



**Annual Report**  
of the  
**Independent Monitoring Board**  
at  
**HM YOI Cookham Wood**

**1<sup>st</sup> August 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2017**

**Published  
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*Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody*

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### 1 STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB

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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.

## 2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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### Introduction

This report presents the findings of the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) at HM Young Offenders' Institution (YOI) Cookham Wood for the period 1<sup>st</sup> August 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2017. In this period IMB members made 312 visits to Cookham Wood. IMB evidence comes from observations made on visits, scrutiny of records and of data, informal contact with boys and staff, and applications by boys to speak to the IMB.

### Main judgements

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From March to July, the boys were subjected to very frequent but unpredictable regime restrictions, caused by shortage of uniformed staff. They spent far too much time in their cells, and far too little time in purposeful activity. This led to frustration and, in the IMB's view, to increased violence. This is the context for all the IMB's judgements below.

#### Are prisoners treated fairly?

Staff are fair and their relationship with the boys is good. But unpredictable regime changes feel unfair and inequitable to the boys affected. Boys in the Cedar complex needs unit have been particularly aggrieved (see section 6.6). There is an onus on staff to explain and reassure.

Boys complain that their "Request and Application" forms get lost in the system: there needs to be a proper tracking system (5.5).

The high number of adjudications has led to a backlog, and delays in hearings (6.1).

Peer support volunteers reassure boys about the fairness of the system (and speak up for them about unfairness): more are needed (5.1).

#### Are prisoners treated humanely?

Staff are caring, with a sympathetic understanding of the boys' needs. There is no deliberately inhumane treatment.

But pressures on the system have led to inhumane outcomes for boys this year – in particular, unacceptably long periods of time locked in their cells and reduced access to agency support services.

Frequent, unpredictable regime restrictions have been upsetting and depressing for the boys (7.8 – 7.10).

Boys have often missed Health and Wellbeing and dental appointments because of a lack of escort officers. (8.1 – 8.3)

Lockdowns have inhibited agency access to vulnerable boys in the Phoenix segregation unit (6.3).

The B1 Progression Landing is under-staffed. As a result, even without regime restrictions, boys there have far too little time out of their cells and too few visits from Health and Wellbeing, Forensic Psychology and other support agencies (6.4).

Keeping boys with very severe mental health difficulties at Cookham Wood is inhumane: they cannot be properly supported here with insufficient appropriate specialist healthcare staffing (6.7 and 8.2).

In the IMB's view, the built environment and very poor facilities in the Phoenix segregation unit are inhumane (6.3 and 7.2).

## **Are prisoners prepared well for their release?**

Education is key to the boys' preparation for release.

The quality and range of educational provision at Cookham Wood is very good, and overall educational achievement improved significantly this year.

But shortage of officers led to regular half-day and full day closures of the education block (7.7) and attendance at education dropped very significantly in May and June (9.1).

## **Main Areas for Development**

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Development is urgently required in 4 areas:

- **Regime delivery** (7.1 – 7.12). The boys need, and are entitled to, a full and consistent regime, providing them with at least 8 hours time out of cell on weekdays and 5 hours at weekends. In the IMB's view, this will require an increase in officer numbers to the benchmark level.
- **Care for boys with severe mental health difficulties** (6.7, 8.2.1). These boys cannot be supported properly in YOIs; there needs to be specialist national provision.
- **Timely estate maintenance and repairs**, particularly where there is a health and safety risk (7.4 - 7.5). In particular, **assurance that the Fire Alarm is fully functional at all times** and that there are rigorous inspection protocols to guarantee its functionality (4.4).
- **Violence reduction**: improved resourcing of the B1 **Progression Programme**, so that its boys have more time out of their cells and more purposeful activity (6.4).

### **TO THE MINISTER**

- **What will be done to help Cookham Wood achieve and maintain its benchmark staffing level?**
- **What will be done about the lack of provision nationally to meet the needs of young prisoners with very severe mental health difficulties?**

### **TO THE PRISON SERVICE**

- **What can be done to monitor and assure the timeliness of repairs?**
- **Can the IMB be assured that the Cookham Wood fire alarm system is fully functional and fit for purpose, and that there are rigorous inspection procedures to keep it so?**

### **TO THE GOVERNOR**

- **What will be done to ensure that all boys receive more time out of cell in the coming year? How will this be monitored?**
- **What will be done to enrich the Progression Programme, so that its boys have more purposeful activity and more agency contact?**

## **Improvements**

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**Behavioural Intervention Team trainers, Conflict Resolution mediators and Kinetic youth workers** are making a valuable contribution to reducing violence (6.4).

Management oversight and direction of the **Progression Programme** has become much tighter. **GOoD segregation reviews** are imaginative, child friendly, action-focussed and genuinely multi-agency (6.5).

Developments in the **education** curriculum have been welcomed by the boys, and education achievement has improved significantly (9.1).

There has been increased involvement and encouragement of **peer support volunteers** across Cookham Wood (5.1).

## **3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON**

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### **3.1 Population**

Cookham Wood is one of 4 juvenile YOI's (Young Offenders' Institutions) in England and Wales. It accommodates boys aged 15 – 18 years.

It has certified accommodation for 196 boys. Its actual population, between January and June, was around 170.

It has a wide catchment area, serving courts in London, the South East, the South West, Central South, and East Anglia.

It accommodates both remand and convicted prisoners. The normal length of stay for remand prisoners is 4 – 12 weeks. The normal length of stay for convicted prisoners is 1 – 6 months, though some have sentences of 1 or 2 years and a small number have indeterminate sentences.

### **3.2 Accommodation and Facilities**

Cookham Wood was built in the 1970s, but has excellent new residential accommodation and a new education block, both opened in 2014.

The new accommodation block has 179 single cells, each with its own telephone and shower, spread over 6 landings.

2 specialist units are housed in old 1970s accommodation: the Phoenix care and separation (segregation) unit (7 single cells), and the Cedar enhanced support unit for boys with complex needs (17 single cells).

Since April 2016, one of the residential landings, B1 has been dedicated to running a Progression Programme for boys who are persistently disruptive and violent.

### **3.3 Agency support**

Primary Healthcare nursing services are delivered by Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust.

Mental Health Services (Health and Wellbeing) are delivered by the Central and North West London Foundation Trust.

Addaction provide Cookham Wood's substance misuse service.

The education provider is Novus.

Youth work is provided by Kinetic Youth Work services.

The Resettlement Team includes case workers from the Medway Youth Offending Team (YOT) as well as prison staff.

A Social Work Team provides child protection oversight and Looked after Children (LAC) support.

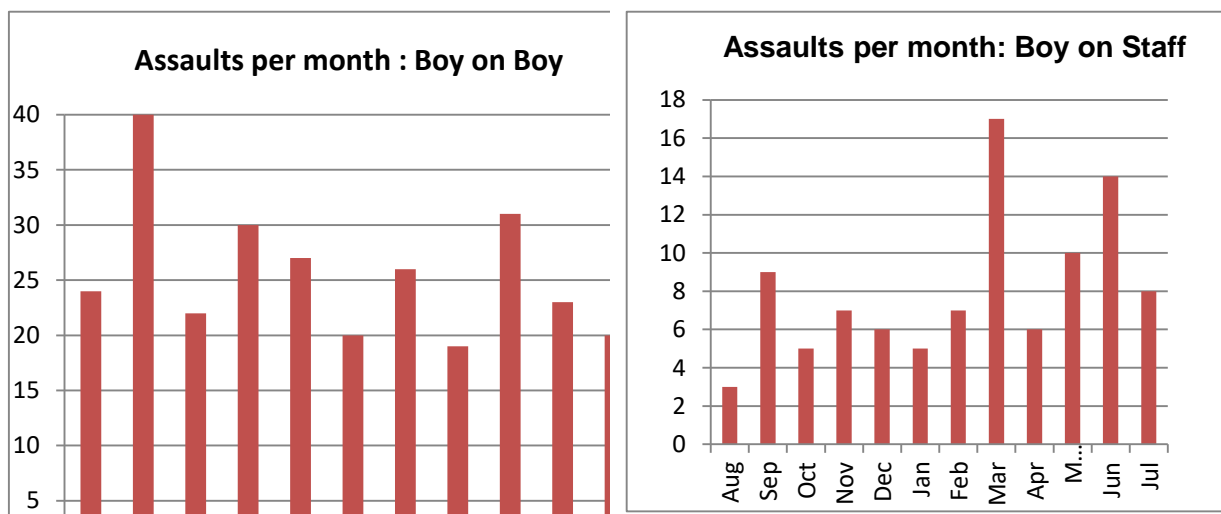
Barnados provide independent advocacy support to the young people.

The maintenance and repair contractor is Carillion.

### 4 SAFETY

#### 4.1 Safety of boys

Last year's HMIP report (September 2016) stated that "boys felt safer than at other YOIs". Since then, an increasing number of boys have told the IMB that they feel unsafe. This change in the boys' feelings reflected a year where violence was a serious issue.



#### 4.2 Violence

During 2016-2017 there were regular, on-going incidents of violence in the prison. Staff shortages resulted in frequent regime restrictions and lack of association time. This caused mounting frustration and, in the IMB's opinion, increased the risk of violence when boys were out of their cells.

The most significant of these incidents are tabulated below:

Date	Incident
October 2016	16 boys were involved in a fight on an exercise yard
November 2016	A member of healthcare staff was very badly injured in an assault.
During March 2017	A staff member was dragged into a cell and assaulted
	A teacher was assaulted with a chair sustaining a broken arm
	A serious incident on an exercise yard when a young person was taken hostage
During April 2017	2 serious incidents on exercise yards including a hostage taking
	Brawl during which 8 officers were injured.

In May and June 2017 some boys were found to have improvised weapons in their cells and there were several incidents of fires being started. Exercise yard fights continued in July 2017, and there were gang issues between 2 landings.

IMB members attended the weekly Risk Minimisation (Managing and Minimising Physical Restraint - MMPR) meetings at which video recordings of restraint are reviewed and discussed. They were satisfied that the Use of Force by officers in response to violence was appropriate and necessary for the safety of the boys.

The IMB strongly supported the Governor and his staff in their initiatives to reduce violence. These included the development of the Progression Programme on B1 landing, discussed in detail in sections 6.4 and 6.5 below. This Programme greatly



improved over the year, but its staffing level remained inadequate, and boys on B1 had too little time out of cell and purposeful activity.

The management of the B1 Progressive Programme, the Segregation Unit and Cedar Unit (for vulnerable boys), was brought under a single management and staffing structure in June 2017.

#### **4.3 Staff Shortages and their impact on the boys**

IMB rota reports in 8 months of the reporting year raised specific concerns about the regime restrictions caused by staff shortages across the prison, and specifically the impact on B1 and the Cedar Unit.

Details are given in sections 7.7 to 7.12 below.

In April 2017 the IMB chair wrote to the Governor and Deputy Director of Custody regarding the impact of staffing levels, and consequent regime restrictions, on boys across Cookham Wood. Board concerns about the situation continued and in June 2017 the Chair wrote to the Secretary of State for Justice drawing his attention to the situation.

#### **4.4 Fire Safety**

The reliability of the fire alarm system in the main residential block, housing around 150 boys, was a major concern to the IMB. The timeline for the main events is set out below:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>
October '16	IMB observe that fire alarm is faulty and alert staff.
November '16	IMB highlight to the Governor at Board meeting that fire alarm is regularly showing a large number of faults.
December '16	Alarm still faulty. Works contractor chased for action. Staff awareness raised and they make routine checks.
January '17	IMB Chair writes to Deputy Director of Custody explaining the issues identified and requesting action.
February '17	IMB Chair writes to the Secretary of State for Justice detailing the problem and setting out the IMB's real and immediate fears for the safety of the boys.
February '17 onwards	The alarm system is now checked daily and faults rectified by the contractor. But faults on the system continue.

A key concern of the IMB remains that its members do not know the number of cells which are without fire alarm cover at any one time. It was reported that, at times, up to nine cells were not covered. Taking this into account, and bearing in mind the risk of fire-setting by some boys and particularly the reduced staff numbers at night, the IMB remains fearful for the safety of the boys. It is vital and of paramount importance that the building be fitted with a fully functional and working fire alarm system to ensure the safety of those who live, work and sleep there.

#### **4.5 Late evening arrivals to Cookham**

Transport and late arrivals continued to be an issue for boys arriving at Cookham Wood. Boys arrived late at the prison, many being transferred after long waits in London courts. In addition, on occasions boys were transported on vehicles shared with adult prisoners which raises safeguarding issues.

New arrivals often came without the report paperwork, known as E-Asset, being completed by their 'home' Youth Offending Team. This presented a problem as the information contained in E-Asset informs the risk assessment process.

Notwithstanding this, the reception process worked well; all boys were seen by a member of staff, processed in a timely manner and transferred to the induction wing (B3). Arrangements were in place for late arrivals to receive a meal.

Assessment and healthcare support was excellent. 100% of arrivals during the reporting year were assessed using the CHAT (Comprehensive Health Assessment Tool) in the reception area; the on call arrangement to assess arrivals after 21.00 worked efficiently.

#### **4.6 Induction**

The induction of new arrivals at Cookham Wood was good throughout the year.

#### **4.7 Safeguarding**

During the year the quarterly and monthly safeguarding meetings were frequently cancelled and rearranged at short notice, sometimes in response to staffing levels and other pressures within the prison. As a result attendance at these meetings was variable. This presents a potential safeguarding risk.

#### **4.8 Searching**

In February 2017 the IMB raised concerns about the daily full body searching of all boys on return from ROTL. The IMB protested to the governor, Safeguarding Board and Security managers. This routine searching ended in March 2017. All searches are now intelligence led.

#### **4.9 Self Harm and Suicide Prevention (SASH)**

The excellent SASH training programme was introduced during the reporting period. It was available to all staff groups, raising awareness of the vulnerability of the boys.

There were no Deaths in Custody during the reporting year. An inquest into the tragic death of a boy during 2015 found that he died of natural causes. Recommendations from the Coroner's report were fully implemented.

#### **4.10 Prohibited items and radicalisation**

There were no major issues with drug, alcohol or phones being brought into the prison. The IMB had no concerns about radicalisation at Cookham Wood: there was no evidence of attempts to radicalise boys and the chaplaincy team are very active and alert to the risk.

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## **5 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS**

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### **5.1 Diversity and Discrimination**

Cookham Wood has a very diverse population. Its boys differ in their age, ethnicity, nationality, religious faith, and (widely) in their individual abilities and needs. All the boys have a passionate belief in their right to be treated fairly. Some, however, have a limited understanding of their need to respect others' feelings and vulnerabilities: it is part of Cookham Wood's role to help them develop this understanding.

The DIRF (Discriminatory Incident Referral Form) system is little used by the boys. Only 5 DIRFs were submitted by boys in the 9 months August 2016 – March 2017 (32 were submitted by staff). The IMB does not believe that this lack of reporting hides discriminatory behaviour by staff. Boys do not allege such behaviour to IMB members

and members see no evidence of it (quite the reverse: staff are seen to be patient and caring). There is no disproportionality in reports for adjudication.

Discriminatory behaviour (chiefly name calling) between boys is another matter: an ongoing problem, which is treated differently by different staff members. It needs to be challenged consistently in all cases.

Boys need peer support to help them challenge discrimination and sympathise with each other. The IMB is pleased that, by the end of this year, there were 5 Young People's Equality Representatives, one for each main Residential Landing. This is part of the increased involvement of peer support volunteers across the prison (in education and health and wellbeing and on the induction landing) – a very healthy development. In addition to supporting and advising boys on their landings, the Representatives help the Equalities Officer organise focus groups and promote diversity events.

## **5.2 Religion**

Most of the boys (around 70%) say they have a religious faith. Cookham Wood respects and encourages this. Weekly religious services are not affected by regime restrictions and are well attended (including, where it is safe, by boys who are otherwise segregated). Support for boys observing Ramadan (32 this year) was outstanding.

The chaplains provide high quality pastoral care for all the boys. Their support for boys in crisis (particularly those who are suffering bereavement or family trauma – sadly not uncommon) is indispensable. The chaplains are well liked and respected.

## **5.3 Family, Carers and Visits**

The boys generally have good contact with their families and carers. All boys in the Residential block and the Cedar Unit have private telephones in their room, for calls to security-cleared numbers ("PIN numbers"). But new boys often complain that clearance of their "PIN numbers" takes too long, meaning they cannot call friends and family on their room phones for days after their arrival. Clearance of new boys' PIN numbers (which is done by their local YOT workers) should be a top priority.

All boys are entitled to weekly visits (and boys on remand can have up to 3). Visits days are pleasant and welcoming. IMB members talk to visitors and they all say the officers are courteous and helpful. The IMB is pleased that there were more "family days" (additional to normal visits, with more activities) this year: they are now held monthly and are open to boys on standard regime, not just to those on "enhanced". The boys think they are great.

The Casework team keeps in close contact with boys' families and carers, and invites them to sentence planning meetings.

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## **5.4 Behaviour – Rewards and Sanctions**

Cookham Wood punishes day-to-day bad behaviour, and encourages good behaviour, by its rewards and sanctions ("IEP") scheme, which is administered by Supervisory Officers. Any member of staff witnessing bad behaviour can issue a boy with a yellow card. If the Residential Supervisory Officer considers the yellow card justified, he/she will speak with the boy and issue a short/sharp sanction (loss of one or more privileges for up to 3 days). A boy who receives repeated yellow card sanctions may have his privilege level ("regime level") downgraded for a longer period (reviewed weekly). Boys who assault others are automatically downgraded to "basic" regime level.

It could be expected that such a system would lead to complaints of unfairness and inconsistency. The IMB finds that this is not the case. The boys understand and accept IEP sanctions. The key is that they receive an immediate personal explanation from a

Supervisory Officer who they know and who knows them. Downgrading to Basic regime is frequent but is accompanied by a clear behaviour plan and rarely lasts more than a week.

Looking at the “reward” side of IEP, the IMB found that there was an increase in the number of green “instant reward” cards issued last year and that boys are strongly encouraged to work for upgrading to “enhanced” regime level.

### **5.5 Prison Complaints and Requests processes**

Boys’ complaints are investigated promptly and thoroughly. However some boys have complained to the IMB that they have not received an appropriate response/explanation of their complaint – albeit that it has been investigated thoroughly by the prison.

Boys often complain that their “Request and Application” forms get lost in the system. A new, tighter system for recording, tracking and monitoring applications is planned but not yet in place.

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## **6 ADJUDICATION, SEGREGATION, CARE AND SEPARATION**

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### **6.1 Adjudications**

There was much violent and disruptive behaviour by a minority of the boys this year (see section 4.1 above). Because of this, the number of adjudications (hearings of disciplinary charges against boys by a governor) remained very high.

The most common charges brought to adjudication were assault, fighting, causing damage, having unauthorised articles (mainly improvised weapons), and making threats. The IMB did not find that adjudication was used for minor matters (these were dealt with through the IEP system, section 5.4 above).

There was increased referral of serious assaults to the police for criminal investigation and charges. The IMB strongly supports this.

The IMB does not routinely attend adjudication hearings. Those hearings IMB members did attend were fair, and the punishments awarded were appropriate and consistent. However, the high number of adjudications led to delays. After charges were laid (within 48 hours), cases were often remanded for up to 6 weeks for a full hearing. Eventually some were not proceeded with because of the lapse of time.

### **6.2 Segregation**

Clearly, when boys are so violent that they present a real and immediate threat to others, it is necessary to separate them for a period (“GOoD” segregation). Equally clearly, this period must be as short as possible and used productively, working with the boys to reduce their risk. Cookham Wood has a small segregation unit, Phoenix, housing up to 7 boys, and a larger “separation” unit, the B1 Progression landing.

### **6.3 Phoenix**

There was reduced use of the Phoenix unit for segregation this year. There were generally 5 or 6 boys in the unit, dropping to an average of 3 boys in July.

However, since Stages 1 and 2 of the Progression Programme also involve segregation (see 6.4 below), the overall number of segregated boys was not reduced.

Because Phoenix has a much higher staff ratio, the most high risk boys tend to be segregated there first.

Most boys stayed in Phoenix for one or two weeks, before moving to the Progression Landing. But a significant minority (9 in the 3 months April-June) stayed there for more than 3 weeks. The IMB was satisfied that this was the result of recalcitrance and threats by the boys, not risk aversion by the review board.

Nonetheless, the IMB's view is that the very poor physical environment and limited facilities in Phoenix (see section 7.2 below) make anything more than a short-term stay there harmful to boys' welfare.

When fully staffed, Phoenix provides a good segregation regime. The high staff ratio (3 officers) means there is lots of supportive one-to-one contact with the boys. There is also good agency access (Health and Wellbeing, Casework, Conflict Resolution, outreach Education).

But, because of staff shortages from March onwards, there were regular half-day lockdowns in Phoenix. These greatly inhibited agency access: visitors were obliged to talk to boys "through their doors", which was neither humane nor confidential.

#### **6.4 Progression Landing**

The Progression Landing (with much better facilities but a lower staff ratio than Phoenix) is part of the main Residential Block. It delivers the Progression Programme, designed to challenge, support and reintegrate persistently violent boys. The Programme moves boys through assessment, intervention support and outreach education, to exercise and association with other landings and rejoining mainstream education. Its aim is to return boys to a normal landing and full regime within 4 weeks. Boys who progress well can complete the Programme, and return to a normal landing and regime, in 17 days.

Stages 1 and 2 of the Progression Programme (normally the first 2 weeks but it can be shorter) are treated as GOoD segregation and monitored and reviewed accordingly.

Boys can be segregated directly onto the Progression landing, joining the Programme at Stage 1. Or they can move onto the landing at Stage 2 of the Programme from Phoenix.

When regime restrictions permit, there is a good range of specialist support available. The involvement of Behavioural Intervention Team trainers and Conflict resolution mediators has been particularly valuable. The work of landing officers, Kinetic youth workers and these specialists has become much more joined-up.

Nonetheless, there is still very limited time out of cell for the boys, particularly in their first 2 weeks. There are 3 landing officers and, for much of the time, over 20 boys on the landing (all of them needy and often boisterous). This is a far lower ratio than is usual in Care and Separation Units. Relations between the officers and boys are good, but the officers are often rushed off their feet and have very little time for one-to-one work.

The problem is compounded by a lack of meeting rooms on the landing (a portakabin has been added, and should resolve this, but was not in use by July). Health and Wellbeing, Forensic Psychology and other agencies found it difficult to access boys for meetings in their first week: these meetings should provide the foundation for the boys' PACT (personal development) plans.

The IMB is concerned that boys on the Progression Programme have too little time out of cell, too little purposeful activity, and too few counselling and support meetings.

## **6.5 GOoD and Progression Programme reviews**

GOoD segregation reviews are held weekly. An IMB member attends, and all the prison agencies are usually represented on the Review Board. The boys are usually present. The reviews are very well conducted: the IMB finds them to be careful, helpful, imaginative and child-friendly.

In addition to attending the reviews, IMB members visit the Phoenix Unit and Progression Landing weekly and speak personally to all segregated boys (though again due to staffing restrictions – at times this has needed to be done through cell doors).

In its Report last year, the IMB raised concerns about lack of management oversight and direction on the Progression Programme. It no longer has these concerns. GOoD safeguards and standards apply on Stages 1 and 2 of the Progression Programme and there are weekly reviews thereafter. There is multi-agency support for the boys' PACT plans. The Programme can be, and is, tailored to meet individual needs.

## **6.6 Cedar House Complex Needs Unit**

Cedar House, Cookham Wood's excellent unit for vulnerable complex needs boys, suffered regular regime restrictions from March.

When the unit is fully staffed, its boys have a full daily regime of outreach education and association. With the abstraction of officers to cover short-staffing elsewhere, this was often reduced to a half-day regime.

The boys were understandably upset, particularly when they had been promised a half day out of their cells – only for that to be withdrawn at short notice when staff needed to be re-deployed to an incident elsewhere in the prison. They believed that "we always get shut down first".

## **6.7 Boys with severe mental health difficulties**

At any given time, there is at least one boy with very severe mental health difficulties at Cookham Wood. Such boys are extremely vulnerable, and often extremely volatile and violent. They need a therapeutic environment and are virtually impossible to support properly in a YOI. This very difficult, very urgent issue is discussed in section 8.2.1 below.

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# **7. ACCOMMODATION AND REGIME**

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## **7.1: Residential and Educational accommodation**

The modern (2014) Residential and Education blocks provide high quality accommodation. The boys' cells each have a shower unit and telephone, and the wide landings and association areas are light and airy. The classrooms and workshops in the Education block are spacious and well equipped.

But other parts of the prison – in particular the Phoenix segregation unit and the gymnasium and sports facilities – are no longer fit for purpose.

## **7.2: Phoenix segregation unit**

The Phoenix segregation unit has very poor and inadequate facilities. The single brick, thin walled structure, was constructed in the 1970s. Therefore at times the rooms are subject to the extremes of the prevailing weather conditions – extremely cold cells in winter and extremely hot in summer. It has narrow corridors, poor natural light and is cramped. Many of the cells are in need of decoration. The unit has only one shower for all its boys and has air/steam extraction problems. There is a single telephone in the corridor for use by all. The

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exercise yard is very small (around 25 square metres) and lined with steel sheeting that radiates heat in the summer – it presents as a brutal, spartan environment. Despite the excellence of Phoenix staff, the IMB considers that this very poor physical environment is seriously detrimental to boys' health and wellbeing. Some boys over the course of the last year were held there for long periods (see 6.3 above).

### 7.3 Kitchen

The kitchen was partly refurbished this year, with an extension for new equipment. The cooks do a remarkable job, providing attractive, wholesome food on a meagre budget. But the kitchen floor continues to raise concerns over Health and Safety and Food Hygiene Standards. The floor level does not lend itself to good drainage so water pools and becomes a hazard.

### 7.4 Gym and exercise facilities

The gym (multi gym area) is cramped and poorly ventilated. The 5-a-side football pitch has plywood boarding around part of the perimeter that is broken and split. This is a serious health and safety hazard. This defect was reported to the contractor before the 15<sup>th</sup> June 2017 and was still awaiting repair at the end of July.

### 7.5 Delay in building repairs

The IMB has been repeatedly frustrated by inordinate delay in effecting repairs throughout the year. As an example, broken internal windows in the education block have taken over 12 weeks to be repaired by the works contractor.

### 7.6 Fire safety

By far the most serious of the IMB's concerns about accommodation this year was in relation to fire safety because of the faulty fire alarm system. This is discussed more fully at section 4.4 above.

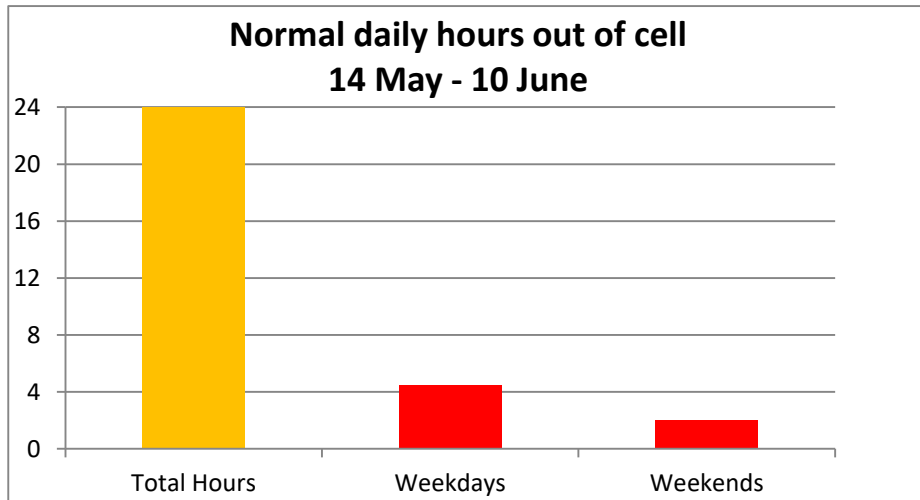
Health and safety and fire safety will be a major focus of IMB monitoring in this coming year.

### 7.7 Regime Restrictions: Time out of Cell

The "Info Guide to HMYOI Cookham Wood", given to boys on arrival, tells them that in normal circumstances, they can expect to receive 8 hours time out of cell on weekdays and 5 hours on weekends and Bank holidays. Since March they have received far less than this.

Average "core day" (Monday – Friday) education and activity time per boy **per week** was 21.4 hours in January. It dropped to 14.3 hours by May and had only recovered slightly (to 15.2 hours) by July.

The IMB made a detailed analysis of the boys' total time out of room (i.e. evenings and weekends as well as "core day") over a one month period, **14<sup>th</sup> May -10<sup>th</sup> June**. It found that the **normal daily time out of cell** for boys in the Residential Block and Cedar unit (i.e. excluding those segregated in Phoenix) was only **4-5 hours on weekdays** and **2 hours at weekends**.



There were changes in regime from day to day and regular “lockdowns” (boys confined to their cells for half a day or more).





**In June, Education was closed for 4 full days, plus 2 mornings and 3 afternoons because of lockdowns.**

Boys received less than half their timetabled association time.

### 7.8 Staffing Levels

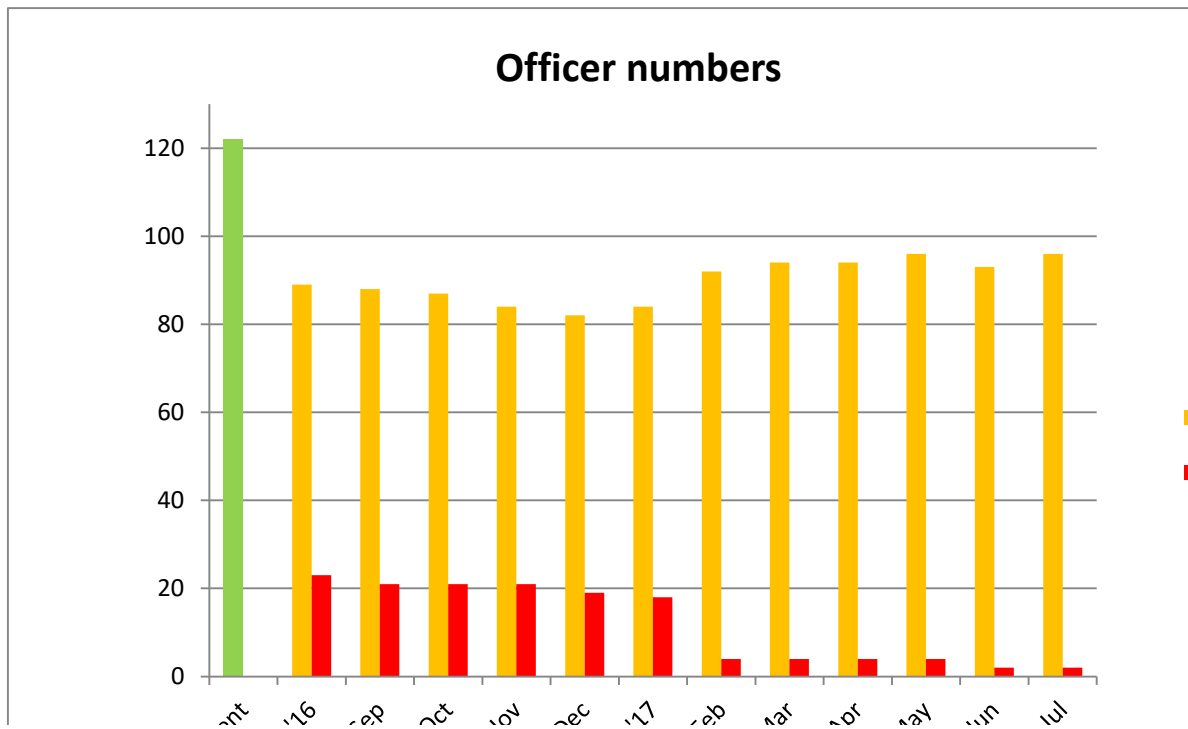
It was clear to the IMB that these repeated regime restrictions were caused by a shortage of prison officers. The benchmark number of Band 3 Prison Officers at Cookham Wood is 122. The actual number in June (including those off sick) was 96, plus 2 “detached duty” officers from other prisons.

Cookham Wood’s “Safe Systems of Work” protocol identifies 4 staffing levels:

Staffing levels	Regime Delivery	Typical staffing level
 Green	Full regime delivery with spare capacity	
 Green/Amber	“shortfalls in staff availability” but the regime can still be delivered	) Since March staffing ) has been in this range
 Amber/Red	“insufficient staff to deliver key services”	
 Red	“severe loss of services”: patrol state only	

Since March, the prison’s staffing level has been at the lower end of the Green/Amber band on most days, and frequently on the cusp of Amber/Red. This means that there is no resilience and any extra demands (incidents, escorts) inevitably trigger regime restrictions.





### 7.9 Effect of Regime Restrictions on the Boys

Boys tell the IMB that it is the unpredictability of their regime which they find particularly upsetting. They do not blame the officers. Indeed, the IMB finds that day-to-day relationships between officers and boys are good – which is strong testimony both to the professionalism and sensitivity of the officers and the patience and understanding of the boys. But many boys say that repeated regime restrictions make them angry and upset. In some boys, anger can lead to violence, and to officers being injured, which in turn exacerbates the staff shortage.

### 7.10 IMB Letter to the Secretary of State

In late June, the IMB wrote to the Secretary of State, setting out its very serious concerns about the frequent regime restrictions, and consequent much reduced time out of cell, at Cookham Wood. His reply was encouraging, detailing a local recruitment drive and the number of new officers to be posted to the prison over the next 3 months.

As at 31<sup>st</sup> July, Cookham Wood had 98 Band 3 officers, with 5 new officers due in late September and more just beginning their training. Regime restrictions continued pending the arrival of these officers.

The IMB considers that frequent restrictions to the boys' regime, such as those experienced between March and July 2017, are totally unacceptable and seriously detrimental to the boys' welfare and wellbeing.

## 8. HEALTHCARE (including mental health and social care)

Two types of healthcare services are provided.

### 8.1 Primary Care

Primary care is delivered by Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust. The service is available 07.00-21.00, and an on-call system operates for assessment of boys outside these times.

All boys arriving in the prison were assessed using CHAT. During the reporting year 100% of boys also received optometry and hearing screening; referrals to specialist services were made when a problem was identified. The health promotion programme offered immunisation and vaccination to boys who had not previously received these.

GP cover for boys is provided by Maidstone Medical Centre, the commissioned service is the same as that available to the general community. Three GP sessions are delivered during the week and one on Saturday morning. Out of hours a GP service is available via the 111 call line.

### 8.1.1 Dentist waiting times

There were serious problems with lengthy dental waiting lists, and times, throughout the year. These were a direct result of the shortage of uniformed staff to escort boys to appointments.

During the year the maximum number of boys awaiting an appointment was 91. At the end of July 2017 the waiting list was 55, of whom 42 were identified at health screening, 13 were self-referrals. The maximum wait at the end of July was 16 weeks for a routine check-up. Some boys were taking paracetamol to address dental pain for extended periods. This was concerning.

Dental clinics were changed from Fridays - as the additional movements required for boys attending Muslim prayers placed pressure on the officers carrying these out. Extra clinics were commissioned to address the backlog of dental appointments; these continue in the current year.

### 8:2 Health and Wellbeing

Health and Wellbeing services are delivered by Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust. The provision at Cookham Wood is good. The team delivered excellent general and specialist Child and Adult Mental Health Service (CAMHS). The team comprises nurses, psychiatrists, psychologists, therapists and other specialities. Recruitment and retention of a speech and language therapist has proved challenging.

Prison staff issues (e.g. lack of escort staff, lockdowns etc.), lack of meeting rooms, court attendance and other reasons led to a significant number of missed appointments during the year. These failed sessions resulted in fewer health and wellbeing interventions. This had an impact on progress in addressing mental health issues. The data shows missed appointments for the period July 1st 2016- August 31st 2017.

Reason for cancellation	Number of cancellations	Percentage cancellations
Prison staff issues	253	35%
Other (No room, etc.)	474	65%
Total	727	-

### 8.2.1: Boys with severe mental health issues

Despite the ministerial response to the IMB report of 2015/2016 explaining that the Youth Justice Board commission appropriate care pathways for boys with serious mental health problems - the issue continued to present problems during 2016/2017.

Four boys whose needs were so complex that they could not be met within the prison, despite highly professional staff who were well supported and directed by the Health and Wellbeing team, remained in Cookham Wood as no suitable placement was available anywhere in the country. This was unacceptable and highly distressing for the boys and staff involved.

As an example, one such boy transferred to Cookham Wood in December. Despite constant pleas by the mental health team, he was not allocated a place in a mental hospital until early June. From early February to late May he lived segregated in the Phoenix Unit, much of the time in its constant watch cell. He was shown kindness and sensitivity there, but his situation was heart-breaking.

The IMB very strongly believes that there should be a specialist therapeutic facility somewhere within the Youth Estate for boys with severe mental health difficulties. This situation must not be allowed to continue and must be addressed as a matter of urgency.

The current situation is exacerbated due to the lack of on-site healthcare support overnight.

### 8.3 Drug Strategy

Addaction provided an effective Young People's Substance Misuse Service to boys in Cookham Wood; however the shortage of staff to facilitate movements to appointments had a serious impact on the number of interventions delivered.

Data on appointments delivered in April, May, and June 2017 demonstrates that 50% of these were not attended. The majority of missed sessions resulted from regime restrictions imposed because of shortages of prison staff.

Appointments	Number
Appointments offered	330
Appointments cancelled	168

## 9. EDUCATION AND PREPARATION FOR RELEASE

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A comprehensive programme of education and other activities is in theory available to all boys. In reality, this provision has been impacted, severely at times, due to the poor staffing situation over the year.

### 9.1 Provision of education

The outcomes for boys in education classes are generally very good - achievement overall has improved significantly since last year. The boys generally enjoy their time in education and produce work of quality. English and mathematics feature strongly in the curriculum offered. Displays of boys' work in classrooms and in education corridors are respected. The education classrooms, housed in a purpose-built two-storey block, are well designed.

However the provision has suffered from a number of issues – prison lockdowns and class closures among them. Staffing shortages across the prison have had a significantly negative impact on boys' education and progress, especially in spring 2017. The IMB has studied the data and this shows:

Attendance rates %				
	Main Education	Cedar	Phoenix	Progression (B1)
Aug-16	78.6	95.3	77.5	54.2
Sep-16	69.4	76.9	76.3	38.9
Oct-16	76.9	75.4	91.1	69.4
Nov-16	72.7	80.1	64.8	94.0
Dec-16	76.0	83.3	57.1	76.3
Jan-17	64.3	72.2	75.7	67.8
Feb-17	76.4	64.6	76.4	91.5
Mar-17	62.3	61.7	38.5	64.7
Apr-17	58.6	50.4	36.3	66.3
May-17	45.0	41.3	25.0	39.1
Jun-17	43.9	43.6	32.3	32.3
Jul-17	63.2	49.8	65.5	60.5
Average	65.6	66.2	59.7	62.9

Those on segregation in Phoenix and the Progression Wing have received much less education by comparison with the boys in main education (not least as their timetabled sessions are much shorter). Of particular concern is the period from late spring into early summer when the available attendances dipped to a very low value due to the staffing problems in the prison.

## 9.2 Allocation to classes and movements

Allocations to education have suffered delays at times, with boys having to wait in their rooms for an Allocations Meeting before they could be given an appropriate education pathway. While in theory it happens twice-weekly, the allocations meeting has not always been able to operate when there have been shortages of staff – and thus boys have not been able to be allocated to appropriate pathways. A further issue for many boys is the long list of ‘keep-aparts’ which hampers the allocations to education classes.

The movements of boys from their rooms to education classes have been slow, typically over 30 minutes. This improved to 15 to 20 minutes in March and April, but by the end of July had regressed and remains stubbornly around 30 minutes – thus wasting the time available for classes.

## 9.3. Distance Learning

For the boys who are more able, the standard offer for education does not meet their needs. Accordingly distance learning for higher level qualifications is available and this offer is now improved compared to previous years.

## 9.4 Vocational pathways

Initially there was considerable resistance from the security team to consider appropriate higher level vocational courses – due to concerns relating to the use of the equipment needed for safety reasons. By July, these were slowly getting progressed. Examples include plans for Horticulture and a Barista Cafe.

## 9.5 Library

The library is located in the main education block and for those boys in mainstream education this is satisfactory since access is made available within education time. For boys located elsewhere including Phoenix and the Progression Landing B1, where no mainstream education time is programmed, access to library facilities is much more

challenging.

Staff have implemented a 'work around' using a library booklet and lists of resources available. Staff endeavour to make this work for the boys, but outcomes are 'hit & miss'. Not surprisingly the IMB has had complaints from segregated boys asking for access to books.

### 9.6 Physical Education

The gym regime has been sporadic throughout the year – due to staffing concerns. Gym sessions were often cancelled. No accredited PE courses have been offered.

The latter part of the year saw a worsening of staff resources for physical education. In particular, weekend gym access went through periods of being poor. Recruitment of specialist staff is underway but has been slow.

One initiative, which is welcome, is that the Duke of Edinburgh award has started, albeit at this stage for just a few boys.

### 9.7 Healthy Living

- Exercise data – weak and often fails to show individual boys who refuse consistently.
- Poor access to gym and recreational sports has been a feature throughout the year due to the poor staffing and prison shutdowns.
- No competitive team games have been arranged beyond the boys playing against their peers.

### 9.8 Cultural Activities

The boys are from many and varied diverse backgrounds. This provides an excellent starting point for cultural activities. Both within education and during activities, cultural issues are addressed and these are good. A number of celebrations take place each year. In addition religious festivals (e.g. Ramadan) provide the background for further events.

### 9.9 ROTL (Release on temporary licence)

Provision of ROTL opportunities improved in the reporting year. However, relative to the total number of boys at Cookham Wood during the year, this is still a tiny proportion – with an average of just over 6 boys participating per month.

	<b>No. of boys on ROTL per month</b>
Aug-16	8
Sep-16	6
Oct-16	4
Nov-16	4
Dec-16	7
Jan-17	7
Feb-17	8
Mar-17	9
Apr-17	8
May-17	5
Jun-17	2
Jul-17	7
<b>Average per month</b>	<b>6.25</b>



## C Section – Work of Board

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### **Rota Visits and Segregation Reviews**

In total, the IMB made 312 visits to Cookham Wood in this reporting year.

Board members made 2 rota visits to Cookham Wood each week; the days and times of visits varied. The first visit followed the standard IMB schedule, but the second was more flexible: its purpose was to follow up issues raised by the first visit, to dig deeper into priority areas, and to engage directly with the young people.

Board members attended weekly GOoD segregation reviews. It was not always possible to attend the first (72 hour) review, but all segregated young people were seen within 72 hours. Members attended 319 GOoD reviews in this reporting year.

### **Recruitment**

By July, the number of IMB Board members at Cookham Wood had dropped to 6. This is a pressing concern. The recommended complement of Board members is 10.

The Board runs regular recruitment campaigns.

<b>BOARD STATISTICS</b>	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	10
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	8
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	6
Total number of visits to the Establishment	312
Total number of segregation reviews attended	319

### **Letters to Secretary of State**

The Board wrote twice to the Secretary of State for Justice this year, expressing its serious concerns about Fire Safety (see section 4.4 above), and about the impact of regime restrictions at Cookham Wood (section 7.7 -7.12 above).

## D Section - Applications

Boxes and forms for written applications to speak to the IMB were displayed in all residential areas. Members also encouraged verbal applications in the course of their rota visits.

The concerns raised by applications were examined in a timely way and an explanation of the outcome given personally to the young person.

The number of written applications by boys to speak to the IMB doubled this year - but still only averaged one a week.

Code	Subject	Current reporting year	Previous reporting year
A	Accommodation including laundry, clothing, ablutions	9	0
B	Discipline including adjudications, IEP, sanctions	7	-
C	Equality	0	2
D	Purposeful Activity including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	14	-
E 1	Letters, visits, phones, public protection restrictions	5	-
E 2	Finance including pay, private monies, spends	1	0
F	Food and kitchens	3	4
G	Health including physical, mental, social care	3	3
H 1	Property within this establishment	0	2
H 2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location	0	0
H 3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	0	0
I	Sentence management including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-categorisation	0	0
J	Staff/prisoner concerns including bullying	11	4
K	Transfers	0	0
	<b>Total number of IMB applications</b>	53	(24)

Note: The definitions for categories B, D and E1 have changed for this year.