

**ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD
FOR HMP GLOUCESTER**

1 December 2009 - 30 November 2010

SECTION 1**Table of Contents**

SECTION 2	Statutory role of the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB)	page 3
SECTION 3	IMB Gloucester's Diversity Statement	page 3
SECTION 4	Description of HMP Gloucester	page 4
SECTION 5	Executive Summary	
	5.1 Particular issues requiring a response - Policy	page 5
	5.2 Particular issues requiring a response - Operations	page 7
	5.3 Particular issues requiring a response - Secretariat	page 7
	5.4 Particular issues of concern or excellence not requiring a response	page 7
	5.5 Overall judgement	page 8
SECTION 6	Areas that must be reported on	
	6.1 Diversity	page 9
	6.2 Learning & Skills	page 10
	6.3 Healthcare & Mental Health	page 12
	6.4 Safer Custody	page 16
	6.5 Segregation, Vulnerable Prisoner & Young Offender Units	page 17
SECTION 7	Other areas on which the Board has matters to report	
	7.1 Accommodation	page 20
	7.2 Catering & Kitchens	page 21
	7.3 Chaplaincy	page 22
	7.4 Effects of Financial Climate	page 22
	7.5 Physical Education	page 24
	7.6 Offender Management Unit	page 24
	7.7 Prisoners' Property	page 25
	7.8 Regimes	page 26
	7.9 Restorative Justice	page 26
	7.10 Visits	page 27
SECTION 8	The work of the Independent Monitoring Board	page 28
SECTION 9	Glossary of Abbreviations	page 31
APPENDICES	A Private & Public Sector Partners	page 32
	B Board Statistics	page 34
	C Analysis of Prisoners' Applications	page 35

SECTION 2 Statutory role of the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB)

The Prisons Act 1952 and the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 require every prison and Immigration Removal Centre (IRC) to be monitored by an independent Board appointed by the Secretary of State for Justice from members of the community in which the prison or centre is situated.

The Board is specifically charged to:

- satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody within its prison and the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release.
- inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom he has delegated authority as it judges appropriate, any concern it has.
- report annually to the Secretary of State on how well the prison has met the standards and requirements placed on it and what impact these have on those in its custody.

To enable the Board to carry out these duties effectively its members have right of access to every prisoner and every part of the prison and also to the prison's records.

SECTION 3 IMB Gloucester's Diversity Statement

3.1 The IMB at HMP Gloucester is committed to view the diversity of individuals and groups within society in a way that can increase mutual understanding and encourage positive interaction. It is particularly mindful of differences of age, disability, gender, marital status, nationality, race, religion and sexuality and of features that can affect people of many backgrounds such as drug addiction, mental ill-health and educational problems.

3.2 This inclusive approach to diversity influences the Board's recruitment and Board development practices. Through it, the Board seeks to increase its range of skills and to foster members' awareness of the wide-ranging needs and perspectives of prisoners and staff alike.

3.3 All members of the IMB at HMP Gloucester do their work in a way that encourages easy communication with all prisoners, staff and visitors, regardless of background and status. Through such communication, the Board monitors whether, in those people's experience, the prison is run fairly and individual dealings with prisoners are routinely characterized by even-handedness and respect. When this is not the case the Board alerts those who are responsible for rectifying matters, from senior management up to, if necessary, the relevant Minister.

SECTION 4 Description of HMP Gloucester

4.1 Gloucester Prison is situated on an inner-city site and, partially, has Listed Building status. It was established in the 18th Century, was rebuilt in the Victorian era, and gained an additional accommodation wing and an administration block in the 1960s and 1980s respectively. It is a Category B (closed) establishment for adult male prisoners, intended to hold mainly those remanded or recently convicted. Young Offenders (YOs) from 18 to 20 years of age are also accommodated, but do not have a separate wing, and routinely share a landing with Vulnerable Prisoners (VPs) when the Vulnerable Prisoner Unit (VPU) is full. The certified normal (i.e. ideal) capacity for the establishment is 225 but it has an operational capacity of 321. The prison is established to serve the Crown Courts of Gloucester and Hereford together with the associated Magistrates' courts. In practice, prisoners come to HMP Gloucester from a far wider area.

4.2 The prison has three main wings (A, B and C), each having 3 accommodation floors. A and B wings are situated in the Victorian part of the prison and are in the style of the period. Cells in A and B wings have toilet and washing facilities within them and normally accommodate 2 prisoners, although originally designed for single occupation. A large chapel is situated between the 2 wings. It continues to be inoperative following structural damage and is unlikely to be used as a chapel in future due to security and funding concerns. Satisfactory alternative accommodation, incorporating a multi-faith room, has been provided by converting the former main storeroom.

4.3 A wing is the induction wing and has been modified to accommodate the Integrated Drug Treatment Strategy (IDTS).

4.4 The ground floor of B wing is devoted to a small Segregation Unit and to a VPU, which invariably has overspill onto B2 landing upstairs where YOs are also housed.

4.5 C wing has the more modern (1960s) accommodation which is nevertheless awaiting much needed refurbishment. It mainly holds prisoners who agree to voluntary testing for drugs. This wing has single cells without integral sanitation.

4.6 A kitchen is situated adjacent to A and B wings. Prisoners from these wings collect their meals from the kitchen and eat in their cells. The food for C wing is transported to a servery in the wing, where there is a communal dining room.

4.7 The separate, two-storey Healthcare Centre, equipped by Gloucestershire Primary Care Trust (PCT), has an assessment and treatment unit, including inpatient facilities upstairs and outpatient facilities downstairs, with a hot food servery for inpatients.

4.8 Learning and Skills is based in a self-contained building on 2 floors. Elsewhere, there is an Enterprise Centre (prison workshop) offering a limited number of job opportunities, and an Offender Management Unit (OMU) on the upper floor.

4.9 The prison has a gymnasium comprising 2 rooms with exercise machines. There are 3 exercise yards and the main exercise yard is used for basket ball and volley ball games.

4.10 The interior of the prison estate has no grassed or cultivated areas, and contains a number of portacabins, which are used as offices. Alongside the former Gate-house, against the prison wall, there is a counselling and group suite, a learning and skills suite, and a rest room and fitness suite for staff.

4.11 A modern block incorporating the entrance to the prison contains an administrative section, a section for visits with a separate internal entrance, and a reception complex.

4.12 Outside the security wall, the former governor's residence (Glevum House) has been converted into accommodation for the Mental Health (In-Reach) team, and conference rooms that are mainly used for in-service training.

4.13 Also outside the main wall, there is a well-equipped Visitors' Centre situated in the former Gate-house. It is run by the Castle Gate Family Support Centre, as a charitable trust.

4.14 A part-time coordinating Muslim Chaplain leads the Chaplaincy Team which provides for all faiths and religions.

4.15 A police liaison unit is attached to the prison to cooperate on joint security operations and advise on specific issues.

4.16 In addition to the main provider partnerships mentioned above, Gloucester Prison management utilises the expertise, advice, and services of a number of organisations, in both the public and private sectors and these are detailed in Appendix A, together with a brief indication of what is provided.

SECTION 5 Executive Summary

5.1 Particular issues requiring a response - Policy

5.1.1 **Accommodation:** The Board is profoundly dismayed by the repeated failure, in times when the financial climate was considerably more favourable than at present, to deal adequately with the problems outlined in successive reports, both by the IMB and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons (HMCIP). Repeated acknowledgement has been made of the matters raised, but little has been done that addressed the basic issues. Worse, improvements were postponed because of replacement plans that never reached fruition (the Prisons Minister's letter of May 2009 illustrates such a stance). Once again, the Board would highlight the long-outstanding deficiencies:-

- **Reception:** The present first floor reception area has been accepted as "not fit for purpose" as it is worn out and inaccessible to prisoners with mobility problems. In the words of the Prisons Minister (in his letter of 31st July 2010) "work is required". No indication was given, however, that any remedy would be forthcoming (see also Section 7.1.2).
- **C Wing:** Although modifications to the regime of night sanitation have mitigated some of the inherent difficulties, it has been accepted that there is no appropriate

alternative to providing 24 hour access to toilet and running water. More generally, the fabric of the wing is in a very poor state, notwithstanding valiant efforts by the works department. Again, though the Prisons Minister recognised (letter 31st July 2010), "...that the problem will only be resolved if C wing is replaced or refurbished", the Board is unaware of any intention so to do within an acceptable timeframe (see also Section 7.1.4).

- ***In-Cell Toilets:*** Prisoners on A and B Wings, including the VPU, are housed in predominantly shared cells that contain their toilets. The curtain screening (the only type of screen the prison is allowed to use) is not adequate to provide a decent environment for these prisoners who are obliged to eat in their cells (see also Section 7.1.5).
- ***Learning and Skills:*** Despite some small improvements being planned through changes in the use of the former chapel, the Board remains concerned at the continuing inadequacies of the main Learning and Skills suite, the facilities for work with Vulnerable Prisoners and the failure to enhance workshop facilities – all matters highlighted by the IMB, OFSTED and HMCIP over several years (see Section 6.2.13).
- ***Physical Activities:*** Although the last year has seen greatly improved use of existing facilities, the fact remains that scope for physical activities remains inadequate for a prison whose population very largely consists of men in their 20s and 30s(see Section 7.5.5).

5.1.2 **Severe Personality Disorder:** The Board continues to be concerned at the significant number of prisoners with severe personality disorder, held in HMP Gloucester, scarcely helped towards rehabilitation, but causing considerable problems for staff and tying up scarce resources. No adequate response has been received to previous airings of this problem, despite the matter being acknowledged in a Government Green Paper (see Section 6.3.20)

5.1.3 **Effects of the Financial Climate:** The impact of financial cuts and strategic uncertainties has been a significant and generally unhelpful factor as the prison has tried to fulfil its role within the criminal justice system. Financial cuts have undoubtedly prevented urgent capital expenditure and also affected the day to day running of the prison. The Board particularly regrets the cutting of the Short Duration Programme (SDP) for drug dependents which runs counter to the drive for rehabilitation and reduced recidivism. However, that is but one example. Further examples of damage to the prison's wellbeing are set out in Section 7.4 and Section 7.8.

5.1.4 **Work of the Independent Monitoring Board:** The Board has three major concerns relating to its own activities. First, at a time when the prison is under considerable financial and operational pressures, it is concerned that the IMB budget should be sufficient to allow it to monitor the impacts thoroughly. Secondly, it is anxious that the expectations placed upon the Board by central initiatives should be relative to the extent of local financial and human resources. Thirdly, it is concerned that, at a period of fast rising transport costs, the travel expenses available should reflect closely the costs incurred, so that membership of the Board is not partially dependent on

individuals' ability or willingness to subsidise their involvement. Were it so, it would run contrary to the government's wish for Board members to have a wide diversity of backgrounds. (see Section 8.5 - 8.9)

5.2 Particular issues requiring a response - Operations

5.2.1 Prisoners' Property: The Board has continued to receive a large number of applications from prisoners concerning their property: its failure to arrive at a designated prison, items being "lost", discrepancies alleged with prison records (see Section 7.7).

5.2.2 Catering: It has been evident that the current contract arrangements, notably with the supplier 3663, have had a damaging effect upon the quality of food available to prisoners, on the ability to resource locally (despite assurances to the contrary), and on the flexibility of an already limited procurement (see Section 7.2).

5.2.3 Young Offenders: The impact of an influx of a large number of YOs into HMP Gloucester as a result of problems elsewhere in the prison estate again highlighted the undesirability of having YOs housed in a small Victorian prison with restricted space and together with adult prisoners and Vulnerable Prisoners on the same wing (see Sections 7.1.6 & 6.5.11-14)

5.2.4 Vulnerable Prisoners and Segregation Unit: The excellent work of the staff who are responsible for both the Vulnerable Prisoner Unit and the Segregation Unit situated on the same wing landing (B1), cannot mitigate the physical conditions which make operating the 2 regimes difficult. For example, the VPU has to be locked down to enable prisoners in the Segregation Unit to have access to washroom facilities and to telephones. Overall, the arrangements make it impossible for the VPU to provide services equivalent to those on other wings (see Sections 6.5.1-6.5.3).

5.2.5 Service Level Agreement: The Board is concerned at the delay in resolving the delivery of a national Service Level Agreement for provision of services for IMBs (see Section 8.9).

5.3 Particular issues requiring a response - Secretariat

There are no particular issues that the Board wishes to bring to the Secretariat's attention.

5.4 Particular issues of concern or excellence not requiring a response

All issues of concern are included in Sections 5.1 and 5.2 above.

The Board is aware of much good work throughout the prison. It draws special attention to the following matters:

- The improvements made by the Physical Education team have been outstanding, particularly considering the severe limitations of the locale (see Section 7.5)

- The high quality of overall medical care available to prisoners at HMP Gloucester has been recognised by the accolade of “Queen’s Nurse” being awarded to the Healthcare Head of Service (see Section 6.3.1)
- The In-Reach team has done excellent work getting prisoners into appropriate hospitals and, where necessary, obtaining the necessary funding. They have done so by using and maintaining strong ties with outside agencies. Those relationships also helped them in their work outside the prison (see Sections 6.3.18 & 19).
- The Restorative Justice (RJ) pilot has been successfully developed and is making strong progress, with enthusiastic and dynamic management. A network of volunteers has been recruited, local connections put in place and solid work with prisoners has been evident (see Section 7.9).
- The Castle Gate Family Support Centre which houses the prison’s Visitors’ Centre has continued to provide a welcoming environment for families. It is particularly child friendly and creates a relaxed atmosphere in which advice and information can be shared with visitors. It contributes in large measure to the success of visits and to the welfare of prisoners’ families (see Section 7.10).
- Despite difficulties (see Section 5.2.2 above) the catering at HMP Gloucester has continued to receive plaudits from prisoners who almost uniformly rate the standard of food highly. The provision of a variety of cuisine for varying dietary requirements, special days, and religious practices is praiseworthy.
- The staff responsible for the Segregation Unit, working in difficult conditions (see above Section 5.2.4), have achieved high standards of care and control.

5.5. Overall Judgement

5.5.1 HMP Gloucester benefits from thoughtful, innovative leadership that is genuinely concerned to maintain a regime that, within a firm structure, acknowledges legitimate individual needs. Consequently, for the most part relationships between staff and prisoners are good, with the handling of the most difficult prisoners often particularly commendable. Similarly, despite the pressures stemming from rivalries and anti-social life-styles that some prisoners bring with them, most visitors find the atmosphere on the wings surprisingly benign. These aspects are indicative of a basically well-run prison.

5.5.2 The prison is fortunate that areas of great concern to many prisoners, such as the quality of food, fostering family relationships, and access to a variety of medical services, are among its strengths. As the body of this report details, there are also many other features of the work of the prison that do it credit, often – as in the case of the highly improved and inclusive regime run by the Physical Education staff – despite the limitations of the facilities. Moreover, it is particularly significant in the present national economic climate that the prison is also financially well-managed, with its costs being officially recognised as below those expected in a prison with its characteristics.

5.53 As in any complex organisation, there are also areas of activity which need attention. Some potential improvements are not directly reliant on significant funding. However, it is an inescapable fact that funding is at the root of HMP Gloucester's needs. Agreed and long overdue major refurbishments have been placed in abeyance, although essential to bringing the fabric of the prison up to the standards of the 21st century. Equally important, cuts to the operating budget (in which staffing costs are by far the largest element) have reduced the rehabilitative potential of the prison's regime. They have also placed pressures on staff and pose threats to health and efficiency. In the view of the Board, if the best features of this local prison are to be preserved and their scope widened, urgent attention needs to be given to its capital and operational funding. This would be advantageous not only to its staff, but to the prisoners it contains and – most important – to the society it seeks to serve.

SECTION 6 Areas that must be reported on

6.1 Diversity

6.1.1 The Board's approach to the monitoring of Diversity is set out in Section 3 above. All strands of Diversity are now better integrated with the Offender Management Unit and this ensures the ability to identify particular needs relevant when prisoners are considered for release.

6.1.2 Through attendance at relevant meetings and through routine monitoring on rota, the Board has continued to be impressed by the enthusiasm with which the leading members of the Diversity Team (the Diversity Officer, the Race Equality Officer and the part-time Disability Liaison Officer) work to meet the needs of all prisoners. Their work shows flexibility yet also benefits from a framework that aims to ensure that the prison has strategies and skills to address as many aspects of Diversity as possible.

6.1.3 Some indication of the continuing progress in the Diversity aspect of the prison's work has been a reduction in the number of reported racial incidents since the last report, 22 to date (a 36% reduction for the same period last year). A satisfaction survey for complainants has been introduced with the response letters and this has been favourably received and empowers the victim. Racial Incident Forms (RIFs) have been quality checked by an outside agency and the process and procedure were regarded as more than satisfactory. Given this validation, it is particularly satisfying that all reported racial incidents were resolved without need for further follow up.

6.1.4 The established range of focus groups, namely for older prisoners, foreign nationals, prisoners with disabilities and black and minority ethnic prisoners, has been augmented this year by a Muslim Prisoners Group, on the recommendation of a Thematic Report which was part of the HMCIP annual report.

6.1.5 These groups meet regularly with the Diversity Manager. In addition, a representative from each group seeks to raise awareness of diversity issues among all prisoners and expresses the concerns and viewpoints gathered at the DREAT (Diversity Race Equality Action Team) meeting. By these means, there is an instant focus on any issues raised and they can be responded to promptly.

6.1.6 DREAT continues to be strengthened by observers from the wider community who contribute and raise issues of concern. Currently outside representatives at DREAT meetings include those from Age Concern, the Race Equality Council, Gloucester Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers, Equality South West and the 2gether Trust (which deals with Mental Health issues).

6.1.7 The information and insights gained both informally and through the various focus groups and meetings result in systematic updating of the Diversity Equality Action Plan. For the most part, concerns are addressed locally and immediately, but some issues are outside the prison's control. One of these was raised in last year's report and the Board is still concerned that the UK Borders Agency (UKBA) continues to issue deportation orders in English and this therefore discriminates unfairly. However, The Board is pleased to note that paperwork for the Facilitated Return Scheme is now being produced in several languages.

6.1.8 Again, as noted last year, the issue of literacy goes far beyond that particular example. The House of Commons was told in 2007 that 48% of prisoners were at or below the reading level expected of 11 year olds and in 2002 the Social Exclusion Unit reported that only 20% were capable of filling in a job application form. The Board still has no reason to believe that prisoners at HMP Gloucester are untypical of the national picture. Sadly, the Prison Service has yet to find an adequate response to the needs of men who have difficulty fully understanding the extensive written material displayed around prisons and the written material with which they have to deal individually within the inevitable bureaucracy of prison life. The Board welcomes the efforts made during the year to brighten up display material and reduce the written content, but considers that, as this is a national problem, there should be a greater central resource of visual and audio-visual materials.

6.1.9 Other aspects of Diversity are reported on in relation to Safer Custody (see Section 6.4.6), Health Care (see Section 6.3.15) and Chaplaincy (see Section 7.3).

6.2 Learning and Skills

6.2.1 Overall Learning and Skills has had a difficult year. The HMCIP report of 12 January 2011, following the unannounced follow-up inspection in August 2010, stated that there was a low achievement rate on both literacy and numeracy programmes, with the outcome for purposeful activity for prisoners remaining poor.

6.2.2 There have been a number of effects of financial cutbacks (see also Section 7.4). They include: the 2009 removal of the full time coordinator post; the downgrading from five to four days of in-house support for Action for Employment (A4E); recent contractual restrictions imposed on A4E by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA); and insufficient funding for Tribal to deliver the full range of services with regard to Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG). These various changes and the associated increase in administrative pressures within the Learning and Skills Department may have been factors relating indirectly to the decrease in participation by prisoners noted by the HMCIP.

6.2.3 As a result of the Inspectorate's comments, more provision has been made for

basic skills training in literacy and numeracy, in addition to that already present within the existing family-based, social and personal skills courses. The 6-week “Employment” course continues to be well attended and, to ensure maximum benefit, prisoners involved are not moved until it has finished.

6.2.4 Across the educational assessment levels ranging from “Pre Entry” to “Level 2” 989 qualifications were achieved during the academic year Aug 2009 to July 2010.

6.2.5 The percentage of prisoners who opted to attend part time education is lower than last year (60% vice 70%). However, it is hoped that the setting up of an allocation board in 2010 will eventually result in a more robust and coherent sentence planning process than previously, when education was promoted without reference to sentence plans.

6.2.6 Courses delivered by N'Ergy and leading to National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) have increased and, in addition to Performing Manufacturing Operations, now include Business Administration and Customer Service. The achievement and retention rate on these courses has risen significantly and prisoners are able to continue them on transfer to other locations where necessary. All gymnasium orderlies have gained a level 2 NVQ and 23 gymnasium related qualifications were obtained between April and December 2010. (See also Section 7.5)

6.2.7 The new Diversity course has been well received and has outstanding success and retention rates. The course was set up in response to feedback from prisoners who wished to learn about different beliefs, cultures and views. It is a core part of the QCF.

6.2.8 The Leonardo's Driving Awareness course continues successfully with 100% achievement rate.

6.2.9 The Toe by Toe scheme is a structured, but informal, reading plan whereby prisoners with good reading skills tutor other prisoners. In August 2010 the scheme was invigorated by the appointment of an officer facilitator with time allocated to the scheme. A leaflet cell drop realised 50+ applicants from prisoners wishing to become mentors. An on-going programme, a necessity for a mobile prison population, was started with the aim of 2 mentors for each of the residential wings. Referral to the scheme came mostly from Learning and Skills, consequent upon initial assessment, but also from individual prisoners, OMU, In-Reach and wing staff. From late August to Christmas 2010, 15 prisoners were started as mentees on the Toe to Toe programme. A small financial incentive was given from the outset to mentors. Finance has been secured to further develop the scheme. The Board welcomes particularly the benefits of the scheme for positive relationships within the prison population.

6.2.10 Over the year, the Library has run a successful '6 Book Challenge'; has introduced popular thematic quizzes for Black History Month, Christmas and Easter; and has set up weekly displays promoting books. These achievements are all the more creditable because at times there were staffing problems (leading on two occasions to unscheduled closures). The Board is pleased that action has now been taken to deal with those problems.

6.2.11 The Way4Ward project to support prisoners after release is working effectively with referrals by OMU and Learning and Skills - 30 referrals having been made by Learning and Skills in the year.

6.2.12 Seven entries from HMP Gloucester won prizes at the annual Koestler Awards, an art competition encompassing a wide range of creative work by those confined in prisons, Young Offender Institutions, secure hospitals, immigration removal centres, and offenders supervised by the Probation and Youth Offending services. A silver award was received for bike art and two bronze awards for pottery, one of which items was selected for the Koestler Awards Exhibition in the Festival Hall and was prominently displayed. In addition 4 prisoners were highly commended or commended in the music category.

6.2.13 Concerns remain from last year's report:

- The outlook in terms of suitable teaching accommodation within the main Learning and Skills area remains unchanged, with no possibility of any major funding allocated to improve or expand existing spaces. However, the project to refurbish the former chapel to provide a centre for assessment, induction and coordinated pre-release work, to include employment and housing, is welcomed by the Board
- The Enterprise Centre remains significantly underused and there has been no progress in addressing restricted workshop usage (see Sections 7.4.2 and 7.8.3).
- Apart for one session a week conducted in the Learning and Skills Suite, the learning environment for VPs is poor. Their sessions are held in the only possible space within VPU itself – in the circulation area by the showering and toilet facility and near to the Segregation Unit. Such a venue would be challenging for seasoned students, let alone men who often have a very chequered educational background (see also Section 6.5).
- The Family Time initiative has still not been reinstated owing to staffing difficulties both in the Library and the Family Centre.

6.3 Healthcare and Mental Health

6.3.1 The difficulties reported last year by the Board with regard to staff recruitment have been largely overcome and the need for agency nursing cover, with its concomitant unfamiliarity with prison procedure and lack of continuity, has been eliminated. Largely as a result, the Prison Health Performance and Quality Indicators (PHPQIs) are, as of November 2010, rated at 33 Greens and 5 Ambers with no Red ratings. A comprehensive health needs assessment covering the period October 2009 to August 2010 summarised its results as demonstrating "...a high level of quality care available to prisoners residing at HMP Gloucester". This standard is also illustrated by the award, during the report year, of the accolade of "Queen's Nurse" to the Head of Service (formerly Matron Manager).

6.3.2 The dual role of the Head of Service, who is also Head of Homeless Healthcare, has assisted with the provision of aftercare for VPs identified as having a pattern of short sentences and short consequent periods of liberty. Being familiar with those who have newly attended the Vaughan Centre (the Gloucester provision for the homeless), from prison, has allowed a continuance of medication and care which contributes to avoidance of the “revolving door” phenomenon.

6.3.3 Key areas identified in a survey, part of the health needs assessment, as examples of good practice within the prison included the IDTS team and the Counselling, Assessment, Referral, Advice & Throughcare Scheme team (CARATS), support and treatment for patients with Hepatitis C, timely access to quality primary services, and the safer custody support group. The reception process, for all prisoners on entry to HMP Gloucester, has been expanded to include screening for learning disabilities and for problematic alcohol use.

6.3.4 A Prison and Probation Ombudsman’s report in December 2009 following a death in custody recommended “...ways to improve communication between wing staff and healthcare staff”. However, it praised the prompt remedial action taken in the matter upon the prison’s receipt of the draft report. A later Prison and Probation Ombudsman report in August 2010 stated that, at HMP Gloucester, medical and nursing care for a gravely ill prisoner was “exemplary”, that the prisoner received “the best care possible...”, and cited areas of good practice.

6.3.5 A survey of 34 prisoners concerning their healthcare in HMP Gloucester disclosed 2 negative responses, both regarding the perception by staff of drug seeking behaviours among prisoners. while 32 prisoners responded positively with remarks ranging from “good” to “brilliant”, with one prisoner reporting - “the best care I have had in any prison”.

6.3.6 The Kings Fund award, highlighted in the last report, for money to convert the 3 bed cell in the Assessment and Treatment Unit to a suite for day care support and group activity has been implemented, although progress has been slow due to problems with contractors.

6.3.7 It has been noted that the number of alcohol only referrals has seen a significant increase. Alcohol screening is running at 20 plus daily with intervention and support including CARATS team and Alcoholic Anonymous (AA). As mentioned in the last report, an alcohol support worker started work in January 2010. This filled a long term gap in provision - a survey as part of the health needs assessment found that 31% of prisoners on entering HMP Gloucester reported having a problem with alcohol (considered likely to be an underestimate). The full time worker left during the year, and has been replaced by 2 nursing posts sharing the alcohol remit; this arrangement provides better cover for sickness and leave periods.

6.3.8 The successful Short Duration Programme (SDP) was axed during the year to save money, although being specifically mentioned by prisoners as particularly useful in supporting them to address their drug/alcohol problems. Staff spoken to were unanimous in reporting that their best efforts could not make up for the loss of this programme.

6.3.9 In similar vein, the funding of the post of Pre-Release Engagement Worker was frozen, but the Board is assured that the work continues to be carried out by the Registered Mental Health Nurses (RMHNS). Also the 7p.m. treatment round was cut in July but replaced by an in-possession pack of required medication.

6.3.10 The Primary Mental Health team has had a high demand for its services, with a minimum of 10-15 referrals per week. It therefore operates a triage system allowing the most urgent cases to be seen first. It is not unusual for there to be a waiting list of up to 35 patients for primary mental health clinics.

6.3.11 Drug use was identified by prison staff in a survey during the health needs assessment (see Section 6.3.1) as the most important health issue facing prisoners in HMP Gloucester because of the high percentage of prisoners needing treatment for addiction and because of the multitude of mental and physical health problems associated with drug misuse.

6.3.12 The health needs assessment (see above 6.3.1) highlighted development of a strong working relationship between CARATS and In-Reach to identify and develop care plans for patients dually diagnosed with substance misuse problems and mental illness. Similarly, there has been good cooperative work by the CARATS and IDTS teams to provide a therapeutic two week group course of information and practical help for those prisoners undergoing drug treatment. The regime for individual prisoners on IDTS is closely monitored and is aimed at reducing dosage except where inappropriate (e.g. remand prisoners whose stay in prison is necessarily unpredictable).

6.3.13 Though Buprenorphine is administered only to prisoners with a drug habit who have been prescribed the drug prior to admission to HMP Gloucester, the Board has been concerned at problems with its administration. Buprenorphine is normally delivered in tablet form, but because of the risks of trafficking in the prison, the tablet is crushed to granules, following a PCT protocol. It proved difficult to achieve consistency and the Board received a number of applications from prisoners relating to its delivery. However, with experience, the problem now seems solved, largely by wider use of other treatments, and a spot check in November showed only 2 prisoners given Buprenorphine, while 47 were given Methadone and 24 treated for alcohol abuse.

6.3.14 Largely due to the inadequacy and age of the prison fabric but also to staff difficulties, it was evident that the cleaning level within the healthcare provisions was not satisfactory and vigorous steps, including a deep clean in May have been taken to remedy the problem, as far as the fabric of the prison will allow. Nevertheless, while pointing out areas of needed improvement, an infection prevention and control survey in April 2010 scored within the Green range on all aspects.

6.3.15 PNOMIS (the new prison IT system) has made it difficult to identify disabled prisoners but a separate data base developed and maintained by the Diversity Manager has proved invaluable. An information sharing protocol with Health Care aims at ensuring that those with disabilities and older prisoners are catered for and all aspects are carefully considered to make sure transfers and/or releases take place smoothly. In spite of the overall fabric of the prison not being suitable for those with disabilities, adjustments have been made to try and make life a little easier - hand rails have been

installed and walking aids, talking alarm clocks and magnifying sheets provided. Though some showers for the disabled have been out of action during the year, other showers (albeit involving movement to other buildings) were made available. In-cell work provision for older prisoners is currently under discussion with an outside charity organisation and remedial sessions for older prisoners and those with disabilities if medically approved have been organised in the Gymnasium (see also Section 7.5.2)

6.3.16 Provision for Secondary Mental Health (severe mental illness including learning disabilities) is supplied by the In-Reach team who liaise with General Practitioners (GPs) and community psychiatric nurses (CPNs) and accept referrals across the prison establishment. Such referrals are indicative of the cooperative working that occurs between Mental Health staff and their prison officer colleagues, an approach underlined this year by the distribution throughout the prison of a general leaflet on Mental Health produced by In-Reach.

6.3.17 The weekly liaison between the prison's In-Reach team and the court diversion team which operates in the Gloucestershire Courts and In-reach's links with the Police helps to divert offenders from the Criminal Justice system when considered necessary on mental health grounds, but this local initiative can only scratch the surface of a national problem, the response to which needs the impetus and inter-departmental work that can come only from a national policy directive.

6.3.18 The team has continued to have a high rate of 30 referrals a month, all of whom are seen within 3 working days. Excellent work was evident during the year, with the In-Reach team being instrumental in getting prisoners into appropriate hospitals and where necessary obtaining the necessary funding. One prisoner had such severe problems with coping that other prisons would not accept a referral from a local prison. He therefore was dependent on treatment provided through the good offices of In-Reach. It says much for the quality of care provided in prison and also secured by the team for him in hospital that he was observed on returning to a normal prison wing after treatment to be positive and cheerful.

6.3.19 The work of the In-Reach team was recognised during the year by an award for "Positive Practice" by the 2gether Trust, and the team achieved a score of 96% in the audit of its Care Programme Approach (CPA). The good practice extends to keeping in contact as appropriate with released patients on the In-Reach caseload. This practice has shown dividends with difficult cases known to the Board, and helped to ensure rapid transfer from prison when indicated - all transfers have been within the national guidelines and in one case was achieved in 3 days due to the continuity of contact both with the prisoner and outside agencies.

6.3.20 The Board has continued to be concerned at the significant number of prisoners with severe personality disorder held in HMP Gloucester, causing considerable problems for staff and tying up limited resources. A national acceptance of the significance of issue is inherent in the Green Paper, Breaking the Cycle published in December 2010. However, though this problem was raised in the Board's last two reports, the latest response from the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) did not deal with it, although it was cited as a particular issue requiring a response (Annual Report HMP Gloucester Dec 08 -Nov 09 para 5.2.5). The problem has been apparent in the current

year with such prisoners often requiring constant watch, causing staff injury and occasioning frequent health alarms. To reiterate: it is obvious that the prison regime does not benefit these prisoners being placed in a small crowded local prison with limited facilities, albeit with an excellent and dedicated staff - a point acknowledged to the Board by prisoners in these circumstances.

6.3.21 The Board outlined in its last report the severe difficulties with provision of dentistry which were eventually remedied. It was, therefore, unfortunate that there were further problems in this year when the dental suite underwent a much needed refurbishment. Delays extended the period of anticipated closure. This occasioned a waiting list of 70 prisoners at the peak of the problem. However, the Board was pleased to see that the backlog was rapidly reduced by additional sessions once the much improved facility was reopened. The sharing of dental provision between three dentists rather than the previous reliance on a single provider was also welcome.

6.4 Safer Custody

6.4.1 The Violence Reduction and Safer Custody Management Team meets monthly under the chairmanship of the Governor. It includes senior staff from all areas, a Listener, and representatives from the Samaritans and Reliance (the escort agency).

6.4.2 The team considers reports concerning violence reduction and aspects of safer custody and reviews the Continuous Improvement Plan instituted last year. The Plan provides a framework which enables closer monitoring and so plays an important part in ensuring that the prison's Suicide and Self Harm Policy is fully implemented.

6.4.3 The Safer Custody Support Group meets weekly, with VPs meeting fortnightly. These are peer support groups for prisoners who are mainly on ACCTs and have a history of self harm or attempted suicide. The Safer Custody Support Groups are part of the care-map process within ACCT procedures and provide prisoners with a coping strategy.

6.4.4 The anti-bullying programme has been rewritten and now includes victim support plans. The gymnasium is being used for remedial and healthcare sessions by prisoners identified as victims (see also section 7.5).

6.4.5 The incidence of self-harming has increased to an average of 11 each month. However, over the course of the year there were 26 prolific self-harmers and this tended to distort the figures.

6.4.6 Two Insiders, i.e. prisoners trained to be part of the induction process, work on A wing, the induction wing, to help new prisoners integrate. Similarly, one Insider helps on the VPU. As well as dealing with any immediate issues the newcomers may have, the Insiders use a briefing prepared by the REO to give all new prisoners an insight into how Diversity issues are handled within the prison.

6.4.7 Suitable prisoners are trained by the Samaritans to act as "Listeners", providing support to fellow prisoners throughout the prison and particularly to VPs at risk of self

harm. They are available during the day and night to listen and talk to prisoners on the wings, in Health Care and the VPU. A Room is allocated for use by Listeners during the night. Two Listeners are permanently working in Reception. In addition, a Listener attends the Suicide Prevention Team meeting to give an oral report. Although there are currently 11 Listeners there is continual search for suitable prisoners to be trained by the Samaritans. Aside from their continued commitment to HMP Gloucester both in their training role and in debriefing Listeners, the Samaritans provide invaluable help to prisoners via a direct line facility.

6.4.8 ACCT records are reviewed on every rota duty by Board members who talk to prisoners as appropriate. There was concern during the year that relevant staff were not always attending reviews and the ad hoc nature of review arrangements made it difficult for the IMB to monitor. However, an initiative late in the reporting year led to a welcome and marked improvement in both matters.

6.4.9 ACCT foundation training continues to be delivered locally. An Interactive ACCT guide is available on the intranet for all staff. A notice to staff containing Caremap guidance has been issued, which includes practical examples of good quality entries. Next of kin and family contact details are now included in ACCT documents where such involvement is appropriate and risk assessed.

6.4.10 The Prisoner Consultative Committee meets on a regular basis and incorporates staff from Finance, Health Care, Safer Custody, OMU and the wings. Prisoner representatives attend from the three wings and during the year have drawn attention (for example) to aspects of the catering, works which need to be carried out and the need to replace games equipment etc. used during association. The Board is satisfied that such points are taken seriously.

6.4.11 Two deaths in custody have occurred during the period of the report (see also Sections 6.3.4 and 6.5.10). No inquest has yet been carried out. In addition an inquest is outstanding from April 2008 and one from April 2005. The Board raised its concern at these latter cases in its last report, and although complications with the long overdue case in particular have been detailed, the Board continues to abhor the distress and strain occasioned to families and friends in particular, but also to prison staff involved.

6.5 Segregation, Vulnerable Prisoner and Young Offender Units

6.5.1 As noted in previous IMB annual reports, the Segregation Unit and the VPU are staffed by the same officers and are both housed on the first floor of B Wing (B1) with only a security door and metal partition between them. There is a similar joint staffing arrangement on the second floor (B2) where, on one side of the landing, those VPs for whom there is insufficient accommodation on B1 are housed and, on the other side, in facing cells, is the main area for YOs. The staff on B2 are also responsible for adult prisoners on the third floor (B3).

6.5.2 Because of the considerable overlaps in the arrangements for the various groups of prisoners on B1 and B2, this section of the Board's report covers all three groups. The situation is very much the same as that described in last year's annual report, so not all issues are repeated.

6.5.3 The Segregation Unit at HMP Gloucester has only 4 cells which are rather dark and spartan. There is no dedicated shower or telephone or exercise yard so that segregated prisoners have access to these facilities only when VPs are on exercise or locked up, and staff can be spared from VP supervision. This situation is scarcely tolerable when prisoners are located in the Segregation Unit for short periods only, but in 2010 it has tended to be the long-term location for 2 or 3 "difficult" prisoners who cannot be accommodated on the main wings due to persistent violent behaviour (see Section 6.3.20). Two prisoners in particular have each spent several months in the Segregation Unit in the latter part of the year; inevitably the longer they are there, the less likely it becomes that they can be reintegrated into a normal prison regime, let alone proceed towards some form of rehabilitation.

6.5.4 Board involvement in Segregation reviews has continued to be patchy. Notification of the timing of Segregation reviews has improved during the year, but as they are not held at fixed times, they often take place without IMB presence (see Appendix B for statistics). On a few occasions subsequent checks have found the segregation paperwork to be inadequate.

6.5.5 The Segregation Standardisation and Tariff meeting has taken place on a quarterly basis. This tends to be a short meeting focussing on reviewing adjudication statistics and ensuring consistency between adjudicators. A discussion at the January meeting led to a successful change in the location of adjudications run by the Independent Adjudicator which were moved to the Legal Visits area, which made visiting legal representatives easier to deal with and saved staff time. There was a slight rise in the number of adjudications in April, July and August 2010, coinciding with some disorder in the prison during these months, including one serious incident on the exercise yard, and an increased number of YOs (see also Section 7.1.6).

6.5.6 In the last quarter of the year the Board was pleased to note that the Segregation Standardisation and Tariff meeting started to include segregation data. In recent years the prison has not formally had a SMARG (Segregation Monitoring and Review Group), and statistics relating to segregation have not been systematically compiled, but this is now part of the remit of the Segregation, Adjudications and Tariff meeting and will enable quarterly review of the use of segregation by governors and other senior staff.

6.5.6 On a number of occasions the Board has noticed the serving of meals through the hatch to prisoners on the Segregation wing, to avoid opening the door. On one occasion an IMB member observed an officer trying to get a full plate of food with half a chicken through the hatch, which was not easy. Whilst this is understandable when a prisoner is on a two- or three-man unlock, it seems unnecessary and degrading on other occasions.

6.5.7 The system of 28-day reviews for VPs was discontinued in March 2010 and replaced by reviews for those prisoners located on B2 only, i.e. those not accommodated on the main VP wing for lack of space, although their out of cell activity takes place in the VPU. The rationale was that VP prisoners in the main VPU have regular contact anyway with the experienced staff of the VPU and can raise any issues when they need to, whereas this is more difficult for those prisoners located upstairs. The Board accepted

this new approach but has had ongoing concerns about the lack of systematic organisation of the few remaining reviews. Frequently no manager has been available to conduct the reviews at the correct time and there has also been some confusion about their status and whether or not they should be conducted as segregation reviews.

6.5.8 VPs who are held upstairs on B2 landing away from the main VPU continue to suffer a number of disadvantages. On the B2 landing, VPs had, until recently, a distinguishing mark on their cell door cards which sent a clear signal to the YOs on the other side of the landing that these men were VPs. Occasionally there has been shouting and taunts by YOs (see also Section 7.1.6). VPs rarely feel able to transfer to normal locations and so have to accept the more limited regime opportunities that being a VP entails. These VPs have fewer opportunities to be out of their cells than if they were downstairs as they can only come out when other prisoners are shut away. They have complained to IMB about loss of association time. They also have fewer opportunities to have contact with the specialist staff on B1, including getting support as necessary or demonstrating behaviours that would lead them to enhanced status and the extra privileges that entails.

6.5.9 Generally VPs inevitably have a more limited regime and more limited facilities than prisoners on the main wings. Occasionally VPs have reported not having had any induction. While this is always rectified when it comes to light, it demonstrates the difficulties inherent in managing a separate population, especially when the staff are also having to deal with difficult prisoners in the Segregation Unit. There are frequent comments about access to phones because of only one being available on the wing. Problems about access to the gym for VPs which occurred earlier in the year have largely been solved since the new gym arrangements have come into place (see Section 7.5).

6.5.10 The Board recognises the complexities of the management decisions that have to be made and continues to appreciate of the quality of much of the work that is done with VPs, including some very difficult prisoners. When asked for their views about B1 staff, prisoners are normally very positive and recognise the good support they receive. However understanding the Prison Service's difficulties does not alter the Board's statutory responsibility to point out each year the impact of the Prison Service's provision on those in its custody. On that basis, it has to report again that it is still dissatisfied with aspects of the accommodation arrangements for VPs. This view is echoed in the Prison and Probation Ombudsman's report on a death in custody in December 2009: "I believe that Gloucester is overburdened with vulnerable prisoners and unable to look after all on them in their dedicated vulnerable prisoner unit. A situation therefore exists whereby vulnerable adults are located opposite young adults. This is unacceptable for all concerned".

6.5.11 The Board for many years has expressed its concern about the use of HMP Gloucester to house Young Offenders (sometimes an inappropriate term, as many are remand prisoners and may eventually be acquitted). The Board repeats its concern that an ageing local prison on a small inner-city site is an inappropriate location for YOs. However, the fact remains that the Prison Service's requirement that YOs should be housed at HMP Gloucester places them in an inherently unsatisfactory situation and, as

mentioned in the previous sub-section, also opens Vulnerable (adult) Prisoners to harassment.

6.5.12 This year numbers of YOs held at HMP Gloucester have been particularly high. In February 2010 numbers rose to 29 on the B2 landing. This led to a volatile atmosphere and fights breaking out (see also Section 7.1.6).

6.5.13 As noted in previous reports, YOs need plenty of opportunities for physical expression, yet at Gloucester they are in a prison with limited opportunities for sport, notwithstanding the excellent innovations in the gymnasium programme and the fact that the exercise yard is now used for ball games. The opportunities for constructive practical activity are also too limited, as the prison only has one workshop.

6.5.14 The Board continues to be of the opinion that YOs should not share a landing with VPs and should be in a physical environment specifically designed to meet their needs.

SECTION 7 Other areas on which the Board has matters to report

7.1 Accommodation

7.1.1 The Board cannot report any real progress with the number of issues it has outlined over the years. Indeed the hopes for substantial refurbishment of the estate have receded. The considerable efforts of the Works Department to keep a check on further deterioration are no substitute for what is required to bring the accommodation up to standard.

7.1.2 The detailed letter from the Prisons Minister, dated 31st July 2010, gave little encouragement that anything would be done in regard to the reception area although "It is recognised that work is required to make Gloucester's reception area a more suitable facility....". It would seem that the projected new ground floor reception building is no longer even under consideration.

7.1.3 Although the regime for night sanitation has been adjusted to make access easier, the system is far from satisfactory and the Board was pleased by the recognition by NOMS (annex to letter quoted above) that "...the problem will only be fully solved if C Wing is replaced or refurbished". However, as with the reception area, the likelihood of action has diminished.

7.1.4 Over the year C Wing has shown signs of further deterioration. On 7 monthly occasions during the year, Board members have raised various concerns - one member described the recesses as "disgraceful" and a visiting member of the IMB National Council described them as "dire". Concrete cancer has been diagnosed, though not an immediate threat, the shower block has subsided away from the main building and the renovated showers have rapidly shown signs of decay. There have been leaks, stale urine smells, cell call failure, and, the Board has been informed of the imminent need for replacement batteries for the night sanitation system at considerable cost (£35,000). The night sanitation was improved in December 2009, but the system still does not

guarantee immediate access to a toilet or running water, and is amenable to abuse by inconsiderate prisoners (according to C wing prisoners' comments). As the Governor stated in a briefing to staff about the uncertain future in July 2010: "Night san must go - prisoners must be able to access toilets 24/7".

7.1.5 The Board reiterates its concern that prisoners on A and B Wings have to eat their meals in cells that contain their toilets. The efforts of the prison staff are acknowledged, but the provision of a screen in a cramped cell originally designed for single occupancy is not adequate to mitigate the problem.

7.1.6 The arrangement for the accommodation for YOs continues to be inadequate. During the year, because of problems elsewhere in the estate, HMP Gloucester's cap on numbers of YOs in situ was waived and as many as 45 YOs were accommodated throughout the residential areas, necessarily putting them in close proximity of adult prisoners (prisoners on C wing expressed concern about YOs on the wing because of the influence of other prisoners). Later in the year the numbers dropped so as to allow YOs to be accommodated in B2 wing, albeit alongside VPs, in itself deeply undesirable. There were during the year several fights and a volatile atmosphere and VPs on B2 wing complained of intimidation and having burning paper pushed under their door. The Board regards the response from NOMS that Gloucester is suitable because it serves as a local detention area as an inadequate answer, flawed by the unsuitability of the surrounding for YOs and by the fact that they are moved out of the local area if sentenced (see also Sections 6.5.11-14).

7.2 Catering and Kitchens

7.2.1 During the report year there was continued evidence of good practice in the prison's catering department. Special arrangements for holidays won praise and varied dietary requirements were fully met, as, for example, were the practices for providing halal food. In June the accolade "best jail for food" was passed on to the Board by prisoners.

7.2.2 Despite the assertion of NOMS that "The food and catering team works with 3663 First for Foodservice in particular to encourage the use of local suppliers...." there is no evidence of such and indeed the contrary seems to be the case. It was recorded by a Board member in December 2009, from information gathered from catering staff, that the "range of goods was less and prices dearer, possibly 10%, but no choice whatsoever, have to use 3663".

7.2.3 In addition, according to the health needs assessment (see Section 6.3.1), the commitment of kitchen staff to providing good food for prisoners was high but the catering manager was constrained so that supply of fresh locally produced food was not an available option at HMP Gloucester.

7.2.4 The normal high standard of food that has been remarked on in successive reports - "the best prison food in the South West" - has been put at risk by the restriction of flexibility to access local produce and by the diminution of quality from 3663 evidenced by the Board when sampling their products.

7.3 Chaplaincy

7.3.1 It has been decided that the chapel will stay in the “temporary” accommodation which it moved to in April 2008. The current area offers more pleasant and lighter surroundings, with better multi-faith facilities, including ablution facilities for Muslim prayers. However, its location away from the main wings means that more organisation and staff time are necessary to escort prisoners to services and other Chaplaincy activities. Plans are underway to make use of the old chapel for learning and skills purposes.

7.3.2 After the loss of the full-time Anglican chaplain, temporary arrangements were in place for nearly a year. A decision was taken to save money by not appointing a full-time Anglican coordinating chaplain. Instead the Muslim Chaplain, who also works at HMP Leyhill, took over the role of coordinating chaplain, and a part-time Anglican chaplain was eventually appointed in April 2010 on transfer from HMP Erlestoke. This new arrangement seems to be working reasonably well, with a focus on the dual chaplaincy roles of faith and pastoral support. Occasionally the Chaplaincy still does not seem to be properly “in the loop” of prison communications. An example of this was that they were not informed in a timely manner of the death of a prisoner after a long-term illness and were unable to offer what they considered to be the appropriate level of support to prisoners who were distressed after this event.

7.3.3 An Away-Day was held in May, with finance the main topic. There has been a substantial reduction in the money for sessional chaplains and it is to be hoped that this will not gradually lead to less pastoral support to prisoners. The Free Church and Mormon chaplains left during the year and have not yet been replaced. Despite best efforts by the coordinating chaplain, it has been particularly difficult to access Sikh, Buddhist and Mormon chaplains.

7.3.4 Prisoners’ religions have not always been properly recorded by Reliance prior to arrival in Reception. If an incorrect or no entry has been made, the chaplains have to use an official “change of religion” form and send it to the Custody Office to amend the prisoner’s record – not only is this unnecessary extra work for the Custody Office but also it skews the figures and makes it look as if a lot of prisoners have converted to a different religion. The matter was drawn to the Governor’s attention and the Board has not been aware of a recurrent problem, though it is the type of matter where continued vigilance is inevitably necessary.

7.3.5 Particular attention is paid to special events and appropriate catering continues to be much valued. The Muslim Chaplain produced a Guideline for Ramadan booklet and gave a lunchtime talk which ensured all staff were fully aware of all aspects of the festival.

7.4 Effects of the Financial Climate

7.4.1 There has been an air of unreality about the financial situation in which the prison has had to operate during the current financial year. The Board understands that the prison’s operating budget was set on the assumption that all the changes needed for the implementation in 2014 of a new management structure, with fewer higher grade staff,

would be made during the current year. This assumption was never regarded as realistic by the prison management and the Board has been told that Area Managers have accepted that the budget could be regarded as aspirational rather than absolute.

7.4.2 In trying to meet the aspirations set by the unrealistic budget, the prison has implemented myriad small changes. Here are some examples.

- The 7pm round for the administration of medicines has been stopped due to a cut in overtime (see Section 6.3.9). This has resulted in prisoners being given extra medication to take unsupervised in their cell.
- The SDP has been ended, leaving a gap in drug treatment services and the prison with no drug related offending behaviour programmes at all. This lack has significance because, though nominally the prison's prime function is to serve the local courts, it is not unusual for about half its population to be there for other purposes (see Section 7.6.3).
- There have been difficulties managing the complex regime on B 2/3 with only 2 members of staff (see Sections 6.5.1 and 7.1.6 for details).
- Efforts to improve the availability of the Enterprise Centre for meaningful activity were thwarted by lack of funds (see also Section 7.8)
- A reduced budget for the chaplaincy (see Section 7.3.2).

7.4.3 The difficulties created by the prison's operational budget have, on occasion, been increased by the budgetary implications of operational decisions taken at a higher level. A good example of this is the new national canteen contract which has transferred various costs (e.g. for the replacement or damaged or missing goods) to individual prisons. The costs for HMP Gloucester run comfortably into five figures.

7.4.4 In the longer term, perhaps the most significant cuts for the prison are those in capital spending. As outlined earlier (see Section 7.1.4) the urgently needed refurbishment of C Wing and of Reception which at one time seemed imminent has now become unforeseeable. Similarly a re-grading of the existing Victorian residential wings A & B does not seem possible in the present climate. When the costs of such important capital works and outstanding maintenance are combined, the total comes to some £25 million to provide accommodation that is wholly consistent with the government's respect and decency agenda.

7.4.5 By implementing staff stress audits, the prison system has given welcome recognition of the potential adverse effect of change and uncertainty. The results locally – and from the informal 'Listen to Improve' sessions instigated by the Governor - have been consistent with the Board's own observations. Though staff by and large have kept going, there have been stress-associated absences and, on occasion, it has been clear that staff have had to draw deep on their reserves of professional commitment. They have appreciated the perceived openness of the Governor in keeping them informed to the best of his ability, but a common perception is that there is much affecting the future of individuals as well as the institution on which he does not have firm information. This

uncertainty fosters rumour and occasionally unhelpful speculation has surfaced in the local media.

7.4.6 Overall, the impact of financial cuts and strategic uncertainties, indirect as well as direct, quantifiable and unquantifiable, has been a significant and generally unhelpful factor as the prison has tried to fulfil its role within the criminal justice system.

7.5 Physical Education

7.5.1 Early in the report year changes occurred in the leadership and staffing of Physical Education activities. These together with an improved staffing level - a need the Board had highlighted in its previous report - resulted in considerable advances in the regime available to prisoners.

7.5.2 A detailed survey of prisoners was undertaken which disclosed that 50% of prisoners responding did not use the facilities, despite the high regard for gym staff and positive sentiments regarding safety recorded by those prisoners who attended. The findings were acted upon and a greater structuring of activities designed to include all the disparate needs identified - e.g. disabled and older prisoners, those undergoing drug rehabilitation (in liaison with the CARATS team), inpatients in Healthcare and those requiring remedial sessions, linked to physiotherapy. Extra equipment was obtained relating to the needs of prisoners.

7.5.3 In May 2010 18 prisoners signed a letter to the Governor expressing their pleasure at the new gymnasium facilities. The usage of the gymnasium increased by 30% between January and June.

7.5.4 A follow-up survey in November 2010 reinforced the impression of substantial improvement: - 91% of prisoners responding used the gymnasium; 100% attending felt the gymnasium a safe place; 96.5% felt they had fair and equal access to the gymnasium. In addition the potential practical benefits of the regime were illustrated by the loss of over two stones in weight each by two prisoners.

7.5.5 The Board reported last year that the main exercise yard had a surface unsuitable for ball games such as football. It had been hoped that funding would be made available to lay down a new surface, but this has faded because of the current financial climate. However, the yard has been very well converted for use for Volleyball and Basketball, games that can be played on the existing surface, as well as kwik cricket and soft tennis. The Board applauds the resourcefulness and imagination of this innovation. It reiterates, however, the limitations of the overall accommodation for physical activities, especially bearing in mind the continued presence of Young Offenders at Gloucester and that roughly 50% of all prisoners at Gloucester are under 30 years and 80% under 40 years.

7.6 Offender Management Unit

7.6.1 The general picture of delays painted by the Board in the last report has improved considerably. In particular, the difficulties with delays with Parole Board hearings have ended.

7.6.2 The Board is pleased that efforts have been made to expedite the movement of lifer prisoners from this local prison. The Board had highlighted the problem of too many lifers in HMP Gloucester and difficulties in moving them on to suitable training prisons. From a figure of 24 lifers resident at HMP Gloucester, by the end of the reporting year the number had reduced to 9. Nevertheless there remains a persistent difficulty in moving on a small but significant number of lifer prisoners – one such has been in the prison for over 2 years, through no fault of HMP Gloucester staff. In June 2010 a lifer prisoner was recorded as being upset about a long delayed transfer. Another lifer prisoner's atypical behaviour was acknowledged by the adjudicating officer at an adjudication hearing in July 2010 to be consequent upon his long stay in HMP Gloucester and lack of progress.

7.6.3 The percentage of licence recall prisoners being held at HMP Gloucester has marginally reduced from an average of 58 to 56 in the current year, still approximately 20% of the prison population, and a cause for concern. Equally difficult for a local prison has been the continued high numbers of prisoners from out of area - a survey gave a figure of 50.4% of the population.

7.6.4 The Board has been concerned that a number of prisoners on transfer have been "rejected" by the receiving prison and sent back to HMP Gloucester - for example an asthmatic prisoner and a diabetic prisoner who had episodes of asthma in the one case and hypoglycaemia in the other, both eminently treatable by any prison healthcare. It is upsetting and disruptive for the prisoner concerned, wastes staff time, prison resources and public money. In the Board's view this suggests lapses of overall management at the higher levels of the prison service.

7.6.5 The OMU was generally successful in meeting the Key Performance Targets (KPTs) relating to prisoners' experience when leaving prison : the KPT for having accommodation on release (80%) was more than achieved (90.6%) and that for finding a job to go to on release (33.8%) exceeds the target (30%) - creditable in the current employment climate. However, the figure of 9.6% prisoners entering education on release was disappointing and failed the KPT (15%). The new manager of the Unit (appointed November 2010) has recognised it as a priority to make an improvement in this area. It is also recognised that Release On Temporary Licence (ROTL) has been underused but the Board has recently seen encouraging signs of its intended future use in more imaginative ways (e.g. for a disabled lifer prisoner to visit intended rehousing or for suitable prisoners to attend at Health Champion courses)

7.6.6 The OMU was strengthened by the appointment of a Senior Probation Officer as Performance Manager supervising sentence planning and supervision who also works in the community with the police as an Integrated Offender Manager dealing with the Prolific and Persistent Offender (PPO) intensive input scheme.

7.7 Prisoners' Property

7.7.1 During the period covered by the last four reporting years, the most common subject about which prisoners have made applications to the Board has consistently been property (see Appendix C).

7.7.2 During the current report year, the greatest causes of concern in that category have arisen from transfer from another prison, from items accepted not to have arrived and from others said to be non-existent. The Board recorded difficulties arising from moves from at least 5 different establishments. There was a persistent problem with prisoners transferred from HMP Leyhill, the nearby open prison. These transfers often occurred with extreme rapidity for security reasons, necessitating the prisoner arriving at HMP Gloucester without his property or without all his property. The ensuing efforts to reconcile prisoners with all their property have been fraught with difficulty.

7.7.3 Special arrangements have been made to try and rectify the particular difficulties with transfers from HMP Leyhill. These have eased for the moment but the Board remains concerned at the apparent lack of care throughout the prison service for prisoners' property and by the problems caused by widely differing practices between prisons on the amount of property prisoners are allowed to hold.

7.8 Regimes and activities

7.8.1 The target set by the Regional Custodial Manager for the number of hours which prisoners spend out of their cells on purposeful activity remained at 20 hours per week. Whilst acknowledging the difficulties inherent in increasing time out of cell given the limitations of the premises, the constraints of the Core Day, and the current financial climate, the Board continues to regard this figure as rather low. Although the current target of 20 hours per week has been met when taking the overall yearly average, there were 8 weeks when 20 hours per week were not achieved. There were particular problems in April (full lock down search after key compromise which led to all areas being closed and prisoners locked up) and August (holiday period).

7.8.2 There has been the occasional Sunday lock-down and missed association. During casual conversations with prisoners during the year, a number of comments have been received about boredom and the lack of ways to pass the time at HMP Gloucester, other than watching TV.

7.8.3 The regime monitoring statistics for the report year showed that the Enterprise Centre was closed for 58 days (see also Section 7.4.2), Learning and Skill for 19 days, Gymnasium for 13 days and the British Institute of Cleaning Science (BICS) Scheme tutor was unavailable on 11 days (includes bank holidays and training days).

7.9 Restorative Justice

7.9.1 The restorative justice project was in its formative stage at the time of the Board's last report and was concerned with funding and promulgating the project within the community. Commenting on the scheme's "undoubted potential", the Board was much impressed, first, by its stress on prisoners hearing at first hand the impact of their crimes (or types of crime) on victims and so hopefully taking some positive responsibility for their actions and, second, by the opportunities the scheme offers for offenders to make reparation, either directly to their victims or to society more widely.

7.9.2 A pilot year was initiated in April 2010. From slow beginnings, there have been solid achievements. The energetic project coordinator has continued to promote the

project and build relationships in the community. Seminars have been held to raise awareness of the project with other organisations involved with the justice system, such as Victim Support and the Probation Service. Twenty volunteer workers have been recruited from across Gloucestershire and key posts to coordinate and facilitate the work have been filled.

7.9.3 As a result, the project can now offer restorative approaches to all offenders who have pleaded or been found guilty, with the sole exclusion at this stage of those committing sex offences and domestic violence. The offenders concerned are not necessarily prisoners, as the project can also offer restorative approaches to offenders in the community under PPO and Integrated Offender Management (IOM) arrangements.

7.9.4 It is regrettable that no funding has yet been allocated to the project at HMP Gloucester beyond March 2011. However, the coordinator is working with NOMS to write a strategy for implementation across the prison estate and by the Probation Service. The coordinator is also supporting other prisons in the South of England to set up Restorative Justice projects and to help with training.

7.9.5 The progress of the project owes much to the commitment of those operating it, a commitment well illustrated by the fact that the project coordinator and 3 volunteer workers paid out of their own pockets to obtain recognised formal qualifications relating to Restorative Justice. This focused enthusiasm has paid dividends. There has been a dramatic rise in offender assessments between the 1st two quarters of the pilot - from 13 to 46. Victims' agreement to meet offenders face to face has risen from a low base to 60% by the end of the 2nd quarter, comfortably above the expected 50% figure. This is a project in which the prison can take pride.

7.10 Visits

7.10.1 The Castle Gate Family Trust which services the prison's Visitors' Centre has continued to offer a kindly welcome to families. Being particularly child friendly, it is also offers a relaxed setting in which advice and information can be shared. It is used as an informal contact point for prison staff, such as the Jobcentre-Plus adviser and the In-Reach team.

7.10.2 The tightening of available finance has meant that the Court support worker post has been lost, but the Centre is endeavouring to fill the gap with volunteers. However, funding was secured for 2 years for children's and young people's support work, allowing an increase in staff in that area. In June a grant from the Children in Need fund enabled the schools and families work to be extended to the whole county.

7.10.3 The Centre was refurbished during the year and drew compliments from families for the facilities, and the Board has received comments on the helpfulness of Centre staff.

7.10.4 The Visits Area within the prison has undergone a number of changes to layout and now seems well organised with a clean functional seating area, improved sighting for staff, CCTV and an attractive play area for small children.

7.10.5 The Board reported concern in its last report over the facilities for closed visits which had poor auditory qualities which made communication and privacy very difficult. It is pleased to report that the facilities, now incorporating microphones, have been improved, and the problems of funding and consultant fees have been surmounted, albeit through a scaling down of plans.

SECTION 8 The work of the Independent Monitoring Board

8.1 The established membership of the Board is 11, though at the end of the reporting year it had a membership of 13. These figures disguise a far more complex picture. For much of the year, largely because of health and domestic problems among members, the work of the Board was carried out by only 7 or 8 people. Recognising the difficulties these circumstances created for the Board, the Secretariat, in the latter part of the year, authorised recruitment to a figure beyond establishment in anticipation of expected resignations. As new members undertake extensive probationary training before undertaking the full range of responsibilities this increase was welcome for the future benefits anticipated rather than for any immediate relief.

8.2 The need for frequent recruitment emphasised the continuing desirability of informing the local public of its activities. One member addressed meetings of two organisations in Herefordshire; another made personal contacts with two Gloucestershire minority ethnic community groups. Local media were helpful (particularly in publicising last year's Annual Report) and established relationships with various Volunteer Bureaux were fruitfully used in attracting potential members.

8.3 Experience suggests that both new and established members find benefit in the wide range of training opportunities available. To keep up to date with developments within the prison, on 6 occasions the Board significantly extended its monthly Board meeting so that Heads of Department (or Function) could give detailed briefing on developments in their areas of responsibility and, in addition, various individual members took part in courses within prison to support them in particular aspects of their roles. Two new members attended the national Foundation Course as well as undergoing structured mentoring from more experienced members; the Board's incoming Chair attended two national courses related to his responsibilities; two members attended a South West Area course on public relations and two other members attended the Annual National Conference. In order to understand more fully various issues occurring when prisoners are transferred from another prison in the Area, a useful visit was made to the prison concerned and later the Board was able to present its informed concerns in correspondence with the Area Custodial Services Manager.

8.4 The Board has tried to ensure that its training and members' day-to-day experiences when monitoring the prison are put to best advantage. For that reason in November 2010 it held a highly-structured 'Away Day' at a local Scouting Centre, so that it could review its practices and priorities in the light of its previous month's Team Performance Review. In line with its previous practice, there are now detailed implementation plans and review dates for the agreed outcomes. In addition, the nationally-organised Triennial Review of all members has taken place. What the detailed individual conversations confirmed was the level of members' commitment to

the Board's work, even at times when their personal priorities and preferences might have led them in different directions.

8.5 An additional pressure this year has been a cut in the IMB's budget. The budget has always been small in comparison with the hours members contribute and members have never been paid for their services (nor would they wish to be). The budget covers only certified expenses, and by far the largest element of expenditure is travel costs. In April, the Board's budget was reduced by roughly 11% of its expenditure in the previous financial year. This is particularly unfortunate, as a time when prisons are having to operate on significantly reduced budgets is precisely the time that IMBs need to be most active in monitoring the effects. Its statutory role – as Section 2 indicates – is primarily to “satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody within its prison and the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release.” To do this, frequent and thorough visits to the prison are essential and doing so within the new budgetary constraints has been challenging.

8.6 For many years past, the Board has worked on a weekly rota basis. The member on duty not only makes unannounced visits to various parts of the prison, but also deals with applications from prisoners and pays special attention to any prisoners who have been segregated. In addition, individual members take on special responsibility for more in-depth monitoring of key areas, attending (for example) some of the associated meetings. Such a programme – which the Board regards as central to its responsibilities – involves members in considerable travel and as members are drawn entirely from residents of the two rural counties of Gloucestershire and Herefordshire, the associated costs are significant. In efforts to limit costs, the Board has over recent months reduced the number of its members' visits to the prison, not attended so many of the prison's internal meetings and relied more on the fullness of the circulated minutes (a practice by no means ideal when seeking to make independent judgements). In addition, Board members have placed new emphasis on using public transport when appropriate and sharing vehicles. However, using public transport is not always easy, it is always more time-consuming, and sharing vehicles is frequently not possible, because members' homes are widespread and many duties are performed singly. The Board would be concerned about its ability to fulfil its statutory responsibilities with the thoroughness they merit should there be further significant reductions in its budget.

8.7 In addition to the Board's concerns about the level of its direct funding, there are three other matters relating to its resourcing that deserve mention because of events of and/or discussions in the past year. The first is that what is required of Boards should not be increased so as to relieve the strain on salaried parts of the government administration. Though such cooperation is superficially attractive or even desirable, the Board is already stretched fulfilling its current responsibilities. Centrally decided priorities and timescales (inevitable when joint projects with a salaried organisation such as HMCIP are mooted) may not fit easily with either local priorities or capacities.

8.8 The second point is that the authorised level of expenses, particularly for travel, should be kept at a realistic level, broadly related to the cost of motoring as calculated by reputable specialist organisations. As motoring costs rise significantly, the Board is concerned not only that current volunteers should not be expected to give their money as well as their time, but also that membership of the IMB should not be restricted by

potential members' financial circumstances. Diversity among IMB members is an explicit Government aim in making appointments and central financial policies need to continue to be consistent with it.

8.9 The third concern is that the de facto reduction in April of the clerical support the Board receives from the prison (which occurred following some administrative restructuring upon the retirement of its long-serving Clerk) should go no further. To say this is not to make a local criticism, either of the commitment of the new Clerk to doing what she can or of the prison leadership. Indeed the Board is appreciative of the help that it has received on occasion through the Governor's direct involvement when staffing difficulties have occurred. The issue ultimately relates to the level of overall funding and the need for a national Service Level Agreement (Section 5.2.5 refers).

8.10 This reporting year the Board received 284 applications from prisoners, an increase of 39% over the previous year, and their distribution is shown in the chart at Appendix C. It is impossible to be certain of the reason for such a rise, though there is a suspicion that it reflects the general pressures put upon the prison system and individual staff. It also, of course, significantly increases the work load of the Board, as applications tend to be the most time-consuming aspect of its work. The format of the chart is that which is nationally prescribed. It does not differentiate between accommodation outside and inside prison, and there is no classification for 'Regime' although this is a prison department. 31 of the 90 "miscellaneous" applications received related to 'Regime' in various forms and 10 of the "miscellaneous" applications related to 'Finance', again not featured in the official template although also a prison department.

8.11 In dealing with applications, as with so many other aspects of its work, the Board is heavily dependent on the cooperation of a wide range of staff, and would place on record its appreciation of the help given at all levels. It is all the more appreciated in the light of the additional pressures, outlined in this report, that staff are under. Board members are fortunate to serve in a prison where so many staff strive to maintain high standards.

SECTION 9 Glossary of abbreviations

AA	Alcoholics Anonymous
A4E	Action for Employment
ACCT	Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork records
BICS	British Institute of Cleaning Science
CARATS	Counselling, Assessment, Referral, Advice & Throughcare Scheme
CPA	Care Programme Approach
CPN	Community Psychiatric Nurse
DREAT	Diversity Race Equality Action Team
DPSM	Developing Programme for Senior Managers
GP	General Practitioner
HMCIP	Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons
IAG	Information Advice and Guidance
IDTS	Integrated Drug Treatment Strategy
ILP	Individual Learning Plan
IMB	Independent Monitoring Board
IOM	Integrated Offender Management
KPT	Key Performance Target
NOMS	National Offender Manager Service
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
OMU	Offender Management Unit
PCT	Primary Care Trust
PHPQI	Prison Health Performance and Quality Indicator
PPO	Prolific and Persistent Offender
QCF	Qualifications and Credit Framework
REO	Race Equality Officer
RIF	Racial Incident Form
RJ	Restorative Justice
RMHN	Registered Mental Health Nurse
ROTL	Release On Temporary Licence
SDP	Short Duration Programme
SFA	Skills Funding Agency
SMARG	Segregation Monitoring and Review Group
UKBA	United Kingdom Borders Agency
VP	Vulnerable Prisoner
VPU	Vulnerable Prisoner Unit
YO	Young Offender

Appendix A: Private and Public Sector Partners

ORGANISATION	PROVISION
Action for Education (A4E)	Art, drama, music, desktop publishing (DTP) cooking and pottery.
Age Concern	Advice and guidance for prisoners over 50
Alcoholics Anonymous	Referrals
Avon and Wiltshire Partnership	Drug treatment and intervention for drug users
Blue Sky Development and Regeneration	Employment for ex-prisoners
Castle Gate Family Support Centre	Support for families from Court, through sentence and in preparation for release
Changing Tunes	Engaging prisoners through music
Church of England (Bishop John Went)	Pastoral Support
Clinks (prison-community links)	Improving links between prisons and the voluntary and community-based sector
Combat Stress	Assistance for Ex Service personnel
Cruse Bereavement Care	Private interviews for prisoners who have requested assistance
Drug Interventions Programme (DIP) Team	Support for prisoners post-release
Equality South West	Advice and guidance to staff and prisoners on Diversity
Fair Shares Partnership	Allows prisoners to earn points which their families can redeem within the local community or donate to Victim Support
GAPS	Housing Advice
Gloucester City Housing	Advice worker specializing in housing under 25s
Gloucestershire Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers (GARAS)	Advice and support for foreign national prisoners and prison staff working with them
Gloucester and District Citizens' Advice Bureau	Part of pre-release intervention. Provides debt advice service to prisoners and families (appointment only)
Gloucestershire NHS Primary Care Trust	Health care services
Gloucestershire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (GPFT)	Community mental health In-Reach team
Gloucestershire Race Equality Council (GlosREC)	Representative attends REAT meetings periodically and assists with the impact assessment programme
Gloucester Mosques	Support to prisoners and families
Holy Trinity Church	Support to prisoners and taking services
Homecare Optician Services	Optician service
House of the Open Door	Monthly Chaplaincy Service
IAG – Connexions Gloucestershire	Information, advice and guidance to prisoners aged 20+ to maximise chances for work, education or training

Appendix A: Private and Public Sector Partners

ORGANISATION	PROVISION
Job Centre Plus	Surgeries at induction, on request. All prisoners seen at discharge board to book fresh appointments where necessary
Jole Rider	Project to refurbish bicycles for supply to third world countries
Leonardo's	Support to prisoners whilst in prison and upon release with driving skills and associated paperwork
NACRO	Guidance to staff and prisoners on issues for older prisoners
N/Ergy	Provision of NVQs
New Dawn	Floating Offender Support
Nextstep (Gloucester)	Advice on jobs and training
Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)	Information, advice and support on health care matters.
Prison Fellowship	Assistance in provision of pastoral care
Prison Visitors	Available to prisoners who do not have family visits
Salvation Army	Music for services and support to prisoners and their families
Samaritans	Training of prisoners as listeners to offer peer support to persons in crisis
Shannon Trust	Sponsorship of the Toe by Toe scheme, and support to prisoners and co-ordinator
Shelter	Advice and assistance to prisoners with housing problems
St Marks, Cheltenham	Chaplaincy Services
The Big Word	Telephone Translation Services
The Haven	Family Support centre for Homeless
The Vaughan Centre	Homeless Centre
Tribal	Information and Guidance and basic skills training
University of Gloucester	Placements and research within the prison

There are also numerous individual volunteers who attend the prison to offer their time to help address the prisoners' needs, working particularly with the Chaplaincy and the Castlegate Family Support Centre.

APPENDIX B: Board Statistics

Recommended Complement of Board Members	11
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	8
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	13
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	6
Number of members leaving within reporting period	2
Number of attendances at meetings other than Board meetings	49
Total number of visits to the prison/IRC (including all meetings)	384
Total number of applications received	284
Total number of segregation reviews held	n/k
Total number of segregation reviews attended	11

APPENDIX C: Prisoners' Applications to the Board

Code	Subject	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
A	Accommodation	0	2	4	5
B	Adjudications	0	1	3	2
C	Diversity related	4	8	4	1
D	Education/employment/training	5	8	3	7
E	Family/visits	3	7	17	13
F	Food/kitchen related	8	6	4	3
G	Health related	27	34	19	40
H	Property	42	50	37	59
I	Sentence related	4	18	4	17
J	Staff/prisoner/related	21	44	50	9
K	Transfers	22	21	20	38
L	Miscellaneous	45	51	39	90
	Total number of applications	181	250	204	284