



# **ANNUAL REPORT**

## **HMP OAKWOOD**

**1st April 2015 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016**

## **Section 1 - STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB**

The Prison Act 1952 and the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 require every prison and IRC 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.

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### **Section 3 - DESCRIPTION OF PRISON**

**3.1** HMP Oakwood opened on 24th April 2012; it is a Category C prison although built to a Category B standard. It is operated by G4S through a contract with the National Offender Management Service; it has an operational capacity of housing 1605 prisoners. The staff is diverse and from the majority of ethnic backgrounds – at the end of the review period the staff were 67% male and 33% female.

A National Offender Management Controller and Assistant Controller are based within the prison and are active in control and management of the contract between G4S and NOMS.

**3.2** The prison has the following accommodation units

|                                  |   |  |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| • Ash                            | (vulnerable prisoners)                        | 492 places   |
| • Beech                          | (mainstream prisoners)                        | 476 places   |
| • Cedar                          | (mainstream prisoners)                        | 476 places   |
| • Douglas                        | (lifers and indeterminate sentence prisoners) | 91 places  |
| • Elm                            | (Family Unit)                                 | 70 places  |
| • Care and Separation Unit (CSU) |   | 24 standard cells<br>2 dirty protest cells<br>2 special case cells |

Cells are equipped with a WC, Shower, Wash Basin, and Telephone (restricted through a PIN code system) bed and storage facility.

Elm has been converted from the First Night Unit to the Family Unit with the establishment of a reception and induction wing on Ash and Beech and the appointment of a Family Intervention Manager who is reviewing the current family provision. Ash, Beech and Cedar have one wing dedicated as Healthy Living wings.

There are a number of special cells on all house blocks for wheelchair users and for the use of Listeners which are twice the size of a normal cell and are compliant with disability requirements. The prison is preparing for a further increase in population by a further 501 prisoners during the 2016/17 reporting period and is undertaking the conversion of a proportion of single cells for double occupation.

**3.3** The main contractors to the prison within the reporting period are:

GEOAmeY (transport to and from other prisons)

DHL (ordering and delivery of canteen items)

Aramark (catering services)

Worcestershire Primary Healthcare Trust (healthcare provision)

Milton Keynes College (education provision)

OLASS is delivered by Milton Keynes College

Staffordshire Library Services

Lloyds Pharmacy Services (providing service from Oakwood to other local prisons)

In addition, there are a large number of voluntary organizations providing services within the prison.

## Section 4 - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

4.1 Within the reporting period the IMB are pleased to acknowledge the continued progress that this prison has continued to make. It's achievements by involving prisoners to manage their own affairs under supervision within the prison has progressed considerably, with the instigation and expansion of a number of prisoner self-help initiatives such as the Basic Intervention Group, which have been driven by the Director and his management team.

Staff churn however, is at an annualized figure of 17.95%. A concern is that staff aged between 19 and 25 equal 20% of all staff. Although the quality of training new staff is deemed as good to excellent the initial naivety of some new staff when detailed to the wings is apparent.

The re-configuration to that of a more local prison has resulted in more locally based prisoners in residence. This in turn has seen the increase in gang members who are local to the Staffordshire and West Midlands areas. In general the Board is able to state that the prison, although remaining settled, has faced this challenge, with the current Director, together with his management team driving discipline and control throughout the prison. There is a noticeable improved atmosphere between prisoners and staff alike. Situations that do arise are dealt with professionally and in a controlled manner.

The change of contractor within Healthcare that will commence from April 2016 has seen a disruption to some of the present healthcare services due to the shortages in staff, as staff migrate to more secure positions outside of the prison.

We are satisfied with the general diligence and security. The increased threat of contraband entering the prison by the use of drones, throw overs and passes made during visits is being managed well with a high detection success rate. The Security Department at HMP Oakwood works closely with the Security Departments at neighbouring prisons, HMP Brinsford and HMP Featherstone, to share local intelligence.

There have been improvements with the operation of the Care and Separation Unit (CSU).

The Board also note the continued more positive interaction with the local community and continued dialogue and the progress that has been made in this area.

The Board compliment and commend the staff at HMP Oakwood for bringing the Anne Frank Exhibition to the prison, across a two-week period from the 1st to 12th February. The exhibition explores Anne's story and the history of the Holocaust and links it to contemporary themes such as racism, prejudice and stereotyping. The exhibition aimed and was successful in encouraging visitors to analyze the concepts of tolerance, mutual respect, human rights, democracy, etc., and their meaning. Nine prisoners were trained as guides; their role was to present various elements of the exhibition.

At the end of this reporting period Anna Schloss, the only surviving member of the Anne Frank family, visited the prison and presented her experiences while incarcerated at Auschwitz Prison Camp during the war in what was a very moving and incredible story.

## **ISSUES REQUIRING A RESPONSE**

- 4.2** Healthcare - Not including emergencies, there have been issues with escorts for outpatient hospital appointments. There is provision for four escorts daily, two in the morning and two in the afternoon. However, the number of escorts is not sufficient for the demand of the large prison population. During the course of the year 80% of hospital appointments have had to be re-scheduled due to emergencies and prioritizing of patients. For the same patients this breaches 18-week waiting time for a hospital appointment. This is a major cause for concern and adds to the frustration of the prisoners. We also presume that this incurs an unnecessary cost to the local NHS service due to cancelled appointments.
- 4.3** Healthcare - The policy for pain relief required during the night is being discussed but is yet to be formalised. This needs urgent consideration as the prison does not have Healthcare staff in the prison at night and is reliant on an out-of-hours agency. The Board also considers that nurses need to be based on house blocks and CSU rather than all in the Healthcare Department building.
- 4.4** Healthcare - The entire top floor of the Healthcare Department at the prison still remains 'mothballed' due to its change in status from Cat B to Cat C when commissioned. The Board's concern is that unnecessary costs are being incurred by NHS and G4S by prisoners having to be transported to hospital when some of the necessary facilities are available in the 'mothballed' facility. This facility could also service the two adjacent HMP establishments, creating a greater saving cost to the NHS, HMP and G4S and of course the risk always associated with prisoners being transported to and treated at local hospitals.
- 4.5** Healthcare – The Board have monitored a slight increase in the numbers of prisoners self-harming and those suffering from mental health issues. Again the Board considers that an increase in Mental Health nursing facilities is required throughout the establishment.
- 4.6** The Board is aware of numerous issues with the loss of property when prisoners transfer between establishments. This appears to be an ongoing issue nationally and is not just an issue at Oakwood; virtually every IMB Board deals with countless issues of missing property. This appears to relate to property being unable to be carried at the time of transfer by the prisoner transport escort companies due to lack of storage and space on their vehicles. The implications of cost in time absorbed by prison staff alone indicates the need for a major review and action is required to remedy this ever ongoing situation and cost.
- 4.7** The Board is concerned that during the reporting period no prisoners have been allowed ROTL (Release on Temporary Licence) to enable them to work outside of the prison environment, which is a requirement of the resettlement programme. With no scope for ROTL the progress for prisoners towards release is limited.
- 4.8** The Board is concerned with the amount of drugs entering the establishment despite the security measures currently in place. The Board is also concerned about the long-term effects on prisoners of the use of drugs such as Black Mamba (legal high) which are entering prisons. This is very much a priority concern for the Board. The Board urges the Government to implement legislation to make such drugs illegal as soon as possible.

## **REPORTS ON ASPECTS OF THE PRISON**

### **5. EQUALITY AND INCLUSION**

- 5.1** The Board believes that the Senior Management Team, together with the staff, has a passionate commitment in achieving equality for prisoners and staff. The ultimate aim is to achieve an environment that is harmonious, decent and safe for all to live and work in.

The Board observes a great deal of due diligence and effort to achieve Equality and Inclusion by both prisoners and staff. The ethos of the programme is to promote and deliver the highest standards of professionalism, integrity, decency and respect. This is being achieved with zero tolerance towards discrimination, victimisation, harassment and bullying and applies to all aspects of the prison, including visitors.

Equalities Governance Meetings are held monthly. Comprehensive data gives a full and comprehensive snapshot of how the prison is performing. The Board has full electronic access to this information at all times whilst at the prison.

The Board notes that Strand Meetings are assigned to the Protected Characteristics such as Foreign Nationals, Race, Gypsies, Travellers and Show people. It is noted however, that the attendance by prisoners at the Strand meetings has declined within the reporting period. It is assumed that questions relating to issues relating to the Protected Characteristics are now dealt with through application on the G4S kiosk system, which is available on each wing.

Prisoner Equality Orderlies and Representatives are appointed and meet all new admissions to the prison. They attend Strand Meetings, act as points of contact and act as a conduit linking prison staff with specific issues, throughout which they promote equality.

DIRF'S (Discrimination Incident Report Forms) are carefully monitored and investigated within the given target time.

A total of 126 DIRFs were raised within the reporting period, which is a significant reduction since the Board's last report in 2013/14 when there were 205.

The Board considers the continued downward trend is a reflection of the work and resources put into the Equalities Programme.

DIRFs actioned at Oakwood are scrutinised by two external groups - BAME (Birmingham University Black and Minority Ethnic Society) and BRAP (Birmingham based BME Group)

### **5.2 VIC (MILITARY VETERANS IN CUSTODY)**

There are a number of ex-servicemen within Oakwood, housed mainly within one block of the prison. This project is managed by an experienced member of CRC (Community Rehabilitation Company) staff who is also an ex-member of HM Armed Forces and is able to recognize the specific issues which affect these prisoners both in custody and on release.

They are in contact with various help agencies who respond to the requests of ex-servicemen.

HMP Oakwood has established good working contacts with Care after Combat, Ubique, Combat Stress and Service Personnel and Veterans Agency. SSAFA Staffs also occasionally attend.

### **5.3 (B.I.G.) BASIC INTERVENTION GROUP**

Changes to the IEP system drew attention to the fact that a Basic regime is intended to be a punitive experience to encourage prisoners to change their behaviour for the better. It has been found that often it has increased the downward trend of poor behaviour. In recognizing this HMP Oakwood has continued this initiative with the introduction of BIG.

B.I.G. is a peer-led intervention designed to engage with those prisoners on Basic Regime and to provide an alternative solution to dealing with issues by using positive role models. These role models are drawn from prisoners with records of excellent behaviour who have significant experience of the penal system and a genuine commitment to help to make a difference. All have undergone appropriate training and security clearance to enable them to offer assistance to others.

As with all peer-led projects, staff are involved at all levels and the Board note that projects are closely monitored and managed. Since the conception of the BIG project there has been a constant flow of prisoners referred by staff members.

The Board welcomes and supports such initiatives, which actively and positively seek to address poor behaviour and attitudes of some prisoners.

The BIG team has been recognised for their achievement at the Redemption & Justice Awards 2015 in the mentoring category.

### **5.4 H.A.S. LINE (THE HELP AND SUPPORT LINE)**

The Board welcomes the continued work of the HAS Line, which is a phone line to enable prisoners to contact prisoner representatives from the privacy of their own cell with queries or for information about healthcare appointments. They also remind prisoners of their forthcoming appointments, which reduces significantly the number of wasted appointments for healthcare professionals. The HAS Line operates from 09:30hrs to 16:30hrs, including during the lunch-time period when most prisoners are locked in their cells. (Please note medical records are not accessed by prisoners. They are only provided with appointment lists and no medical assistance is given).

### **5.5 RALPH (RESETTLEMENT ADVICE LINE AND PRISONER HELPDESK)**

The Board welcomes the continued work of RALPH, which is a call centre within the prison, operated and manned by prisoners under supervision. Prisoners are able to dial RALPH direct from the privacy of their own cell for help and advice with issues. This service has proved particularly successful for new prisoners to Oakwood and as a consequence the number of IMB applications has fallen accordingly. The helpline deals with issues regarding accommodation and support on release, employment, training and education, finance, benefits, debt, mental and physical health, alcohol, substance misuse, maintaining family ties, attitudes and thinking behaviour.

### **5.6 USER VOICE/PRISON COUNCIL**

The Board recognises the contribution that User Voice makes to the prison. It consists of elected prisoner representatives who meet weekly to discuss issues and formulate an agenda for discussion at the fortnightly Prison Council Meeting, which is attended by the Director and his management team and representatives of all departments. A wide-ranging number of topics are discussed at the meetings.

## 5.7 YCG (YOUR CONSULTATION GROUP)

YCG was established in November 2015 at Oakwood. It consists of a group of prisoners from Douglas house block who focus on prisoner support under the direction of the Head of Support Services. They have easy access to Prison Service Orders and Prison Service Instructions for reference.

## 5.8 EDUCATION, LEARNING AND SKILLS

Milton Keynes College is contracted by the Skills Funds Agency to deliver OLASS within the prison. They are achieving the standards required. The following educational and vocational courses are currently available.

| ASH                | BEECH                | CEDAR                | VOCATIONAL       |
|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| Skills for Success | Functional Skills    | All courses are part | Bricklaying      |
| English Entry 2/3  | Pathway              | time for learners–   | Painting &       |
| English Level 1/2  | All courses are part | but will operate for | Decorating       |
| ESOL               | time for learners–   | the full day.        | Fenestration     |
| Creative Media     | but will operate for | E.g. CA2 Business    | (Window fitting) |
| IMedia             | the full day.        | and Customer         | Maintenance      |
| Customer Service   | ESOL                 | Service              | Operations       |
| Team Leading       | English Entry 2/3    | Team Leading         | Bench Joinery    |
| ITQ                | English Level 1/2    | Business             | Electrics        |
| Maths E1/2/3       | Maths E1/2/3         | Creative Media       | Catering         |
| Maths Level 1/2    | Maths Level 1/2      | ITQ                  | Barbering        |
| Business           | English Progression  | Mentoring            | Industrial       |
| Nutrition & Health | Functional Skills    | Nutrition & Health   | Cleaning         |
| Mentoring          | Diagnostic/Exams     | IMedia               | Site Carpentry   |
| Employability      |                      | Skills for Success   | Food Safety      |
| Family Relations   |                      | Pre-Tenancy          | Health & safety  |
| Music              |                      | Family Relations     | Music            |
| Pre-Tenancy        |                      | Employability        | EWS              |
| Functional Skills  |                      | Parenting            | Rail Track       |
| Diagnostic/Exams   |                      | BIG                  | Forklift         |

At the year end the actual attendance at the morning sessions for all purposeful activity was 92%, with the afternoon sessions achieving a 94% attendance.

Milton Keynes College endorses and uses the assistance of Virtual Campus especially for prisoners undertaking vocational courses. Distance Learning facilities are in place for Open University courses funded by NOMS.

Oaks Cuisine is a training scheme operated within the Aramark catering unit which trains prisoners in the skills associated with Silver Service and the restaurant trade.

## 5.9 THE LIBRARY

The Library operated by Staffordshire Libraries continues to work well - it is staffed by enthusiastic and knowledgeable staff. There is a wide range of books in a number of languages available from the Library, together with national and foreign newspapers and talking books. Books can also be ordered. The Library also has a number of Virtual Campus computers installed for the use of the prisoners during their library sessions.

The Library employs enhanced prisoners to assist with the booking in and out of books and the shelving of books.

## 5.10 HEALTHCARE

The current supplier of Healthcare is NHS Worcestershire Healthcare Trust; as of April 2016 the contract will be operated by Care UK. Unfortunately, this has obviously caused unrest and insecurity amongst staff and a number of key staff with the present contractor have decided to take up employment outside of the prison. Due to this issue recruitment has been unsuccessful and a number of positions advertised have had no response. Agency nurses are used on a very regular basis which contributes to a lower level of continuity of care.

The waiting times through the reporting period, with the exception of the optician, have met the contractual terms and conditions. Due to the demands and the waiting list for the optician it appears that there are insufficient numbers of clinics contracted.

A number of initiatives have been introduced in order to reduce the number of external escorted visits to hospitals; the use of a mobile MRI scanner, X Ray equipment and diabetic retinopathy screening equipment. This has helped to reduce waiting times within the prison for such services.

G4S have trained all staff in the use of the Code Red and Blue policy within the prison. On such occasions an ambulance is called immediately, however they are often stood down en route as prison medical staff have dealt with the situation. When a prisoner is taken by ambulance to the hospital in an emergency situation, the prison has always been able to provide a suitable escort officer to accompany the prisoner.

Prisoners are encouraged to take responsibility for their own health issues. They are able to book their own appointments via the kiosk system on their wing, with the prisoners also able to request repeat prescriptions in this manner.

In October 2015 the GP provider was changed. As a result the medication previously prescribed to all prisoners was reviewed. All prisoners reviewed were offered an appointment before any alteration in medication was made. There were a large number of missed appointments, resulting in a significant reduction of unnecessary medication. This commendable and proactive approach, which was initiated to stop the passing of opiate-based drugs between prisoners, resulted in numerous complaints to the Board, the majority of which were found to be unsubstantiated.

After assessment prisoners are allowed to self-medicate, if appropriate. From February 2016 prisoners were advised on admission to order a maximum of sixteen Paracetamol tablets when ordering canteen to provide analgesia if required overnight, as there are no Healthcare staff on site.

Medication is dispensed on the wings at specific times for routine and controlled drugs, at which time there is an officer present.

The Board are greatly concerned with the use of illicit drugs within the prison, together with the additional problems caused by New Psychoactive Substances, also known as legal highs, the most well-known being Black Mamba.

Mental Health issues are becoming a major issue within the prison community, allegedly as a result of drug use. Prisoners arriving at Oakwood are assessed on admission and if known to the service, are usually seen within one to three days. If referred by the GP the referral time is ten to fourteen days on average.

The on-site pharmacy provides pharmaceuticals for Oakwood and a number of other prisons in the area and is operated by Lloyds Chemists.

There is an NHS complaint procedure in place and prisoners are familiar with this; the Board receives numerous applications from prisoners attempting to short-cut the system regarding healthcare issues, which in turn are returned back to the prisoners for re-direction to Healthcare.

The Healthcare Department work jointly with Macmillan Nurse and a local hospice to assist with end of life care (The Prison Palliative and End of Life Care Education Project). It links palliative and social care and liaises with services on release if appropriate. Staffordshire Social Services are proactive with their support within the prison but there is no nurse cover during the night.

#### **5.11 ISMS (INTEGRATED SUBSTANCE MISUSE)**

The Board monitors the monthly Drug Strategy Meeting through the provision of the minutes.

The ISMS team operates a policy of reduction rather than maintenance which follows the NICE guidelines.

The service specialises in drug, alcohol and solvent misuse and utilises prisoner mentors. Prisoners with dependency are identified on admission or may refer themselves at any time. The aim is to tackle misuse through education, healthy living and exercise and works in conjunction with the gym if required. There are healthy living wings on the three main house blocks, which are non-smoking wings.

The service run various support groups e.g. alcohol dependency, smoking cessation etc.

#### **5.12 PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITIES**

Prison workshops continue to offer a variety of skill training opportunities, which include carpentry, UPVC stripping, dismantling electrical goods, plastics and plumbing assembling, haberdashery, de-branding of clothing, refurbishing and PAT testing of portable appliances and a call centre facility.

There is also some in-cell house block work and education for prisoners who are unable to attend the workshop e.g. elderly and disabled prisoners; albeit low skilled work.

The prison has seen its once very proactive Farms and Gardens area fall into decline due to its closure. This area was very productive and was always enjoyed by the prisoners who worked in it. The Board looks forward to seeing this activity re-instated.

On Ash house block Practical Horticulture Skills and Level 2 work-based Horticulture Diploma are available. Planting schemes have been established around the prison. Vegetables and herbs are grown for the catering qualification and a mixture of shrubs and perennials are grown for outside sales. Such activities are funded and supported by NOMS.

Aramark, the catering contractor, operates Food Hygiene and basic courses for use in the catering trade. The Board commends Aramark who are willing to employ prisoners after their time working and training in the Kitchens.

### **5.13 RESETTLEMENT**

The Resettlement Department was taken over by the local CRC (Community Rehabilitation Companies) with key staff transferring over to them; they continue to meet their Key Performance Targets. However, finding suitable accommodation for ex-prisoners is now becoming more difficult as the prison population in general has risen within the reporting period.

A new initiative within Resettlement covers seven prisoners selected from volunteers to become coordinators. They have produced a support package to help men with aspirations of self-employment. To date a number of prisoners have successfully achieved self-employment following release,

Resettlement staff actively encourage family links, especially through the themed Children's Days which are arranged each month, being well attended and appreciated by prisoners and their families, but especially the children. There are also separate FABBS days organized (Family and Baby Bonding Sessions). The introduction of a family unit on the Elm house block has also been a success, which the Board is continuing to monitor closely.

Oakwood's Money Management courses to prepare prisoners for release continue to be well supported.

Resettlement operates "Through the Gate" meetings, which prepare the prisoners for release that are not being picked up by family or an agency. It often includes a written C.V., however since the instigation of the CRCs this initiative does not seem to work too well.

The Resettlement Department can be proud of their achievements with only a nominal amount of personnel dealing with a very large number of admissions and discharges each month. We note that the CRC working within HMP Oakwood have been more successful than other CRCs in other establishments.

### **5.14 SAFER CUSTODY**

Within Oakwood the duty of care and safety of offenders is a very high priority. The Safer Custody Team have had many challenges within the reporting period; the main issues are those prisoners suffering from drug issues, mental health issues and those prisoners who have been re-categorised as Category B prisoners and are awaiting transfer to such establishments.

The prison has a robust Safer Custody Action Plan, which contains 41 areas of monitoring or action required. The Board is supplied with a monthly document, which gives statistics for the previous month ranging over several categories and initiatives. The Board commends the quality and scope of the data provided.

The use of SMART Data (Systematic Monitoring and Analysis of Race Equality) within the prison is monitored very closely and data is used to enable the prison to identify any areas where bias or discrimination may exist.

The use of SMARG (Segregation Monitoring and Review Group) within the prison allows for the monitoring of the following areas to be examined and made available every 3 months:

|                       |                      |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Prisoners held in CSU | Adjudications        |
| Diversity             | Safer custody        |
| CSU Staff             | Adherence to PSO1700 |

Evidence provided by these comprehensive systems, together with Board observations and monitoring, indicates that staff are confident in dealing appropriately with some very difficult and challenging issues within the Care & Separation Unit.

#### ACCT (Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork)

Reviews of all ACCTS raised are analysed by the Board and trends discussed in detail. The Board notes that Oakwood appears to perform well when measured against other comparable prisons. We commend G4S for the daily updates on prisoners on ACCT monitoring that is supplied to the Board on a daily basis, for access within the prison.

#### Death in Custody

Unfortunately, there has been one death in custody within the reporting period. At the time of writing this report a date for the Coroner's Court hearing has not been confirmed. The Board are comfortable in the fact that the family were afforded compassion by G4S and those staff affected were offered counselling and due diligence was paid to their needs.

#### Violence Reduction Programme,

Action against violence has improved considerably. Consistent use of the IEP process, use of body cameras by wing managers, increased number of CCTV cameras; weekly complex case meetings, debt management compacts and many other initiatives have helped to reduce the amount of violence. The Board is concerned however, about the increased use of illicit drugs within the prison, which follows a national trend and results in debts being incurred to those selling and supplying the drugs.

#### Listeners/Samaritans

There are only 16 active Listeners/Samaritans at the end of the reporting period, with 9 more about to embark on the training course. The prison is trying to establish Listeners on all house blocks. It is noted that there are special cells adapted for use by the Listeners for Listener/Samaritan consultations. The Board notes that the system works well.

#### Use of Force

The Board notes that within the reporting period there were 539 recorded Use of Force events, which has marginally increased. All incidents are now reported in more depth. The Board is aware that the use of illegal drugs and the consequences to the mental health and well-being of prisoners has resulted in more incidents of restraining force being used.

#### Older Prisoners

All prisoners after arrival at Oakwood and following completion of a questionnaire to identify their individual specific needs are put onto a full care plan. This is reviewed and adjusted periodically.

At the end of this reporting period there were 238 prisoners aged over 50.

The breakdown is as follows:

- 50 to 59 = 147
- 60 to 69 = 61
- 70 to 79 = 26
- 80 to 89 = 4

At the end of the reporting period there were 35 prisoners considered as fully retired and 3 as retired part time. The majority of retired prisoners are assigned to Ash block. The Department of Work & Pensions is now able to advise and guide the inevitable growing elderly population within the prison.

## Disabilities

At the end of the reporting period there were 187 prisoners diagnosed with one or several disabilities. There are 14 defined disabilities within the P-NOMIS (Prison National Offender Management Information System). This includes mental health and learning difficulties.

They are distributed throughout the prison,

|         |   |     |   |
|---------|---|-----|---|
| Ash     | = | 110 | Prisoners with one or more disabilities |
| Beech   | = | 45  | Prisoners with one or more disabilities |
| Cedar   | = | 32  | Prisoners with one or more disabilities |
| Douglas | = | 0   | Prisoners with one or more disabilities |

Disability & Elderly Prisoner forums are held bi-monthly as one combined meeting. Through these meetings it has become apparent that prisoners with a disability are asking for high back chairs to eliminate back problems. The Board welcomes the fact that a number have now been supplied and seems to be beneficial to the recipients.

## Complex Needs Prisoners

At the end of the reporting period there were 20 prisoners with complex medical needs.

Negotiations are ongoing with Safe & Settled regarding the introduction of an education programme being developed for 'Prisoners caring for other prisoners'.

### **5.15 CARE AND SEPARATION UNIT (CSU)**

The Board has attended all CSU Good Order reviews during the reporting period.

CSU continues to be a very demanding and frequently busy part of the prison. Most prisoners are held in CSU as a result of or pending a Good Order review usually after an incident within the prison. CSU Good Order reviews are required to be carried out within a specific time framework. The Board observed the prison to be compliant in this area. The reviews are conducted professionally and in depth, with prisoners given plenty of opportunity to discuss their situation and plan for their future within custody.

Issues deemed as serious are escalated for adjudication and review by an outside adjudicator who is a judge who can and does extend prison sentences when required.

In August 2015 a Supreme Court Judgement was issued relating to the segregation of prisoners beyond 42 days. As a result the Ministry of Justice implemented a revised policy for the review and authorisation of continued segregation from September 2015. The Board observed that the new policy was implemented appropriately and effectively at Oakwood.

During the reporting period the Board has on numerous occasions raised concerns regarding the punctuality of reviews; initially with the late attendance of the Healthcare staff and towards the end by the late appearance of the manager grades.

The CSU has dealt with a number of prisoners suffering from severe mental health and psychiatric issues, who have been closely monitored by the Board. The Board commends the CSU and Healthcare staff for their patience and diligence while dealing professionally with sometimes complex and demanding issues.

At the commencement of the reporting period the Board had concerns that a number of adjudication reviews did not progress due to lack of evidence or unavailability of reporting staff. At the end of this reporting period action has been taken to improve this issue and to initiate an action plan to resolve the situation.

The Board expresses concern of the impact that a further 501 prisoners will have on CSU, which operates at near capacity for the majority of the time with the existing 1605 prisoners.

#### **5.16 RESIDENTIAL SERVICES (includes accommodation, food, catering and kitchens)**

The Board has generally noted that throughout all house blocks there is continued improvement in all aspects of cleanliness, hygiene and atmosphere. The BIG team is engaged in painting areas that show wear and are in need of a coat of paint to refresh the area.

Board members have noted that throughout this reporting period staff have remained pleasant and observed good meaningful interactions. Prisoners have previously made complaints through the prisons complaint procedures and did not feel that the staff were able to resolve their issues while feeling that their grievances were not taken seriously. The Board has found that the Prison Complaints System has greatly improved and in the majority of cases the complaints have been dealt with in an appropriate manner.

During the reporting year the Board has observed the current Director, together with other senior managers frequently walking around and interacting with prisoners. We also note that the NOMS Controller and his assistant are also seen frequently on the wings communicating with prisoners and occasionally sit alongside the IMB observing reviews in CSU.

The Board note that during the reporting period the number of prisoner paper applications has significantly reduced with the introduction of monitored applications on the kiosk system.

##### Kitchens and Food

The cleanliness of wing serveries has significantly improved since the last report. Attention has been drawn to the lack of correct Personal Protective Clothing whilst prisoners were working in the restricted servery area. The correct Personal Protective Clothing was supplied for use by servery workers within the restricted servery area. Temperatures of food on arrival in the food trolley, servery temperatures and portion sizes are all monitored by the Board. An issue of unmarked food brought to the Board's notice in the servery refrigerated units has been resolved.

The Board became aware that food transfer trolleys were being returned to the Kitchens without being cleaned. They are now regularly cleaned and inspected. All serveries now have designated trolleys and the servery staff are responsible for initial cleaning.

Complaints regarding food, pertaining to its quality and quantity have dropped significantly – Comments Books are available and are viewed by Aramark and the Director/Controller regularly. Most prisoners are aware that Oakwood is one of a few prisons that serve two hot meals a day. Over the reporting period work has been undertaken by Aramark in conjunction with Healthcare and the Chaplaincy who have identified the needs and requirements of special diets on medical and/or religious grounds. They have been able to achieve acceptable dietary needs for all, which includes Vegan and Kosher requirements.

Board members often undertake food sampling and testing. The food is satisfactory with only minor issues noted.

## Oaks Cuisine Training (Attached to Main Kitchen Unit)

Oaks Cuisine Restaurant a learning centre opened in November 2012. It operates a silver service and buffet style service for staff two days a week. Appropriate charges apply to the food in the restaurant.

Since opening Oaks Cuisine, many prisoners have gained qualifications working in a realistic catering environment. The facility continues to be very successful.

## **Section 6 - REPORTS ON OTHER AREAS OF THE PRISON**

### **6.1 Travellers**

Within Oakwood there is a small group of Gypsies, Travellers and Show People, Oakwood have set up contact with local traveller communities and also have programmes to assist them with their educational needs.

### **6.2 Foreign Nationals (FN)**

At the end of the reporting period Oakwood had 48 Foreign National prisoners dispersed throughout the prison; this figure has reduced significantly over the past two years. Oakwood have a Foreign National prisoner representative on each house block who will undertake initial assessment when an FN prisoner arrives at Oakwood. They meet up on a regular basis to discuss status. A local company of Immigration solicitors attends Oakwood every six weeks to deal with legal or deportation issues.

### **6.3 Gym and PE (Physical Education)**

Oakwood Sports Centre is available to all and has again seen a good take up with high numbers of prisoners from all parts of the prison having the opportunity to take part in some form of exercise, which includes circuits, badminton, basketball, volleyball and outdoor football.

The Well Man Clinic and the Remedial Therapy classes for the over 50s continue, together with the Basketball & Circuit Training clubs. Bowls, Volleyball, Walking & Tennis, Cricket and Fitness Clubs have been added.

Equality Diversity Inclusion sessions are held for those that feel uncomfortable in a busy training environment. Other initiatives are the introduction of Bhangra Fitness sessions, smoking cessation classes and remedial sessions working together with Healthcare and a Physiotherapist.

Those prisoners on the Healthy Living wings have the opportunity to participate in early morning fitness classes. They are set goals with regards to body composition and nutritional intake.

The full-sized turf football pitch has been lost to make room for a large manufacturing/educational facility on its former footprint. The pitch was not used to its full potential and no adverse comments from the prisoners have been received.

### **6.4 Programmes**

The prison runs numerous accredited Programmes within the prison e.g. Thinking Skills Programme, Chrysalis etc.

The Board receives in depth monthly updates and analysis from the Programmes Departments.

## **6.5** Multi-Faith Chaplaincy

The prison has a complement of full-time Chaplains who are managed by the Muslim Imam – unfortunately towards the end of this reporting period there was not a Church of England Chaplain in post. There is a part-time Roman Catholic priest and Free Church minister and representation from the Quaker and Jewish communities. There is also support from part-time ministers of other faiths and denominations.

The Chaplaincy team continues to support prisoners and their families especially in times of family crisis and bereavements. Bereavement support groups are held and lead by the Chaplaincy Team.

## **6.6** Induction and Reception

During the reporting period Oakwood has received and despatched more prisoners than in previous years. The prison has been running with or close to its maximum of 1605 prisoners throughout the reporting year. The Reception area operates very professionally and has a consistent approach when dealing with new prisoners. Assisted by enhanced prisoners this area is very well run and deals effectively with all prisoners.

## **6.7** OMU (Offender Management Unit), Probation/Transfers

In past reports the Board has been concerned about the lack of performance and inefficiency of OMU.

Changes in the operation of the OMU have led to an improvement in performance and this is recognized by the reduction in the number of applications to the Board.

An exercise to increase the number of OMU staff is being undertaken to cope with the additional 501 prisoners who will arrive later in 2016.

## OASYS

On average approximately 91% of prisoners have an up-to-date Oasys report. However, a number of prisoners arrive at the prison either without reports or without their report being updated. Plans for the forthcoming year are to exceed the current high performance level. The Board are now confident that the OMU and its functions of public protection in terms of providing accurate / defensible risk assessments is at the forefront of all employed in the department.

## **6.8** Lifer/ ISP (Indeterminate Sentenced Prisoners)

There are 123 Indeterminate Sentenced Prisoners at Oakwood of which 68 are Lifers. There are regular monthly meetings held to address the specific issues raised for this class of prisoner. These meetings are well attended by the required Heads of Department, Probation, OMU and Prisoner representatives from the respective House Units on which ISP's are held.

## **6.9** Prison Complaints

By end of March the figure for the year was 1911.

During the year a number of complaints were looked at by the Board and all indicated that the reply was factual and satisfactory.

## **6.10** Security

The Board monitors all aspects of security and is complementary of the standards achieved and the focus paid to security by the numerous prompts and posters displayed around the staff movement areas.

All visitors are searched and staff searches are frequent, unannounced and unpredictable, with various levels of success. They remain a deterrent against unlawful items entering the prison.

The Board is satisfied that the Security Department is constantly working to ensure the security of all who reside and work at Oakwood.

The Board is kept aware of all relevant security initiatives within the prison and understands the new challenges of drones flying contraband into the prison and the increase in the use of Black Mamba and other so called legal high drugs within the prison.

Oakwood is designated as a security dog training centre.

#### **6.11 Visitor and Visits Centre**

Within the reporting period the prison received 58349 visitors and a further 2803 legal visitors. There were 1868 video linked broadcasts between solicitors, courts and prisoners.

Family Days, facilitated by HALOW (Help & Advice Line for Offender's Wives, Partners and Families) are held monthly where food, fun and games are held around a central theme. Families can have closer time together and fathers are encouraged to play with their children. Baby bonding sessions have been facilitated and more are planned. These visits take place in a more relaxed environment and have proved successful.

Four family events have been held in the school holidays. An average of fifteen families attended each session with play activities for the children sponsored by HALOW and Barnardo's.

HALOW report that the satisfaction surveys conducted rate the Visitor centre and visits hall as being very successful and achieve high marks in all areas, with quotes that it is 'possibly the best visitor centre in the Midlands'.

#### **6.12 Health & Safety Department.**

The Board notes that Health and Safety is paramount within the prison. Standards have continued to rise considerably making Oakwood a safer place for both prisoners and staff.

Throughout the reporting period major construction work has taken place on the former football pitch at the far end of the prison estate. This has caused minimal inconvenience to the regime because of careful planning, despite all the contractors and specialist equipment entering the prison.

#### **6.13 Shannon Trust**

The Board recognises the support given by the Senior Management Team for the Shannon Trust charity's prisoner-led reading scheme, which has undergone significant change and development during the reporting year with the introduction of newly appointed reading plan leads to coordinate the mentors, learners and training sessions which are attended by volunteers from The Shannon Trust. Paid co-ordinators are now employed on the main house blocks. There are currently seventeen learners within the prison. The Trust has good engagement with Milton Keynes College, the Library, Gym and OMU and meets with key staff monthly at the Performance & Delivery Review meetings to continually explore ways of further supporting men in Oakwood to develop their reading skills.

#### **6.14 The Cordial Group**

The Board appreciates the work of the Cordial Group, which is a prisoner-led group who meet fortnightly with isolated prisoners who have limited support within prison and externally.

## **Section 7 –THE WORK OF THE IMB BOARD**

**7.1** The Oakwood Board has suffered from a higher than expected churn of members, some of whom were dual boarders who have returned to their donor Board. This has left a skill gap and had increased the workload of the remaining members. Normal monitoring duties have been carried out throughout the year but attendance at meetings has had to be reduced drastically in favour of mentoring duties.

The Board in conjunction with the Secretariat has developed a successful recruitment campaign for Oakwood. As a result, a total of eleven new members have joined the Board. The induction process, with the agreement of G4S, took place on a Saturday morning in a block training session, which developed a bonding between all new members and achieved the desired effect of reducing demand on our Clerk by incurring just one visit rather than eleven separate visits in order to complete the relevant paperwork and induct the new members.

Throughout this year the personal commitment of the Board members past and present has been above and beyond that expected in one of the United Kingdom's largest prisons. The dedication has been unique. The Board also expresses its gratitude to G4S for the continued provision of the IMB Clerk whose work and assistance has been gratefully appreciated by the Board and acknowledged by the Secretariat.

Within this reporting period the Board has implemented a more effective Rota plan that achieves maximum contact between prisoners and IMB members on the wings by targeting house blocks on specific days of the week. This has given a greater credibility to the IMB - 'more visibility', 'more active' and 'more approachable' as stated by the prisoners themselves.

It was with regret however, that the Board at Oakwood was unable to publish an Annual Report for the period of 2014/15. It was felt that between three active members only during the end of this period that the Board should concentrate on monitoring, with any urgent needs of prisoners taking preference.

### **7.2 BOARD STATISTICS**

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Recommended Complement of Board Members                                  | 20+  |
| Number of Board trained members at the start of the reporting period     | 4    |
| Number of Board probationer members at the start of the reporting period | 2    |
| Number of new members joining within the reporting period                | 12   |
| Number of members leaving within reporting period                        | 1    |
| Total number of Board meetings during reporting period                   | 12   |
| Total number of visits to the Establishment(excluding Board meetings)    | 421  |
| Total number of segregation reviews held                                 | 461  |
| Total number of segregation reviews attended                             | 461  |
| Date of Annual Team Performance Review                                   | June |

### 7.3 **IMB APPLICATIONS**

This year's applications have followed the trend of previous years. In a number of cases however, prisoners try to short cut the system and complete a Confidential Access Complaint Form to the IMB Chair without first going through the Prisoner Complaint System and the IMB Application process. This has led to a rise in Confidential Access Forms for the Board. After analysis the Board receives on average just one valid Confidential Access Form per week.

The Board continues to spend a considerable amount of time trying to repatriate prisoners with their property after transfer from other prisons. This the fourth operational year of this prison and the issue is bigger now than it has ever been. The cost to HMP and G4S is considerable and unnecessary

The Board are concerned that 116 complaints were aligned with issues with Healthcare; this is frustrating as the NHS operate their own complaint system which appears not to be answering the original Healthcare complaint and the IMB applications are being used to try to get the IMB to arbitrate.

Sentence related issues have decreased but remain associated with the lack of information received about prisoner sentence plans when transferring into the prison.

| CODE | SUBJECT   | YEAR 13 | YEAR 14 | YEAR 15 | YEAR 16 |
|------|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| A    | Accommodation   | 4       | 8       | N/A     | 5       |
| B    | Adjudications   | 3       | 4       | N/A     | 9       |
| C    | Equality & Diversity (inc. religion )                                 | 11      | 19      | N/A     | 6       |
| D    | Education /employment /training inc. IEP                              | 24      | 29      | N/A     | 9       |
| E1   | Family/visits inc. mail & phone                                       | 29      | 41      | N/A     | 22      |
| E2   | Finance/pay   | 20      | 41      | N/A     | 22      |
| F    | Food/kitchen related  | 24      | 19      | N/A     | 13      |
| G    | Health related  | 91      | 116     | N/A     | 88      |
| H1   | Property (within current establishment)                               | 58      | 40      | N/A     | 23      |
| H2   | Property(during transfer/in another establishment                     | 24      | 46      | N/A     | 75      |
| H3   | Canteen, facilities, Catalogue shopping, Argos                        | 13      | 8       | N/A     | 3       |
| I    | Sentence related (inc. HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-cat etc.) | 110     | 119     | N/A     | 50      |
| J    | Staff/prisoner/detainee concerns inc. bullying                        | 57      | 96      | N/A     | 6       |
| K    | Transfers   | 16      | 16      | N/A     | 15      |
| L    | Miscellaneous   | 60      | 21      | N/A     | 37      |