



Annual Report
of the
Independent Monitoring Board
at

HMP Nottingham

for reporting Year
2016-17

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Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody

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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 or centre is situated.

The Board is specifically charged to:

- (1) 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.
- (2) inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom he has delegated authority as it judges appropriate, any concern it has.
- (3) **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.

Main judgements

Are prisoners treated fairly?

- The Board is concerned about vulnerable prisoners in the induction wing whose regime is unfairly restricted and more widely about the limited out-of-cell opportunities for prisoners at HMP Nottingham.
- Lack of access to stored property is unfair.
- Prisoner perceptions of lack of fairness were partially addressed by the introduction of the restricted regime in October which made daily life more predictable but the many restrictions this placed on prisoners was itself concerning.

Are prisoners treated humanely?

- A busy local prison is not a humane location for those with severe mental health issues.
- The Board remains concerned about the pressures on Reception and the inherent risks to prisoners when vulnerable upon first entry to prison.
- Shortages of various commodities during the year, and especially clean clothing, cannot be said to be decent. The Board is pleased that the problems eased towards the end of the reporting period.

Are prisoners prepared well for their release?

- Prisoners who have limited opportunity for work or education are not being positively prepared for release. However, many embryonic initiatives are ready to expand once the prison staffing issues are addressed.

Main Areas for Development

TO THE MINISTER

The Board wishes to raise the severe impact of staff shortages on the experiences of prisoners. Whilst current plans seem to address this issue for HMP Nottingham, the Minister might consider ensuring that in future strategic plans for the prison service, risks to staffing levels are addressed.

The Board wishes to raise the difficulties which are encountered in transferring prisoners with severe mental health issues to an environment where they can be effectively treated. The Board would like to see greater availability of more suitable locations for these prisoners.

TO THE PRISON SERVICE

Whilst the Board recognises the pressures on capacity within the service, will the Prison Service review the procedures for dispersing prisoners following loss of prison capacity so that pressures on Reception facilities are effectively managed?

TO THE GOVERNOR

Will the Governor review the arrangements for prisoners accessing property so that long waits caused by staff shortages can be avoided?

Will the Governor, together with Healthcare, review the arrangements for prisoners to attend hospital for non-emergency diagnostic tests?

Improvements

The Board is pleased to note that the Discrimination Incident Reporting Form process, which had been largely out of use during the previous year has been operational during this year. This has meant that it has been possible for the prison to compile statistics on incidents of discrimination.

Towards the end of the year, as new staff were recruited it became evident that there were more officers on wings. However, this had not impacted on the restricted regime at the end of the reporting period.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

The Operational Capacity of HMP Nottingham is 1060 prisoners. The Certified Normal Accommodation (CNA) is 723. The number of prisoners fluctuates on a daily basis due to cells being out of action due to damage, the number of high risk prisoners who cannot share a double cell, and the number of prisoners in Segregation or in hospital.

HMP Nottingham is designated as a Category B adult male and YOI establishment, serving primarily the counties of Nottingham and Derby and those cities. Around 20% of prisoners are on remand and overall more than half of prisoners are Category C. A small amount of capacity is reserved for post sentence detainees awaiting resolution of their status and who are unsuitable for an Immigration Detention Centre.

Accommodation is arranged on seven Wings, all of modern design. Most accommodation is in shared cells. One wing is designated as non-smoking (the prison is due to go entirely smoke-free later in 2017), one is for vulnerable prisoners (VPs) and a third for First Night with VP overspill. Prisoners with drug dependency issues are concentrated on a further wing. Remand prisoners continue to be co-located with sentenced prisoners.

The Segregation Unit has capacity for 12 prisoners, including one special cell.

There is a separate block for education which, along with classrooms, provides capacity for two workshops and the library; there are seven additional workshops, a large sports hall and gym and a fitness suite. Separately located workshop and education facilities are provided for VPs.

The following services to the establishment are provided by third parties under contract arrangements: Resettlement (Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire and Rutland Community Rehabilitation Company), Healthcare (Nottinghamshire Healthcare), Visitor Centre (PACT) and Maintenance (Amey). Offender Management also works with a large number of partner agencies in its efforts to provide resettlement opportunities for prisoners.

B Evidence sections 4 – 12

4 STAFFING ISSUES

The overwhelming majority of the issues which we report below emanated from the fact that the prison had insufficient staff during most of the reporting period.

At the beginning of the reporting period, the regime designed under the process known as Benchmarking had recently been reintroduced. It quickly became apparent that the prison could not sustain the regime because there were insufficient staff. This was caused by resignations, slow recruitment processes and sickness absence. Later in the year, the situation was further exacerbated when eight staff were suspended pending a police investigation.

As a result, there were daily, often unpredictable, cancellations of regime activity and prisoners seemed to lose the habit of attending work and education, meaning that there were further issues about attendance and the challenges which that creates in terms of applying sanctions fairly. Staff were struggling to fulfill the tasks allocated to them and prisoners requests therefore went unmet. The prison tried very hard throughout the period to maintain stability and occasions of indiscipline were quickly and effectively brought under control. However, with prisoners spending time on the wing, frustration, bullying, violence and use of New Psychoactive Substance (NPS) illegal drugs became increasingly evident.

It is important to understand the impact of incidents that arise amongst the prisoner population on the overall establishment. For instance, if a prisoner takes NPS and has a serious reaction, an ambulance has to be called and two officers need to accompany the prisoner to hospital. Those officers have to be taken from their designated duties, which will then not be done. If they were on prisoner-facing duties then prisoners are likely to be locked up, lose regime or access to facilities. If they were performing administrative tasks, those tasks will fall behind leading to more delays for prisoners. Similarly, if prisoners refuse to go to their cells in a demonstration of indiscipline, all the other prisoners in the immediate area will then be locked up. This may then mean that they miss access to showers or to phone calls. In short, anything which leads to disruption to the planned regime quickly leads to the cancellation of some activity for prisoners.

In October, after consultation with prisoners, some major restrictions were introduced to the regime which involved the closure of workshops, education and the library and a restricted but more consistent gym programme. Details of the specific effects of this change are set out in the sections below. Overall, this more restricted regime enabled the prison to provide a more consistent regime and this improved the general atmosphere in the establishment. However, throughout the latter part of the reporting period, violence between prisoners and against staff remained a persistent problem, as did the use of drugs.

At the end of the reporting period a noticeable number of newly-trained staff started to be introduced to their new duties and this began to make an impact. In addition to recovering the staff roll, the Board is aware that the prison is planning for two significant changes: 52 new officers over and above the benchmark, who will be focused on prisoner interaction, and major investment in in-cell technology. The Board welcomes both of these planned developments which are intended to give prisoners far more opportunity to communicate directly with service providers, to access information and to make controlled phone calls at a much reduced cost. We recognise the investments represented by these two initiatives and hope that the expected improvements materialise.

5 SAFETY

5.1 Reception

The Board has reported several times previously on the effects of the churn of prisoners through Reception at HMP Nottingham (21300 during the reporting period, of whom about a third are new intake to HMP Nottingham) and expressed concern about the increased risk to prisoners when staff are rushed. This situation continues to cause concern. On one Wednesday in January there were 97 movements through Reception, which is higher than usual. A bus from Birmingham courts arrived at 7.35pm, after the scheduled latest arrival time, and this added to an already busy evening. It was after midnight before all the prisoners were processed through Reception and Healthcare and located in cells. During the night one of the prisoners who had arrived on the Birmingham bus seriously self-harmed and was admitted to hospital as an emergency. He died later in the month. The Board was told some time ago that the Benchmark staff for Reception would be raised because the flow of prisoners had increased by about 30% since the original calculations, but the resources for this were never allocated.

5.2 Self-Harm and ACCTs

The Board remains very concerned at the level of self-harm in the prison. The prison recorded 605 acts of self-harm during the reporting period, with peak incidences in April, May, September, January and February. Although prisoners have access to the Samaritans phone and to trained Listeners within the prison, not all prisoners are likely to ask for help and we are sometimes told that no Listener was available. It is hoped that in-cell technology, which is due to be introduced during the next reporting year, will provide better opportunities for prisoners to maintain contact with family and will reduce the frustrations which sometimes lead to self-harm. However, it should be recognised that many prisoners suffer from Mental Health and drug-related conditions which will continue to make them vulnerable.

During the reporting period 1069 ACCTs (a monitoring procedure for those identified as at risk of self-harm) were opened; each remains open according to the assessment of risk by the manager for the ACCT and other professionals, in consultation with the prisoner. On average there are 20 to 30 ACCTs open at any one time. Reviews are held by supervising SOs and there have been improvements over time in the way they are managed. However, ACCT procedures have been mentioned in 2 recent Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) Reports following Deaths in Custody, so the prison's continued focus on this process is both essential and welcome.

5.3 Violence

Acts of violence continue to be a very significant problem at HMP Nottingham. During the reporting period there were 199 assaults on staff, 457 recorded assaults by prisoners on other prisoners (with a noticeable increase during the summer months of 2016 when the impact of staff shortage was at its worst) and 82 fires. Every incident has consequences for victims, for perpetrators and for the wider population when the regime is disrupted.

5.4 Death in Custody

The Board is sad to record the deaths in custody of 5 men during the reporting period. In two instances the death came after a period of hospital care following self-harm. In each case the Board was properly informed and attended at an appropriate time. All such deaths are reported to the police and to the PPO. In due course a PPO Report is issued. The IMB has nothing to add to those reports.

5.5 Drugs

Illegal drugs continue to infiltrate the prison by a variety of means, all of them contrary to prison law. They are a source of bullying and debt, of acute health issues and longer term

health damage and disruption to the prisoner regime. The Board acknowledges the efforts of both the prison and the police in their attempts to curb the problem.

6 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS

6.1 General

The ethnic mix of the population at HMP Nottingham varies on a daily basis because of the high churn of prisoners. At any given time the population is around 78% White, 9% Black, 6% Asian and 6% of mixed ethnicity.

The Board receives relatively few applications from prisoners relating to unfair treatment due to their ethnicity and the Board monitors to ensure that the prison investigates such claims. As noted in section 2 above, the Board is pleased that the DIRF process has been fully operational again during the reporting period. However, there is anecdotal evidence from prisoners that the system is not well-used by prisoners due to concerns that complaints will not be dealt with fairly.

The prison's well-intentioned efforts to engage with prisoners on equalities matters have again fallen short of aspirations, in part due to the lack of staff. Equality Action Team meetings with prisoner and management representation were held in the early part of the reporting year but have not taken place since June 2016. Similarly, focus groups on protected characteristics with prisoner representation, which the Board welcomes, have been sporadic. The Board recognises the desire of staff to engage in this way and would like to see these initiatives further developed in the coming year. Each wing has an Equalities Rep, but due to the high churn rate of the prison, they are not often in place for long.

The Board recognises the good work of the Chaplaincy in providing a range of services to prisoners.

The Board receives applications from Foreign Nationals detained beyond the end of their sentence, and it seems that they are not always fully aware of the status as a detainee and of the reasons for their continued detention beyond the end of their sentence. The prison does make efforts to provide information to prisoners in multiple languages.

6.2 Disability

The number of prisoners with a disability is significant and the Board is aware from contact with prisoners that provision of activities, particularly for wheelchair users, is not always adequate. This may sometimes be as simple as providing suitable tables for these prisoners to engage in games. Sometimes difficulties have been encountered in getting such prisoners to Healthcare and this can result in non-attendance being logged as a refusal.

Integration issues, particularly amongst the population of older prisoners, have been reported by prisoners and the Board would welcome efforts by the prison to improve this.

7 SEGREGATION/CARE AND SEPARATION UNIT

Throughout the reporting year the Segregation Unit was generally at or close to capacity, although the available capacity was often reduced by cell damage. The Unit is small for the capacity of the Prison and sometimes prisoners have to be moved off the unit to accommodate more troublesome individuals. Sometimes the demand for Segregation cells simply cannot be met and individuals who would otherwise be placed in Segregation are returned to their cells on the wing. Management propose that some prisoners should be assessed before going into the Unit, the assessment process taking place in specially designed accommodation on one of the wings. A business case for this scheme has been submitted and the outcome is awaited. The Board believes that if properly resourced and organised the scheme would be beneficial.

Staff dealt with prisoners who suffer from severe mental health problems which often manifest themselves in challenging behaviour including self harm, dirty protest, violence, extensive damage and verbal abuse. There were 10 dirty protests during the reporting year; we are satisfied that they were handled as best they could be in extremely difficult circumstances, with Health and Safety considerations and security prioritised. As in previous years, the Board wishes to commend the efforts of the Segregation Unit staff who carry out their duties to a high standard in these difficult circumstances. The Board repeats our previous observations that the prison is not a suitable environment for those individuals whose mental health difficulties make them especially vulnerable.

The Board is pleased that the practice of prisoners leaving Rampton for the prison estate automatically moving to HMP Nottingham has now been modified. However, prisoners do still come from this hospital environment and have often had to be housed in Segregation because of the risks involved in putting them on normal location. Scheduled transfers to specialist institutions following medical assessment are subject to the same pressures on resources as for the rest of the community and it is concerning that prisoners often wait quite long periods for transfer to a more appropriate environment.

During the reporting period, the Governor responsible for the Unit has conducted reviews personally whenever practicable and this has restored a level of consistency. Healthcare staff have properly attended reviews, as have Chaplaincy staff. Education and Psychology input is beneficial but irregular, as staff are not always available. More input from them would be welcomed by the Board. Discussions at Review Boards are properly focussed on the relevant issues and most prisoners attend, subject to security considerations, and the overwhelming majority of prisoners express their views.

On the rare occasions when the special cell has been used the Board has been properly informed and the time in use kept to a minimum.

8 ACCOMMODATION (including communication)

8.1 Restricted unlock

Under the restricted regime introduced in October 2016, all landings have been unlocked for domestic activity in either the morning or afternoon but those not allocated a regime activity have then been locked in their cell for the rest of the day. This has made for a very crowded and restricted existence which cannot be said to have contributed to rehabilitation, notwithstanding the efforts of library and education staff to provide in-cell activities (see Section 10 below). At weekends the effects are exacerbated by the service of the evening meal at cell doors rather than from the serveries.

Throughout the year, wing staff were visibly rushing and constantly complained that they struggled to complete all allocated tasks. This in turn restricted their availability to engage with prisoners which meant that often quite basic requests for information were not met. This was compounded by staff shortages elsewhere which caused other departments to take action to restrict abstractions. On one occasion early in the reporting period we observed an agitated prisoner trying to get a member of staff to make an enquiry on his behalf and struggling to understand that the staff were no longer allowed to ring the appropriate section. On enquiry we confirmed that an instruction had indeed been issued that the section concerned should not be rung, but emailed instead, to enable it to deal with its own backlog. It is not fair if prisoners cannot engage the staff to help them, as their opportunities for self-help are restricted.

8.2 Provision of kit and equipment

In the early part of the reporting year there were serious difficulties in providing sufficient clean clothing for all prisoners on a weekly basis, so some men went without changes for two or more weeks. Naturally, prisoners hoarded clothing and washed it themselves in their cells which merely exacerbated the problem. This is not decent. We are very pleased that the considerable financial investment in more clothing, together with improvements in the management process of dealing with clothing exchange, has resulted in very marked improvements in this situation. In recent months, complaints from prisoners in this area have diminished significantly. Similarly, shortages of televisions and kettles in particular, have been brought under much better control.

8.3 Access to reception for stored property

Access to stored property is typically scheduled for weekend afternoons and prisoners are put on a list for escort to Reception for this purpose. Prisoners frequently complained about the failure of this system, often for weeks in succession. It was especially noticeable over the Christmas and New Year period as each festival fell on a Sunday. In one instance we were contacted by a remand prisoner's partner to appraise us that he had not been able to access his clothes and was still wearing the same clothes after 3 weeks because no alternative in the form of prison clothing had been made available. The situation became critical when he was due in court and still did not have his clothes; on this occasion the Governor intervened. We are advised by the prison that because of staffing challenges at weekends the escort to Reception is frequently unavailable. This is plainly neither fair nor decent for the individuals disadvantaged, although we recognise that the withdrawal of the officer from this role prevents even worse problems for larger numbers of prisoners.

8.4 Remand prisoners

The average remand population at HMP Nottingham is around 200 men or 20% of the total. This population is distributed throughout the prison. There is no separation by cell, landing or wing, which is in contravention of the UN Mandela Rules and is a matter we have raised many times before. However, prisoners do not raise this as an issue with us.

8.5 Vulnerable Prisoners

There are 140 places for vulnerable prisoners (VPs) on the wing dedicated to vulnerable prisoners; G Wing. These are mostly prisoners whose offences, or the charges they face, relate to sexual matters; the prison has been successful in separating men who have debt problems from this very different vulnerable population. A few are there for their own safety. Regrettably, the places on G Wing were insufficient for the total demand and at any time up to about 40 vulnerable prisoners were located on the designated First Night wing. When we monitored in February we established that not a single one of those VPs located on the First Night wing had been allocated either a work or an education place. Their time out of cell is constrained by the need to manage the wing in such a way that they are kept safe, as the accommodation allocated to them cannot be physically separated. Special arrangements are made to escort them to exercise. Whilst we commend the efforts of the staff to treat these prisoners fairly and with dignity, the situation undermines their efforts. The Board was pleased to learn that there are plans during the year 2017/18 to designate a further wing for VPs, which will address many of these issues.

9 HEALTHCARE (including mental health and social care)

9.1 Healthcare

The Board has been aware of difficulties in recruiting Healthcare staff and there have been occasions when a shortage has caused delays to the delivery of services to prisoners. At the end of the reporting period, staffing was good, although retention continues to be an issue. The problems around prison service staffing impact on healthcare provision, particularly long term programmes for health related to fitness and the gym (shortage of escorts). Shortage of prison escorts also sometimes prevents transport to hospital for diagnostic tests and as such means that prisoners cannot get the same access they might have in the community. In one instance just before Christmas a prisoner waited more than a week for x-ray of damage to his hand.

A significant proportion of IMB applications every month are about healthcare issues; appointment times, administration of drugs and/or specific healthcare issues. Many prisoners still remain unaware of the health service complaints system, PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service) and as a consequence continue to use the IMB application forms for making a complaint of a health care nature, or even to complain about a PALS complaint. This causes delays in directly addressing individual health issues and does escalate instances of bad feeling between prisoners and healthcare professionals.

Did Not Attend (DNA) levels continue to remain unacceptably high at 33.4% to year end, although this reflects a whole range of issues from prisoner disinterest through to a shortage of escorts. The current regime and the staffing inputs are helping to address both 'in prison' and 'external' DNA levels, which show an improving trend (down to 21.5% in February 2017) but this is still too high. Action has been taken to avoid appointments clashing with prisoners' visits or activity time but prisoners have complained that appointment slips have not been received, cell doors were not unlocked for them to attend an appointment, they were out on the Wing or they were not collected from their activity. As a result of these high levels of DNAs, appointment waiting times can still be long across many of the clinics but are particularly problematic in Dentistry. A podiatry service is available but the waiting list remains long and priority is given to those prisoners with medical conditions which require foot care as part of ongoing care e.g. diabetics. Whilst the percentage has varied over time, DNA rates have been a source of concern over many years and, in the interests of effective use of a scarce resource, need to be addressed as a priority once the prison is again running a normal regime.

Two GPs provide 17 hours' cover each per week, but there is no cover for holidays, which has an impact on GP waiting lists. There is an out of hours service for prisoners, but it is only telephone advice and its usefulness seems limited and sometimes prisoners were transferred out to hospital because there was no other option.

Medicines are administered three times a day from Wing treatment rooms, and night medicines are administered separately at around 8pm. There continue to be some issues surrounding these administration times, although the new regime has addressed this concern particularly in the afternoon sessions. On occasions, prisoners have complained to us about medications not being administered at the prescribed frequency and investigation has proved their complaint to be correct. The newly proposed introduction of a Naloxone Programme for prisoners with a significant opiate drug use needs to be monitored to ensure prisoner access to this programme is consistent.

The issue of prisoner admissions over a weekend without the provision of medication or prescriptions, resulting in the interruption of essential drug therapy for up to four days, is particularly concerning especially for those with mental illnesses.

On arrival at HMP Nottingham, all new prisoners receive an initial health screening interview in Reception by a nurse, though difficulties can occur in achieving this when there are late arrivals at the prison. A secondary health assessment is still offered and can be arranged within the next few days. Mental health assessment of prisoners is completed within 24 hours and those requiring triage are seen within five days. Whilst this may be a reasonable timeframe in the context of running a service, prisoners do not always understand the apparent delay, especially if prescribed medication has been taken from them upon reception and they cannot then secure replacement drugs. This is, again, an issue which has repeatedly occurred over many years and needs to be addressed.

The Enhanced Care Assessment (ECA) cells have been closed so the prison now has no facility between the prisoner coping in their own cell and admission to hospital; there is need for a replacement to ECA to be installed. A proposal put forward for a 'Day Care Centre' (not an in-patient unit) to be established as part of the new Healthcare contract has not made the hoped for development; this is disappointing as it could have a very positive impact on prisoner wellbeing.

9.2 Mental Health

Increasing numbers of prisoners in HMP Nottingham have varying mental health issues from minor to very severe and an integrated primary and secondary mental health team is responsible for their mental health care. The numbers of prisoners now suffering from dementia is also becoming a major issue and provision is being reviewed.

HMP Nottingham continues to be one of the local prisons to which prisoners from Rampton secure hospital are transferred (although Nottingham is no longer the default prison). This is not the right place for these prisoners, particularly those who have to remain in the Segregation Unit because it is too dangerous to put them on normal location. This can have a major detrimental effect on the prison as a whole and other prisoners and staff because of the behaviour of these prisoners. This issue has been escalated to NHS England for further consideration but it continues to be a major issue of concern.

The secondary mental health in-reach team is working at maximum levels of prisoner caseloads. This could cause issues for prisoners and members of the in-reach team if the level of interventions required increases further.

Access to a range of psychological support services has improved across the year but demand has also continued to increase. The Board has heard of problems in individual cases but generally these services are available to those who are prescribed them. As a remand prison, many prisoners come and go frequently and there are real concerns over transfers in and out, as the 'Pathway' (owned by NHS England) has not seen any major progress over the last year.

10 EDUCATION AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

Education services were provided by Milton Keynes College under the OLASS 4 contract. Delivering education to short stay prisoners of whom approximately 50% did not complete their schooling is challenging under any circumstances, but when a restricted regime is in place, this is even more so.

At the end of October 2016 the education centre was closed and after that education was available in three small classrooms within the three remaining workshop classrooms and through distance learning packages delivered to cells. These three classrooms offered basic English, basic Maths and ESOL to a small number of prisoners. The scope of in cell provision is limited; it is workbook-based with written feedback only and award of a certificate if successful. There is no associated tuition or classroom activity available for the general population of prisoners.

This has a huge impact, with prisoners reporting that provision is no longer meeting their needs and staff reporting that, whilst they understand the need for the restricted regime to improve staff and prisoner safety, they are "simply making the best of a difficult situation". The IMB receive very few applications regarding education and learning opportunities (17 in the reporting period) and when normal arrangements are in place, retention rates on courses are high.

Vulnerable prisoners located on the dedicated wing were able to access English, maths, art and IT education in classrooms despite the restricted regime, resulting in inequitable provision across the prison population, as these prisoners had better provision than the general population, although not all VPs benefitted (see section 8.5 above)

New prisoners learning needs were assessed whilst on the Induction Wing, usually the day after their induction. However, if they are quickly relocated then this may not happen, and although the prison had been making good progress in ensuring that sentence planning and learning needs assessments influenced the opportunities on offer, this was restricted by the regime changes.

Until the restrictions to the regime were introduced, there were sufficient education opportunities available for the number of prisoners. Attendance had been improving and there has been an increase in the number of qualifications being successfully completed. The number of prisoners applying for distance learning courses has increased with 30 new learners in 2016 and another 10 in the first 3 months of 2017 and the number of prisoners successfully applying to do Open University courses has increased to 41 (12 in the prior reporting period). A number of prisoners have made successful applications for art materials to be available in cell.

Prior to October 2016 there were frequent unscheduled closures of the gym, and the IMB has received many applications (formal and informal) on this subject. Since October 2016 a limited but much more reliable gym programme has been in place and the number of complaints has reduced. However, a continuing concern was the impact of restricted access to the gym on prisoners being "prescribed" gym activity as part of their rehabilitation/treatment. Gym and healthcare staff do provide such prisoners with in cell exercise routines but the motivation to complete these, ultimate compliance and therefore necessary health benefits are left unassessed/unrealised.

Whilst the regime in the latter part of the reporting period has prevented prisoners from visiting the library, the library staff have continued to provide a library service to prisoners, with regular library staff and book trolley visits to wings, installation and stocking of

additional bookcases on wings, circulation of booklists and a highly responsive requests service for both books and information. Prisoners report positively about this service. A recent prisoner comment to an IMB member was that the library staff were being “absolutely brilliant, given the circumstances”. This is evidenced by more books being borrowed now than ever before. The library supplies activity packs to prisoners, supports wing “signposters” in providing a link between prisoners and library staff and publishes a regular newsletter to keep prisoners informed about how library services can be accessed.

11 WORK, VOCATIONAL TRAINING and EMPLOYMENT

Overall, in contrast with the previous report, we have to report that the prison now offers an inadequate number of opportunities for employment. As a result of the restricted regime, three of the main workshops and the industrial cleaning workshop were closed during latter part of the reporting period. However, the work opportunities that are available are now rarely cancelled and attendance rates to the limited provision have improved. Some full-time activities continue to be available in the kitchen, waste management, serveries and cleaning but overall there is high unemployment with only 528 formal spaces, mostly part time, for a prison population of up to 1060. There are other out of cell activities available in chaplaincy, gym and attendance at support sessions such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous and Anger Management but these in no way compensate for the lack of formal work opportunities.

The Board was especially disappointed at the closure of the bicycle refurbishment workshop, which was transferred to HMP Sudbury. This workshop was popular and led to a number of prisoners securing employment with the participating cycle schemes on release. There were indications at the end of the reporting period that this workshop would be reinstated over the spring, and indeed after the end of the reporting period, by May it had been recommissioned.

A rule, whereby any prisoner failing to attend purposeful activity on three consecutive occasions without good reason is suspended from that activity and has to re-apply and be re-assessed, was brought in as planned in the latter part of year and has had a positive effect on attendance. Prisoners also report that they are making the best of what opportunities are available within the restricted regime and do not want to lose out on what opportunities there are to be out of their cells.

Individual Learning Plan awards and an Employee of the Month scheme continue, with a certificate and financial awards given in recognition of this achievement. Bonuses are also awarded to prisoners moving up from entry level to level 1 and from level 1 to level 2 qualifications. Board member conversations with prisoners have shown that these schemes are popular with prisoners and encourage ongoing attendance and improvement, though these conversations are tempered by the overall lack of opportunity because of the restricted regime.

First Aid at Work courses continued in the gym and WAMITAB waste management training/qualification remained available, delivered on the wings, which ensure prisoners completing this can be released straight into Waste Management employment. The contract with a local gaming company continues, as does the work with Boots to offer warehousing training, leading to interview and possible employment with them on release. A programme of inspirational speakers, Next Steps and Kick Off in Business courses are also available. Advanced Personal Management is delivering courses and 12 prisoners have completed a level 1 award in employability and development via this route, also providing them with educational credits via the Open College Network.

The prison is still trying to align the activities which are available to local employment opportunities and is planning and developing new ways to prepare prisoners for employment on release. We welcome the plans that the prison is putting in place and hope that they will improve the employability of prisoners on their release.

12 RESETTLEMENT PREPARATION

It is now about two years since the inception of the Community Rehabilitation Company and the post-sentence supervision regime. It is impossible for us, or perhaps anyone else, to discern whether post-sentence supervision is successful in individual cases. Once a person has left custody they have no further contact with IMB.

Much of the preparation for release in a Cat B local prison focuses on housing. At the present time, significant numbers of prisoners are being released annually from HMP Nottingham with nowhere to live, either because they were homeless prior to imprisonment or because they have lost their accommodation whilst in prison. Realistically, the prospects for an individual to lead a settled and stable life outside custody are significantly diminished when they have no permanent home. Across the year on average, more than 14% of prisoners are released without a place to live.

Resettlement is also contingent upon having the opportunity to work. Some 14.4% of prisoners released identify as having work to go to. The restriction of work experience during the year has inevitably reduced the chances for some prisoners to improve their prospects of work and we have to conclude that this does not constitute fair treatment when compared to other establishments. However, the prison has continued with new initiatives, albeit on a fairly small scale at this stage. The creation of a candidate pool of "job ready" prisoners is a welcome development. Prisoners due for release in a three month forward looking period have been completing employment referral forms and are being given access to working with employment advisers who assess their "job readiness". Those entering the candidate pool can then meet with prospective employers and be interviewed, leading to employment immediately on release. We very much welcome this initiative and hope it will be expanded in the coming year.

C Section – Work of Board

BOARD STATISTICS	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	20
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	10
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	10
Total number of visits to the Establishment	430
Total number of segregation review sessions attended	123

D Section - Applications

Code	Subject	Current reporting year	Previous reporting year
A	Accommodation including laundry, clothing, ablutions	17	36
B	Discipline including adjudications, IEP, sanctions	5	17
C	Equality	11	14
D	Purposeful Activity including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	15	37
E 1	Letters, visits, phones, public protection restrictions	42	37
E 2	Finance including pay, private monies, spends	15	24
F	Food and kitchens	7	12
G	Health including physical, mental, social care	70	88
H 1	Property within this establishment	46	50
H 2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	56	44
H 3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	18	21
I	Sentence management including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-categorisation	71	48
J	Staff/prisoner concerns including bullying	44	68
K	Transfers	36	29
	Total number of IMB applications	520	541