



# Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Ranby

**For reporting year  
1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026**

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# Contents

<b>Introductory sections 1 – 3</b>		<b>Page</b>
1.	Statutory role of the IMB	3
2.	Description of the establishment	4
3.	Key points	5
 <b>Evidence sections 4 – 7</b>		
4.	Safety	10
5.	Fair and humane treatment	12
6.	Health and wellbeing	16
7.	Progression and resettlement	18
 <b>The work of the IMB</b>		
	Board statistics	20
	Applications to the IMB	21

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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 Ranby is situated in north Nottinghamshire, midway between the towns of Worksop and Retford. Ranby is a category C male training prison (which holds those whose escape risk is considered low, but who cannot be trusted in open conditions).

Since opening as a prison in 1972, Ranby has had its accommodation capacity regularly and significantly increased due to demand, including, most recently, in 2024, when further accommodation was built.

The certified normal accommodation, or CNA (the number of prisoners a prison can hold without being overcrowded), at HMP Ranby, as at the end of March 2026, was 835<sup>1</sup> and its operational capacity, or OC (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), was 1123.

The residential accommodation consists of eight house blocks. Located in the house blocks are the departments for the induction of new prisoners, resettlement, skills for life and safer custody. One house block has prisoners on an integrated drug treatment strategy (IDTS).

HMP Ranby has no hospital but has 24-hour healthcare cover on site. The single-story healthcare building accommodates other functioning departments such as the drug and alcohol recovery team (DART), IDTS, and the mandatory drug testing (MDT) team.

The care and separation unit (CSU), where prisoners are segregated, is in one of the older buildings in the establishment and comprises 16 single cells. Attached to the unit is a small, paved area that is used as an exercise yard and is contained by a high wall.

Education is allocated in two buildings, one of which holds the library and one the chaplaincy team. For prisoners in the CSU, there is in-cell learning and teachers visit them, as necessary.

The workshops in Ranby, which are run both by the prison and the education department, include: textiles; painting and decorating; woodwork; wood assembly; plastics; industrial cleaning; officers' mess; data input; laundry; powder coating; engineering; barbers; waste management; gardens; and building trades.

Physical exercise takes place in two buildings and the sports field. In one of the buildings, prisoners are instructed mainly on weights, and it is also where prisoners with physical disabilities are treated. Fitness equipment has been installed outside each house block.

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

### **3. Key points**

#### **3.1 Main findings**

##### **Safety**

- There were five deaths in custody in the reporting year. The prison regularly reviews all its action plans concerning the safety of prisoners and has assurance mechanisms in place to provide supporting evidence for these reviews.
- We believe from observation and reading the daily reports that violence has increased within the prison, much of this resulting from the significant amounts of illicit drugs and contraband coming into the prison. However, the prison reports that they believe the figures are very similar from last year.
- Drones are still being used to drop illicit items into the grounds and are a high risk to the establishment. Illegal packages thrown over the fence continue to be a problem from time to time. Dog handlers complete active dog sweeps/searches each morning.
- The ingress of illicit drugs into the prison has a profoundly negative effect on the prison. This is despite the best efforts of the managers and staff. Prisoners reporting to the IMB and HM Inspectors state that they don't feel safe in the prison.
- The Board believes the prison is less safe compared to the previous reporting year. We note during the reporting year that prisoners are increasingly seeking ways to be sent to the care and separation unit (CASU), where men are segregated, to escape conflict, debt or the threat of violence.
- This is evidenced by our assessment of segregation paperwork and applications, (prisoners' written representations to the Board), as well as our monitoring of segregation reviews, safer custody meetings and serious incidents (predominantly incidents at height).
- The care and separation unit has managed some very challenging prisoners during the reporting year, particularly regarding men with mental health issues. The long wait for prisoners to be transferred to more appropriate conditions has been a problem.
- The Board would like to commend the staff for their professionalism and care in very challenging situations.

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

- The Board has observed that, in the main, prisoners are treated fairly and humanely by staff at HMP Ranby and relationships between staff and prisoners continue to be good in most cases.
- As reported last year, parts of the shower and toilet blocks in some areas are starting to look tired and shabby and need refurbishment.
- Bedbugs continued to be an ongoing problem during the reporting year. However, towards the end of the reporting year the prison has mostly eradicated the problem. Staff have been trained to help to deal with this as much they can, but it is not an easy situation. The Board will continue to monitor this situation.
- There continues to be problems relating to the transfer of prisoners' property, both whilst moving between prisons and moving between house blocks and wings. This has caused frustration and anxiety among prisoners, leading to violence occurring from time to time.
- The practice of doubling up prison cells designed for one continues, with no sign of this outdated practice coming to an end.

- The Board is concerned about the number of men being held in segregated conditions in the CSU (care and separation unit) when clearly due to mental health issues they should not be held there at all. The shortage of National Health Service (NHS) beds in secure units does not help with this situation.
- In addition, we are also concerned that the CSU is perceived as a place of sanctuary by prisoners, who break prison rules in order to be taken there to escape debt, threat or drugs, or simply to take themselves out of the general prisoner population.
- Whilst the prison advises us that they are fully staffed in most areas, there are significant shortfalls, with only around 70% of the required numbers available to the prison. The shortfall is subsequently made up by staff working overtime, which many staff seem willing to do.
- The number of staff who are both young and new to the prison service is high. The consequence of this is a lack of in-depth knowledge when dealing with prisoner complaints and a lack of confidence to challenge unacceptable behaviours or wrongdoing.

### **Health and wellbeing**

- The Board is concerned about the lack of options of senior management when choosing the most appropriate location for a prisoner whilst awaiting assessment for transfer under the Mental Health Act. This is the process of evaluating whether a prisoner requires transfer to a specialist mental health facility or if their needs can be met at the prison.
- The Board wishes to commend the Care after Combat initiative, which supports former military veterans and their families in the justice system. For a number of years, the prison has successfully run a substance free living environment on house block 4. We are told by prisoners that they enjoy living on this houseblock. Very few problems are reported to the Board.

### **Progression and resettlement**

- HMP Ranby is designated as a category C training prison for men, yet official figures obtained by the Board reveal that it is closer to a 35% training and a 65% resettlement establishment. Despite making representations to the Minister about this in our previous annual reports, the situation remains largely unchanged.
- As reported last year, the Board believes too few courses are being offered in both education and work which provide meaningful training and progression. Prisoners say the courses are good but that they would like the opportunity to progress to more advanced options to better prepare for release.
- In addition, there is evidence to link the lack of meaningful activity to the increase in use of illicit substances due to boredom.
- During the reporting year, a new full-time working regime has been instigated at HMP Ranby in which prisoners do not return to their houseblocks at lunch times, and their working day mimics the working day outside of the prison. A canteen facility has been provided to enable prisoners to have a lunch on site before returning to work.
- The Board has received positive feedback so far that prisoners are enjoying the experience and opportunities.
- In previous reports we have reported the Board is concerned at the impact of prisoner population pressures to prepare prisoners for release. The situation has not improved during the current reporting period.

- Ranby is still receiving large numbers of prisoners who have a very short time left to serve. This does not enable them to do any courses that are designed to enable their rehabilitation in the workplace or education. The Board does not believe the situation is likely to change any time soon.

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

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

- During the reporting year, the Board has been very aware, as have members of the public, that prisons are in dire straits regarding overcrowding. To this end, work has started on the infrastructure to enable two new house blocks to be built at HMP Ranby. The Board has since been advised that the build has been rescheduled but is on track to open in April 2027. Could the Minister tell us why, when the prisons are in serious need of extra accommodation, the building of much needed house blocks is being rescheduled, especially as much of the infrastructure is in place?
- We advised the Minister in our report last year that prisoners have been constantly located in the CSU due to their complex and challenging behaviour and mental health issues. Why has the situation remained unchanged since our last report?
- Unavailability of courses can sometimes mean prisoners are unable to meet their sentence plan. How will the Minister address this problem?

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

- The prison continues to be seriously overcrowded. We ask once again what steps will the Prison Service take to effectively manage the operational capacity of the prison?
- The churn of prisoners with a short time to serve on their sentences continues to be a problem for Ranby as a training prison with a rehabilitative ethos. This situation continues to cause issues with resettlement and progression. We ask again what will the Prison Service do to address this problem?
- Once again, we note that the proportion of inexperienced staff has continued to rise. How does the Prison Service plan to improve the training of inexperienced staff?
- The level of illegal substances in the prison has remained high. What measures will the Prison Service take to tackle this situation?
- As highlighted in last year's report, the problem with prisoners' canteen continues. Although the prison has worked with suppliers to try to address the issue, there have still been too many instances reported to the Board regarding canteen items not being delivered in accordance with what has been ordered. The delays in refunds being issued have an adverse effect on the attitude and morale of the prisoners. It is apparent that the delay in many instances is unwarranted and is still a cause for concern, which can only be rectified by much better contract management at a higher level, in the Board's view. How will the Prison Service improve the situation?
- One of the biggest issues raised by prisoners is the loss of property. Belongings often seem to go missing during transfers from other establishments, resulting in a long wait for prisoners to be reunited with their property or, in some cases, the property is never ever located. Prisoners become unhappy and frustrated with the system. When property is finally deemed as lost, it would appear prisoners have difficulty in claiming compensation. How does the Prison Service plan to resolve this problem?

**TO THE GOVERNOR**

- During the reporting year the attendance of prisoners going to work has increased from an average of 60% in 2024/2025 to 70% in 2025/2026. Although attendance at purposeful activity has increased by 10% (to 70%) in this reporting year, the Board still has concerns that 30% of prisoners are not attending.
- The Board has been aware that there have problems regarding role reconciliation (ensuring that all individuals are consistently accounted for). This would indicate that the reconciliation process is still not robust enough. Could the Governor explain how the prison management is intending to rectify the situation?
- During the reporting year, prisoners have informed the Board that complaint forms, IMB complaint forms and Independent Prison Complaint Investigation (IPCI) ombudsman forms have not been available on the house blocks. We have brought this matter up with the wing Governors on several occasions and also with the Governor at our Board meetings, but little appears to have been done to rectify the problem. We would expect the IPCI forms to be readily available in their own area and not in the IMB boxes. Could the Governor explain what will be done to rectify the situation?

**3.3 Response to the last report**

Issue raised	Progress
<b>To the Minister</b>	
<p>Concern raised regarding cell sharing, which has not been alleviated during the reporting year. This has led to the build-up of tension within the establishment, which has led to difficulties in the management of house blocks for prison officers.</p> <p>We commented on the fact that Ranby is designated as a training prison in our last report. There continues to be a problem, as many of the prisoners at Ranby are not only resettlement prisoners but are on short sentences. The target figure, according to the Minister, was a mix of 35% training and 65% resettlement.</p>	<p>No appreciable difference. Cell sharing continues to be a big problem in the prison. The prison is still overcrowded and two people sharing cells designed for one person is common.</p> <p>This situation does not appear to have improved during the reporting year and is not helped by the number of prisoners coming into Ranby on short-term sentences.</p>
<b>To the Prison Service</b>	
<p>The prison continues to be overcrowded.</p>	<p>This situation has not improved.</p>

<p>The churn of prisoners on short-term prison sentences causes problems with resettlement and progression. Ranby is not a designated resettlement prison.</p>	<p>This situation continues and has been raised in our previous reports to the Minister. We have noted little or no improvement.</p>
<p>The level of illegal substances coming into the prison remains high.</p>	<p>We are reporting a similar situation this year, as we did last year.</p>
<p>Problems with prisoners' canteen (a facility where prisoners can buy snacks, toiletries and other items with their own money) and delays in refunds.</p>	<p>The prison is working hard with the canteen supplier to rectify this situation.</p>
<p>Loss of property during transfers from other establishments and, to a lesser extent, transfers within the prison.</p>	<p>This situation remains the same, although we appear to have received fewer complaints regarding loss during internal transfers.</p>

## Evidence sections 4 – 7

### 4. Safety

#### 4.1 Reception and induction

From the Board's observations, the arrival of prisoners at reception was carried out efficiently and with care during the reporting year. All the relevant checks and processes were in place to enable prisoners to be passed through the system quickly and efficiently.

All prisoners arriving at Ranby go through an induction process. Some issues are still arising with property being lost between prison transfers, as well as during cell clearances once in the prison.

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

There were five deaths in custody during the reporting year.

Incidents of self-harm from 1 April 2025 to February 2026 were as follows:

Apr 24	May 25	June 25	July 25	Aug 25	Sept 25	Oct 25	Nov 25	Dec 25	Jan 26	Feb 26	Total
48	47	47	57	72	47	44	55	26	40	39	522

Assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) plans (used to support prisoners at risk of self-harm and suicide) opened from 1 April 2025 to February 2026, as follows:

Apr 25	May 25	June 25	July 25	Aug 25	Sept 25	Oct 25	Nov 25	Dec 25	Jan 26	Feb 26	Total
30	20	20	34	23	21	17	19	13	21	15	233

Board members routinely check ACCT documents when visiting house blocks or in the CSU.

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

The Board reports that, despite the best efforts of managers and staff, illicit drugs in the prison have undermined safety and efforts to reduce reoffending.

Prisoners are increasingly seeking ways to be sent to CSU (care and separation unit) to escape conflict, debt and the threat of violence, much of which is linked to illicit drugs and other items. Also, the use of illicit non-specific substances potentially endangers prisoners' general health and well-being. We have observed examples of individuals having to be taken to hospital in an emergency ambulance whilst under the influence of illicit drugs.

Prisoner assaults on staff from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026:

Apr 25	May 25	Jun 25	Jul 25	Aug 25	Sep 25	Oct 25	Nov 25	Dec 25	Jan 26	Feb 26	Mar 26	Total
10	8	9	8	4	12	12	14	8	8	7		100

Prisoner-on-prisoner assaults from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2025:

Apr 25	May 25	Jun 25	Jul 25	Aug 25	Sep 25	Oct 25	Nov 25	Dec 25	Jan 26	Feb 26	Mar 26	Total
25	24	21	30	31	31	22	22	16	27	16		268

The Board would like to thank the safer custody team for their help and co-operation during the reporting year.

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

Statistics on the use of force include percentages of the different minority ethnic and religious groups, and any anomalies are investigated. Monthly and quarterly senior management team (SMT) meetings discuss all incidents of force and those of self-harm. A member of the Board observes these meetings when they are able. The Board also receive the minutes of the meetings.

#### **4.5 Preventing illicit items**

Anyone coming into the prison, including staff, are rigorously searched and their property scanned to discourage illicit items being smuggled into the establishment. The Board believes that this has been an active deterrent, which has resulted in significant finds during the reporting year. However, illicit items, including drugs, coming into the prison continue to be a problem.

One route of illicit drugs coming into the prison is via drones and the prison has reported a significant number of sightings during the reporting year.

The prison's capability to detect drones is severely limited and this is not something that can be overcome by existing prison resources.

A number of improvements to windows to prevent drones being collected have been implemented this year but due to financial constraints not all windows are able to be modified at this point in time.

Intelligence-led searches of prisoners and cells are carried out frequently and have been found to be very successful during the reporting year. However, they are often limited due to staff redeployment.

Whilst the priority is to reduce demand, efforts are constantly being made to reduce supply. All mail is scanned (as drugs can be impregnated in paper), and sniffer dogs are used.

As reported last year, during this reporting year, there have been illicit substances finds, purporting to come through lawyers. Prisoners report to the Board that some Rule 39 mail (confidential legal correspondence) has been opened by prison staff before it reaches the prisoner, even though this is not allowed. We are aware of the need for this, due to intelligence received, prisoners find this frustrating. The Board has found that many prisoners do not understand the difference between Rule 39 mail and ordinary mail.

From the Board's observations, the senior management team and staff have worked tirelessly to deal with the often-daily complex issues they are facing.

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

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

As reported in our last report, furniture and fittings in some of the house blocks are looking run-down and in need of refurbishment but are fit for purpose. Little appears to have been done to address this situation, mainly due to financial constraints.

From the Board's observations, the wing cleaners do a good job of keeping their designated areas clean and tidy.

The exterior areas around the larger house blocks are often strewn with debris and rubbish, which prisoners throw out of their windows. This encourages rats and vermin to flourish and leaves the area looking very scruffy and untidy.

As reported last year, bedbugs continue to be an ongoing problem. Cells are taken out of use to deal with the situation as it arises. It has become an even bigger problem this year, due to the acute shortage of cells which, in turn, affects the number of prisoners the establishment can take.

Fire safety checks and drills are carried out regularly. This procedure is part of the staff induction courses.

The Board rarely receives any complaints from prisoners about the food.

### **5.2 Segregation**

The segregation unit, or care and separation unit (CSU), has a total capacity for 15 prisoners, with one constant-watch cell.

The Board continues to observe generally very good staff and prisoner relationships. It has been another challenging year for staff, due to prisoners being housed in the unit whilst awaiting transfer to mental health facilities. We believe this process is still taking far too long to facilitate, which puts a lot of strain on staff.

The CSU is regularly visited by staff from the healthcare and mental health units, as well as by the chaplaincy team, the IMB and the duty Governor.

The number of prisoners in segregation has fluctuated throughout the reporting year and has, at times, been as low as three or four, whilst being at full capacity during other periods.

Prisoners are housed in the CSU for a variety of reasons, including security, their own interest and cellular confinement, as well as for 'bed blocking' (refusing to share a cell).

The Board would like to acknowledge the professional and caring approach witnessed by staff towards prisoners in some very challenging situations.

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

As reported last year, staff and prisoner relationships remain generally good. Prisoners were observed by the Board to be treated with courtesy and respect most of the time.

However, there continues to be a turnover of staff, with many young officers having served less than three years. Despite comprehensive training, these officers lack the necessary skills to deal with older or vulnerable prisoners.

This situation has continued into the reporting period and has been exacerbated by officers joining the Prison Service, undergoing training then, on taking up their full-time job in the prison, finding that the role is not for them for a variety of reasons.

The Board believes that many younger officers being recruited do not possess the skills necessary to deal with vulnerable prisoners or those with challenging behaviour. Prisoners have repeatedly reported to the Board that these young members of staff do not have the empathy or experience when dealing with men who come to them with problems.

As reported last year, the situation with key workers being pulled from their designated key worker duties has continued into this reporting year. The key workers report to the Board that this situation affects their ability to allocate time to their key worker duties. We are advised that this situation arises because of staff shortages and many staff from various departments in the prison report to us that a number of issues that generate complaints could be resolved through discussions with a key worker, hence reducing workloads.

From our observations, in the main, aside from the issues mentioned, most prison officers have good working relationships with prisoners. Their concerns appear to be listened to and acted on in a timely manner.

#### 5.4 Equality and diversity

Equality and diversity sections are overseen by a full-time diversity manager and support staff. There were 65 discrimination incident reporting forms (DIRFs) completed by prisoners and staff during the reporting year.

Month	No. of DIRFs raised	Religion/ belief	Disability	Sexual orientation	Race
April 2025	7	4	-	-	3
May 2025	4	2	-	-	2
June 2025	6	3	2	-	1
July 2025	4	3	-	-	-
August 2025	4	1	1	-	2
September 2025	1	-	-	-	1
October 2025	0	-	-	-	-
November 2025	4	1	1	-	2
December 2025	5	4	0	0	1
January 2026	0	-	-	-	-
February 2026	7	-	2	-	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17</b>

Although DIRFs were raised and considered for application, not all were deemed to be actual DIRFs, and the prisoners were then advised to explore alternative avenues to address their issues.

## **5.5 Faith and pastoral support**

The chaplaincy team at HMP Ranby is staffed by members from a variety of faiths, including Church of England, Roman Catholic, Free Church, Islam, Sikhism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Jehovah's Witness, Paganism, Rastafarian and Quaker.

In the view of the Board, the chaplaincy is well run and caring. The prisoners report that there is a good atmosphere. A variety of regular services and festivals, as well as faith courses and studies, are run.

The problems reported last year regarding unlocking prisoners in time to attend services has continued to be patchy. Although the Governor has adjusted attendance times to try to alleviate the problem, there has been little improvement, and we will continue to observe the situation.

Members of the IMB are welcomed by the chaplaincy team, and both staff and prisoners in the department are happy to talk to the IMB.

## **5.6 Incentives schemes**

We have received very little information about this area during the reporting year but will continue to monitor the situation.

## **5.7 Complaints**

The situation regarding the complaints department appears to have hugely improved during the reporting year. The Board has received few complaints from prisoners that they have not received replies to their complaints to the prison in a timely manner.

The department is always busy. As well as dealing with complaints, the clerk also doubles up as clerk to the IMB. The Board wishes to commend the two members of staff for their courtesy, professional and cheerful assistance when IMB approach them with queries. No matter how busy they are with other work, they always make time to deal with our requests.

### **Number of complaints received from April 2025 to March 2026**

	Processed
April	171
May	177
June	193
July	219
August	164
September	185
October	205
November	194
December	155

January	172
February	180
March	166
<b>Totals</b>	<b>924</b>

Please note some complaints forms are sent back to prisoners for a variety of reasons, i.e. not following protocol, incomplete, etc; however, all complaints are read, dealt with and sent back to the prisoner with an explanation.

### **5.8 Property**

Very little has changed regarding property during the reporting year. The Board continues to receive numerous informal complaints and applications. The management of prisoners' property during transfer has been reported by the Board as being unsatisfactory over recent years. The trend has continued.

Property is not being tracked efficiently on prison transfers which, in turn, is still leading to instances of items being lost. This issue continues to cause distress and frustration to many prisoners transferring into the prison which, in turn, gives rise to anger and frustration to those affected. In several instances, this has led to breaches of discipline, which staff on the wings must then deal with.

## **6. Health and wellbeing**

### **6.1 Healthcare general**

Due to patient confidentiality, Board members are very limited as to the enquiries they can pursue.

As stated in our report last year, we have found that it is often difficult to engage with healthcare staff, even when prisoners have given us written permission to pursue complaints on their behalf. Unfortunately, this difficulty has continued during this reporting year.

The IMB is often made to feel unwelcome by some staff, which makes it challenging for us to support prisoners who have asked us to pursue queries on their behalf.

Although healthcare has been taken over by a new provider, the situation stated above unfortunately remains the same.

### **6.2 Physical healthcare**

On arrival at the prison, all prisoners are seen by the healthcare team at the point of reception and are subject to a full and comprehensive screening, which should identify any needs. This includes physical, mental and substance misuse treatment needs. Any relevant referrals are actioned at this point. Prisoners' health records are received via email and medications are received at the time of prisoner transfer.

In addition to a GP service, the healthcare centre also provides dentistry, optometry, podiatry, physiotherapy and pharmacy services. Waiting times are monitored to ensure compliance with key performance indicators and all prescriptions are ordered via an external pharmacy, which include those that are both urgent and routine.

The healthcare centre provides fully functional clinic rooms that offer privacy and dignity for all consultations. It has been reported to us that staffing levels continue to be a problem due, in part, to the length of time taken for an applicant to be security vetted.

### **6.3 Mental health**

The role of the mental health matron is part of the integrated healthcare team. They are supported by an experienced mental healthcare team, which should provide care for relevant individuals within a reasonable timeframe.

The mental health team also provides input at ACCT reviews and segregation reviews.

As reported last year, unfortunately, there appear to be very long waiting times, more than 28 days, for the transfer of prisoners to appropriate mental health facilities. During the reporting year, 12 prisoners were sectioned under the Mental Health Act.

We are advised that delays are dependent on the area that the prisoner has been referred to. Out-of-area referrals tend to be difficult, as there isn't a central referral process, with each area having a different one. It has been found that Nottinghamshire referrals are quicker, as they go directly to the IMPACT (Improved Pathways and Community Teams) team. Delays also occur if there are no beds, as pressure on beds in mental health hospitals is increasing. A long-established initiative that continues is the Care after Combat section, which supports ex-military veterans and their families in the justice system. Men are invited to a quiet environment, separate to their custodial residential setting. A member of the Board has observed the meeting and found it to be most interesting and helpful to HMP Ranby's veterans. Many veterans face significant

problems when reintegrating into civilian life, especially if they become involved with the justice system. The transition can be incredibly difficult, leading to mental health problems, lack of support and social isolation. HMP Ranby works with Care after Combat charity staff and volunteers to try to address these issues through personalised mentorship and comprehensive support services.

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

The policy for each prisoner is that they attend the gym for a 1.25-hour session three times a week. There is a rota for each house block, which is available for prisoners to read on their in-cell laptop.

There are two gyms: gym 1 has six members of staff, which includes two members seconded from other establishments. Recruitment for more gym instructors is in progress, but we are informed that this process is likely to be lengthy.

Gym 2 is now sometimes used for remedial sessions, but these are only generally available for one session per prisoner, per week.

Feedback from prisoners regarding the gym is positive and there is always a big demand for sessions.

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

The Board is pleased to report that work on the house block dedicated to drug and alcohol rehabilitation appears to be continuing to go well. Prisoners are very keen to be transferred to this house block whenever a place becomes available. From the Board's observations throughout the reporting year, the staff working on this house block are dedicated and professional. Prisoners appear to have an excellent relationship with them. Prisoners report that staff communicate well with them, treat them with respect and that they enjoy living there.

During the reporting year, there were reports of the brewing of illicit alcohol in the prison, which occurs from time to time.

## 7. Progression and resettlement

### 7.1 Education, library

All prisoners attend an induction, which is undertaken in the education unit within the first two weeks of arriving at HMP Ranby. The inductions are carried out over two sessions. The first session is to complete any relevant screening of maths, English, learning difficulties or disabilities (LDD) and reading. The second is for them to learn about the offer of education and work in the prison and to complete a pathway and a personal learning plan (PLP) with the information, advice and guidance (IAG) service. During this session they go to the library for their library induction.

Prisoners are taught in either classroom or workshop settings, or one-to-one in outreach. Support is offered to neurodivergent learners. The prison's outreach team supports learners who are not comfortable in the classroom to help them transition.

We are advised by prison management that a number of courses previously offered have had to be cut this year due to the support staff being massively cut.

Staff have been very uncertain regarding their jobs, and a number of redundancies have taken place in this department which has impacted on the number of courses being offered.

The following courses are provided by the education unit:

- Functional skills, maths: Entry level 1 – Level 2
- Functional skills, English: Entry Level 2
- Essential digital skills: Entry 1 – Entry 3
- Business: Entry 2 – Level 2
- Painting and decorating: Level 1 – Level 3
- Plumbing: Level 1 – Level 2
- Multi-skills: Level 1
- Joinery: Level 1
- Cookery: Entry 3
- Drugs, alcohol, conflict (OMU) Referral course: Level 1
- Digital graphics: Level 2
- Monitoring: Level 3
- Safeguarding: Level 2
- Variety of LDD units delivered in mentoring course: Level 2
- Barbering: Level 2 – Level 3
- Outreach: Maths and English
- Bricklaying: To start soon

The library service is run by Suffolk Libraries, which is subcontracted by People Plus. The library is well used and is popular with prisoners. There is a good quantity of books of all genres, which appear to be in good condition. The librarians appear to be knowledgeable and interact well with prisoners. Very few complaints have been received by IMB regarding this service.

## **7.2 Vocational training, work**

A large section of the prison is designated for the workshops. New jobs are being created to enable more prisoners to work full-time. Prisoners inform us that they would prefer to be working full-time from a social point of view and, also, they can earn more by working in full-time employment.

As the months have gone by, the prisoners working in this area tell us that they enjoy the new set up.

Towards the end of the reporting period, the Board has observed a reluctance in several prisoners to attend work. Attendance at this time has been much lower than expected.

It is still not clear how the prison is going to develop its role as a training prison when many of the prisoners have short-term sentences, so do not have sufficient time to complete any courses.

## **7.3 Offender management, progression**

The offender management unit (OMU) always seems to be under pressure and are extremely busy, caused in part due to a change in the recall policy. As always there is a constant churn of prisoners, many on short term sentences.

The Board are informed that the OMU receives a comparatively small number of complaints from prisoners and we are assured that they are dealt with in a timely manner.

During the reporting year the Board have not received many informal complaints from prisoners or applications regarding the OMU department.

## **7.4 Family contact**

The Board receives very few complaints or comments regarding family social visits.

## **7.5 Resettlement planning**

As a result of the decision to release prisoners early, due to lack of places in the prison estate, the resettlement department has been constantly busy and has worked very hard to facilitate the early release scheme.

Little has changed since our last report regarding providing accommodation to prisoners leaving the prison. There are just not enough places for people who require them. The early release scheme has exacerbated this situation.

Resettlement staff raise a referral form, which is a risk assessment, with all the prisoner's history. Once again, it has been noted that prisoners tend to blame the resettlement team for not being able to provide accommodation for them in the areas they would prefer to live on release.

The resettlement staff inform us that landlords can be much more selective when choosing tenants for their accommodation, as housing is very scarce. The local council (in theory) should be able to assist with emergency accommodation, but in practice this rarely appears to happen.

## 8. The work of the IMB

### Board statistics

The Board has had a very difficult year with regard to our monitoring duties. We are operating with less than a quarter of the compliment of Board members. One very experienced member left under tenure (15-year rule).

We understand other prisons are having similar difficulties and we are concerned that the 15-year tenure rule is being so rigidly adhered to, especially when many Boards are struggling to recruit members.

To carry out our duties, we have had to focus on areas that require attention. Despite this, we have managed to maintain regular weekly visits to the prison, covering important areas like the care and separation unit, where prisoners are segregated, segregation reviews and prisoner applications. We have observed other routine prison meetings when a member is available.

The Board continues to be concerned that very sick prisoners with mental health issues are spending many months in the segregation unit because there are no beds available to them in National Health facilities.

It has been very difficult to produce both the annual report and the quarterly reports required of us, with so few members able to contribute. As a result, we would not have chosen to do these as a priority. We feel that our time could be better spent elsewhere.

Recommended complement of Board members	16
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	5
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	3
Total number of visits to the establishment	209

## Applications to the IMB

Code	Subject	Previous reporting year	Current reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	14	14
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives schemes, sanctions	4	5
C	Equality	3	3
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, time out of cell	13	12
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection, restrictions	8	6
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	12	8
F	Food and kitchens	0	0
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	46	41
H1	Property within the establishment	16	16
H2	Property during transfer or in another facility	39	33
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogues	12	13
I	Sentence management, including HDC (home detention curfew), ROTL (release on temporary licence), parole, release dates, recategorisation	30	24
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	54	24
K	Transfers	9	7
L	Miscellaneous	0	0
	<b>Total number of applications</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>227</b>



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