



**Annual Report**  
of the  
**Independent Monitoring Board**  
at

**HMP Gartree**

**for reporting Year**  
**(December 2016 to November 2017)**

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*Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody*

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### 1 STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB

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The Prison Act 1952 requires every prison to be monitored by an independent Board appointed by the Secretary of State from members of the community in which the prison or centre is situated.

The Board is specifically charged to:

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

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

### **Main judgements**

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#### **Are prisoners treated fairly?**

On the whole the Board feels that prisoners are treated fairly by staff and management at Gartree Prison.

However, the Board is concerned that despite some good examples of institutional support there are unfortunately some practices that undermine equality principles. Discrimination complaints are not consistently responded to in a timely manner. This must be addressed urgently.

The Board is concerned about restrictions to the regime which result in prisoners spending unacceptably long periods in their cells and affects their daily routine.

#### **Are prisoners treated humanely?**

The Board considers that in the majority of cases the prisoners are treated humanely by the staff and management at Gartree.

However, there are growing concerns that frequent regime restrictions are affecting the men and their ability to access basic facilities such as healthcare and engage in meaningful activities, education, employment and exercise.

Some problems have been experienced with shortages of clothing and bedding during the reporting period, and on occasions it seems to the Board that new arrivals are not provided with basic commodities.

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

Gartree is not a dispersal prison so does not offer training to the same extent as some prisons although the men do have access to education and employment opportunities in various workshops.

Some of the prisoners have suggested that the training and employment they do have access to will not equip them well for their release back into the community. As many are serving long term sentences they may never have used or had access to IT and the world they may one day encounter will be even harder to adjust to. The Board would like to see better use of technology within the prison (where reasonably possible) to help 'future proof' the men in preparation for their ultimate release.

## **Main Areas for Development**

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### **TO THE MINISTER**

#### **Safer Custody**

Staff shortages and an increase in the number of staff on restricted duties has had a major effect on the regime and on prisoners' ability to access healthcare, exercise, education etc. It has also had a detrimental effect on staff morale. There has been a lack of consistency in staffing (lack of ownership/responsibility for wings/areas).

The Board is very concerned by the restricted regimes and the daily impact this has on the prisoners' lives. The subsequent boredom and frustration amongst the prisoners manifests itself in increased disorder, self-harm and unpredictable behaviour, as well as limiting opportunities for positive rehabilitation and access to programmes and training. Levels of assaults, violence and use of force have continued to rise.

The Board is in no doubt that financial constraints and economic stringency continue to have a negative impact on the service provided.

Lack of resources in terms of staff time to input into safer custody and violence reduction work has had detrimental effects, and in some instances has also limited the ability of staff to interact with the men to build positive and meaningful relationships.

#### **Segregation and Progression Unit**

The number of prisoners held in the SAPU who have complex mental health needs is a continuing concern. Lack of meaningful activity exacerbates this and can result in self-harm, poor behaviour and dirty protests. Progression for these prisoners is slow and ponderous with many frustrations in finding suitable placements for the required specialist care. There seems to be little support or regard for the SAPU staff who have to endure the most difficult behaviour not just from the vulnerable prisoner(s), but also the other residents of the SAPU who become frustrated and annoyed by incessant noise and disruption.

The Board is concerned that the physical environment of the SAPU is deteriorating and seems inadequate for the functions which take place within it. It is an unhealthy environment, particularly for those men with serious mental health issues who remain there for long periods of time. It is also too small to reasonably accommodate the daily applications of prisoners segregated on wings who also require showers and exercise.

#### **Indeterminate Sentences for Public Protection (IPP)**

The Board continues to be concerned about the level of IPP prisoners, 86% of whom are over tariff and of those two thirds were sentenced to four years or less. These prisoners don't know when, or indeed if, they will be released. Inevitably this leads to behavioural problems. At one point during the reporting period, of eleven men held in the SAPU, ten were IPP prisoners. The Prison Reform Trust predicts that without legislation, there will still be 1500 prisoners serving an IPP by 2020. The Board urges the Minister to find robust and lasting solutions to hasten the progression of such men as a matter of urgency.

## **Healthcare provision**

The Board is very concerned about the provision of healthcare services at Gartree and in particular mental health services, following the introduction of a new healthcare provider (Mitie) in April 2017. Low and frequently changing staffing levels (with the provider) are having a serious affect on the level of care offered to the men.

There appear to be considerable difficulties and delays in assessing and transferring men with mental health issues to a more suitable environment where they can access appropriate and effective treatment.

With an increasingly ageing population the Board is concerned that there does not appear to be a coordinated approach to the provision of Social Care to meet the requirements of the population. The physical built environment also causes some issues for prisoners with limited mobility or disability.

## **TO THE GOVERNING GOVERNOR**

### **Safer Custody / SAPU**

The Board is deeply concerned that an increasing number of men are segregated for longer periods of time both with the SAPU and on wings. There are also concerns about the use of special accommodation for housing more vulnerable prisoners. The accommodation in the SAPU is inadequate in terms of size and quality.

Lack of support and dedicated care for men with complex mental health needs causes problems not only to the men concerned but also for the staff in the SAPU who are under considerable and continual pressure.

There is concern about the increase in the number of open ACCT documents and incidences of self harm. Towards the end of the reporting period it was encouraging to note that the quality of ACCT reviews was being examined and a system to improve training and adopt a means to check the quality of reviews was being introduced.

### **Healthcare**

Since the change of Healthcare provider in April 2017, the Board has continued to be concerned about the staffing levels. Mitie has had to rely to a large extent on agency staff after facing a number of challenges to recruitment to fill the various vacancies including delays in security clearance. The restricted regimes which result in prisoners spending more time in their cells have seriously affected the attendance at some clinics; which have dropped to as low as 30%. The Board would like to see the prisoners given much better access to the Healthcare services and urge steps be taken to ensure that Mitie become resourced to engage in a more proactive approach to prisoners' well being.

In addition staff shortages have resulted in many instances of hospital appointments being cancelled because there is no escort available. The Board would like these hospital visits given greater priority in terms of staffing. Would the Governors and Healthcare provider please review the arrangements for prisoners to attend non-emergency hospital appointments for routine and diagnostic tests?

The Board would also like assurance that the issues experienced with the Healthcare contract have been raised at a more senior level. The provision of mental health services is of particular concern. It appears that there are simply not enough staff to respond to all of the requests from prisoners to see a mental health professional at what sometimes are times of crisis.

**Accommodation**

Regime restrictions and staff shortages have resulted in substantial volumes of litter throughout the establishment grounds, largely because of prisoners throwing waste from their windows. The response to this has been slow and therefore accumulations build up quickly. It is unsightly, depressing and a cause for comment by some visitors. Accompanying this is a major rodent infestation evidenced by nest holes around the grounds and faeces found on workshop floors. Pest controllers have attended but the Board urges that this needs to be combined with improved waste management, to effectively tackle the problem in the general environment.

**Induction Process**

Inductions have become less structured throughout the reporting period. As there is no longer a dedicated induction wing, there are inconsistencies in the way new prisoners are inducted upon arrival at Gartree and staff are not always fully aware of the actions that are required. The Induction Orderly has also had difficulties in gaining access to wings to speak to new prisoners because of regime restrictions. What should be a routine issue of the basics of bedding, clothing and cell furniture has proved problematic and the Board feels that this needs to be addressed with some urgency.

**Equality and Fairness**

The Board is concerned that despite some good examples of institutional support there are unfortunately some practices that undermine equality principles. Discrimination complaints are not consistently responded to in a timely manner. This must be addressed urgently.

### 3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

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HMP Gartree first opened in 1965 as a category C training prison, and has seen its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the past reporting year. In 1992 its role changed when it became a category B male prison with an emphasis on housing prisoners with indeterminate and long-term sentences. It remains a category B prison. Following a review of the wider prison estate during the reporting period Gartree has now become part of the Long Term and High Security Prison estate.

The prison is located just north of Market Harborough in Leicestershire, just off the A6, and is roughly equidistant between Northampton and Leicester. The prison remains within the public sector and is operated by the prison Service.

The Certified Normal Accommodation is 708 with an Operational Capacity of 714 as of the 30.11.2017.

On the 30.11.2017 the breakdown of the prisoners held at Gartree was:

- Life sentenced prisoners 638
- Indeterminate sentenced prisoners 68

The layout of the establishment is based around 9 wings. The original 4 are laid out in a 'H' block style forming A, B, C and D wings, each containing around 100 cells on three landings. The two most recently built wings; G and H are located south of the original complex and have cells on two levels. The smaller E wing provides a 12 cell Separation and Progression Unit (SAPU), F wing is now dedicated to hold the Gartree Therapeutic Community (GTC) and an additional unit: Therapeutic Community Plus (TC+) holds up to 12 prisoners with particular learning disabilities. Part of H wing now houses the Psychological Informed Planned Environment unit (PIPE) which holds 58 prisoners and the other spur of H Wing is now a dedicated over 50's unit for 60 of Gartree's older prisoners. G wing has historically been a designated 'drug free' wing but was not a substance free and drug recovery wing during this reporting period. I wing, which provides accommodation in shared cells, now accommodates prisoners who are awaiting transfer to a Category C prison.

For most of the reporting period there has been no dedicated 'Induction' wing and new arrivals have been dispersed throughout the establishment.

## B Evidence sections 4 – 11

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### 4 SAFETY

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Over the past year the work of the Safer Custody Team has been affected by changes in personnel, through redeployment/promotion of staff into other functional areas and inadequate back-filling along with constant pulling away of staff to cover shortages and other duties in the prison. The manager in charge of this functional area has also, for the greater part of the reporting period, had responsibility for other areas including Accommodation, Segregation and Equality, so he has been unreasonably stretched beyond capability.

Towards the end of the reporting period there have been some changes made to staff structures with the introduction of a new Head of Safety (Custodial Manager) role, which should help to relieve pressure on the Manager, allow some overarching support and improvements in the way ACCTs are monitored and reviewed. However, the Board is concerned that there continue to be staffing issues throughout the establishment, affecting not only the wider regime but also Safer Custody and Violence Monitoring/Reduction work.

<b>Safer Custody Statistics</b>	2015	2016	2017
Self – Harm Incidents	209	283	434
ACCTs Opened	139	135	184
Assaults: prisoner on prisoner	35	43	39
Assaults: prisoner on staff	22	27	53
Violent incidents	82	87	134
Deaths in Custody	1	3	2
Use of force			180
Serious Incidents		4	2

#### **Self-harm**

In the previous reporting period the Board highlighted a worrying increase in the reported incidences of actual self-harm from 209 in 2015 up to 283 incidences 2016. Unfortunately, the incidences of self-harm have continued to rise over the past year with a dramatic increase up to 434, reflecting the high levels across the wider prison estate where the causes were attributed to drug taking, bullying and violence.

Debt continues to be a major issue within the prison and a growing number of men are being placed on Rule 45 (removal from association) for their own protection when they have been unable to repay debts and then become targeted for this. There have also been some instances where men are 'self isolating', which is worrying to the Board because they can remain isolated

and segregated without access to the daily Apps and Reviews which legally ‘segregated’ men are entitled to.

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

The table below shows a significant increase in the number of ACCTs opened during the reporting period (in terms of all reasons given). This is a great concern to the Board, particularly in terms of the issues we have raised about the provision of mental health services and support for the men.

<b>Reasons ACCT document opened</b>			
	2015	2016	2017
Hanging	4	2	8
Cuts minor	42	41	58
Cuts major (require sutures)	6	3	10
Overdose	5	13	8
Food refusal	5	0	1
Threats to self harm	20	31	32
Low in mood	57	45	60
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>184</b>
Transferred in open ACCT	3	3	7
Figures provided by Safer Custody Team HMP Gartree			

There are also still concerns about the quality of observations recorded in ACCT documents. However, towards the end of the reporting period measures appear to have been introduced through new dedicated staff resources in the Safer Custody Team to allow this system to be reviewed and measures to be put in place for all staff involved in their completion to receive training (or refresher training) and for monitoring and quality assurance checks to be carried out by a dedicated Head of Safety and Equalities, to ensure that all documentation is of the required standard and that post closure reviews are undertaken. In addition prison psychologists will now also become involved in ACCT reviews to ensure better links into programmes and with the mental health support.

### Deaths in Custody

It has been a difficult year at HMP Gartree with two deaths in custody during this reporting period, one as a result of a drug overdose and one from terminal illness. Such deaths cause a great deal of concern and sadness for the bereaved families, staff and fellow prisoners. The Prison and Probation Ombudsman Action Plans and Recommendations have been discussed in Safer Custody meetings and it is vital that these actions and recommendations are implemented as quickly as possible over the coming year.

## **Violence Reduction**

The **Safer Custody Action Plan** states that **Violence Reduction** investigations are not being completed in a timely fashion, which has a negative effect on violence reduction work and on any Cell Sharing Risk Assessment (CSRA) work which is carried out. It highlights the need for training to be provided to Senior Officers and staff in relation to this area.

Important violence reduction work has been affected by staff shortages. Safer Custody Officers continue to be pulled off to cover custodial duties, which has meant a negative impact on Safer Custody and Violence Reduction work and the scope for specialist staff to train other staff in areas such as ACCTs, CSRA, Information Reporting Systems (IRS) and Violence Reduction Investigation recording.

## **Listeners/Samaritans**

There are currently 12 Listeners in Gartree who are trained and supported by the Samaritans to provide invaluable peer support to their fellow prisoners. They now have access to a dedicated Listener Care Suite, which they can access 24 hours a day to enable them to carry out their important roles away from the general noise of the residential wings or at night.

The Board is encouraged by the efforts the prison has made to facilitate the valuable contribution the Listeners make. Where risk assessments suggest that the Listeners cannot be used, prisoners are allowed access a Samaritans phone.

## **5 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS**

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The policy of the prison shows commitment to valuing equality, identifying the legal duty to deliver services in line with the nine protected characteristics within the provision of the Equality Act 2010.

The Equalities Action Team (EAT) comprises prisoner representatives for each protected characteristic supported by an SMT lead for each. The wing closures to date have affected the regularity of the EAT meetings, scheduled bi-monthly, and the various equality forums. The cancellation of events within Black History Month, for example, was not well received by prisoners and staff regarded their time and efforts to organise these events as wasted.

All prisoners at Gartree appear to understand the complaints procedure although are often frustrated by the failure to meet deadlines and by the sparse and inadequate responses on occasions. A system whereby each complaint received is acknowledged on a printed slip has been welcomed.

Gartree has experienced acute staffing shortages which have resulted in an increasing number of unpredictable wing lockdowns. This has impacted seriously upon workforces, activities, psychology, education, the delivery of health care etc. The Kaizen programme, therefore, has not been able to run as expected. However, as from January 2018 a defined schedule of wing closures on three-weekly rotation has been introduced, which is aimed to address the problem to some degree.

Despite examples of institutional support and associated policies there are examples of practice that undermine equality principles. Discrimination complaints are not consistently responded to in a timely manner owing to the number of DIRFs submitted and the limited time available to the one member of the EAT staff who processes, investigates and reports. The limited number of full-time staff appointed to the Equalities team impacts upon the efficiency of this role.

The number of DIRFs submitted in 2017 was 70 compared to 40 in 2016 and 36 in 2015. This increase is not necessarily cause for alarm; it could be an indication that prisoners are now more trusting of the system rather than a greater trend of discrimination. The majority of DIRFs received in a twelve month period have been faith and race related. A recent innovation is to issue a letter acknowledging receipt of a DIRF; however, DIRF forms are not always readily available on the wings even though this was minuted for action at the November EAT meeting.

The prison seeks to accommodate the needs of prisoners over the age of 50 within a dedicated wing. Approximately 24% of the prison population are over 50 and almost 30% are identified as disabled. Cells have been adapted for wheelchair users and grab rails are installed as and when necessary. Peers are selected, trained and approved to assist wheelchair users. A plastic garden chair is the substitute for proper seating in the shower area which the IMB have been told will be fitted in due course; this has been the situation for over six months and there is no firm installation date. Toilet facilities for the disabled in the Education area are lacking but this, it is understood, is being addressed within the Action Plan. Apart from the assessment of need upon reception at Gartree, there is the expectation of self-declaration of disability. Those registered disabled or infirm are prioritised for in-cell work.

75% of the Foreign Nationals within Gartree are from countries that have UK Prisoner Transfer Agreements. The Board has been informed that there have been more repatriations in October and November 2017 than in the past two years but figures have not been made available other than 3 deported in the last quarter. There is evidence of Library material in some foreign languages. Foreign Nationals can study English (ESOL) at Level 2.

Gartree accommodates one transgender prisoner. She has appropriate adjustments to canteen, clothing and access to showers and is supported on the wing by a Senior Officer.

There are approximately 2% of prisoners recognised as Gypsy, Romany and Travellers (GRT). Within this category there is excellent external support set up by EAT, i.e. GATE Leicester and Derbyshire Gypsy Life. The National Association of Gypsy and Travellers have invited a Gartree representative from EAT to speak at their Annual Conference thereby enhancing links with external organisations.

With reference to veterans, there have been recent discussions regarding the involvement of the charity Veterans in Custody. At present it appears an impasse has been reached but the IMB are assured that steps will be taken at management level to regenerate talks.

Most religions are represented within the Chaplaincy and additional faith leaders visit the prison as required. All Muslims are entitled to attend corporate worship at Friday Prayers apart from those segregated who may apply to attend. Whether or not permission is granted, they

have access to an Imam every day. Those on an ACCT see a member of the Chaplaincy at least once a week. There is established provision for pastoral care and bereavement counselling. Awareness Day in line with Inter-faith Week is scheduled for March. Regrettably the frequent and unpredictable wing closures have resulted in prisoners being unable to attend religious classes.

Dietary needs relating to religion, specialist health requirements and religious festivals are adequately catered for by the kitchen.

The prison attempts to foster good relations between prisoners and their families. Special Family Days are organised with suitable activities, involving external providers, engendering a more relaxed atmosphere. Despite all good intentions, disappointingly there have been cancellations owing to staff shortages.

Not all prisoners have been in regular employment. A new initiative (2018) will increase the number of workers by ensuring all prisoners are engaged in work or activity 7 sessions per week rather than fewer workers attending 9 per week. This is a fairer distribution of employment within the prison but inevitably has a knock-on effect for those who will lose two sessions of pay. It is too early to assess how successful this will be.

## **6 SEGREGATION/CARE AND SEPARATION UNIT**

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### **Segregation and Progression Unit (SAPU)**

The Board has again noted the changing nature of residents of the SAPU especially in terms of an increase in men with complex mental needs and men who are more violent.

This puts enormous pressure on the staff working in the SAPU who have to deal with continuous pressures in an extremely challenging environment.

The 12 cells in the SAPU remain almost constantly full and in addition there continue to be high numbers of men segregated (and confined to cell) on the Wings. It is not uncommon for up to 20 men to be held in this way, putting additional pressures on staff who are required to escort them for exercise, showers, telephone calls etc. Many of these men are there because they believe themselves to be under threat, largely because of unpaid debt, adding more pressure to staffing. However, there have been some worrying occasions in the past year where men who are a '3 person unlock' are confined to cells on residential wings. When staffing levels (for various reasons) have been critically low this has made life very difficult, particularly when there are not 3 staff on a wing to facilitate an unlock.

There are also insufficient constant supervision cells to accommodate prisoners in crisis or on constant watch. Despite there being two specifically earmarked for this purpose on D Wing it has not been uncommon throughout the past year for constant watches to also be accommodated in the SAPU and there have also been concerns raised about men being held in the 'special' cells with no windows or external ventilation.

## **Mental Health**

The Board is aware that it is not always easy to transfer men with mental health needs from the SAPU out to other establishments or more suitable secure healthcare accommodation but there continue to be men kept in the SAPU or segregated for many months. This appears to not only be detrimental to their health and wellbeing but it also affects the whole regime within the SAPU. The Board would like to see prisoners who are clearly suffering with mental illness offered more support from mental health professionals and given a means to occupy their time and distract themselves before they can be moved back to normal location or onto more suitable establishments/accommodation.

The Board remains concerned that drugs have continued to find their way into the SAPU, as have items which allow some men to start fires or cause themselves harm.

The increase in men on ACCT documents, on dirty protests and self harming in the SAPU again puts additional pressure on staff, who despite doing everything they can in impossible circumstances, may not be best placed to deal with some of the more complex mental health issues.

There is a huge backlog of adjudication hearings which have not taken place. This causes some prisoners a great deal of stress and uncertainty. The Board is keen for a more transparent and regular system of undertaking adjudications, to be introduced.

The accommodation in the SAPU is very limited and with everything else that goes on in the unit it can be very difficult environment when Segregation Reviews are taking place. Similarly, adjudications may be better conducted in a calmer environment.

## 7 ACCOMMODATION (including communication)

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The litter in the grounds of the prison is nothing short of disgraceful. Despite repeated references by the IMB throughout the year, the amount of litter remains at a level that would simply not be tolerated in the outside community where it would only be seen in times of refuse collector's industrial action. Inevitably there is large scale rodent infestation with rat faeces and burrows in common evidence. Like so many other malfunctions of the prison the restricted regime is offered as a defence but this situation needs greater priority. Rubbish generates more rubbish and the rat problem grows with its accompanying health risks.

Within the wings, cleanliness is of a reasonable standard, but many corridors and stairs are often littered and dirty. The showers on G Wing smell and attract flies in the summer. The IMB wonder whether the money spent on redecorating the Admin and Governors' corridors might have been better spent on discouraging prisoners from littering and improving waste management.

With the exception of the showers on G Wing, the showers on the wings are serviceable. However, once again restricted regimes have made access to showers for those men confined to cell on the wings a logistical problem. Each prisoner needs to be escorted to the Segregation Unit and with staff shortages and a high number of men, which has been as many as nineteen, confined to cell, the ability to offer a daily shower is severely stretched.

The kitchen is well managed and the staff/ prisoner relationship is particularly good. The meals are provided on time and menu choices are available to prisoners on a computerised ordering system. The food is varied and to a reasonable standard with minority requirements catered for. The kitchen handles the demands of the varying religious festivals throughout the year exceptionally well and reacts quickly to unexpected ad hoc demands. Cleanliness and hygiene within the kitchen is to a good standard although there have been occasions when standing water has been found on the floor. Staff and prisoners are all properly attired and there is strict management of kitchen utensils. Health and safety notices and guidance on equipment usage are properly displayed. There seems never to be a time when all the equipment is functioning properly. There seems to be permanent confusion between the kitchen management and Amey, the facilities management partner, as to who is responsible for repairing and replacing failed equipment. Delays occur as a result to the frustration of the kitchen management.

Property continues to be the source of many applications from prisoners and accounts for nearly a third of all complaints. Prisoners serving long sentences accumulate a considerable amount of property and when a transfer takes place, the cellular vehicles do not have the capacity to hold it all with the prisoner and it is therefore often split. This invariably leads to property going missing. It becomes difficult to action the sending prison into searching for the property where they now consider the matter to be beyond their concern.

The business of investigating property that has gone missing within Gartree is made doubly difficult by some members of the Senior Management Team being unresponsive, as they are with many other kinds of prisoner applications that are reported to us. They are given low priority and only with internal escalation do matters get resolved. It's very poor and needs to improve considerably.

Generally speaking the officers have a good relationship with the prisoners and are supportive and caring. No more so than in the Segregation Unit, where some of the most challenging men are managed with a great deal of respect and compassion.

Staff shortages, smoking cessation and restricted regimes have put additional stresses on the prison population and whilst there have been a number of situations which could have developed into something more serious, the staff have been able to defuse the situation with skill and diplomacy

There have been a number of accounts of prisoners arriving at Gartree who have not been offered any of the basic necessities for living accommodation. Twelve prisoners had recently been identified by Induction Orderlies as being in this situation. The men were also denied first night interviews and telephone calls. This is wholly unacceptable. Similarly, there appears to be a desperate shortage of bedding, mattress and clothing on some wings where orders have not been fulfilled. There has been one account of a prisoner having to sleep on the floor because the mattress was too thin and the bed hurt his back. It would appear the reason for these failures is a faulty stock system and bureaucracy. Whatever the reasons, there needs to be a rapid improvement.

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

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During the reporting year, responsibility for healthcare provision of Integrated Healthcare Services at Gartree was awarded to Mitie by Arden and Greater East Midlands Commission Support Unit, who were acting on behalf of NHS England (Health and Justice, North Midlands). The contract commenced on the 1st April 2017 and is managed through Mitie's Care & Custody (Health) Limited.

Since the announcement regarding changing healthcare providers, concerns about healthcare staffing levels have been raised by the IMB on numerous occasions. Since April Mitie have been in a position of continuous recruitment and have experienced a number of challenges regarding appointing to outstanding positions. These have included individuals withdrawing from the process at 'offer' stage, and delays through the security clearance process. Mitie use agency staff to fill any outstanding vacancies and continue to seek permanent situations for all staff vacancies, including establishing working relationships with local universities.

It is the IMB view that the current prison regime at Gartree and the health and wellbeing services at Gartree, are not designed or resourced to improve health and wellbeing, tackle health inequalities and wider determinants of health. With the regime under such considerable pressure, it has resulted in prisoners spending more time in cells, potentially making it more difficult for prisoners, and the healthcare team, to manage their health and mental wellbeing. When spending time with the healthcare team the IMB has witnessed some attendance rates as low as 30% across triage clinics, dentistry and smoking cessation sessions.

There remains a concern with the lack of proactive management and engagement with the prisoners regarding their health and wellbeing, and their social care needs. There appears to be an over reliance on prisoners self-referring rather than a proactive approach to identify and support prisoners who would benefit from such an intervention especially with older prisoners. Older prisoners bring their own challenges as they are more likely to have a reliance on primary care and higher rates of long term conditions which should be proactively managed and there is little evidence that this is happening. Not all public health screening programmes are being offered to prisoners who qualify, however Mitie have confirmed actions are being taken to address this situation.

During this reporting period, open ACCTs and self-harm incidents have steadily increased and recently are at a record high at Gartree. The Healthcare Team acknowledge that this situation is impacting on their resources. The IMB has seen some improvement regarding waiting times with the latest information provided demonstrating that for an appointment to see the triage Mental Health Nurse the waiting period was approximately one day, the Psychiatrist three weeks, and the Clinical Psychologist twelve weeks. However, the IMB remains concerned regarding the of lack proactive ongoing management of prisoners' mental health at Gartree.

In the last four months of the reporting period, seven prisoners have been referred to the 'gatekeeper' with a view to transferring these mentally ill prisoners to more suitable accommodation. Three were declined. By referring these prisoners the decision had been reached by the Governors and the Healthcare Team that Gartree offered inappropriate accommodation and treatment facilities, and therefore cannot effectively support these

prisoners' mental health problems. The IMB seeks clarification as to how the mental health of these prisoners should be managed to prevent any further deterioration in their wellbeing in a location that has been deemed inappropriate by those currently working with the prisoner.

Mitie have introduced internal governance meetings regarding Healthcare, which the IMB have been invited to. Additionally, Mitie have reintroduced Patient Forums which will enable prisoners to raise concerns and reflect experiences of the services. The IMB acknowledge that Mitie's longer term intention is to have a 'Patient Representative' on the Governance Committee which the IMB view as a very positive move in relation to user engagement and representation.

Cross department communication and sharing about prisoner health conditions are developing through the introduction, in June, of Multidisciplinary Team meetings. The participants at these meetings include members from: Mental Health team, STaRT, and the Psychology Department. The function of these meetings is to review complex cases, which should contribute in managing and implementing effective interventions for Prisoners, producing detailed care plans. The IMB welcomes these meetings and would like to see the outputs of these meetings reflected when working with prisoners.

Dual Diagnosis meetings have commenced in the past couple of months. The function of these meetings is to identify/review prisoners who have mental health, and alcohol/drug misuse issues – often called dual disorder or co-morbidity. Again the outputs of these meetings should contribute in managing and implementing interventions for prisoners by producing a joint care plan and improve patient management, a move welcomed by the IMB.

In September Gartree successfully became part of the national 'Smoke Free Prison' programme, and the IMB look forward to seeing more proactive work to address health inequalities at Gartree.

## 9 EDUCATION AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

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This continues under a contract with Milton Keynes College which is a major provider of education to the Prison Service.

The mandatory requirement is to undertake Level 1 & 2 English and Maths for those prisoners without these qualifications. In addition, prisoners can undertake a variety of courses such as GCSEs which include History, Citizenship, Business, Film, Economics etc. An A level in Classics is now underway with nine prisoners enrolled. Other areas offering education training include entry level cookery, hospitality (in the Flavours staff restaurant), Art, Spanish, web design, business and IT. Additionally prisoners in some of the workshops can receive an NVQ award for their work-based learning and it is hoped to extend this.

Like most areas of the prison, education has suffered badly from the impact of the recent regime restrictions with prisoners unable to attend sessions because of wing lockdowns or arriving as much as two hours late due to incorrect roll calls. Staff report that this de-motivates prisoners, some of whom are dropping out of courses. It also undoubtedly impacted negatively on the recent OFSTED inspection report

## **10 WORK, VOCATIONAL TRAINING and EMPLOYMENT**

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### **Purposeful activity**

The prison operates 10 workshops which provide a variety of employment activities for prisoners. These include Braille transcription work, production of wooden craft items, recycling activities, clothing production etc. Some activities produce items for use within the prison service – e.g. prisoner clothing and hand brushes whereas others produce items for external organisations e.g. converting end-of-roll carpet remnants into mats. Additionally, prisoners work on activities such as wing cleaning, laundry work, kitchens, painting and decorating and grounds maintenance.

The Board is pleased to note that there has been a new workshop opened up to provide 'Fine Cell' training and employment and in addition there has also been a S Giles Level 4 – Advice and Guidance qualification and De Montfort learning Together Course introduced in the past year.

There is a hard core of about 50 prisoners who refuse to engage in employment and the prison is planning to penalise them unless they take on employment. To ensure that there will be sufficient employment opportunities to offer to these prisoners it is planned to reduce the current work week from nine sessions to seven for all workers. It remains to be seen how the majority of the work force will react to the loss of two employment sessions per week. Those in education, those who are over 65 years of age or those who are certified with health issues are excused employment.

Unfortunately we learnt at the end of this reporting period that the Braille contract with the RNIB will cease as the RNIB are moving to electronic production of Braille items. However an agreement has been reached with the Sue Ryder charity under which the prison will repair bicycles for them. A new contract involving the assembly of light fittings is also due to start. The activities staff are to be commended for finding new work opportunities.

In the latter part of the reporting period IMB members have received reports from all employment areas of the deleterious effect that the prison regime is having on the operation of purposeful activity. Wing lockdowns mean that some prisoners are unable to get to their activities and the rising frequency of incorrect roll calls has led to the late arrival of prisoners at their workplaces and impacted heavily on the production levels of some workshops.

## 11 RESETTLEMENT PREPARATION

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Gartree has struggled recently with offender management due to problems of staff rotation, sickness, cross deployment of uniformed officers and general staff shortages. Offender management inevitably suffers in such circumstances and we urge management to priorities stability within the Offender Management Unit.

In the sphere of Resettlement Preparation, the IMB has concerns about men serving Indeterminate sentences, both Indeterminate Life and Indeterminate Sentences for Public Protection (IPPs) and the problems around both handling and progressing these prisoners effectively.

The IMB is most concerned about the number of prisoners serving IPPs that are well over-tariff. Far from the prison being able to progress these prisoners to reduce their future risk and enable release, most of them appear 'stuck' in the system and comprise the most disruptive and mentally troubled group of men (for instance, they are more than twice as likely to self-harm). They are the source of a disproportionate amount of stress to other prisoners and to staff and consume a disproportionate amount of resource.

As things stand, there is only a dwindling hope that a meaningful number of these men will be released which feeds their negative behaviour and deteriorating mental state. Indeed, the IMB conclude that the bulk of these men are in a worse state than when they completed their original tariff and some have become 'un-releasable'. It should also be remembered that the intention was for IPP prisoners to be housed in Cat C or D prisons and the fact that so many are in a Cat B 'lifer' prison, like HMP Gartree, reflects the seriousness of the situation.

To give an example of one prisoner at Gartree, we have a prisoner who was given an IPP with a 10 month tariff back in 2006 when he was 18 years old. He is now over 11 years past his tariff expiry date. He resides in the prison's TC+ wing and is expected to be there for a further 3 to 4 years, according to OMU, depending on his progress. He has done all his courses, but having learning difficulties and previous behavioural issues caused partly by his mental health and the stresses of prison (barricading, self-harming etc.), he has struggled to progress, though he is not considered 'dangerous' by staff.

The IMB is aware that the high number of over tariff IPPs is a significant problem across the wider prison estate and now forms 86% of the total number of IPPs. The IMB urges the Minister to:

1. consider ways to re-sentence all prisoners serving IPPs to determinate sentences
2. ensure this re-sentencing is accompanied by the provision of intensive, properly-resourced rehabilitation programmes to target early to mid-term release, and
3. ensure there is sufficient support given post release.

The 'recalled IPP population' is also increasing significantly at 20% per annum which suggests that without a fresh approach by senior prison management and without a greater determination to deal with these men effectively, the number of IPP serving prisoners will remain as a hard core of around 3,000 and the trouble they cause will perpetuate. We are aware

of certain programmes being initiated but question whether they are sufficient to make a material difference to the number of over-tariff IPP prisoners simply 'stuck' in the system.

## C Section – Work of Board

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Members of the Board make a rota visit to the prison each week. During the course of these visits the Segregation Unit and kitchen will always be visited, along with other wings and areas of the prison as per a rolling programme. Board members are also encouraged to visit an 'area of their choice'. This broad coverage during rota visits helps to ensure that areas of concern are promptly and regularly monitored. Weekly rota reports are then passed to the Governor for observations, which are fed back to the Board for review and discussion at the monthly Board meetings.

A named Board member is 'on call' each week and they become the initial point of contact for any serious incidents. If a call is received then they will liaise with another board member to arrange a rota for ongoing attendance, should the incident be likely to continue for more than several hours. Board members who have attended an incident are responsible for preparing a report of the event and how it was handled.

BOARD STATISTICS	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	15
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	6
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	11
Total number of visits to the Establishment	501
Total number of segregation reviews attended	400

## D Section - Applications

Code	Subject	Current reporting year	Previous reporting year
A	Accommodation including laundry, clothing, ablutions	6	11
B	Discipline including adjudications, IEP, sanctions	10	9
C	Equality	3	3
D	Purposeful Activity including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	16	9
E 1	Letters, visits, phones, public protection restrictions	11	15
E 2	Finance including pay, private monies, spends		
F	Food and kitchens	3	4
G	Health including physical, mental, social care	22	23
H 1	Property within this establishment	70	99
H 2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location		
H 3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)		
I	Sentence management including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-categorisation	21	27
J	Staff/prisoner concerns including bullying	17	11
K	Transfers	7	14
	<b>L miscellaneous</b>	35	18
	<b>M Not appropriate</b>	18	6
	<b>Total number of IMB applications</b>	239	249

During the year the Chairman received 5 Confidential Access Complaints.