledge and awareness. Plans are in place to establish a neurodiverse landing.

6.4 Social care

Social care board meetings occur bi-monthly. PPG have 37 hours per week allocated for social care. The social care worker has a caseload varying between seven and 15 prisoners at any one time. Prisoners are assessed at reception by healthcare to identify care and support needs and evaluate any risks to independence and wellbeing. An occupational therapist is available as required on referral from the social care worker. Social care peer supporters have been trained to undertake basic tasks, such as helping those in need to make their beds and take wheelchair users to their place of work, as well as being a point of contact on each wing.

6.5 Exercise, regime

Guidance encourages time out of cell to be used only for purposeful activity and domestics (time spent on personal hygiene, calling family and socialising), thus reducing opportunities for violent incidents to occur. Sufficient staffing is required to achieve desired levels. Those who have a job or attend education classes spend more time outside their cells. Many prisoners spend time in the gym, with great efforts being made to make sporting activities more interesting. Representatives from a local football league team are supporting a project. There is a waiting list for many activities and those who do not yet have or refuse the opportunities get around 1.5 hours out of their cell each day. With the increase in the churn of prison arrivals and departures, the HMP Winchester time out of cell target for each prisoner becomes harder to achieve. But a staff profiling exercise is underway to help remedy this, with the aim of achieving a minimum of 4.5 hours out of cell for all.

6.6 Drug rehabilitation

Around one-third of all prisoners have engaged with the recovery service offered by PPG in the last 12 months. In June 2023, the caseload was 159 and rose steadily to 195 in September 2023 before gradually dropping to 160 in April 2024.

A revised under the influence (UTI) protocol was introduced at the end of March 2024. Until that time, separate statistics on the occurrence were not recorded. In May, 57 incidents of UTI were recorded, with most of unknown cause. The Board observed 10 cases of men under the influence during a three-day period in May 2024. The service noted a continued increase in the proportion of released prisoners who had been receiving support and treatment in prison for substance misuse commencing further treatment with a community provider within three weeks of

⁴ Catch 22 <https://www.catch-22.org.uk/resources/neurodiversity-in-the-criminal-justice-system>.

release. Final data is not available, but they suggest that the proportion is now over 39%.

Steps have been taken to increase links with the community, including a new probation notification and actioning project (PNAP), which confirms to the probation service, with the prisoner's consent, the date of a prisoner's first community appointment. A discharge and transfer co-ordinator role has also been created. However, the introduction of the ESCL scheme in October 2023, and the subsequent increase in the early release period from 16 days to 70 days, continues to put pressure on continuity of care for prisoners.

A 14-session SMART Inside/Out programme was introduced in May 2024, targeting behaviour change and skills to help reduce addictive behaviour. Alcoholics Anonymous (33 men attending in April 2024) and Narcotics Anonymous groups (43 men attending in April 2024) continue with weekly meetings.

A multidisciplinary drug strategy meeting takes place monthly, which develops new ways of working and builds relationships across the prison to restrict supply, reduce demand, build recovery and minimise harm. Mandatory drug testing ceased in November 2023, as it was not considered to be effective by HMP Winchester senior leadership. Planning is ongoing regarding an 'incentivised substance free living' landing, which is to be introduced later in 2024.

6.7 Soft skills

BearFace Theatre continues to run sessions exploring writing and performance in an ensemble session. Two courses were run last year, with a total of 22 men enrolled, of whom 14 performed in the final session. Performances receive very positive feedback from participants. In November 2023, Spurgeons piloted a course 'Boys2Men', supporting young men in exploring the role of masculinity and the role family has played in male development. A suitable facilitator has been difficult to find, with two unsuccessful rounds of recruitment, so the course has been suspended.

Music, yoga, staff vs prisoner sports events and engaging prisoners in special events continue to develop under the guidance of dedicated staff. The new education contract, from May 2024, offers the flexibility to contract for courses such as music or art, should HMP Winchester wish to do so.

Training for new members of staff and support for all staff to encourage the building of positive relationships and confidence in dealing with prisoners has been stepped up from the previous reporting year.

7. Progression and resettlement

7.1 Education and library

During the financial year, 2023-2024, 966 prisoners started courses, with 764 achievements in total across the department. The change in risk-assessment profiling for prisoners slowed the allocation process to education in October 2023. It took two months to embed the new process, which resulted in an initial 28% drop in efficiency. Efficiency had improved to around 80% by May 2024. Attendance rates for education average around 67%. A new course prospectus was introduced in May 2024 because of an education skills and work needs analysis. The courses now offered aim to better serve the needs of the many men only staying for short periods in HMP Winchester and which are more likely to lead directly to employment opportunities. Construction is an area of significant interest to prisoners, so new courses have been commissioned. The new IT server, introduced in April 2023 to improve the connection to the virtual campus used for education, is now working as it should. English for speakers of another language (ESOL), which is particularly important, is over-subscribed, which is understandable, given the high number of foreign national prisoners who are serving in HMP Winchester. Over the year, there have been 44 ESOL enrolments, with 31 individuals achieving progression.

Library staffing has improved over the year and is now full strength, at 2.5 WTE. Prisoner visits to the library have also increased throughout the year, from 298 in June 2023 to 407 in May 2024. The variety of books available has improved. A timetable provides opportunities for all prisoners to visit the library, although time is often short due to uniformed staff pressures either collecting or returning men to their accommodation wings. Recruiting and security clearance have been ongoing since July 2023 for a Shannon Trust co-ordinator, who is needed to recruit and train prisoner mentors so they can provide reading support to prisoners. The introduction of a pop-up library on A wing, to promote the library and all the services it can offer, has been very effective. The prison held a dedicated book week initiative in February 2024, aimed at both staff and prisoners, which was very well supported and raised the profile of reading across the prison. This is alongside the Governor's reading strategy, which is to introduce reading time in all purposeful and regime activity provision.

7.2 Vocational training and work

The Wandsworth escape and security audit in November 2023 resulted in all prisoner risk assessments for work being reviewed and new procedures put in place ensuring multi-agency input. This caused a temporary drop in allocations. Work allocations are now discussed weekly and attendance rates are improving. Prisoners in at least half-time activity have remained between 40-50% over the reporting period. Full-time activity has decreased from around 26% to 22.4%, although part-time activity has increased from 7.1% to 12%. The reduction is partly due to the textile workshop being unavailable for much of the year, because of damage caused by prisoners. It can also be attributed to an initiative to split selected full-time industry and service jobs into part-time work to ensure more prisoners are given the opportunity to earn money. A proportion of the remaining full-time jobs ensure learning and progression are continued for the benefit of prisoners. Overall, the proportion of prisoners in some form of purposeful activity had risen slightly by the

end of the reporting year to 62% (266 men), with 38% being classed as unemployed compared with 47% in June 2023.

7.3 Offender management and progression

The prison's offender management unit (OMU) is resourced to manage a population of 55% remand/reception and 45% resettlement prisoners. These figures are regularly exceeded. In May 2024, 62% of the total population was unsentenced, which increases to 81% if Westhill (category C) is excluded. Managing the complexity of this prison population, which is consistently close to maximum capacity, has a significant impact on staff workload.

The OMU has been under significant pressure because of the introduction of the ECSL. The 18-day ECSL scheme was implemented at Winchester in January 2024, with staff being given five working days' notice to re-assess release dates and the needs of prisoners on release. ECSL was extended to 35 days on 2 April, with a two-day notice period. It was, again, extended to 70 days on 23 May 2024. An earlier initiative to prevent Friday or bank holiday releases by bringing the release date forward to the preceding Thursday was working well, but it does not apply to prisoners released under ECSL. In the January to May 2024 period, 124 prisoners have been released under ECSL. Of these, 32% were escalated as risk concerns; 21% breached their licence and were recalled; and 38% were released as homeless, because no accommodation could be arranged in time.

These changes have resulted in a significant workload. No additional staff have been provided and although overtime can be applied, uptake is low, given the very small team already working in stressful conditions. Staff at HMP Winchester should be congratulated for managing these excessive workloads under significant stress.

Immediate release from court is an ongoing issue, with prisoners who have been on remand for some time often released directly from court as time served or, more frequently, being awarded bail or a community order. These prisoners do not receive any direct support to re-engage in the community and may be at high risk of reoffending. There has been an increase of 20% in this reporting period. In April 2023-March 2024, there were 664 immediate releases: 163 were released on licence to probation, 80 of which were timed served.

The backlog of offender assessment system (OASys) assessments has been significantly reduced over the reporting period. A new tracker has been successfully introduced, ensuring prisoners have sentence and risk management plans in place. Caseworker ratio for the 12 prison offender managers (POMs) is 25:1, compared with 15:1 in 2022-2023.

7.4 Family contact

Family services are provided by the charity Spurgeons, which attends daily inductions for new arrivals, helping to ensure that each prisoner has support for any family-related concerns. 'Warbler' (the weekly internal newsletter for all HMP Winchester staff) has reported that 50% of prisoners have no visitors/contact outside HMP Winchester.

Spurgeons' work includes continuing with a pilot scheme called Behind the Wall/Beyond the Gate. Offering a whole-family approach to strengthen relationships, it provides an intensive 12 week pre- and post-release support programme. Other

initiatives include Storybook Dads recordings, homework club with children, parenting courses for fathers and monthly baby and toddler visit sessions. This year, they have launched a quarterly session for prisoners who do not have social visits, either in person or via social video calls, where prisoners are given time in the visits' hall (with access to refreshments and activities such as crafts and a quiz) and are able to connect with other services in the prison. At the first session, 252 prisoners were invited to attend the time to connect (TTC) session – all of whom do not receive either social visits, social video calls or family day visits. Of those invited, Spurgeons received 74 applications to attend the session: 54 individuals were cleared by security to attend in the morning and 15 were cleared to attend in the afternoon. In total, 43 prisoners attended in the morning and 14 in the afternoon.

Feedback from visitors and staff in the visitors' centre on the social visits' booking process suggests a reduction in issues with the process this year, with the online system taking the majority of bookings and the phone line being manned for two hours in the morning and again in the afternoon. The Board was told that inaccurate information was being issued in the visit confirmation email, leading to confusion on visits dates and times. But, following intervention by Spurgeons' staff, this has been resolved.

Another issue was the delay in uploading personal identification numbers (PIN) - required to allow prisoners to make phone calls - at one point with a wait of three weeks, as published to the prisoners in a notice on A wing in July 2023. At the latter end of the reporting period, improvements were reported at the prison council meeting, with waiting times for PIN uploads reducing to less than a week.

7.5 Resettlement planning

Resettlement planning is carried out within the establishment by staff who are part of the Probation Service. There are six members of staff in this service.

Resettlement work now only covers the initial prisoner assessment, setting up of bank accounts and help with linking prisoners due for release with accommodation providers.

The number of staff providing the contracted service to assist with the provision of accommodation on release (provided by Ingeus) has increased in the reporting year from one to four people. However, changes to the contract service now require support and signposting to remand and sentenced prisoners. The service is not responsible for locating accommodation for prisoners on release. Due to the national changes through the early release scheme, Ingeus now manage their workload to an 18-week timeframe rather than the 12-week standard. Data shared with the Board via a reducing reoffending meeting shows that 20% of men were released homeless, and that 8% of men were back in prison by the sixth day of the following week.

National changes regarding the early release scheme and prison overcrowding are adding pressure to HMP Winchester and impacting on resettlement planning. The case load for the resettlement team sits at 230 for each member of the team. Staff commented that there is very limited direct - and even less scope for private - interaction with prisoners.

In addition to the early release scheme, the Prison Strategy White Paper (published in December 2021) and The Offenders (Day of Release from Detention) Act 2023

identified changes to Friday releases for prisoners. This change was introduced to ensure successful planning and access to essential services on release and commenced at HMP Winchester in December 2023.

Case studies have been shared with the Board on successful interventions provided by third-sector providers: the Saints Foundation, Spurgeons, Making Connections and Catch 22. In addition, prisoners have access to other sessions within the prison, such as connect sessions, for example, which provide focus and discussions on resettlement.

There is a national requirement to have an in-situ prison employment lead. This post was filled earlier in 2024. The national target of 21.7% prisoners in employment six weeks post-release has been set and, for this reporting year, HMP Winchester averaged 16.44%. On-site accommodation is being sought to further aid the team with their service offer, although limited resources are available to support this. Employment hub visits are scheduled with external businesses in attendance. These are a relatively new development, and work continues to build internal and external relationships.

8. The work of the IMB

The Board has seen four members resign during the reporting period, two of which were after a period of long service. Five new members joined the Board in Summer 2023 and have been successfully inducted. The vetting process, provided by contractor SSCL, was frustratingly slow and arguably inefficient, as candidates have struggled to submit details and get timely responses. As in the most recent years, the integration of new members has resulted in considerable extra work for Board members, who need to provide training and mentoring.

New board officers were appointed on 1 January 2024 into the roles of Chair, Deputy Chair and Board Development Officer.

Board statistics

Recommended complement of IMB members	13
Number of IMB members at the start of the reporting period	11
Number of IMB members at the end of the reporting period	12
Total number of visits to the establishment, which includes 59 shadow visits by new members	393
Total number of segregation reviews observed	19

The content of this report has been based on observations recorded by the Board over the period 2023-2024. Of the 480 observations recorded in the Board's observations' log, 329 were members' personal observations, while the remainder were obtained from staff, prisoner reports, official documents and notifications.

Applications to the IMB

Total applications to the IMB have fallen by 47 (14%), with applications relating to finance, property within the establishment, and sentence management seeing the most significant falls. Despite the overall drop in applications, those relating to accommodation and health both increased.

Code	Subject	2022-23	2023-24
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	21	33
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives scheme, sanctions	3	8
C	Equality	5	5
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, time out of cell	18	14
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection, restrictions	39	35
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	28	11
F	Food and kitchens	5	7
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	52	64
H1	Property within the establishment	34	19
H2	Property during transfer or in another facility	20	15
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogues	5	12
I	Sentence management, including HDC (home detention curfew), ROTL (release on temporary licence), parole, release dates, re-categorisation	50	25
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	27	25
K	Transfers	10	0
L	Miscellaneous	17	13
X	Confidential access request	0	1
	Total number of applications	334	287



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