



HMP & YOI NEW HALL

INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD

ANNUAL REPORT

1ST MARCH 2010 – 28TH FEBRUARY 2011

The Prisons Act 1952 and the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 require every prison and immigration removal centre (IRC) to be monitored by an Independent Board (IMB) appointed by the *Home Secretary 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 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 responsibility for appointments now rests with the Secretary of State for Justice

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Brief history

3.1 HMP/YOI New Hall is located in a rural setting on the A637 close to the M1 and M62 motorways, between Wakefield and Huddersfield. New Hall was originally a Military Camp but was acquired by the Prison Commissioners in 1933 to become the first open prison in England, operating as a satellite of HMP Wakefield. In 1987 it was converted to its present role as a secure local prison for females and this year celebrates its twenty-fourth year in its present role.

Resident mix

3.2 The prison holds a challenging mix of adult residents and young people less than 18 years old, sentenced and unsentenced, as well as accommodation for nine mothers and ten babies. Additionally, up to a total of forty life-sentenced residents and those serving IPP sentences are held as well as a small number of foreign nationals.

Residential units

3.3 There are three main residential units, Oak, Willow and Poplar with most of the accommodation as single rooms. Willow House also houses the Listeners' suite and Apple Tree House, a dedicated first night centre. Larch House has semi-open conditions and holds low risk mainly enhanced residents.

3.4 There is also a mother and baby unit (Maple House), a Care and Assessment unit (Holly House) and a Care and Separation unit (Sycamore House).

3.5 Rivendell is the dedicated young peoples' unit housing those up to age 18 which was opened in December 2005. It has three spurs having a maximum capacity of twenty eight. However the recent efficiency savings and loss of the YJB budget means that in 2011/12 it is likely that only one spur will be open to house nine young people.

Population

3.6 The certified normal accommodation at the end of the reporting period was 392 with the operational capacity being 446. The average daily unlock figure was 351.

3.7 New Hall's catchment area for all classes of adult residents and for unsentenced young people covers Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire. For sentenced young people, this area is extended to include all courts in a geographical line from mid-Lincolnshire across to South Wales and taking in all the North of England.

4.1 The Board's last report covered March 2009 to February 2010. It was published in May 2010 and received a response from the Minister in August 2010. Three main issues were raised with the Minister, not for the first time, residents with mental health issues, transportation of young people and the reduction of the prison budget.

4.2 The Board thanks the Minister for his reply. It is pleased to note his remarks concerning the reduction in the number of residents with mental health problems having to wait over 12 weeks for transfers to outside hospitals. This is a welcome improvement but does not address the ongoing issue as to why these people are in custody in the first place.

The transportation of young people, by his own admission, is still not satisfactory and the extra stress that this group of people suffer due to late arrivals and long journey times is unacceptable. It is hoped that when the new provider for these services is commissioned in August 2011 there will be a significant improvement.

The ongoing efficiency savings are still a cause for concern. He states in his reply that, quote, 'It has been made clear from senior NOMS management downwards that the welfare of staff and prisoners should not be affected by any budgetary restrictions', unquote. The Board hopes that this proves to be the case.

4.3 This year, again, New Hall in common with other prisons has had to plan for a substantial reduction in its budget. The new Governing Governor, Marian Mahoney, who took up office shortly before the start of this reporting period has had a challenging task to achieve the budget level demanded without compromising the safety and well being of staff and residents. This has been achieved in part by holding a series of World Cafe events with staff to encourage suggestions and solutions and the temporary secondment of a governor into New Hall to look into ways of achieving the efficiency savings required. That this has been achieved pays tribute to their commitment and professionalism.

PARTICULAR ISSUES REQUIRING A RESPONSE

4.4 People with mental health problems continue to be imprisoned. Year after year this issue has been brought to the Minister's attention by not only Independent Monitoring Boards but also by the Chief Inspector of Prisons and other interested parties. Although waiting times for transfer to outside hospitals has reduced (paragraph 4.2) in the Board's opinion in many instances they are not suitable or fit to be in custody at all.

The Board asks the Minister yet again, when will the relevant Government Departments address the underlying problem, imprisoning people with mental health needs, and instead of ignoring it, actually do something about it.

4.5 The prison budget has again substantially been reduced and the Governor and her staff have had to make considerable efforts to attempt to deliver the necessary service without risking the safety and welfare of staff and residents.

The Board asks the Minister again if he can guarantee that the safety and welfare of both staff and residents will not be compromised in any way due to excessive budget restrictions, not, quote 'should not be affected by any budgetary restrictions' unquote and could he suggest how this might be achieved with the current and continuing severe restrictions.

OTHER AREAS OF CONCERN OR GOOD PRACTICE NOT REQUIRING A RESPONSE

Areas of Concern

4.6 Generally the relationship between residents and staff is good. However the Board does receive comments from the residents that sometimes the staff 'cannot be bothered to help sort my problems out'. This is sometimes reflected in the applications that the Board receives that should, in the Board's opinion, have been dealt with on the wings. The occasional shortage of staff must play a big part in this but if only a little more time could be found for the residents much frustration and in the end, wasted time for all parties could be avoided.

4.7 New Hall receive a number of women transferred from their 'home' prison very close to their release date which causes them great distress and resettlement problems. Insufficient consideration is given by the transferring prisons to residents' needs at this time. (paragraph 6.9).

Areas of good practice

4.8 Last year's report commented on the effect that the continued staff shortage problem was having on Offender Management and it was hoped that the introduction of the new Layered Offender Management would ameliorate this. Staff have shown great commitment to introducing this system and making it work effectively and although problems remain there has been considerable improvement (paragraph 6.7).

4.9 During the year the prison has been in discussions with the Max Spielman photography business about opening a training facility inside the prison. This is an important initiative to be commended giving residents a valuable opportunity not only for employment within the prison but on their release also (paragraph 5.4).

4.10 New Hall has many residents with mental health issues. These residents can be extremely demanding of staff and the Board highly commends the professionalism of those staff who are constantly engaged in the care and well being of these vulnerable residents.

4.11 The Board would finally like to thank the Governor, the Senior Management Team and members of staff for their help and support thus allowing the Board to carry out its monitoring role effectively.

Diversity

5.1 Equality Monitoring

New Hall has a dedicated diversity team. The Diversity Manager is also responsible for the management of diversity matters at Askham Grange, the sister prison in the cluster. REAT meetings are held at New Hall on a regular basis and are normally chaired by the Governing Governor. The IMB is invited to attend these meetings.

Information gathering systems such as Incentives and Earned Privileges (IEP), Control and Restraint, Segregation, Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) and Adjudications are regularly monitored to ensure that there is no direct/indirect discrimination. In the very few instances where monitoring shows that this may be the case a review is undertaken to establish whether any action needs to be taken.

There is a strong commitment from the senior management team to address any inequalities and the enthusiasm and commitment of the Diversity Manager is to be commended. The prison continues to promote and support the many and varied avenues to ensure that it remains alert to diversity in every aspect and has the systems and skills in place to recognise and address problems whenever and wherever they arise. The very low number of applications received concerning diversity issues (just one for this reporting year) suggest that residents are treated fairly, feel safe and have equal access to prison facilities.

The Diversity team has been proactive in ensuring that the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 are complied with and the new impact assessments are in place.

A new protocol has been put in place for those residents aged sixty or over who do not have to work, having reached 'retirement' age. This allows them, subject to risk assessment and IEP status (Incentive and Earnings Privileges) to be allowed out of their rooms on the wings during working hours. The Board welcomes this initiative.

Learning and Skills

5.2 General Overview

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) has the main responsibility in the prison for providing residents with qualifications and skills when they are released, through the activities of the main Education Department. The Head of Learning and Skills is also responsible for other areas including the library, physical education, workshops and other land based work activity.

5.3 Education Department

The Education Department of the prison has had to be increasingly alert to the changing rules and approach of the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) throughout the

year. For example the SFA no longer recognises the BICS qualification (Industrial Cleaning Services qualification) as one to continue to fund. So, the funding and qualification for the course is now transferred to City and Guilds. The SFA will often (and selectively) not support and fund residents who are not EU resident, so this is another important feature of recent developments in the prison education world.

Important rehabilitation and resettlement programmes which continue to be very successful and which are healthily-subscribed include the 'Ready, Steady, Work' course which enhances employability skills, a new book-keeping course (accredited), Information Technology (ICT) programmes, Hospitality and Catering, Gardening and Horticultural Practice and Call Centre Training (also accredited). The Hairdressing course introduced during the past year continues to attract substantial interest, although the change of personal appearance that occasionally occurs during even one session causes problems with identification documentation in the prison.

The prison's Education section and skills development teams continue to meet and frequently exceed Key Performance Indicators laid down by the LSCs and this provides an important focus of the work of relevant Education and Training Staff.

5.4 Workshops

New Hall has four workshops consisting of an assembly shop for private sector work and three sewing shops for Prison Service work.

During the year a small number of residents were accepted on ROTL to work at a Max Spielman photography business. Discussions have been taking place about opening a Max Spielman training facility inside the prison. This is an important initiative since it provides a template of good practice which can, hopefully, be replicated in other establishments. It would enable a number of residents to be trained not only in the techniques and technology of photographic reproduction, but also in the relevant customer service facilities for the general public.

Healthcare and Mental Health

5.5 General

Health services at New Hall are commissioned by a Primary Care Trust and a Mental Health Trust. A senior representative (governor grade) from the prison is the Healthcare interface between the prison and commissioners/health trusts.

The healthcare centre (Holly House) is centrally located within the prison and access to ground floor (primary care) and first floor (12 bedded secondary care) is easily accessible. There are also healthcare rooms situated on several wings. Nurses here are able to assess (triage), dispense medications and refer residents onto healthcare for appointments and clinics if necessary.

5.6 Primary and integrated drug service

Primary care and substance use services are provided by Wakefield District Primary Care Trust. However from 1st April 2011 the care for the above will be taken over by Spectrum Community Health CIC (trading name of Spectrum Community Health).

GP sessions continue to be held regularly and frequently, applications to see a doctor from the residents themselves normally take two days (as in the community) but emergency or urgent needs are facilitated straight away.

A number of clinics are provided including: optician, midwife, asthma, diabetes, cytology, CASH (contraceptive and sexual health), Well Being, IDTS, phlebotomy, health promotion, tissue viability and wound care and telemedicine. Dental clinics are held four times a week.

Two trained nurses and one health care support worker are on duty at night and are based on the primary care unit.

A high level of professional care is given from a supportive primary care team. They have a vast mix of experience, skills and knowledge and continue to provide a satisfactory service to the residents of New Hall.

5.7 Integrated Mental Health Service

Mental health services were provided by South West Yorkshire Mental Health Trust until 1st of December 2010. They are now provided by the Offender Health Division of Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust who currently provide four psychiatrist sessions per week at the prison.

Referral is dependent on individual need as determined through a 'stepped care model' and some residents are managed via the GP service aligning service provision to the community model. Those individuals with complex needs who may be unsettled and require psychiatrist input can be seen within the first week of referral if admitted to the healthcare wing after reception. Other residents do have to go on the psychiatrist waiting list for a period of time until they can be seen.

The commissioned service does not provide 24 hour mental health nursing provision. Core business hours during weekdays are 8.30 am to 7pm including bank holidays.

There is no mental health cover on site at weekends although an over the phone on-call cover is provided by the team out of hours.

The small team of nurses have been proactive in identifying and transferring residents who require hospital treatment to appropriate settings and have actively participated and supported in the ACCT process maintaining the safety of residents.

They are also working at improving the care planning process, delivering a proactive service as well as establishing a CPA framework based on national standards.

As with many prisons New Hall continues to 'house' many residents with mental health problems who should not be detained in this establishment but would be better suited to secure hospital settings.

Safer Custody

5.8 General

The Safer Custody Group is responsible for violence reduction and anti-bullying, and also the prevention of suicide and self-harm. The Violence Reduction meetings and Suicide and Self-harm meetings are both held monthly and are chaired by the Head of Safer Custody. A wide range of disciplines attend including representatives from all the residential areas as well as Holly House, Chaplaincy, Resettlement, Psychology, CARATS, Education, Works and Workshops and Catering. Listeners attend (for part of the meetings) as well as the Samaritan's representative. The meetings are regularly observed by a member of the IMB.

The Safer Custody Group continues to produce its monthly report including statistics and data enabling them to investigate and take action where appropriate in a properly directed manner.

The prison also continues to operate its anti bullying policy diligently reinforcing its non tolerance towards this behaviour in the residents.

5.9 First night centre

During the year the prison established a dedicated 26 bed unit (Apple Tree House) for women entering custody to spend their first few nights. It is a self contained unit within one of the smaller residential areas. The regime is organised so that residents have access to necessary services based on individual need and are generally moved to normal location after a few nights. Those residents undergoing

drug detoxification will remain in the centre for at least five nights but any move into the main establishment will be agreed by a multi disciplinary team.

5.10 Self Harm

Self-harm continues to be an issue in New Hall. Residents placed on an ACCT are regularly assessed as necessary. The number of ACCT documents opened and closed is monitored daily which ensures their appropriate use. Although the number of residents self-harming is still significantly less than two years ago, 2010 has shown a slight increase both in the number of incidents and in the number of incidents per resident.

	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
Self harm incidents	900	817	1060	1180	1260	1017
Residents involved	364	360	474	434	335	304

The Board will monitor these figures for the coming year to see whether this is a continuing trend upwards and therefore requires further investigation into the reasons or whether the figures remain broadly at the same level.

5.11 Listeners

The Listeners and Insiders scheme has an important role at New Hall. In previous years the scheme has been threatened with temporary suspension due to low numbers although this did not in fact happen. The number of Listeners at the end of this reporting period was six. Even where sufficient numbers can be recruited and trained to carry out the Listeners role, because of the nature and type of resident suitable for the role this means that it is likely that many of them will move to open conditions and thus away from New Hall.

There does not appear to be a solution to this particular problem given this type of prison. Despite the continuing struggle to recruit and retain Listeners the worthwhile nature of the scheme ensures its continuing existence for now.

5.12 Death in Custody

During the reporting period there was one death. Initial findings are that the resident died from natural causes. The notification of next of kin and the duties of the Family Liaison Officer were carried out correctly and to the Board's satisfaction.

Care and Separation Unit

5.13 Sycamore House

General Overview

Sycamore House makes up one half of the Care in Custody Integrated Services (CCIS) module. The other half of the module consists of the healthcare centre, Holly House. (See paragraph 5.5) The CCIS is managed by one Governor with two Senior Officers and dedicated staff.

There are cells for refractory residents on Good Order or Discipline, residents on Cellular Confinement and those located on the unit for their own protection. There is an association room, adjudication room, showers and two outside exercise yards.

Staff ensure that the Board is notified of any resident's move to the unit within 24 hours. Board members visit Sycamore House on rota visits at least once a week and as otherwise required. They are able to see and speak freely with residents, attend the PSO 1700 reviews (generally held once a week) and attend Governor's adjudications.

5.14 Management of Sycamore House

Staff manage residents, often with very challenging behaviour, so that whatever the reason for their stay in Sycamore House they are there for the least possible time that is conducive with their behaviour and can be returned to normal location as soon as is practicable and safe for themselves and others.

Because of the fluctuating numbers located on the unit and the varying nature of the management required, for example, residents subject to 'three unlock', the low staffing level makes it difficult on occasions to carry out necessary activities. However, during the Board's monitoring this year it is not aware of any resident being treated inappropriately or being denied any of their statutory rights.

The dual purpose of Sycamore House as both a segregation unit and a care unit could make it difficult to manage as it tries to fulfil two different purposes. Any residents on ACCT's are moved off the unit as soon as possible, additional authorisation is completed to ensure that the period they spend on the unit is for genuine needs.

The Board commends the CCIS governor and his staff for their professionalism and care when, at times, they have to deal with some very disturbed residents. During the reporting year a long term resident of Sycamore House with some challenging behaviour was, through the patience and perseverance of staff, finally returned successfully to normal location after a number of earlier attempts.

Accommodation

6.1 General Improvements

The poor standard and shortage of showers in Willow and particularly in Poplar 2, the largest of the residential wings, has been the subject of reports previously. During this period work has commenced on installing new showers in both of these wings. The quality of facilities to be provided and the number of showers available are both to be improved.

6.2 Exercise yard

The current largest exercise yard used by the greatest number of residents is not specifically enclosed. It is open to more than one residential block and various workshops and other units. Plans have been approved for a 5.2 metre high fence as per the Prison Service specifications. This will be in place shortly.

6.3 Mother and Baby Unit

As reported last year, Maple House, the mother and baby unit was being used as a stand in reception area whilst the new dedicated Reception unit was built. The temporary mother and baby unit (Acer House) has now been closed again and Maple House restored to a dedicated mother and baby unit with capacity for nine mothers and 10 babies following completion of the Reception unit (see paragraph 6.4 below).

6.4 Holly House Windows

The Board expressed concern on a number of occasions this year about the lack of ventilation in the cells in Holly House, the Care and Assessment Unit. The windows do not open at all nor do they have vents. On some occasions the cells are very hot and airless and where residents are smokers this compounds the problem. The reasons given for not addressing this in the past has been the problem of installing ventilation which does not provide ligature points and the extra cost of providing this type of secure window.

The Board has now been informed that as soon as funding is available in the coming year the windows in Holly House will be replaced.

Induction

6.5 New Programme

Last year the Board expressed concern that many residents were relying on second hand information passed to them due to the infrequent number of inductions held involving the IMB. This resulted in increased numbers of applications to the Board.

The Board had been advised that a new induction programme would be introduced. Induction sessions to include IMB involvement are now held each Monday to Thursday. If no members can be present IMB booklets are handed out. This is a considerable improvement on the previous arrangements.

Offender Management

6.6 Overview

The resettlement team's main function is to prepare residents for their release into the community and to help reduce the risk of re-offending. The team continues to work hard in developing a constructive programme enabling residents to return to their communities with the necessary skills and support. Staff are to be commended in their efforts to complete Offender Assessment System (OASys) documents for all eligible residents and to achieve good results in the numbers of residents succeeding in their Home Detention Curfew (HDC) applications. More private interviewing space has been made available to address previous concerns that the prison could not provide sufficient privacy for conducting interviews and carrying out small group-work. Completing the essential workload has often suffered in the past from staff being detailed to other departments and in this year, a long term sickness absence.

6.7 Layered Offender Management

From April 2010 New Hall became a pilot for the new Layered Offender Management System (LOM). This is a significant change to the previous method of working within the Resettlement and Probation teams. A basic custody screening tool allocates an offender supervisor who remains the same throughout sentence and deals with all aspects from start to finish. LOM applies to all residents irrespective of length of sentence. This also includes The Young People's Unit. The Offender Management area has undergone a complete change. Workspace areas are arranged in 'pods' with staff from each of the various disciplines allocated to a 'pod' to provide a complete service for the residents managed by that pod.

Initially the backlog of work in both HDC and sentence planning from the existing system and the parallel introduction of the new system caused more difficulties for staff. However there has been an increase in staff to deal with the very busy area of case administration and the backlog is gradually reducing. Although problems still remain; offender supervisors are still very busy which means that often insufficient one to one work is able to be carried out, also outside agencies, particularly external probation take a long time to respond necessitating chasing them for replies and reports.

The Board reported last year that courses offered to address residents' needs are not all available at New Hall necessitating negotiations with other prisons for transfers to enable appropriate and/or essential courses to be delivered. This creates problems with transport and vacancies. Unfortunately the position is unchanged for this year.

Reception

6.8 New unit

The building of the new reception unit which was started last year was completed and opened ahead of schedule in August 2010. The Reception staff are now working in much improved conditions in a purpose built unit.

6.9 Transfers

New Hall receive a number of women transferred from their 'home' prison very close to their release date which causes them great distress and resettlement problems.

This is not within the control of staff at New Hall. Central Population notify the transferring prison that they must ship out a number of prisoners and then the sending prison does not always give sufficient consideration to whom they are transferring. However when they are the sending prison, New Hall needs to ensure that they make sure that residents close to their release date are not unnecessarily transferred bearing in mind operational needs.

7.1

BOARD STATISTICS	2010/11	2009/10
Recommended Complement of Board Members	15	15
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	10	7
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	8	10
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	0	7
Number of members leaving within reporting period	2	4
Number of rota visits carried out	103	142
Number of other visits carried out	159	242
Total number of applications received	200	190
Total number of weekly segregation reviews held	52	52
Total number of weekly segregation reviews attended	50	49

7.2

APPLICATIONS

Code	Subject	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09	2006/07	2005/06
A	Accommodation	7	6	7	1	3
B	Adjudications	10	8	2	0	1
C	Diversity	1	3	3	3	2
D	Education/Employment	2	2	12	10	4
E	Family/Visits	11	13	18	18	2
F	Food/Kitchen	6	5	6	3	3
G	Health	15	12	25	9	5
H	Property	25	25	39	19	6
I	Sentences	47	40	27	17	10
J	Staff/Residents Relations	12	10	11	-	-
K	Transfers	9	14	5	19	9
L	Miscellaneous	55	52	39	45	32
	Total number of applications	200	190	194	144	77

NOTES

- The Sentence related applications that come under the umbrella of Offender Management (OM) show the continuing problems that the Board has experienced with OM and which was mentioned in the previous year's report. The introduction of Layered Offender Management this reporting year should address these problems in the future (Section 6).
- Applications received under other categories are broadly similar to previous years although there are an increasing number of miscellaneous applications (which account for 27% of those received). The Board intends to look into the reasons for this during the next reporting period.

7.3 Members have attended a range of meetings in addition to and as part of their special interest. Officers have also given presentations to the Board enhancing our knowledge of the prison and the work it does enabling us to be aware of issues that affect our work.

One member attended the IMB Annual conference.

Members have attended training courses for Vice Chair, BDO, and experienced members.

Board members also held a local training day at which they discussed issues relevant to their work at the prison and listened to presentations from members of the Board.

During the year the Board hosted visits from HMP Doncaster and HMP Wold and also visited HMP Full Sutton.

ACCT	Assessment, Care in Custody, Teamwork
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
CARATS	Counselling, Assessment, Referral, Advice and Throughcare Scheme
DTO	Detainee Training Order
ECL	End of Custody Licence
ETS	Enhanced Thinking Skills
GOOD	Good Order or Discipline
HDC	Home Detention Curfew
HMP	Her Majesty's Prison
HMIP	Her Majesty's Inspector of Prisons
IEP	Incentives and Earned Privileges
IRC	Immigration Removal Centre
IPPS	Indeterminate Public Protection Sentence
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender
MSL	Minimum Staffing Levels
NOMS	National Offender Manager Service
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
OASYS	Offender Assessment System
OP	Own Protection
PCT	Primary Care Trust
PO	Principal Officer
PSO	Prison Service Order
REAT	Race Equality Action Team
RIRF	Racist Incident Reporting Form
ROTL	Release on Temporary Licence
SIR	Security Information Report
SMARG	Segregation and Monitoring Review Group
SMT	Senior Management Team
SO	Senior Officer
VCS	Voluntary and Community Sector
YJB	Youth Justice Board
YOI	Young Offenders Institution