



Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Wayland

**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
- 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 Wayland, for adult men, in Thetford, Norfolk, is one of many category C training and resettlement prisons (for prisoners who pose a lower risk to the public and are not considered to be an escape risk) in England. Such prisons are officially described as providing prisoners with ‘the opportunity to develop their own skills so they can find work and resettle back into the community on release’.

Despite the apparently limited description of the purpose of a category c prison, such responsibilities are usually described as ‘rehabilitation’. Therefore, that is a test we have applied throughout our work and this report, especially in the linked issues of responses to identified learning deficits, prisoners’ rehabilitation needs, their sentence progression and their release planning: are the prison’s activities and, therefore, the treatment of its prisoners rehabilitative?

Wayland is a large site, 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 919 at the close of the reporting period¹. Its prisoners are housed in two radically different types of accommodation:

- the ‘old build’, a 1985 series of five linked brick and block buildings, with integral sanitation but no in-cell showers, holding 511 prisoners; this includes 62 prisoners who are in ‘doubled’ cells, that is, cells built for one prisoner but which have recently been fitted with two bunk beds as a Prison Service mandated effort to accommodate additional prisoners due to the accommodation crisis in English prisons, and which we will examine in detail in this report;
- a newer accommodation unit, the Wensum unit, for 96 prisoners, with full, integral sanitation, including showers; and,
- the ‘new build’, a separated sector of the site, comprising five individual, ready-to-use units, all but one holding 60 prisoners each in double cells with full, integral sanitation, and a small unit of 14 as the first night unit, in total providing the balance of 312 prisoners to the prison's operational capacity.

With the exception of the Wensum unit, all the prisoner accommodation throughout the site has continued to be plagued with serious structural and maintenance problems. Some are so severe that the affected areas have occasionally been taken out of use for emergency repair; such repairs have been ad hoc and not strategic. We comment, again, in this report, as we have done in previous reports, on this ongoing scandal.

In addition to the standard prisoner accommodation, a new, purpose-built care and separation unit (CSU), with a capacity of 14 prisoners, opened just before the start of the reporting year. Lastly, pre-construction work finally began at the start of the reporting year on a new, 120-prisoner accommodation unit to replace two condemned units demolished four years before.

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.

Education and work skills are provided across two large buildings capable of providing, at current usage activities, educational, vocational and workshop skills for, the Board believes from its monitoring of actual capacities, more prisoner activities than the prisoner numbers, especially as at least two areas could be logistically re-purposed.

The prison is 13 miles from the nearest rail station and three miles from the nearest bus stop, which makes visiting both difficult and expensive, as around only 15% of the prisoners are from Norfolk and Suffolk, and almost all the rest are from London and the southeast of England.

3. Key points

3.1 Main findings

Safety

- From the Board's observations, the prisoner escort contractor has improved management of prisoner-carried property.
- Follow-on property still causes difficulties, with some prisons not responding to prisoners' complaints within the timescale, or even at all.
- The triad of reception, first night and induction has improved, but more work is needed.
- Prisoner self-harm incidents, although below the comparator average, are still stubbornly around an incident a day, on average.
- Assaults on staff are lower than comparator average and have shown a gradual reduction over the year.
- Assaults on prisoners, again although just below the comparator group average, have not seen the same reduction trend as assaults on staff.
- Although prevention of illicit substances entering the prison by the 'official' routes (letters, clothes, hidden items in apparently acceptable possessions) continued to score successful finds during the year, and the 'street price' of drugs was often high, indicating a low supply, the common use of vapes, which can be easily adulterated with psychoactive substances such as Spice, and the frequent finds of illicitly brewed alcohol, show the pervasiveness of drugs throughout the establishment.
- Self-isolation amongst prisoners, however, has been maintained at a very low level and numbers are rarely more than three or four, unlike the 20 or so incidents common in the last few years.

Fair and humane treatment

- The accommodation across the prison, which the Board repeatedly reported has bordered on the inhumane in winter, has at last been seriously accepted by the Prison Service to be in need of significant refurbishment. However, the anticipated five-year plan is, in the opinion of the Board, far too long.
- The design of the new care and separation unit (CSU), where prisoners are segregated, has been shown to be defective in some areas, with frequent losses of accommodation through 'cell smash-ups', which should be virtually impossible in such a unit.
- The unacceptable use of single cells as double cells, although numerically small in number at Wayland, still means that approximately 10% of prisoners in the 'old build' are in such accommodation.
- UTI (under the influence) incidents are still very frequent and it is a rare daily briefing that does not show two, three or four such observed incidents.
- The system of 'clothing parcels' continues to discriminate against a large proportion of the prisoner population.
- In the Board's view, the small increase in the daily provision allowance has enabled the catering manager to provide varied, nutritious and adequately portioned meals.
- Prisoners' assessment of the helpfulness of staff has improved, but much work remains to be done to improve prisoner and staff relationships further.

- Key working has shown improvement in the quality of reports, but its frequency and, indeed, its contribution to a prisoner's rehabilitation, in collaboration with other prison departments, needs significant work.
- The incentives scheme requires a thorough review to fully follow the Prison Service's framework for its practical application; prisoners display little respect for the way it is managed.
- The management of property has shown a little improvement, in the Board's view, but there is still too much delay in managing follow-on property, there remains an apparent refusal by some prisons to respond to complaints made by prisoners against its delay, or its subsequent loss.

Health and wellbeing

- There has been a much-improved management of healthcare complaints, which has been positively noted by prisoners.
- From the Board's observations, there remains a tendency to view a range of prisoner problems as medical alone, when a more multi-disciplinary approach could achieve better results.
- The problem of prisoners failing to attend healthcare appointment (known as 'do not attends', or DNAs) has seen a slight reduction, but the failures that were the direct fault of the operational arm has remained stubbornly high, at about 7% of appointments made.
- There have, again, been great demands on the mental health team, which could be minimised, perhaps, by greater effort being made by the prison as a whole to take a pro-active approach rather than a mostly reactive one in terms of the whole-prison experience.
- Time out of cell improved markedly throughout the year, as a consequence of improved staffing and a more predictable regime.
- Illicit drugs and alcohol remain significant challenges and although there have been notable successes in finds, drugs and alcohol are still all too easy to obtain or, in the case of alcohol, make.

Progression and resettlement

- In previous reports, we asked for better coordination and efforts to address the high level of prisoners who cannot read or have difficulty with reading. This has been responded to this year with a significant change of approach, utilising education, the Shannon Trust and the library with innovative ways of encouraging and supporting prisoners' reading skills.
- However, we cannot be as assured that the prison is paying the same attention to the rehabilitative need to prepare prisoners for a return to, or a first approach to, the world of work. By the mandated collection of statistics, Wayland is at least as good as, and aiming to be better than, its comparators for allocation to, and attendance at, work. But we point to well-regarded training courses being stopped, and operational demands and failures eating into an already short 'purposeful activity' week.
- However, there are some good and well-regarded training courses still operational. But the demands in the way some of these are managed, and the small number of prisoners allowed for within them, means that only a small proportion of Wayland's prisoners can benefit from them; for many, work is

just a way of passing time and earning pocket money, not the rehabilitative preparation needed by most.

- We are also concerned that opportunities for encouraging prisoners to gain qualifications in industry-related work opportunities in Wayland, such as in the DHL packing workshop and waste management, for example, have not been taken up, whether through lack of financial support or for other reasons.
- In the Board's view, the management of progression has been hit badly this year by the changing service-wide demand to keep the category D prisons full and the unprepared-for political and, thereafter, organisational demands caused by the pressure on available places. The offender management unit (OMU) and those associated with it have responded valiantly to these demands, but it is with the resulting effect on prisoners' rehabilitation progress that the Board is concerned.
- The actual experience of visiting Wayland, for those who can make the journey, has been significantly improved by a comprehensive redecoration of the external visits' centre and the internal visits' hall, coupled with the innovative creation of the Breck Barista, the on-site coffee shop and cafeteria, in the latter, providing snacks and drinks for those on visits.
- StoryBook Dads (where prisoner can record bedtime stories on CD or DVD for their children) has gone from strength to strength under its new management in the library, together with the Book Hut, where a prisoner and his child can share the same book to read to each other, and talk about, on family phone calls.
- The Board has welcomed the energy and work of the resettlement planning process and there is now a coordinated effort to ensure that vital requirements for a prisoner's safe release are dealt with before the actual day of release.

3.2 Main areas for development

TO THE MINISTER

- The Board requests that the Minister require a Prison Service review of its policy of double occupation of single cells to achieve an outcome that seeks the cooperation of those affected while not preventing the emergency use of such a doubling policy. We cannot imagine such an outcome would be impossible at least at category C prisons. (Section 5.1)
- We would repeat what we said above: where prison officers are inexperienced, there must be training. We so recommend to the Governor for local management, the Prison Service as facilitators, and the Minister for the direction of resources. (Section 5.3)
- The Board recommends to the Minister that he takes note of, and tests, the points we have made, in concert with the situation in other category C training prisons, in a service-wide review of what is required to make a deliverable reality of the Government's, and the service's, public commitment to a properly rehabilitative Prison Service. (Section 7.2)

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

- To follow the Wayland Governor's lead in recommending that all prison establishments consider regarding the recommendations in their IMB annual report with the same care as they respond to those of HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (HMCHIP). (Section 3.3)

- We would look to a clear, and perhaps extended, focus during initial, and refresher, training on the need to deploy interpersonal and non-physical means to manage the threat of prisoner violence in achieving the fundamental aim of violence reduction and not just violence management. We so recommend to the Prison Service. (Section 4.3)
- We recommend, again, to the Prison Service that the staffing complement of the 'old build' four wings needs to be reviewed. The 'standard' of two staff for 60 prisoners, while perhaps adequate for well-designed and open, galleried landings and wings, appears under-resourced, given the poor design and lack of direct observation possible in these wings.
- Through a re-launched key worker system, staff could have the time to become familiar with not just the prisoner but the prisoner's family and significant others, all to bring home to him the ongoing costs to himself and others of his continued delinquency. We recommend additional resources are provide to the prison to enable this. (Section 4.5)
- The Board recommends to the Prison Service that it reviews the design and the construction of its double bunk beds to improve their utility and safety. (Section 5.1)
- Because the local Governor's hands are tied in the provision of staff and, indeed, much staff training, we make a recommendation to the Prison Service that the CSU staff complement, including supervisory staff, is reviewed, and that the specialist training that CSU staff need is provided from wider Prison Service training resources and not merely by online programmes. (Section 5.2)
- The Board commends the Governor and his staff for working consistently at the core task of key working, with such good results, but would recommend that they look for more support from the Prison Service to provide greater staff resources for this task. (Section 5.3)
- We would repeat what we said elsewhere: where there is inexperience, there must be training. Therefore, we recommend such to the Governor and local management, the Prison Service as facilitators and the Minister for the direction of resources. (Section 5.3)
- The Board recommends to the Prison Service that it considers anew how to address the property issue, by the means we have described or other operational solutions, aside from merely asking staff and contractors to do their best. (Section 5.8)
- The Board would make the recommendation to the Prison Service that the value of multi-disciplinary team working should be a fundamental consideration in the recalibration of the resources needed for the anticipated increased population when the additional accommodation comes on stream in the near future, and not merely a continuation of a silo approach to the numbers in this or that specialism or activity thought necessary. (Section 6.1)
- If the Board's assessments are correct, it would appear that the dental contract is significantly underfunded. We, therefore, recommend that the Prison Service carries out its own reassessment of the dental need at Wayland and establishes such contract changes thereafter as necessary. (Section 6.2)
- The Board would invite the Prison Service to take what is now being done in Wayland as a 'best practice' example of what can be done, and seek to adjust

education providers' contractual obligations and measurements, where needed, to fully support the development of 'the Wayland approach' in other prisons as an essential part of its commitment to the better rehabilitation of prisoners in all prisons. We so recommend. (Section 7.1)

TO THE GOVERNOR

- We consider that to remedy the lack of a sustained initial experience of custody, the prison's management should consider whether the 14 cells of the first night unit actually provide the best use of its accommodation, and that such a review might be helpful in considering how best that management might address the continuing challenge of induction. (Section 4.1)
- The Board believes there should be a local policy for addressing every incident of self-harm by a key worker as a matter of routine. The evidence from such interventions might then usefully lead to a re-orientation of key worker efforts to create an atmosphere of approachability for such self-harm feelings before they get to self-harm actions. We so recommend to the Governor. (Section 4.2)
- In the Board's view, more attention might usefully be directed towards prisoners' capacity to manage the frustrations of their sentence and its conditions, with a greater curiosity in the social and personal situations behind the obvious outcomes of both intra- and extra-personal violence. We so recommend to the Governor. (Section 4.3)
- The Board recommends to the Governor that all prisoners who are expecting at least two further years in custody should have access to a regulated 'clothing parcel' annually. This would reduce the felt cause of unjustified discrimination between groups. (Section 5.1)
- We would repeat what we said before: where there is inexperience, there must be training. Therefore, we recommend such to the Governor and local management, the Prison Service as facilitators and the Minister for the direction of resources. (Section 5.3)
- The Board would recommend the process of the local Incentives Policy Review takes note of the requirement of the Incentives Policy Framework (in its paragraph 5.23) for a forum involving prisoners and staff to discuss the fairness and effectiveness of the new local policy. Such a move would clearly demonstrate the commitment of the prison to the revised policy. (Section 5.6)
- The Board has received a significant number of applications about property received being delayed considerably before issue. We would, therefore, recommend to the Governor that a longer-term solution is found to ensure that the delay to prisoners being reunited with their property is as short as it is possible to make it. (Section 5.8)
- Due to the continuing high level of 'no access' occasions, when prisoners cannot attend healthcare appointments, the Board recommends to the Governor that a comprehensive review of the whole roll-count process is undertaken to establish a system that delivers a consistently accurate roll-count. (Section 6.2)
- To further reduce the still significant number of prisoners failing to attend a healthcare appointment, the Board recommends that the Governor considers the more open, perhaps automatic, use of the prison disciplinary and incentives procedures available to the prison. (Section 6.2)

- The Board would make the recommendation that local management reviews the issues of a more preventative directed mental health strategy, which might involve the content and management of the induction programme at the beginning of a prisoner's experience. (Section 6.3)
- We recommend to the Governor that he considers using the key working strategy to include an automatic triggering of a requirement for a key work episode concentrated on the state of mind behind the use of drugs in UTI incidents as a further plank in an integrated drug reduction strategy. (Section 6.6)
- We recommend to the Governor that the prison takes the success of the gym staff's provision of an innovative course based on Greek stoic philosophy, and examines how additional resilience and prevention training could be introduced as an expanded weapon in its war on the evils of drugs and to improve the rehabilitation chances of its prisoners. (Section 6.6)
- To support family contact and development, we again make the recommendation to the Governor that he review the practice of parenting classes provided in other prisons, both publicly and privately managed, to discover the most appropriate experience and provision for offering such courses at Wayland. (Section 7.4)

3.3 Response to the last report

For the second year, we are not commenting on a 'We said, you did (or did not) do' analysis of the observations and recommendations in our last report. The reason for this is that our annual report was late in delivery and we judged it would not be appropriate to comment on issues that the Governor has had much less than a year in which to respond.

However, the Governor has directed that the recommendations in our last report are given the same importance, together with those from the previous HMIP (HM Inspectorate of Prisons) inspection, in one document, with the requirement that they are responded to in a transparent and considered way, regardless of their origin. This is not only a refreshing approach to the IMB's monitoring observations but, in its thoroughness and completeness is, even if it is not unique in the Prison Service, a very rare approach and one which we trust the Prison Service can be minded to consider and require to be followed in its establishment's treatment of other IMB's annual reports. We have so recommended to the Prison Service in section 3.2, above.

We appreciated the swift response of Minister's response to our 2022-2023 report, but felt that it merely repeated what we had already been told about the investment proposed for Wayland over the next five or more years. It did not pick up on our detailed recommendations. Therefore, this year, we have limited our Ministerial recommendations to what we consider to be their absolutely essential core and trust these will receive a response that provides evidence about how they have been considered or, at least, inform us where we are wrong to make our recommendations, with reasons that give the same thought we have given to them.

Evidence sections 4 – 7

General note about the Board's survey of prisoner attitudes

As in previous years, in January, we randomly requested 100 prisoners to take part in the 2024 survey, achieving a response rate of 35%. Comments on the issues revealed in the survey are included in appropriate evidence sections below.

4. Safety

4.1 Reception and induction

Initial reception

Reception has been busier than ever this year, due mainly to the pressure on accommodation nationally, feeding into the demand to ensure that prisoners suitable for recategorisation to category D are moved swiftly on to open conditions, to create vacancies for transfers from the local prisons after sentence. IMB members frequently take the opportunity to check prisoners' experiences of their transit conditions in the contractor's cellular vehicles. From talking to such prisoners - and although more anecdotal than rigorously statistical - it is our impression that their experiences of the transport process are much improved on previous years, such as, for example, when there were fairly frequent complaints about the contractor's staff 'working to rule' on accepting prisoners' accompanying property. This issue has been raised far less frequently in the past year. We do, however, make comment on the general issue of 'follow-on' property in section 5.8.

Last year, we reported in considerable depth in this section on what we termed the 'triad' of reception, first night and induction activities. This year, we again identify that there are significant weaknesses in Wayland's management of this triad of critical processes, from both members' observations and prisoners' perceptions. However, from IMB members' observations of the actual reception process, we report that it is sensitively handled; that there is often a core of experienced staff who are able to ensure that the less-experienced are supported and trained; and that the personal 'airport-style' body scanner is used appropriately and to good effect in preventing the personal importation of illicit items (see section 4.8) and in support of the personal searching of received prisoners.

First night unit

The picture of the second part of the triad, first night management, is less acceptable, due to the increasing pressure on accommodation. This has continued to mean, as we reported at the end of last year, that prisoners' time in the first night unit of 14 cells is measured in hours not days, before the pressing need to move them on to their allocated permanent unit. Essentially, this means that the critical first few days in custody in a new prison, when prisoners need to talk to staff about their personal problems and staff need to identify concerns with these same new prisoners, is such that only the most serious of observable problems is likely to be identified, and an opportunity to encourage new prisoners to see Wayland as a welcoming and useful experience in their sentence is made much more difficult. This situation is compounded by the high proportion of inexperienced officer staff in their allocated unit, who are hindered by that inexperience and not prepared for this role by the very brief initial training they have received.

As we reported last year, the Covid experience meant that new prisoners (other than those deemed unsuitable for shared accommodation) stayed on one of the new build units for a much longer period. This gave staff much more time to identify problems and begin the process of their rehabilitation, for which a period of stability is crucially important.

We have been informed that the most recent regional assessment gave a very positive result for the work that was carried out. However, we suggest this is a result that could have a much better longer-term effect in a more focused environment. We consider, therefore, that to remedy the lack of a sustained initial experience of custody, the prison's management should consider whether the 14 cells of the first night unit actually provide the best use of its accommodation, and that such a review might be helpful in considering how best management might address the continuing challenge of the third and, in many ways, most important part of the triad, which is induction.

Induction

In our last report, we made considered recommendations that management thoroughly review the entire induction process to ensure that it was not a wasted opportunity in a critical period of a prisoner's experience of Wayland and its opportunities for them and their rehabilitation.

Unfortunately, the extreme pressures on accommodation, coupled with a very high proportion of inexperienced first-line staff (70% of whom have less than two years' experience), on whom must fall the bulk of the face-to-face work of the daily induction experience, has meant that little has been done to effect change. However, the prison does now have an induction working party to begin the process of improvement. As a start, we congratulate those involved for recognising that there has been, to date, far too much 'paperwork' handed out on reception, with the expectation that prisoners will actually read and take notice of all this. We understand the information will now be simplified and the prisoners' intranet will be used for the first time to provide a video information film for their unhurried later viewing.

However, pleasingly, the outcome of the Board's latest survey of prisoners' attitudes, conducted in January 2024, when we asked the question, '*Was induction at Wayland helpful?*', did indicate that prisoners' overall experience of the induction process was much more positive than in previous years. We pulled together answers that responded 'yes' or 'maybe', which resulted in an increase from 46% to 66% of respondents who answered in positive terms. It is, therefore, gratifying that the staff's efforts to improve the process does seem to have had some impact. That said, much more needs to be done to ensure that the 'maybe' responses are converted into a 'yes' answer and the 22% remaining 'no' replies are also brought into the fold! That much more needs to be done is clear from the responses to other survey questions, especially as we report in section 5.3, below, in making full use of the total induction experience in support of every prisoner's rehabilitation.

4.2 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody

In our last report, we noted that the number of self-harm incidents had shown that Wayland's record was amongst the lowest in the prison's comparator group. In this reporting year, that has remained the case. Nevertheless, the numbers are still too

high for comfort. From the evidence of the daily briefings, it appears that the great majority of these self-harm incidents are reasonably minor, usually concerning razor cuts to the arms or upper body. But, of course, they are anything but minor to the prisoners involved or to the staff who have to deal with them. The reasons given for the behaviour are frequently the prisoner's frustration with the regime; that legitimate requests or complaints had been ignored; and that it helped the prisoner cope with his negative feelings.

These offered explanations of the self-destructive behaviour are uncomfortably similar to similar activities amongst young people in open society, for which the explanation of a need to react to feelings of helplessness is frequently put forward. In the Board's view, although the feelings and the outcomes in both groups seem alike, in the closed society of a prison there is surely much more that could be done to address the more concentrated reasons for self-harm shared across participants in this behaviour.

To the Board, it appears that the main focus in this area is on the ACCT (advice, care in custody and teamwork) process, which itself is concentrated on the risk a prisoner poses of suicide. This, therefore, results in less notice of the much lower level of risk associated with the great majority of self-harm behaviours. In section 5.3, we refer to our survey's revelation of the large number of prisoners who admit to feelings of loneliness in Wayland and the very low percentage who would approach staff with their concerns. As these two highly personal feelings seem associated, we believe there should be a local policy for addressing every incident of self-harm by a key worker as a matter of routine; the evidence from such interventions might then usefully lead to a re-orientation of key worker efforts to create an atmosphere of approachability for such self-harm feelings before they get to self-harm actions. We so recommend to the Governor.

We regret that we must record a death in custody in the reporting year, although the inquest has not been held, so the cause of death has yet to be established.

4.3 Violence and violence reduction, self-isolation

Violence against staff and other prisoners

The Board wishes to record that both assaults on staff and on other prisoners have been considerably reduced during the reporting year, continuing the trend reported in our previous report. Assaults on staff have shown that Wayland is consistently below the comparator group average and, in terms of actual numbers, at, or around, the lowest in the group.

An almost identical pattern has been seen in the figures for prisoner-on-prisoner assaults, with Wayland usually reporting the lowest, or at least lower than average, numbers but with an upward-trend trajectory.

In terms of absolute numbers in both areas, therefore, Wayland has improved on the situation of just a few years ago, although it would appear that greater management attention is needed towards the drivers for the uptick trend seen in the last 12 months. In the Board's view, such attention might be usefully directed towards the issues we have raised above, in section 4.2, and below, in section 5.3, with a greater curiosity towards the social and personal situations behind the obvious outcomes of both intra- and extra-personal violence. We so recommend to the Governor.

Staff management of violent behaviour

Although we have recommended greater attention is paid to the individual reasons behind violence, as described above, there will always be the need for staff to exercise physical force to maintain control and safety in a prison.

In this context, the Prison Service has introduced SPEAR (spontaneous protection enabling accelerated response) training in Wayland. This is described as using 'the Body's natural flinches and reactions to fear or violence... and converts these reactions into efficient tactical responses.' The Board has noted this additional 'physical self-defence' training, together with the use of PAVA, an incapacitant pepper-spray now carried and used by staff, plus the standard control-and-restraint training already in place, and has become concerned about the amount and content of training that new-entrant staff receive on the whole subject of violence management, as against other aspects of their job.

We have discovered that a very significant fraction of the initial training course time, including subject matter in the 'teach-yourself' modules, is concentrated on responding to prisoners' violent actions. Such training obviously includes the many days devoted to the practical skills in the use of SPEAR, PAVA and control and restraint. But, although important, the Board believes that the central issue of violence-reduction training does not necessarily mean only the physical response to violent incidents. The Prison Service's own use of challenge, support and intervention plans (CSIP) is an example of longer-term, non-violent intervention programme put in place as a response to violence.

Standing back from the management of actual incidents of violence, therefore, the Board believes that the initiative of countering violent behaviour should lie with the prison and its staff and not be left to prisoners to, essentially, initiate the discourse by their own violent actions. In the Board's view, this means that there must be a much more focused training effort targeted at providing the skills of prisoner challenge and de-escalation management so that staff do not feel they need to respond instantly and physically to a perceived threat of violence towards themselves. Not for the first time do we state our strong belief that, where there is inexperience there absolutely must be training to compensate for this shortfall, and to lay down shared foundations as staff's experience builds and as they advance in their responsibilities.

We would look to a clear and, perhaps, extended, focus during initial and refresher training on the need to deploy interpersonal and non-physical means to manage the threat of prisoner violence in achieving the fundamental aim of violence reduction and not just violence management. We so recommend to the Prison Service.

4.4 Use of force

We have been impressed with the care with which the use of force statistics have been collated and are reviewed on a monthly basis. However, we note the significant frequency of using 'guiding holds' to ensure compliance with, for example, orders to prisoners to return to their cell or move to another area. We have also noted that the majority of such instances - and the use of force generally - is concentrated on the old build wings of A to D. These wings contain, of course, the majority of single-cell prisoners, where cell sharing risk assessment (CSRA) decisions will be predominant, and so could, plausibly, be expected to contain prisoners who are, perhaps, more likely to resort to violent, or potentially violent, behaviour. However, it is undeniable

that the design of these wings is poor, with narrow corridors, obscured sightlines and, consequently, a more challenging interpersonal experience - for staff as well as for prisoners. These considerations prompt the Board to repeat previous recommendations that the staffing complement of these four wings needs to be reviewed: the 'standard' of two staff for 60 prisoners, while perhaps adequate for well-designed and open, galleried landings and wings, appears under-resourced for the old-build units, given their poor design and the lack of direct observation possible. We so recommend again to the Prison Service.

4.5 Preventing illicit items

Despite the efforts at preventing illicit items coming into the prison being made by reception staff, as we have described, especially Spice (the generic term for New Psychoactive Substances, or NPS), the fact that drugs are readily and easily available, prisoners tell us, in every wing and unit of the prison - even in the 'drug free' unit - must mean that there is a supply route, or routes, into the prison of at least the precursor chemicals, if not the final products.

There have been attempts, some observed and, therefore, an unknown unobserved number, possibly successful, of drone deliveries. Thankfully, these have been reasonably rare this year, but simpler methods such as 'throw-overs' and new clothing soaked in such substances have also been used. IMB members have also been told by prisoners that they believe corrupt staff are involved. Nevertheless, drugs are being imported, or somehow made or recovered, and we have learned from prisoners that psychoactive drugs of unknown strength of efficacy have been offered, 'free of charge', to the more naïve prisoners; thereafter, such freebies are charged for, with the usual consequences of failure to pay leading to punishments, often physical but also including the infamous 'double bubble', where a debt is doubled every week. This situation often leads either to self-isolation, recourse to applications for 'own interest protection' segregation or a later transfer. Sometimes, another way is found, often involving outside sources, to pay off the debt. This is another of the 'hidden costs' of the scourge of drug importation into prisons, which diverts staff's attention from rehabilitation to keeping prisoners, as well as the general public, safe.

The most observable result of the use of drugs is the frequency that prisoners are identified - and confirmed by healthcare staff - as being 'under the influence' (UTI). Almost every daily briefing reports that one, two or more prisoners were identified as UTI the previous day. And that is when staff are around. Healthcare staff estimate that the known UTI cases probably represent only as little as 20% of the likely drug consumption incidents, given that UTI cases may be either unobserved during the day or in the long periods when prisoners are in their cells for their extended night.

The greatly increased number of UTI cases gave rise during the year to a new local policy of recording the number of times a prisoner was known to be UTI during a 28-day period. A third such occasion automatically led to a prisoner's adjudication (a disciplinary hearing held when a prisoner is alleged to have broken prison rules), under paragraph 5 of rule 51, for recklessly endangering himself or others, with a punishment as harsh as 14 days' confined to cell and loss of all privileges, given at least once, to the Board's knowledge. It seemed, to the Board, that it was a wrong approach to use severe punishments when it seemed that the prisoner's use of drugs was a way to avoid, if only for a time, the considerable personal pains of

imprisonment, of which boredom and pointlessness were reported to the Board by prisoners as significant factors. We approached senior staff with our concerns and were grateful to note that this heavy-handed approach gave way during the year to a more focused intervention by staff on the reasons for the UTIs, together with the Governor's new, linked strategic priorities of (i) delivering a regime that prioritises education and purposeful activity, and (ii) of reducing drug availability, drug demand, and debt.

The efforts we noted, above, have seen some successes in countering the trade in at least NPS. However, the level of finds of illicitly brewed alcohol (IBH) seems to have recovered somewhat, perhaps in response to the successes against NPS supply, with segregation and subsequent transfer affecting some prisoners during the year. Despite this, and given the lack of sufficient resources - human and technological - to further combat this scourge, the Board fears that future years' situations will still reflect this continuing battle. But the extra resources the Board would look for would not just be to manage the 'hard' elements of prohibition, through increased intelligence gathering and management and the searching of prisoners, visitors and staff, but also, importantly, the 'soft' resources of additional fully trained staff to manage not a monthly 'meaningful' key talk with a prisoner but to be a real and frequent influence in the lives of prisoners. Through such a re-launched key worker system, staff could have the time to become familiar with not just the prisoner but the prisoner's family and significant others, all to bring home to him the ongoing costs to himself and others of his continued poor behaviour. We return to this point in more detail in our commentary on the staff and prisoner relationships within the prison in section 5.3.

5. Fair and humane treatment

5.1 Accommodation, clothing, food

Accommodation

With regard to prisoner accommodation, the Board is pleased to report that there has been a lot of progress over the reporting year. Major issues remain, including the discovery that the core problem of the poor heating in the new-build cells is due to the design of the final legs to each cell of the heating supply, which are of a much smaller diameter than the main supply, which means that the scale and other detritus in the system choke the smaller pipes. Once again, during the winter, a very large number of electric heaters had to be deployed in cells in the new-build due to the failure of their heating.

The Board notes two things: firstly, that the buildings were only temporary, as we have said in previous annual reports, with a 15-year design life; and, secondly, as they were built in 2008-2009, that life is over. With the capacity crisis in the Prison Service, the Board accepts that there is no chance of doing what needs to be done, which is to demolish and rebuild with modern, permanent designs. However, the Board does recommend that the Prison Service follow through on its planned dedicated refurbishment programme, which involves taking out an agreed maximum number of cells, consistent with the limitations of the original design in terms of the number of cells needed to be taken off line to effect the repairs efficiently. If something is not done, there will continue to be years ahead when up to 300 prisoners will suffer the effects of winter cold and the prison having to budget for the continued purchase of electric oil-filled radiators and their electrical demand and cost.

In other areas of the prison's accommodation and physical facilities, there are, and have been, continued challenges and failings. We can report, however, that the combined efforts of a rejuvenated Government Facility Services Limited (GFSL) team, the support of the two staff-managed prisoner works parties of the mobile maintenance group and the CRED (clean, rehabilitative, enabling and decent) team, have meant the entire prison feels - indeed, is - cleaner, more cared for and more swiftly repaired and refurbished when the inevitable prisoner or other accidental damage takes place. The grounds, too, have been vastly improved, with innovative flower-bed designs and judiciously placed, large plant boxes designed, installed and maintained by a similarly rejuvenated horticultural team. The common thread to all this has been the dogged insistence of the Governing Governor that a prison is more than a collection of prisoner-holding buildings but a living community which, if given the right encouragement, would prefer to live in tidy and pleasant surroundings.

We note in this section the result of the prison's, externally-conducted, living conditions audit, carried out after the close of our reporting year but in time for us to note that the audit gave Wayland the grade of 'substantial green'. It is one of the very few prisons, of whatever category, to be so ranked and it has been good to see the pride taken by staff at all levels in this result.

However, after the deserved plaudits above, the Board must also report its dissatisfaction with four particular areas:

- the design and construction of the new care and separation unit (CSU);

- the failure to provide a significant number of additional anti-barricade cells, which were promised following a very serious cell fire some years ago;
- the management of the requirement to double-up a total of 31 single cells in the 'old build' so cells built 40 years ago for single occupancy now have to hold two prisoners; and
- the frequent outbreaks of bed bugs in the prison, which seem to affect the double-cell, new-build wings, in particular.

Our concerns with each of the above have been raised with local management, but the responsibility lies not with them but with the Prison Service, and, indeed, the Minister, as they involve either a failure of design, as with the CSU, or a long-term maintenance and refurbishment failure. Even controlling the bed bugs issue is hampered by the latter, due to the unsatisfactory nature of those buildings' design and construction. We have noted elsewhere in the report our recommendations on this topic.

The care and separation (segregation) unit

The Board cannot understand why such a unit has been built to a design so noisy and so easy to damage, when it has been known for some time that such units house the most disruptive men and those most likely to damage their surroundings, frequently, prisoners who have often been removed from 'normal' accommodation because they have vandalised it.

Simple, cheap and effective acoustic management treatments are available, the Board understands, which would much reduce the frequently intolerable noise, for staff as well as prisoners, caused by a few held in the unit whose main aim seems to be as challenging as possible to secure their transfer, which, almost invariably, is the final outcome. Although little can be done to change the actual physical design of the building, we strongly recommend to the Prison Service that it seeks the advice of a respected acoustic management consultancy to establish what, and how, the building can be retro-fitted to achieve a much lower reflected noise level.

Anti-barricade cell doors

At the end of our reporting year, we were given to understand that the intended refurbishment of the old cell doors would be a major part of the refurbishment of the entire cell-blocks. This would include new windows and measures to improve the internal prisoner activity spaces and to deal with the problem of leaking flat roofs. We would look to a move to start this programme as soon as possible.

Doubled occupation of single cells

Nearly 35 years ago, Lord Woolf, in his report on the Strangeways Prison (Manchester) riot identified as unacceptable the practice of doubling, and even trebling, the occupation of prison cells designed for a single prisoner. Now, because of the pressure on accommodation of more prisoners than the certified normal accommodation (the number of prisoners a prison can hold without being overcrowded) allows, cells in many prisons, including HMP Wayland, are routinely holding more than one prisoner. In the old buildings, there are 31 single cells designated as doubled cells. Therefore, there are 62 prisoners, out of an uncrowded total of 445, in these old cell blocks - or 14% of the total - who are being forced to live, eat, sleep, (in bunk beds) wash, brush their teeth, urinate, defecate, read, watch

the single television (with normal inbuilt speakers and without headphones), listen to the radio, use the prisoners' officially provided phone to talk with their loved ones, and think about their future and their rehabilitation, all in the close company of a stranger, whose offence may be one of some sort of violence that although it does not trigger the cell sharing risk assessment (CSRA) threshold but whose only point of similarity may be that they are both sentenced prisoners, and do all of this in a space approximately 9 feet 6 inches by around 7 feet.

Of course, many in the non-criminal world might say that these prisoners have been found guilty of serious offences and are being punished for their crimes by imprisonment, so there should be nothing that should concern anyone else about this state of affairs.

However, the Board would point out the truism that every prisoner in Wayland will be released and that everything possible, therefore, should be done whilst they are in prison to encourage their rehabilitation, not discourage it by being forced to live in such conditions.

When the practice of doubling cells in Wayland began, the Board waited to see how the prison staff would manage the challenge. In the event, the only 'management' was, and remains, the identification of the degree of risk arising out of the CSRA process, which was brought into use after a young prisoner beat another young prisoner to death in a Young Offenders Institution in 2000.

This CSRA assessment is based exclusively on the degree of risk a prisoner represents to others in that he may kill or seriously harm any prisoner forced to share a cell with him. It is not the case that a prisoner whose offence has been violent will be prevented from sharing a cell. It is, therefore, it is the case that 'doubling up' means most prisoners are forced to share a cell with a stranger whose habits, behaviours, interests, personality, age, beliefs, offending history or propensity to smoke vapes make such crowding a permanent challenge and potential health impact.

Worse, there is even no requirement that a prisoner should be assessed for his physical capacity to climb up to the top bunk of the bunk bed arrangement, which is the only way two beds can be fitted onto a cell designed for one. The Board knows of at least one prisoner - an older, overweight man - who had a serious fall when trying to get out of the top bunk, triggering an extended period of pain and mental ill health.

In the Board's opinion, the beds are badly designed, cheaply made of inappropriate materials that are easily damaged, accidentally or deliberately. The 'safety ladder' has been designed to take up the smallest space in a crowded cell, so it is placed against the wall, forcing the occupant to climb up in the tight corner between the wall and the end of the bed, making it difficult for anyone but a slim and fit person to do this safely. The Board therefore recommends to the Prison service that it reviews the design and the construction of its doubled bunk beds.

Finally, in this litany of unacceptable outcomes for the treatment of prisoners by this crowding policy, the remaining space in the cell cannot take the nationally specified furniture deemed necessary for a single prisoner. This forces yet another interpersonal challenge over the shared space by two people, neither of whom has been assessed at any level for this treatment other than for the risk of killing each other.

Shortly after this policy began to be implemented - and when the Board had seen and heard the reactions of prisoners to the impact on them of this treatment - we made a number of suggestions to prison management about how the policy could, at least, be made more acceptable to those forced to bear its effects. The suggestions were considered, but rejected, being viewed as potentially leading to prisoners being given the ability to challenge a decision by management. We were informed that this decision was in line with the national policy that there must be such sharing, compounded by the fact that half of HMP Wayland's population was already in accommodation in the new buildings (which were designed as doubles, with each large cell having a screened toilet and shower facility) and which, therefore, reduced local management's ability to select prisoners for sharing who were not so prevented by the CSRA.

The Board, however, remains of the view that a more respectful management policy could be mandated nationally, which acknowledges the necessity of the sharing policy but which reduces the challenges on those involved. It would encourage prisoners to make the necessary adjustments to their conditions of imprisonment, setting out an agreed commitment to the social requirements of sharing such cramped accommodation, a management commitment that it will be temporary and that there will be compensations for the discomforts inevitable in such a policy. In other words, the Prison Service should accept that the centuries-old legitimisation of the concept of the consent of the governed should not necessarily, and in all circumstances, stop at the prison gate.

The Board so recommends to the Minister as responsible for the ultimate use of the State's authority against the individual, and requests that the Minister require a review of the 'doubling' policy to achieve such an outcome while not preventing the emergency use of such a doubling policy.

Clothing

As a category C prison, men are allowed to wear their own clothes. This has two major results (apart from saving the Prison Service money, as it doesn't have to provide 'uniforms'). Firstly, prisoners must spend their own money on the clothes they require (with the exception of working clothing and outdoor, wet-weather gear) once the items they arrived with become worn out or damaged. With the expense of many items, this means some prisoners have very little clothing to change into. Secondly, that for a select group - lifers and long-sentence, IPP prisoners - permission to have what are termed as 'clothing parcels' sent in creates discontent amongst those prisoners who are outside this group. The Board recommends that the prison management should consider, perhaps within the local Incentives Framework, that all prisoners who are expecting at least two further years in custody should have access to a regulated 'clothing parcel' annually. This would reduce the felt cause of unjustified discrimination between groups. We so recommend to the Governor

Food

For the first time for quite a while, we can report that the now increased food allowance appears to be sufficient for the skilled catering manager to ensure that adequate and nutritious meals are routinely possible. What is not so praiseworthy, however, is the continuing failure of the Prison Service to ensure that the physical catering resources match the demand. We have been informed that there will be a

new kitchen built as part of the extension of the prison, but that this will not be available until possibly 2027. Until then, the whole prison, almost 1,000 prisoners, will need to be catered for from the two existing small kitchens, the old build kitchen and the new build, both of which are constantly plagued by failing equipment and, in the case of the new build kitchen especially, a failing structure.

These continued failures of design and maintenance are not due to failure on local management's part, even of GFSL locally, but to the failure, over many years by the Prison Service at large, to respond adequately with the resources to address the known and repeatedly reported problems. The Board hopes that such institutional failures will not be seen post-2027, when the promised new kitchen is opened.

5.2 Segregation

Care and separation unit (segregation)

The Board acknowledges that, throughout the reporting year, the staff in the care and separation unit (CSU) have been faced with severe challenges by the behaviour of prisoners, who have required separation from the rest of the prison population. This has included long periods when some prisoners have maintained, and worsened, their behaviour, through noise, extensive damage to cells (whose fittings have been unbelievably easy to damage) and physical challenges to staff. We pay credit to the staff who, from our observations, have, on a daily basis, still maintained a high degree of professionalism in the management of their responsibilities.

However, the Board believes, from close observation of the CSU as part of our monitoring duties, that these staff, often as inexperienced as the bulk of HMP Wayland's officer staff, have not been as supported as the Board believes they should have been and should be.

The key issues, the Board believes, have been the lack of a thorough overhaul of the local policy document on the purpose and activities of the CSU, remaining just a restatement of the normal management tasks associated with a segregation facility. We had hoped that, with the new building, there would be a new approach, but this does not seem to be the case. We did note, however, that although the CSU, with twice the holding capacity of the old segregation unit, had been opened with the same number of staff, this has now been remedied with the addition of another officer. Yet this did not herald the looked-for, new approach. This is not to say that the Board does not appreciate the effort needed to manage some prisoners with very challenging behaviour, as we have recognised above, but, too often, that is the end of it; the effort is made and the prisoners calm down, but that is as far as it often goes in the Board's view.

In our view, the CSU should be the centrepiece of the prison's skill at managing very challenging prisoners, but, where experience is not available, considerable effort in training must be made, and this seems impossible to do. We therefore repeat our view that to make a thorough success of the new CSU, there must be a commitment to provide both additional staff needed for this task and, importantly, for the specialist training that such a unit requires, not merely to leave staff with encouragement from experienced staff to do their best and learn from that. As the local Governor's hands are tied in the provision of staff and, indeed, staff training, we make a recommendation to the Prison Service that the CSU staff complement, including supervisory staff, is reviewed, and that the specialist training CSU staff need is

provided from wider Prison Service training resources and not merely by online programmes.

5.3 Staff and prisoner relationships, key workers

Staff and prisoner relationships

In the Board's view, this is one of - if not *the* - most important area in how the prison sees its task and how it puts into practice the national and, thankfully, now local, rhetoric of rehabilitation. We comment on this elsewhere in this report, but at this point we must reveal, however, that the responses of prisoners to our 2024 survey of prisoner attitudes do not seem to describe the sort of dependable staff and prisoner relationships that should underpin a thorough commitment to rehabilitation.

As in previous years, we asked 11 questions focusing on the issue of how prisoners saw their relationship with staff, how effective that relationship was and how much they trusted, or did not trust, staff. The comparisons with previous years' responses are instructive.

One question we asked prisoners was if they have felt lonely in Wayland. Some readers may find this an odd question, as if prisoners in an establishment of more than 900 prisoners could possibly feel lonely. The reality, of course, is that very few prisoners know each other prior to being in prison, and the additional reality of a frequent chance of violence or predation adds to a feeling of being unable to let one's guard down. As we have noted elsewhere, one of the significant successes of the new Governor's approach has been to significantly reduce the level of violence against other prisoners and against staff to one of the lowest amongst comparable prisons in the country. So we must hope that in the six or so months since the survey, that lowering of threat will have been reflected in a lowering of fear.

Nevertheless, it is not just the feeling of being lonely that is important; it is what then happens. Unfortunately, although in 2023 the response to the question of whether prisoners had talked with staff about their feelings indicated a willingness to do so by about 50% of prisoners, in 2024 this had dropped catastrophically, to just 5%. The Board believes this is a serious call to prison management to investigate further, since the feeling of loneliness seems to be a proxy for a significant degree of detachment from the prison and what it can offer prisoners in the way of rehabilitation.

We, therefore, recommend that prison management make efforts to follow up this finding through a variety of means and devise appropriate training modules for staff to encourage sensitivity to this issue and confidence in talking with prisoners about it. The lack of experience of a large proportion of prison staff is a problem acknowledged by all, including prisoners, and it would seem to the Board that the only way to address the issue is to accept that training must try and give what experience has yet to teach.

That there is a reservoir of goodwill amongst prisoners for staff is revealed in responses to other questions in this section, which reported that around 50% of prisoners thought they could trust staff, which is a similar proportion to previous years, and that almost 60% were willing to say that staff relationships were 'good'. It is against this more positive background that we believe appropriate training for all staff, not merely the young and inexperienced, would tilt the perception of positive

staff relationships further and could unlock a greater willingness, indeed desire, amongst prisoners to fully engage in their rehabilitation instead of just tolerating their imprisonment and waiting until it is over.

Our comments above might prompt some readers to ask ‘How?’ We asked this of prisoners in a more oblique fashion, and the answer is clear and simple. We have shared all the freeform responses with prison management, but they can be summed up as:

- listen to us and do something about what we tell you;
- treat prisoners as humans, be open with communication, we’re adults;
- move away from the ‘need to punish’ mindset;
- spend more time out of the office, be better trained;
- staff-and-prisoner trust-building exercises; and just
- talking more.

We would repeat what we said above: where there is inexperience there must be training. Therefore, we so recommend to the Governor and local management, the Prison Service as facilitators, and the Minister for the direction of resources.

Key working

Although, for reasons of staff resources, the amount of key work has not yet reached its required frequency, or satisfactory delivery, the Governor and his senior staff have made strenuous efforts to restart the process and monitor its output better. The pleasing result is that this effort has been reflected in our January 2024 survey. There was, this year, a doubling of responses that said they saw their key worker ‘often’, up from 9% to 20%, and a significant reduction in those reporting that they ‘never’ saw their key worker, down from 48% in 2023 to 26% in 2024, with 55% saying they saw their key worker within at least the previous six weeks, with the bulk of these within the previous three weeks.

The Board commends the Governor and his staff for working consistently at this core task with such good results, but would look for more support from the Prison Service to provide greater staff resources for this task as we have recommended above in section 4.5.

5.4 Equality and diversity

One member of the Board has equality and diversity as a special interest and has reported that the group’s multi-disciplinary meetings are well attended and issues raised at the meetings are promptly dealt with. The Board has also had the benefit of a training talk from the neurodiversity support manager and was impressed by the staff training plan that has been devised. This was reinforced by an address from the lead of an outside neurodiverse charity, who explained how they worked with released prisoners referred to them for help.

The one particular area that does concern the Board in the general equality and neurodiverse areas, is that of the impact on prisoners who cannot read, or find great difficulty in reading. We set out our concerns in detail in section 7.1, below.

5.5 Faith and pastoral support

The chaplaincy team has demonstrated comprehensive support to those of all faiths - and none - throughout the reporting year. When Board members have been on monitoring visits, they have reported on how often they have seen chaplains around the prison, in the wings and in the CSU. All the important religious festivals have been celebrated and, with the skilled work of the catering staff, catered for, and non-faith but spiritually important occasions, such as with the dedication of the specially commissioned Armistice poppy memorial and the continuing demand for places on the Sycamore Tree restorative justice courses, have reminded prisoners that they are part of a wider world and that they are not forgotten.

5.6 Incentives schemes

During the year, the Board has had a number of applications (written representations) from prisoners in which the topic of proper application of the incentives scheme has been the focus, largely because they believed it had been used to disadvantage them. This view also was raised in many of the survey responses, as shown in the example from one respondent: *'A better understanding of the incentives scheme system as on X wing - here it's used as a stick with which to beat us with and NOT as the scheme is intended! (It's wrong).'*

In this regard, our IMB prisoner application investigations discovered that at least one major unit was working on a copy of a local incentives scheme policy that declared its conformity with the PSO 30/2013, but which PSO had been superseded by the 2019 Incentives Framework Policy, while others were perhaps not working within the spirit of the framework. We reported our concerns to senior management and as this report is in process there is now a review of local policy to bring it into line with the framework. We trust this will empower staff to take the more positive and supportive elements of the process into account more generally.

As part of this, we hope that a major concern of the Board is taken note of in that there has been no clear policy about the need for the involvement of the prisoner, his opportunity to present his case and to be present when decisions are made about him, or even to know that there had been an incentives review before he was told he had been downgraded or not advanced. All these areas are fully and clearly laid out in the framework, which is also very clearly established as a major tool to influence good behaviour rather than, as many prisoners have seen it, a way to punish prisoners by the 'back door' without the trouble of an adjudication.

Because of the importance of this policy, the Board would respectfully recommend to the Governor that the review, when completed, is itself further reviewed by senior staff who have not been part of the policy review process, charged with ensuring that the positive and prisoner-supportive elements of the framework have been given due weight and that other policies of the prison that impinge on the framework's delivery are considered to ensure that opportunities for conflict are removed, or at least reduced. It would also be good if the process were to take the requirement of the framework, in its paragraph 5.23, for a forum, involving prisoners and staff, to discuss the fairness and effectiveness of the new local policy. Such a move would clearly demonstrate the commitment of the prison to the revised policy. The Board so recommends to the Governor.

5.7 Complaints

The Board is grateful to the complaints department of the prison for another year of unstinting help and support. The team tries to make sure that Board members have the right information to assist their investigations into applications from prisoners, who may, or may not, have availed themselves of the prison's complaints process, and with what result.

In the early part of the reporting year, we have had to make the occasional referral to senior staff when we reviewed the response received by the prisoner, which did not deal with the issue appropriately. However, by the close of our reporting year, these occasions had become very infrequent, as the senior staff monitoring complaint responses had ensured the process was now much more satisfactory.

In terms of complaints made to the Board through the IMB application system, the pattern of issues experienced this year closely mirrors previous years, as illustrated by the table of applications at the end of the report and, once again, property is a major concern. Managing applications, investigations and responses is a major time constraint on the Board's ability to attend to other elements of the IMB's work. We understand that some Boards are of the view that the applications system 'gets in the way of the real work'. However, we firmly believe that the system provides a valuable insight into what concerns prisoners about their treatment and how the prison is responding to them and their needs. After all, as one IMB member put it: *'The prisoners may not be independent but they do monitor the prison, between them, 24/7/365!'*

Therefore, the Board will continue to follow the authority of rule 78 of the Prison Rules 1999 and continue to 'hear any complaint or request which a prisoner wishes to make to them' by maintaining the IMB application process.

5.8 Property

There are two major issues with prisoners' property experienced at Wayland. The first we will tackle is property on transfer.

Whilst the Board acknowledges that the PECS (prisoner escort and custody services) contractors' property limits are in line with HMPPS policy for the amount of property prisoners should have and, therefore, be moved with them on transfer, the reality is that virtually every prisoner is allowed, in almost every prison, to accumulate, in one way or another, a total property amount frequently in excess of those HMPPS limits.

This amount of property is often more than contractors' vehicles can physically accept. This results in prisoners often failing to have their property with them in full on transfer, prison staff having the additional work involved in managing the onward property moves needed, at considerable additional expense and the complaints system being strained by the need to request responses from the sending prisons when property has not been forwarded on. At the base of it all, prisoners get frustrated at their lack of property and become further disillusioned with the ability of the Prison Service to manage what seems to them to be a simple task: to have their property on transfer.

The Board remains at a loss to understand how such an important issue, which must have been known prior to the contracts being tendered, could have been gone so wrong. Although it may be beyond the Wayland IMB's remit to recommend so obvious a solution as a contract change for escort vans to tow a dedicated 'property container', such a system could be an inexpensive way to solve the expensive running sore of delayed and, sometimes, lost prisoner property, with all that means for the effort staff must continue to make to manage and chase up 'follow-on property', as we have described.

The Prisoners' Property Policy Framework itself acknowledges the importance of this problem, observing it is vitally important to a prisoner's wellbeing that he has access, without undue delay, to his property. If it fails to arrive for some considerable time, his worries could obviously impinge on his ability to cope successfully with his new situation in an unfamiliar prison.

The Board therefore recommends to the Prison Service that it considers anew how to address the property issue, by the means described above or other solutions aside from merely asking staff and contractors to do their best.

The second concern is property management within the establishment.

At the start of the reporting year, the Board was concerned about a number of occasions when cell clearances were not being carried out properly, and when cell doors were opened when they should not have been, both resulting in lost property. The Board brought its concerns to senior management and this was quickly rectified, but the problem of property being received and stored outside, sometimes for many weeks at a time, seemed more challenging. Eventually, with the judicious use of additional hours, this was solved. However, the recurring issue of weekend reception staff support grades being vitally needed elsewhere in the prison, to support visits and other requirements, has meant the management of property that does arrive with a prisoner frequently takes too long to get to him. We have been told by staff that a prisoner arriving on a Friday might not see any of his property until the Monday or, more likely, the Tuesday, if reception staff are not available as described above.

The time taken to check property is not something that can be easily reduced, we are told, which leaves only the solution, it seems, to use additional hours, if staff are available to work them. We cannot, of course, comment on such detailed operational management matters, but we would recommend to the Governor that a longer-term solution is found to ensure that the delay to prisoners being reunited with their property is as short as possible.

6. Health and wellbeing

6.1 Healthcare general

The test for prisoner access to the prison's healthcare service is that it should replicate general accessibility of the same services available to non-criminal society. Although this doctrine of 'equal eligibility' seems reasonable, the Board believes that it takes no real account of the particular needs of prisoners. An obvious example is that the concentration of people who are drug-dependent will be higher in a prison of a thousand prisoners, as is the case in Wayland, than in a comparable random sample of a thousand adult males who are not in prison. But there are many other examples of greater healthcare need: the effect of imprisonment itself on vulnerable people leads to a high number who see self-harm as a viable strategy to deal with their feeling of helplessness, and mental health challenges are greater amongst prisoners. Not merely because of their individual psychological or psychiatric history, but because their family and friendship links, the social institutions, including work, amongst others, which provides a wage by means of which a person whose vulnerabilities might be offset by the simple thought that others are depending on their wage to help their family thrive, are no longer available to them.

Where does a prison's healthcare provider stand in the face of these challenges? The Board's response is that it believes the provider is being expected to do too much on its own. Board members are often presented with complaints by prisoners that are alleged to identify healthcare failings (a significant proportion of which are claims that long-term prescriptions for certain drugs to manage their condition have been unfairly reduced or eliminated when they have come into prison) but which, on further discussion with the prisoner are frequently about his generalised feelings of psychological powerlessness as a prisoner, and healthcare becomes the focus of the reason for his anger at his failure to manage his own life.

To be fair to the staff in the healthcare, psychological services, activities, and operations, we have seen them become more aware that many behaviours are not the result of one cause and for whom the practice of multi-disciplinary team working in the face of such challenges is becoming more usual. However, this has been in response, generally, to the need to manage the more challenging prisoner rather than as the bedrock of the prison's general approach to its prisoner care. The challenge to make such an approach a normal response to the whole prisoner population is, in the Board's view, too great for the prison's resources in terms of staff, expertise and training. So, the natural tendency, for many staff as well as prisoners, is to compartmentalise issues into the broad ones of healthcare, mental or otherwise, psychological services, education or disciplinary management.

The Board would therefore make the recommendation to the Prison Service that the growing acceptance of the value of multi-disciplinary team working should be a fundamental consideration in the recalibration of the resources needed for the anticipated increased population when the additional accommodation comes on stream in the near future, and not merely a continuation of a silo approach to the numbers in this or that specialism or activity.

However, although we have asked, above, for an increasingly joined-up approach to the challenge of prisoner management, we conclude this introduction by revealing that prisoners have noticed a significant improvement in their healthcare services in

their response to our 2024 survey, when compared with that in 2023. The resulting responses to our questions concerning complaints about healthcare and satisfaction with healthcare responses to those complaints were instructive. A total of 54% of respondents had not made a complaint about healthcare but, of those who had, 63% said that they had had a satisfactory response, with only 37% reporting that their response had not been satisfactory. The 2024 result is almost a complete reversal of the 2023 result, when 70% said they had not had a satisfactory response. This significant improvement seems more than just an anomaly; it appears to represent what we know, from our general monitoring, has been a significant attempt to provide considered answers to complaints over the reporting year, which has apparently paid off.

A similar improvement was noted in the felt ease of making healthcare appointments, with, in the round, two-thirds saying that it was easy or OK in 2024, against only half saying that in 2023, while the percentage responding that it was difficult to do so in 2023 halved in 2024.

The Board believes that these solid improvements are the result of healthcare management's emphasis on delivering a healthcare service not just contractually efficient but also, and critically, in response to prisoners' needs. An example of how such an integrated approach across all its subsidiary specialisms can bring positive results in a challenging area of the prison's operations.

6.2 Physical healthcare

In our report last year, we revealed that there was a 'DNA' (did not attend) rate by prisoners of almost 10%. This has actually improved this year, with the DNA rate by prisoners dropping to 7.4%. However, the 'no access' rate, due to prison operational failure to allow prisoners to get to the healthcare unit either on time or not at all, showed very little change, at 6.4%, compared with 7% in the previous year.

In total, therefore, these failures to attend show an expensive under-productivity, amounting to 14% of the total staff cost of the healthcare contract. This is a significant waste of public funds. We obviously do not know the actual costs of the contract but if, say, the annual total staff costs were in the order of £2 million, this waste of time would amount to something in the order of one-third of a million pounds each year.

Last year, we asked the Governor to create the conditions to improve the 2023 figure for operational failings. Unfortunately, the result for this reporting year showed that this call had not been successful.

As far as the Board can determine, and by our frequent attendance at the prison demonstrating to us, the main causes of the operational 'no access' DNAs can only be due to either the possibility that the system for roll counting and reconciliation is defective, or it is a failure of staff to be able to count accurately. Of the two possibilities, the Board would prefer to believe that it is the system that is the cause, rather than a generalised dyscalculia amongst the staff. We therefore recommend to the Governor that a comprehensive review of the whole roll-count process is undertaken to establish a system that delivers a consistently accurate roll-count.

But even if the roll-count delays or failures are overcome, there remains the issue of prisoners failing to attend.

Although prisoners obviously cannot be required to accept treatment, they do enter into a form of contract with the healthcare provider when they make an appointment themselves or when they agree to a proposed appointment by healthcare staff. The Board believes that the implications of a casual acceptance of prisoners' failures to attend healthcare appointments does no one, let alone the prisoner, any favours.

We therefore suggest to the Governor that the prison examines the appropriateness of a local instruction, which addresses the issue of prisoners failures to attend by the use of Prison Rule 51, paragraph 18, as a failure to attend anywhere he is required to be, and also that such absences should form an automatic part of the review examination in a prisoner behavioural compact in the incentives scheme as a way of both encouraging a prisoner's visible commitment to his rehabilitation and increasing appointment attendance, which, of course will need to be emphasised during his induction experience.

To illustrate the points we have made above, the DNA and 'no access' details are given in the table below:

Missed appointments (excluding dental) with reasons

2023-2024 month	Total appointments booked	Did not attend (prisoner failures)	No access (prison operational failures)
June	1388	150	43
July	2139	129	78
August	2016	155	39
September	1749	112	128
October	1627	96	112
November	2268	132	122
December	2028	99	184
January	2187	138	171
February	1853	93	183
March	2032	192	206
April	1962	208	159
May	2502	260	105
Total	23751	1764	1530

Dental provision

The effect of 'operational no access' on prisoner dentistry was pointed out to a Board member on one occasion by the dental surgeon and his nurse when prisoners had not attended their appointments. On that occasion, the standard allowance of prisoners to be seen by the dental team, which is one appointment every 30 minutes, meant that, of the six prisoners to be seen in the three hour session, only four were actually seen. The member was informed that this was not unusual. The dental contractor reports that a total of 1431 appointments were booked, but there was a total of 194 failures to attend. Of these, 138 were prisoner DNAs and 56 were 'no access', that is, prison operational failures. Prisoner failures to attend were, therefore, just under 10%, with almost a further 4% due to operational failures.

Nevertheless, the problem of DNA, both voluntary and forced, is not just an inconvenience for the dental staff; it is also a significant problem for prisoners waiting

for treatment, since, as is well known, prisoners' teeth are more neglected than that of the general population and, thus, in need of more treatment, in addition to being a waste of publicly funded dental treatment resources.

Therefore, alongside the issue we have raised, above, about non-attendance due to operational failings, the incident, together with a number of IMB applications alleging significantly delayed dental care, prompted the Board to consider whether there was sufficient time in the dental contract for the likely demand from prisoners. We believe there is an insufficiency amounting to something close to 50% when measured against treatment needs in a prison of nearly a thousand prisoners with a churn rate of something in the order of an annual turnover. Our local calculations, allowing for check-ups and treatment required from those check-ups, indicates that there is a likely need for 2250 sessions, but a provision of only 1500 or so treatment sessions.

If our assessments, above, are correct, it would appear that the dental contract is significantly underfunded. We, therefore, recommend that the Prison Service carry out its own reassessment of the dental need at Wayland and establishes such contract changes thereafter are necessary.

6.3 Mental health

With what we have observed in the introduction to this section, in paragraph 6.1, above, it will be obvious that the demand on the mental health team is considerable. The Board, therefore, places on record its view that this team carries out its work with commendable energy and effectiveness. However, what we have observed in this area is that, perhaps not unexpectedly, much of the work of the team is reactive, responding to the demands on them by referrals from operational staff that they are concerned about a particular prisoner's mental health by his actions within the living unit, or perhaps by the results of a frequent recourse to illicit alcohol or narcotics. This is obviously vital work, with the team members responding to a prisoner's distress, which is being exhibited in this way, and by doing so perhaps preventing a further decline, or an even worse expression of that distress.

The Board would, therefore, wish to point out that local management practice could usefully be improved by an approach of what might be termed 'preventative mental health care' rather than reactive. Such an approach would involve a prison-wide admission that imprisonment, no matter how deserved as a punishment for a crime, brings with it reactions and behaviours that may exacerbate a prisoner's already fragile mental health. The incidents of self-harm are an obvious indicator of such feelings.

The Board, of course, has no remit to suggest how this might be achieved, but would make the recommendation that local management at least considers the issue of a preventative mental health strategy. This could involve the content and management of the Induction programme at the beginning of a prisoner's experience of Wayland. It might also include the more obvious involvement of key working sessions afterwards, thus helping prisoners anticipate their challenges, understand that these are understood by staff of all departments, not just healthcare, and are helped to access the resources available to make their own responses to their frustrations, feelings and concerns more manageable. But, once again, staff training should be at the forefront.

6.4 Social care

The Board is pleased that it has seen a greater response in the reporting year across the prison to the social care needs of prisoners whose disabilities and needs require, as in outside society, individualised responses. Nevertheless, although at the time of reporting there are no prisoners who need such social care, few prisoners come with the support equipment they require, which means a delay before an assessment of need and then its supply. There are some 25 prisoner, however, who need additional, although not 'official social care', support. It is commendable that such prisoners often have formal or informal 'buddy' support, which often means the less mobile prisoner can at least have his meals brought to him and assistance with other domestic activities.

6.5 Time out of cell, regime

As a contrast to last year, and as we hoped for in our last report, the calmer, more open regime has been continued and developed. The improvement in atmosphere, cheerfulness, cooperation between prisoners and staff, and the look and feel of the prison has also continued and developed. The disruptions to the regime, due to a lack of staff, have been markedly fewer and the greater predictability to the regime has allowed the prison visibly to relax. That predictability has meant that time out of cell has largely stabilised and delivered, according to the agreed programme, to the extent that the Governor is planning a return to scheduled evening out of cell routines for enhanced (the top level of the incentives scheme) prisoners on a limited and shared weekday evening programme. This will be a regime improvement not seen for years at HMP Wayland.

However, as we have described above, the difficulty with roll counts and checks has not gone away and late roll counts are still biting into the regime. But it is hoped that, as the operational staffing maintains its stability, so its greater experience and confidence in its ability to report accurate roll checks will improve. This would certainly improve activity management further and increase the effective time in activities for prisoners, although, despite the roll count delays, we have been informed that total reported attendances at activities has already improved, to the point where it is amongst the highest in the prison's comparator group.

6.6 Drug and alcohol rehabilitation

HMP Wayland has as much of a drug problem as virtually every other major prison in the country, with almost two-thirds of respondents in our 2024 survey saying that drugs and 'hooch' (prison-brewed alcohol) were easily available. This is despite staff in reception and in the sniffer dog team discovering significant amounts in attempts to bring drugs into the prison. This has been the case, for example, with clothing, which has been soaked in new psychoactive substances (NPS, or 'Spice') for later re-soaking and extraction of the drug, and even paper from alleged solicitors' offices has been so received. Additionally, hooch is also found on a regular basis, although less so in the latter part of the reporting year. The most reliable indicator is the 'street price' of an A4 sheet of Spice paper, which has varied from a low figure of £200 to a high of £1000 during the reporting year (according to information given to the IMB by prisoners). This indicates that the law of supply and demand is affecting drugs in Wayland, as it does everything else.

In section 4.5, we have commented on the efforts of staff to prevent the importation of drugs. But the fact is that they are still getting in and are, reportedly, available even in Wayland's 'drug-free' wing where, admitted as such by staff and confirmed by prisoners, prisoners have as easy access to drugs as anywhere else. The drug recovery unit appears to have a similar problem, with a member of staff on the unit admitting to the IMB that he thought at least 20% of prisoners were still users.

Phoenix Futures, the drug treatment and recovery provider, battles against this backdrop but, it seems to the Board, makes little more than a dent in the problem.

So neither punitive measures (which, we mentioned, in section 4.5, were not effective) nor treatment involvement seems effective. Where patients are on high opioid medication and are discovered to be under the influence (UTI), their opioid medication is reduced and even stopped, as the unknown effects of a NPS or, the latest, Chinese illicit opioid copies, might give rise to dangerous results to a prisoner's health if taken with such illicit substances. This results in complaints against the healthcare department for refusing previously prescribed powerful drugs. We understand the medical reasons for so doing, yet even this seems not to dull the appetite for such illicit substances.

The Board understands the efforts the prison and the Prison Service are making to counter the scourge of drugs within its walls. We do not discount those efforts, but we do ask whether there could not be a greater emphasis on additional strategies than ones of prohibition of the actual supply and the provision of treatment options for those caught up in its effects. We mean, by this, a strategy that counters the reasons that prisoners find drug taking either attractive, as a way of dealing with their personal pains of imprisonment, or seeks innovative approaches to creating greater resilience amongst the prisoner population and greater action against the predations of in-prison drug dealers.

One approach to this might be to use the key working strategy to include an automatic triggering of a requirement for a key work episode concentrated on the state of mind behind the use of drugs in a UTI incident as a further plank in an integrated drug reduction strategy, we so recommend to the Governor.

It may be said that this is asking for the impossible, but to allow the current situation to continue is continuing to allow the blighting of lives already ruined by drugs, and an inevitable increase of drug taking in that population who have not previously succumbed to the transitory charms of the drugs themselves. The Board does not believe that the availability of drugs in prison is inevitable, and success in strategies addressing that availability and their attractiveness will make the other efforts the prison makes in all its areas of preparing its prisoners for release and their rehabilitation vastly more effective.

An example of this approach is the innovative involvement by gym staff themselves to lead a course heavily influenced by the Greek philosophy of stoicism. A Board member has been following this development and records that the voluntary courses are well-attended and well-received and, due to demand, are almost continuously scheduled now. It is this sort of effort, which distances itself from both punitive and simply educative approaches and, instead, seeks to increase a prisoner's inner resilience, which we would encourage and were recommending in our commentary on the 2024 prisoner attitude survey.

We therefore recommend to the Governor that the prison takes the success of this course and examines how additional resilience and prevention training could be introduced as an expanded weapon in its war on the evils of drugs and the rehabilitation chances of its prisoners.

6.7 Soft skills

In our previous report, we commented on the increase in responsible positions as Shannon Trust mentors and safer custody mentors, which we welcomed. These have continued to expand in the reporting year, with the CRED team, where those on the team may experience working for a 'customer' in terms of their work and indeed overall behaviours. But these numbers are small within the total population.

The Board hopes that the building work on the extension to the prison will increase the number of prisoners trained in construction skills, as is being agreed in principle between the contractors and the Governor.

7. Progression and resettlement

7.1 Education, library

Art classes have been reintroduced and not only are they appreciated by prisoners, but they can act as a gateway to further educational achievement. By a mixture of educational stealth and design, prisoners who would reject 'education' find that, through art and music, it is not the threatening scenario they feared (perhaps through failure at school in earlier years), but an opportunity that allows them to succeed in something worthwhile, on which further education can be built. This is not to paint a picture of unalloyed success, but its contribution should be an acknowledged counterpart to the mantra that the only good education is one that is explicitly focused on only engagement with so-called 'employability qualifications'; prisoners can get to employability by more methods than the obvious. In the reporting year, a prisoner who had never been near a graphic arts computer programme until he came to HMP Wayland not only won a Koestler Award (an annual exhibition for arts in criminal justice) for his graphic art production of a booklet to help children understand what was happening to their fathers in prison, but has been accepted for further study leading to a university placement. He left a changed person from the one he was on his arrival, due to his experience of education at Wayland.

Reading education

The Board is also pleased that it can place on record that the individual case noted above is an example of the improvement in collaboration with the operational arm of the prison during the reporting year, and its significant improvement in the provision of reading education, as we describe in this section. People Plus staff are now trained in phonics to assist poor readers and there is a developing, and widely published, strategy to embed reading throughout the educational input of the prison.

At the start of the reporting period, the Shannon Trust, a charity that supports prisoners wishing to learn how to read and works with prisoners who are even below the level of reading at which the education provider is contracted to provide, was working largely alone. It then had a challenging time with its staff provision, but that was eventually solved and the new lead has now, with local operational management involvement, not only further developed its mentor system, with mentors allowed to cover the whole establishment rather than being limited to mentors located on the same wing as the prisoner who needed their help, but has a 'seat at the table' of the education contractor's efforts to improve literacy, using the different skills of both organisations. By the end of the year in review, the reading world had changed in HMP Wayland, in the Board's view and we trust that these improvements can be built on in the coming year

In detail, the new education manager, with the consistent support of the Governing Governor, has led a transformative approach to the problem of the lack of reading skills in so many of the prison's population. What we had asked for, in our last three annual reports, for better collaboration between the operational and the educational arms of the prison, has begun to be delivered. This is not just in the improved arrangements for Shannon Trust Mentor flexibility and the Governor's support for education initiatives, but in a prison-wide strategy for the embedding of reading education now, with ambitious targets to embed such education within all activities of the prison beyond just its education sections.

To emphasise just how much the Board understands, and appreciates, the changes that have been made, and are planned, we should record that at the time of our annual survey of prisoner attitudes in January 2024, although we had received statistics and assurances that the education contractor was fully compliant with the contractual requirements for measuring progress in the various levels of educational need and attainment, we had suspicions from our discussions with prisoners and their applications, that more prisoners were slipping through the reading competence net than was realised. We, therefore, included a simple pair of questions in our 2024 survey, which we had not included in previous years. These were: ‘Do you have trouble reading/writing?’ and, ‘If you said “yes”, are you being offered enough help with reading/writing?’

It is not correct to say that we were shocked by the fact that fully a third of respondents admitted they had difficulty in either reading or writing, or both, since reputable analysis, including those referenced by Parliamentary Committees, reveal that around 60% of prisoners are functionally illiterate. But we were, again, incredulous that such well-founded analyses seems to have little impact on the focused provision of educational planning in prisons. Moreover, it was also dispiriting, but not unexpected, that of those who admitted difficulty, more than half said they had not had enough help. This, we felt, had to change.

Two years ago, HMIP published a report, [*Prison education: a review of reading education in prisons*](#). After stating their bald finding (as the Wayland Board has also been noting for the last three years), ‘*Reading education is not given sufficient priority in the prison regime*’, the authors listed five telling points, with which the Board is in total agreement, of which three were focused on the Board’s similar concerns, namely:

- reading is not a distinct part of the core education offer;
- early reading provision relies heavily on voluntary organisations to deliver it; and
- assessments for identifying prisoners’ specific learning needs and gaps in reading knowledge were inappropriate.

The first two points were stunningly obvious at Wayland, and, although we may not have the educational expertise to validate the third, our survey responses nevertheless demonstrated the failure then identified. As we have described above, however, major improvements have since taken place, with all prisoners now being screened on reception to identify their needs and referred to either the Shannon Trust or the education department to meet those needs. We have confidence that in our next survey, we shall see a marked change in the responses to the two extra questions we posed this year.

The Board is, therefore, more than pleased to record its view that the practices now in place, and with a clear strategy for improvement adopted, not only fully meet its expectations that the prison as an whole must address the core educational need for such a large number of its prisoners, but would invite the Prison Service to take what is now being done in Wayland as a ‘best practice’ example of what can be done, and, where needed, seek to adjust education providers’ contractual obligations and measurements to fully support the development of ‘the Wayland Approach’ in other prisons as an essential part of its commitment to the better rehabilitation of prisoners in all prisons. We so recommend.

Library

This year, under its new management by Suffolk Libraries, the Board has seen a welcome regeneration of interest, activity and library use. The percentage of active prisoner usage has risen to just under 70%, while, at the end of the reporting year, the total library membership amongst prisoners reached 86%, footfall increased by 16%, and the percentage of active prison users was up by 26%. All are supportive of our perception of a renewed relevance of the library and its offerings beyond that of a mere bookstore. These included library reading challenges, monthly writing competitions, and the initiative, with the Shannon Trust, of a 'book hut' in the library. This offers books for the 'Share a Book' scheme, whereby books come in pairs, one for the prisoner and one sent home to the prisoner's child or children, so that parent and child can read together over the phone or during social visits.

Importantly, the library has also made a success of a renewed provision of 'Storybook Dads' which we comment on, below, in section 7.4.

7.2 Vocational training, work

Turning to practical education and work, the Board's key approach to its monitoring responsibilities in this section for the report has been to ask a fundamental question: if HMP Wayland is a training prison, what are prisoners being trained for and how?

We have been concerned - and made those concerns known to local management - that over the past few years we have seen valued training courses in motor mechanics and motor bodywork terminated, a popular welding course removed and painting and decorating courses downgraded, then terminated. Other courses started and stopped, such as the BRICS cleaning course, a workshop changed into a gym, an activity started up simply to re-cycle broken prisoner furniture into other goods without educational or vocational training input or involvement, and a popular 'Streetworks' training course removed and its large area left largely derelict.

Some low-skill workshops still exist, such as those dedicated to folding party balloons into their packets, a low-skill textile workshop and another assembling electrical connectors, albeit, we are informed by the instructors, with a very erratic supply provision. But these works are neither onerous nor even demanding: for example, the standard output per prisoner for a notional three-hour session is 100 packed balloons, yet we were informed that one prisoner, perhaps for reasons of his own, consistently produced 500 packs in that time.

If even these workshops were seen as part of a 'progression' of skill acquisition, it might be understandable, but we see no evidence of that; rather, the prison is obliged to achieve as high a percentage of 'purposeful activity hours' as possible and, indeed, the current Governor has driven that percentage up to around the highest in the country for a category C prison. The Governor and his staff deserve due praise for this, but we believe that the notion of 'purposeful activity' needs redefining in a Prison Service anxious to achieve the maximum rehabilitation value for its prisoners.

Admittedly, there is a popular forklift training course, but it is only capable of training three prisoners at a time, and a CRED activity (clean, rehabilitative, enabling and decent) group, which is a small but useful prisoner maintenance party that does at least give some practical DIY-type skills to a few prisoners that, we are told, could

lead to better employment prospects on release. However, our strong impression is that there is insufficient real vocational training activity at the core of Wayland's prisoner purposeful, practical activity programme. There are some courses, such as carpentry, plumbing, plastering and electrics, which teach a practical real skill that can be translated into at least potential entry-level employment after release. But the total of such vocational training is only a fraction of the purposeful activities recorded for the prison, excluding those in education.

The education manager has started to make some improvements to the management of vocational training through targeted skill enhancements, leading to increased employability potential for prisoners after release. We understand there are plans to involve the construction firms now gearing up for the prison's expansion programme to take on suitably qualified prisoners on release, and perhaps, ROTL (release on temporary licence) terms. But, at the end of the reporting year, these, we feel, only touch the surface of the problem that will exist for the vast majority of prisoners.

Additionally, the pressure on prisoners' time, for activities such as exercise (for which walking to work in the open air can no longer count, even on a significant walk to work and back four times a day, but which must be a scheduled separate activity), a weekly half-day closure for staff training, and a weekly half-day closure for activity staff paperwork and the distribution of prisoners' canteen purchases, coupled with the time often lost because of late roll counts on an almost daily basis, and the sheer demands of security that tools are to be returned and checked half-an-hour before the end of a working session, results in the scheduled six-hour working day ending up, we are reliably informed by instruction staff, to frequently less than five hours. With a 'real world' notional working week of just 30 hours, the 'lost' two half days and the further loss of an hour per six-hour scheduled workday this is a 'purposeful activity productivity rate' around 60% of, arguably, what should be one of the key activities of a training prison.

The Board, however, feels that even if these challenges were overcome, there would still be a need to ensure that the whole experience of work and training at Wayland is directed to rehabilitation. We would hope to see a coordinated 'rehabilitative purpose' throughout a prisoner's time at Wayland, rather than just an activity, even a high level of activity, categorised as 'purposeful'. There are opportunities lost with work activities that already exist, such as, for example, with waste management and the DHL canteen packing workshop. Both these activities could support a programmed training approach so that prisoners could leave Wayland with a recognised qualification, indeed, within waste management one of the staff is a qualified WAMITAB (Waste Management Industry Training & Advisory Board) instructor. But whether through a lack of financial support, or other reason, these qualification opportunities are not happening. If it is the cost of the qualification, could not the Prison Service negotiate a reduced fee or, perhaps, even start up its own qualification system? The Board hopes its further investigation may reveal a way forward in our next Report.

It may seem a harsh judgement, but we believe that, taking all that we have observed and learnt, HMP Wayland is failing in its task to provide the experience necessary for an adequate number prisoners with a sufficiently rigorous training or productive activity to fully justify its public description as a training prison. Perhaps this is asking for too much? However, each prisoner is serving just his one sentence

and will often be released in little more than a year or two, which is a very short time in which to prepare for his rehabilitation.

To the Board, it seems that although the physical building resources for vocational and other training work activities at Wayland are adequate for its population, perhaps even for a proportion of the predicted increased numbers in the next few years, what is needed is a comprehensive plan for activities firmly based on deliverable vocational and other training and 'return to work' experiences that address the assessed needs of each prisoner (including educational input as an integral part of all such activities). This should be resourced appropriately and measured by rehabilitative outcomes, both potential, in terms of qualifications and testable improvements in competencies, and actual, in terms of employment after release.

However, although the Prison Service should be the operational driver of those expectations and the provider of the financial and human resources required, it is the Government that must accept its responsibility for putting the finance and the authority behind those drivers, expectations and resources.

The Board therefore recommends to the Minister that he take note of, and tests, the points we have made, in concert with the situation in other category C training prisons, in a Prison Service-wide review of what is required to make a deliverable reality of the Government's, and the Prison Service's, public commitment to a properly rehabilitative Prison Service.

7.3 Offender management, progression

The Board has seen a welcome reduction in the applications it has received this year referencing complaints about their involvement with the offender management unit (OMU). When, however, we have received such, the staff of the OMU, particularly the senior probation officer, have responded promptly and knowledgeably. However, there have been three issues that have often got in the way of delivering a true offender management activity.

The first is the frequent absence of OASys reports, an integral, indeed essential, part of a prisoner's management, enabling a constructive sentence plan to be formally devised. These are meant to be raised at the receiving local prison after sentence, but pressures on those prisons mean that they are often not. This situation is not a temporary one, due to the accommodation pressures, but has been the case for years, with the Prison Service, at one point, setting up a temporary unit in London, specifically to work through outstanding OASys reports. For the reporting year, however, the completion of these reports has largely been the responsibility of the Wayland OMU, given that the much increased frequency of prisoners received from local prisons without a completed OASys has clearly impacted on their other tasks. Notwithstanding this effort, there were significant numbers of prisoners who complained that their progression needs were not being pursued because of the lack of a sentence plan, due to the continuing lack of an OASys report.

The second issue was the demand, earlier in the year, from the Prison Service, that all available places in category D open prisons had to be filled - and kept filled - thus breaking up expected plans for the completion of programmes required prior to open conditions and creating feelings of unfairness amongst other prisoners that their opportunities for open conditions had been put back. This particularly affected prisoners deemed to require courses, such as Kaizen (an accredited offender

behaviour programme for men who have been convicted of violent or sexual offences), which they had been prevented from attending earlier in their sentence due to the Prison Service's belief that the best results of such courses happened when they are delivered close to release. So, if we can be allowed this observation, once again administrative convenience has got in the way of justice, although we acknowledge that, given the need to move prisoners earlier to open conditions, there was little that the OMU could do about the consequences.

The third issue has been the emergency release of prisoners to ease overcrowding nationally, which, again, hampered the OMU's normal service. Credit must be given, however, in this instance to the OMU staff for the fact that the required work was completed on time, as was the following Government initiative for the early release of prisoners, requiring strenuous efforts to provide access to accommodation and limit the number being sent out on release with a tent.

Perhaps nothing could have been done better in these instances, but the general political failure over many years to respond adequately and in a timely fashion to a very observable increasing crisis in accommodation should surely be taken note of by the new Government when it sets out its own plan for the future management of the country's imprisoned population.

7.4 Family contact

The Board records its appreciation of the efforts that have been made by the prison, particularly the Government Facility Services Limited (GSFL) team, in refurbishing the visitors' centre, for which the Board has asked for some time. The centre is now welcoming and pleasingly decorated. However, the distance of the prison from the home areas of large numbers of its population means that some prisoners do not get social visits, while for many others without personal transport the journey is long and expensive, which inhibits opportunities to take advantage of the now-fortnightly family visits (which bring together prisoner and their families outside of their statutory entitlement to social visits, usually in more informal settings).

For those who are able to make the journey, however, the visits' hall is now a much more welcoming experience: with the roof repaired, buckets in the hall are no longer required when it rains. The 'Breck Barista', the prison's name for the visitors' cafe, with the provision of hot and cold food and drinks has been a resounding success and been much appreciated.

The library has renewed the Storybook Dads scheme. This has gathered pace in the reporting year, with an average of around ten recording sessions a month for prisoners to video their reading a story for the children in their family. This has been appreciated by prisoners as a way of keeping the family bond together in the difficult circumstances of a having a father in prison.

In the wider context, however, of family contact and a recognition that this means many prisoners are also fathers, the Board believes more could be done. We have asked, over the years, about whether it would be possible to organise parenting classes and courses for prisoners with children. So far, this has not apparently been possible. We therefore again make the recommendation to the Governor, that he review the practice of parenting classes provided in other prisons, both publicly and privately managed, to discover the most appropriate experience and provision for offering such courses at Wayland.

7.5 Resettlement planning

Over the reporting year, there has been a clear commitment from the senior team at Wayland to implement the initiatives brought by HM Prison and Probation Service (HMMPS) to improve resettlement support for prisoners to reduce reoffending. The difficulty is how to record, monitor and evaluate the progress being made in achieving this. However, the appointment last year of a primary employment lead and a head of learning skills and work, led by a Governor grade, are indicative of movement towards a strategic plan that aims to coordinate all aspects of resettlement, but this has yet to be fully implemented. Consequently, the Board can identify only some general aspects of the progress being made.

A significant problem for pre-release is the remote geographical location of Wayland in relation to many prisoners' homes. For example, of 38 stated home areas in one sample, 19 (66%) were released to London and another five to the wider southeast/London region; only 4 (10%) were released to the east region while 11 released across the Midlands and the North.

However, one area of significant progress over the reporting year has been the establishment of regular and better attended discharge boards. Although the data shared with the Board do show quite positive attendance for the PEL, ID and banking, and the information, advice and guidance (IAG) service, the OMU and probation staff attendances were significantly lower than expected, due, we were informed, to time and staff pressures. Prisoner attendance was 66% after transfers were considered. A stated aim in future is to increase the invitations to employers – something that is beginning to happen and we look forward to seeing

Prisoners getting ID and banking accounts arranged during the reporting period showed: 123 bank accounts were set up; 283 IDs organised up; and eight driving licences arranged. The range of employment activities, including visits and employment events were: 29 in the seven-month period, June to December 2023: 38 in the five-month period, January to May 2024. This represents a notable increase during the latter part of the reporting period.

Some examples of the activities, visits and events were:

- Mock interviews and career advice with Wates, Galliford Try, Balfour Beatty and Fortel, CCDO, ISC, Iceland
- Plastering apprentice competition
- Work promotions with Chevron
- City College Norwich re-training and apprenticeship opportunities
- MENTA self-employment
- CITB visit
- Job Club events
- Anglia demolition training: four sessions funded by the Department for Work and Pensions and delivered by National Demolition Training Group in collaboration with the Number 8 Agency

These activities were a notable increase on the situation in previous years and the Board has high hopes that this foundation will continue to be built on in the future, especially as there is now, as mentioned, a Pre-release Employment Lead in place.

In conclusion to this section, despite the continued difficulty of accessing information on released prisoners in order to judge the effectiveness of Wayland's interventions and support, the Governor does have a clear strategic plan and this is being implemented with some notable successes. The Board, therefore, looks forward to further improvements in the coming year.

8. The work of the IMB

Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	15
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	8
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	6
Total number of visits to the establishment	325

Applications to the IMB

Code	Subject	Previous reporting year	Current reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	10	11
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives schemes, sanctions	19	21
C	Equality	8	10
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, time out of cell	9	11
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection, restrictions	14	38
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	18	15
F	Food and kitchens	3	5
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	35	39
H1	Property within the establishment	56	34
H2	Property during transfer or in another facility	61	60
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogues	3	4
I	Sentence management, including HDC (home detention curfew), ROTL (release on temporary licence), parole, release dates, re-categorisation	27	82
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	11	42
K	Transfers	21	7
L	Miscellaneous	0	0
	Total number of applications	295	379

The Board observes the astonishing lock-step of many of this year's application topics with that of the previous year and would only comment that the significant increase in themes in the sentence management category, etc. reflects the interest raised in this area by the various changes in sentence expectation and, hence, progression, in the past year and, internally, the prisoners expecting more of their relationships with staff in the more open regime experienced in comparison with former years.

Annex A

Service providers

- Healthcare:
 - Practice Plus Group
 - Forward Trust
 - NHS England
 - Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust
 - CDS (Community Dental Services) Education: People Plus
- Prisoner canteen: DHL Ltd
- Facilities Maintenance: Gov Facility Services Limited (GSFL)
- Prisoner visits: Ormiston Prisoners' Family Services

Annex B

Local Wayland IMB survey

For the last five years, the Wayland IMB has asked a random sample of 10% of the Wayland population to complete a survey under the general title of 'prisoner attitudes'. The 2019 survey comprised 60 questions, which we reduced to 47 in the 2024 survey. But we kept many, although not all, questions deliberately identical in order to track changes over the years in a number of areas the Board considered most important. We have referenced our commentary on the latest survey in appropriate sections of this report, including our appreciation of the new Governor, who has taken the Board's recommendations in its survey commentary and required his staff to respond to these in the same way as they are doing to the latest HMIP report.

The survey's questions and the Board's commentary on the responses, are available separately on the IMB website, rather than in this annex, due to their considerable combined length.



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