



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

**HMP Gartree**

for reporting year  
**December 2017 to November 2018**

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*Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody*

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**1 STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB**

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

The Board is specifically charged to:

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

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

## 2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This report presents the findings of the Independent Monitoring Board ('the Board') at HMP Gartree ('Gartree') for the period 1<sup>st</sup> December 2017 to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

For part of this reporting period the role of Governor was undertaken by two individuals as a 'job share'. The Board welcomed the return of working with one individual in the role of Governor.

### **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 about:

- The restricted regime caused by staffing issues, and the daily impact this has on the prisoners' lives in relation to accessing healthcare, exercise and education etc.
- These restrictions can mean prisoners have limited opportunities for positive rehabilitation and access to programmes, training, work and a safe living environment.
- Staffing shortages and frequent issues in getting the roll (a head count of prisoners) correct results in additional unpredictable changes to an already restricted regime which results in cancelled activities such as gym/library sessions and even healthcare appointments.

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

The Board considers that prisoners are treated humanely but does have some concerns:

- The wellbeing of long-term segregated prisoners, in terms of both their physical and mental health.
- The physical environment of the Segregation Unit remains inadequate for both staff and prisoners. The environment provides unhealthy long-term living accommodation especially for those with mental health issues, who often remain in the unit and isolated in their cells for long periods.
- Prisoners remaining on ACCTs for long periods of time
- Segregated prisoners on wings do not have access to the statutory segregated regime
- The inadequate healthcare provision

#### **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. However, the Board remains concerned about the lack of individuals' preparation for release into the digital world that now exists. Due to the length of custodial sentences of the men at Gartree, the Board believes that there needs to be consideration of how and when this preparation begins for the men residing at Gartree.

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### **Main Areas for Development**

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## To the Minister

1. Despite reassurances from the Minister in his letter dated the 11th September 2018 to the Board regarding the healthcare provision at Gartree, the outcome of the CQC's visit in August 2018 resulted in the announcement that the existing contract would be terminated and a new provider appointed.

The Board seeks to understand how the effectiveness and performance of commissioned healthcare services is measured. Despite concerns being raised by the Board on numerous occasions, it remains unclear that without the initial inspection by the CQC and subsequent follow-up visits the inadequate health provision being provided at HMP Gartree might have continued or declined further. The Board is concerned that, within 18 months of a new contract being awarded, the inadequate level of healthcare being provided resulted in the decision, taken by NHS England and Mitie, to mutually terminate the contract.

It is acknowledged by the Board that Mitie has experience of providing the police and Home Office with medical support services in police custody suites, sexual assault referral centres, and within immigration and customs. However, when Mitie was introduced to the Board there was no obvious evidence that they had experience of providing the list of healthcare services required at Gartree, as outlined in the tender documentation. It is the Board's view that the list of services in the tender documentation can be aligned to that of a primary care service offered in the wider community. The tender documentation described the service to be provided by a supplier as 'an outcome based high quality integrated healthcare service' - again there was no obvious evidence that Mitie had delivered this type of service within a prison environment. The tender stated that 'successful providers are expected to be fully operational, providing services from the 1st April 2017'; the start date for the contract.

Is the Minister satisfied that the decision to award Mitie a contract to provide healthcare at HMP Gartree was based primarily on the needs of the population, and to support improving health inequalities for the men living at Gartree, rather than any other criteria?

Will the Minister share with the Board any identified lessons learnt from all parties involved in the commissioning of Mitie, and how this shared learning will be utilised in future commissioning?

2. The National Partnership Agreement for Prison Healthcare acknowledges the interaction and inter-dependency of health and social care needs and the prison environment (defined as the physical environment, staffing levels and regime) to improve the overall health and wellbeing of prisoners. These interactions include staffing levels, impact of the regime in access employment and other activities, as well as delivering effective healthcare.

Gartree has experienced issues with all the necessary components to improve health and wellbeing in this and the previous reporting period. In order to support Gartree in the turnaround and address the inadequate healthcare services provided over the past few years, the Board believes that there needs to be a major improvement in the interaction and inter-dependency between health and social care and the prison regime to create an enabling environment to improve the health and wellbeing of all prisoners at Gartree.

Will the Minister therefore consider discussing with the partnership the possibility of Gartree as a pilot site to implement and measure the whole prison approach to health and wellbeing, as outlined in their objectives for 2018-2021? If the partnership is unable to consider Gartree as a pilot site, would the partnership offer more support to Gartree to ensure that it can implement and measure a 'whole prison' approach at Gartree that will demonstrate improvements in the healthcare and wellbeing of the men residing at Gartree?

### **To the Prison Service**

1. In order to support Gartree in reducing:
  - the continued impact that staffing levels have on prisoners in all aspects of their daily lives, especially employment, education, health, and addressing the significant increase in prisoner on prisoner assaults
  - the need to redeploy officers from areas such as Safer Custody, Offender Management Unit and Reception, together with the increase on prisoner on staff assaults.

will the Prison Service consider reviewing the agreed staffing levels at Gartree to ensure that levels allow for absences such as long-term sick, leave of absence, attrition/transfers, detached duties, and other factors that impact on providing an effective purposeful profile and regime management plan?

2. Does the Prison Service consider that Gartree has a sufficient budget to provide a decent, safe, secure living environment with resources to contribute to the rehabilitation of the prisoners at Gartree?
3. Does the Prison Service consider that Gartree has sufficient capital and major maintenance investment to provide a decent, safe, secure living environment with resources to contribute to the rehabilitation of the prisoners at Gartree?

### **To the Governing Governor**

1. Will the Governor work with healthcare and activities to focus on a new intervention plan for long-term segregated prisons to address any deterioration in mental health and physical wellbeing, and support their progression out of segregation?
2. Will the Governor consider improvements to existing checks to ensure that segregated prisoners on the wings receive their statutory segregated regime?
3. Will the Governor and healthcare review the current healthcare complaint system, and make necessary improvements?
4. Will the Governor review the current complaint system, and make necessary improvements to bring it in line with the PSI?
5. Will the Governor review reception and make improvements to address the continuing issues regarding clothing and property?
6. Will the Governor review and identify steps to make the predicted regime more reliable and credible by making improvements in relation to the number of incorrect roll calls and improved warning of wing closures?

### **Improvements**

#### Staffing

After the reduction in prison staff nationally, Gartree has benefited from the recruitment drive for prison officers and in this reporting period there has been a large intake of Prison Officer Entry Level Training officers (POELTs). Efforts are being made to understand and address levels of sickness in the form of research to gain a better understanding of the reasons underlying the sickness.

After a number of changes within the senior management team (SMT) towards the end of this reporting period, there has been a period of stability within the SMT, which is welcomed by the Board.

The Board would like to recognise the work of the Gartree Therapeutic Community (GTC). Since 1993, the GTC has provided an open living-learning environment, empowering those who reside in the GTC, and the Board acknowledges the outstanding work achieved over the past 25 years.

### 3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

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Gartree first opened in 1965 as a category C training prison. 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 Gartree has now become part of the Long Term and High Security Prison Estate (LTHSE).

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 30.11.2018.

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 and low IQ. 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 50s unit for 60 of Gartree's older prisoners.

Currently I Wing provides accommodation in shared cells, and accommodates prisoners who are awaiting transfer to a category C prison. However, the Board is aware of future plans to amend the purpose of I Wing. The Board understands that I wing will become a 'special' unit designed to assist individuals with complex health needs from within the LTHSE.

An induction wing was introduced during this reporting period, which commenced on B wing before being permanently moved to G wing.

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## 4 SAFETY

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### **Safer Custody Team**

In our last Annual Report the Board expressed concern that the work of the Safer Custody Team had been greatly 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. This remains a concern, especially as the Board is aware of levels of violence increasing.

By the beginning of this reporting period some changes had been made to staff structures with the introduction of a new head of safety (custodial manager) role, in an effort to help to relieve pressure on the manager and allow some overarching support and improvements to the way ACCTs are conducted, monitored and reviewed. The team has appeared more stable over the past year but as with all other areas of the prison, staffing shortages and regime restrictions continue to have a knock-on effect on the safer custody and violence monitoring/reduction work.

### **Self-harm**

The Board remains concerned about the level of self-harm, although the overall figures have fallen slightly towards the end of the reporting period. It would appear that a high number of the incidents are linked to a small number of prisoners. Nevertheless this still seems to indicate that there are ongoing and underlying issues and it is of concern to the Board that these cycles of behaviour are sometimes not broken – either because they are not adequately addressed or not supported through interventions. This may be linked to our wider concerns about the provision of mental health support for some of the most vulnerable prisoners. The staff, who are not fully trained mental health practitioners, are left to deal with this challenging behavior.

Illicit debt, often incurred by drug purchases, appears to be a growing issue within the prison and men are often 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 also continue to be men who self-isolate because they feel threatened and the Board is concerned that because they can remain isolated and segregated, in some instances for weeks, they may not be given access to exercise, showers and fresh air (amongst other things) in the same way that legally segregated men are entitled to.

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

There are 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 safer custody custodial manager, 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 mental health support.

The Board is aware that funding has been secured for in-cell phones to be introduced during the next reporting year, which should provide much better opportunities for prisoners to maintain important

contact with family and friends which may help to reduce some of the anxieties and frustrations which sometimes lead to self-harm. However, it should be recognised that many prisoners suffer from Mental Health and drug-related conditions which will continue to make them vulnerable.

### **Violence and Violence Reduction**

Acts of violence continue to be a problem at HMP Gartree. During 2018 there were 61 assaults on staff, sixteen of which were serious, and 79 assaults or fights between prisoners. These acts of violence not only affect the victims and perpetrators but can also disrupt the regime and have a negative impact on the wider population. Debt and violence are often linked and there has been a growing trend in holding/brewing hooch (illicitly brewed alcohol) over the reporting year, although through the targeted work of the search team many of these have been detected and removed.

Over the past year important violence reduction work has continued to be affected by staff shortages. Safer custody officers continue to be pulled off to cover custodial duties which affects important 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. In addition to these initiatives, Gartree has also introduced a new Challenge Support and Intervention Plan (CSIP) initiative during the past reporting year. CSIP is a national initiative which aims to improve management of prisoners identified as being at high risk of self-harming or being harmed by others. Prisoners who commit assaults will be subject to enhanced review under this CSIP violence reduction process.

Since its introduction at Gartree, a number of CSIP cases have been opened (and some closed) and proactive work is being carried out by senior officers from the residential wings, working with the prisoners who are perpetrating violent acts and in some cases with the victims. This intervention is to be welcomed, but it is essential that the staff who have been trained in this work are given the necessary time to carry out this work and train and promote wider knowledge of the initiative amongst all staff and prisoners.

### **Listeners/Samaritans**

There are currently 16 Listeners in Gartree, who are prisoners trained and supported by the Samaritans to provide invaluable peer support to their fellow prisoners. They have access to a dedicated Listener care suite, which they can access 24 hours a day (subject to dynamic risk assessment) to enable them to carry out their important role in a quieter and better equipped environment. The Listeners vital work is acknowledged by the Safer Custody Team.

Where risk assessments suggest that the Listeners cannot be used, prisoners are allowed access to a Samaritans' phone, although there are reports that these are not always available.

### **Drugs**

Illegal drugs continue to infiltrate the prison by a variety of means and their prevalence can be linked to debt, violence and bullying. The Board has been particularly concerned to note that there have been instances where prisoners in the SAPU and even on constant watch have been able to obtain illegal drugs. This can result in disruptive behaviour which the staff have to deal with and which damage the physical and mental health of prisoners.

Over the reporting period new scanning equipment has been introduced to allow correspondence to be checked for illegal drugs. This has not been without issue and some teething problems, but in the main any initiative which stems the flow of illegal drugs into HMP Gartree is welcomed by the Board.

Figures below provided by Safer Custody Team HMP Gartree

<b>Safer Custody Statistics</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
Self – Harm Incidents	20	283	434	427
ACCTs Opened	139	135	184	186
CSIP				
Referrals				137
Cases opened				53
Assaults: prisoner on prisoner	35	43	39	79
Assaults: prisoner on staff	22	27	53	61
Violent incidents	82	87	134	140
Deaths in Custody	1	3	2	1
Serious Incidents		4	2	4

<b>Reasons ACCT document opened</b>				
	2015	2016	2017	2018
Hanging	4	2	8	8
Cuts minor	42	41	58	92
Cuts major (require sutures)	6	3	10	2
Overdose	5	13	8	2
Food refusal	5	0	1	1
Threats to self-harm	20	31	32	27
Low in mood	57	45	60	47
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>186</b>
Transferred in open ACCT	3	3	7	2

The prison is bound by the Equalities Act (2010), which is designed to ensure that it: eliminates unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advances equality of opportunity, and fosters good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

### **Equalities Action Team**

The Equalities Action Team ('EAT') is comprised of a prisoner representative for each protected characteristic. These prisoners are supported by a foreign national officer, an equalities officer, an equality and community engagement co-ordinator and an equalities manager from the senior management team. The entire equalities team reports to the Governing Governor. Unfortunately, towards the end of this reporting period the role of foreign national officer was not covered, resulting in a number of prisoners being unsure about the status of deportations. The equalities liaison officer is also often redeployed due to staff shortages, which adversely impacts on the department and results in a lack of consistency in support.

EAT meetings take place every two months. The regularity of meetings throughout 2018 has slightly improved in comparison to 2017, with fewer cancellations due to wing closures and restricted regime. However, data provided in these meetings can often be lacking or incomplete which leads to inconclusive meeting outcomes.

### **Discrimination Incident Report Forms**

Discrimination Incident Report Forms (DIRFS) should be available on all wings; however it was noted that the DIRF sections in the form racks were empty on numerous wings at different points in time. Prisoners have said that this is a regular occurrence. In 2018, 46 DIRFs were submitted; the majority of these have been regarding the use of disrespectful language towards individuals with protected characteristics. There is confusion among prisoners as to whose responsibility it is to answer DIRFs; however the governors and custodial managers of the department the DIRF relates to are supposed to respond. At the beginning of 2018 the response time to DIRFS was inadequate. A new system has been introduced to improve the response times, and the Board looks forward to seeing improvements as an outcome of implementing a new system.

### **Age and Disability**

The prison accommodates 191 prisoners aged 50 and above. There is a dedicated wing which seeks to meet the needs of this population, with specially adapted cells which are wheel chair friendly and installed with grab rails as needed. Individuals who have need for it are allocated a peer who is trained to assist the wheelchair users. Regardless of the fact that over 27% of the population are disabled, there have been no advancement on the installation of toilet facilities suitable for disabled individuals since the last Board annual report, despite it being part of an action plan.

### **Transgender Support**

For this reporting period Gartree accommodated one transgender prisoner. The support and resources available have significantly improved upon the previous year, with a compact being put in place and a full complement of staff including case manager, senior officer, healthcare staff and wing staff. Currently, a bi-monthly review is held by the case manager in order to assess needs. The prison is now working with the HIS charity, which will allow transgender individuals to purchase female clothing at a reduced price. The prison is also working on prosthetics and wigs being made available. However recent funding concerns have delayed this and it has now been decided that funding will be the prisoner's responsibility.

## **Religion**

The prison population is comprised of the following faiths: 4.85% Buddhist; 46.63% Christian; 0.52% Hindu; 20.26% Muslim; 0.43% Jewish; 1.42% Sikh; 3.81% other and 22.08% no religion. The majority of religions are represented within the chaplaincy department. Currently there is one full-time imam; one full-time Anglican chaplain and two part-time imams employed at HMP Gartree. Other faith leaders are employed on a sessional basis and cover: Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Paganism, Roman Catholicism and Rastafarian. Unfortunately, the religious events and services can be affected by wing closures, and both attendees and staff reported this becoming a more regular occurrence towards the end of 2018 after improving at the beginning of the year. The chaplaincy team can offer special measures to support with bereavement and memorable anniversaries to those prisoners who request it. Prisoners in the segregation unit and those segregated on wings have access to a member of chaplaincy and can make applications to attend religious ceremonies which are granted dependent on a security basis.

Any dietary requirements related to religion, religious festivals and health concerns are catered for by the kitchen. In 2018 HMP Gartree provided all prisoners observing Ramadan with an in-cell microwave which maintained their ability to eat a good standard of food at the times they needed.

## **Family Days**

Prisoners are also able to invite the chaplaincy to visits and family days. Family days at HMP Gartree are a really positive means of encouraging good relationships between prisoners and their families. These days often involve external companies coming in to provide entertainment, such as falconry experiences and pet corners. Prisoners are able to request, within reason, the types of food available at the buffet on the day which is provided by the kitchens.

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

Over the past reporting year the 12 cells in the SAPU have remained almost constantly full of men who tend to exhibit more challenging behaviour and who in many cases have complex mental health needs which can result in violence, verbal abuse and assaults, in addition to self-harm, dirty protests, and damage to premises and property. The Board has raised concerns that the SAPU and Gartree is not a suitable environment for these individuals, whose mental health difficulties make them especially vulnerable and whose behaviour seemed stuck in a cycle of helplessness.

This puts enormous strain on the staff working in the SAPU who have to deal with the pressures, day in day out, in an extremely challenging environment. The staff continue to deal with this in a positively professional manner and demonstrate resilience, patience and compassion.

Because the SAPU is small, there continue to be high numbers of men segregated (and confined to cell) on the residential wings. It is not uncommon to find 20+ men held in this way, putting additional pressures on wing staff who are required to escort them for exercise, showers, telephone calls and other 'daily apps' they may require. The Board has raised concerns on a number of occasions that we come across instances where men have not showered or exercised for days, because of staff shortages causing restrictions to the regime.

There have been several instances where, because the SAPU is full, a troublesome individual has had to be accommodated on a residential wing, despite being on a 'three person unlock'. When staffing levels (for various reasons) have been critically low this has made life very difficult, particularly when there are not three staff on a wing to facilitate an unlock. Over the year there have been some changes to the regime, whereby wing closures have now become slightly more predictable.

The Board was encouraged to hear that staff in the SAPU were to be offered 'supervision' sessions whereby they can offload and discuss the challenges they face in carrying out their daily duties and get advice and support from peers and professionals. Unfortunately, it appears that these have been affected by regime restrictions and have not taken place regularly. The Board would welcome a more structured approach to supporting staff in this way. In view of the continued use of residential wings to hold segregated men perhaps this 'supervision' could also be offered more widely if staff on residential wings are also dealing with complex cases.

The Board has expressed concern about the general standard of accommodation in the SAPU, which not only houses segregated men but is also the venue for adjudications and segregation and ACCT reviews. In response to a rota report in March 2018 we were advised that there were no plans to improve the SAPU accommodation, but that plans were in place for I wing to become a 'Progression Unit', which are now moving forward. For periods throughout the year B Wing was used as the SAPU 'overspill'. An additional exercise yard has been installed in the SAPU courtyard to allow three men to exercise at any one time but staffing issues and risk assessments sometimes mean that this cannot be fully utilised.

The Board is now aware of proposals to make I wing a more 'specialised unit' to provide accommodation for prisoners in the LTHSE with complex needs, who are unable to reside and be supported in wider groups. This initiative is welcomed by the Board, provided the relevant staff resources are made available and that measures are put in place to replace the current I wing facilities which operate as a 'progression unit'.

Last year we raised concerns about insufficient constant supervision cells to accommodate prisoners in crisis or on constant watch. There are two specifically earmarked for this purpose on D wing but there are still instances where constant watches have had to be accommodated in the SAPU where the Board continues to express concern that the use of the 'special' cells with no windows or external ventilation is not ideal and that any prisoner who is on constant watch should not be placed into the SAPU environment which can at times be highly disruptive.

It is unfortunate and with sadness that the Board reports one death in custody over the past year, of a prisoner being held in the SAPU. The Coroner's findings and final report are yet to be published. The Board will examine this in due course and review any reference/recommendations made.

### **Mental Health**

The high number of men with complex mental health needs (i.e. those on ACCT documents, self-harming, on dirty protests in the SAPU puts considerable strain on staff, who despite doing everything they can in very difficult circumstances, may not be best placed to deal with some of these more complex prisoners. The Board is aware that is not always easy to transfer men with mental health needs from the SAPU to other establishments or more suitable secure healthcare accommodation but we continue to be concerned that in the cases of some men who have been segregated for long periods there appear to be no clear plans for progression out of the SAPU or off segregation on wings.

This is not only detrimental to the health and wellbeing of these prisoners 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 access to meaningful activities or work as a means to occupy their time and distract themselves before they can be moved back to normal location or on to more suitable establishments/accommodation.

The Board is aware of occasions throughout the year where men in the SAPU have not received prescribed medication when it is due or needed. There appear to have been issues with the communication of planned reductions or changes to medication, where some men have not been made fully aware of these changes and the reasons behind them. The Board acknowledges that there have been considerable pressures and problems with the delivery of health care facilities within Gartree generally over the past year, culminating in a change of the healthcare provider and would seek reassurance that the provision for the physical and mental health needs of the men who are segregated can become more consistent and better coordinated and necessary and regular medications are always available.

### **Communication**

The IMB is concerned that there appear to have been occasions where we have not been notified of use of the special accommodation within the SAPU or other planned removals. There was a process agreed and set down with the previous Deputy Governor in post during the reporting period but, with one or two exceptions, it is largely ignored and so the monitoring of such important processes does not happen. This needs to be addressed. The Board is particularly concerned that we have only recently been advised about an incident whereby a prisoner was taken to special accommodation following an assault on staff and has later alleged that he was himself assaulted by officers. Investigations are still ongoing but, whilst respecting that, the Board needs to know why the Board is not being notified or given information on this and other more minor incidents.

### **Wing lockdowns**

Although improvements were made latterly, wing closures because of staff shortages were poorly managed, with wings being shut down at short notice in an uncoordinated way leading to a great deal of unrest amongst the prison population. Healthcare needs, education, work, telephone calls were all severely disrupted. At times it even became difficult for the kitchen to function because the lockdowns interrupted the transfer of prisoners to their place of work. The Board wonders how it was that the prison allowed itself to be in such a position that it was unable to provide enough cover to operate the most basic of regimes which allow prison life to continue.

The problem was exacerbated by continual incorrect rolls which led to even more restricted movement. The process is simply the business of counting prisoners in whatever location they are in and so it is a manual exercise which is forever going wrong because of human error. It suggests a lack of sufficient management. The Board understands that measures are in place to simplify the process but regards this as being well overdue.

### **Equipment supply**

The provision of basic kit/clothing, equipment and furniture to new prisoners continues to be a problem and the Board is aware that wings often complain that the essentials such as toilet paper run out of stock. The Board does not understand why this is difficult. The prison has been slow to respond, blaming technical difficulties with stock ordering systems. This would simply not occur in the outside community with organisations of a similar size and it is time this problem disappeared.

### **Accommodation**

Accommodation on the wings is generally well maintained with a good standard of house-keeping in that the corridors and communal areas are largely kept clean and tidy. The shower areas in some cases need attention, however. The showers on G Wing however continue to smell in the summer and attract flies. The showers on C Wing need decoration and the curtains, inexplicably removed, need to be replaced.

The prisoners' kitchens are generally kept in good order but there needs to be a review of the available equipment. Some microwaves are in a poor state of repair and the fridges need to comply with health and safety criteria. The Board recommends that thermometers are kept within the fridge and a daily check maintained, as they are in court custody suites.

### **Accommodation in the SAPU**

The accommodation in the SAPU is oppressive. Whilst a TV was introduced into the office, there were promises of refurbishing, which does not appear to have taken place. SAPU staff work under the most difficult circumstances and therefore they need to be made as comfortable as possible. Staff have no separate rest area and only a basic kitchen and toilet.

Work on the SAPU exercise yard has produced three separate areas for individual prisoners. Whilst understanding that measures needed to be taken to prevent further occurrences of incidents at height and other potential situations, the outcome of these measures are nothing more than three extremely grim cages.

### **Property**

Property continues to be a major issue with a 40% increase in the number of applications the IMB receives for missing items, bringing it back to 2015/16 levels. The senior management team appears reluctant to investigate such claims, and complaints raised by the IMB involve protracted correspondence or are simply ignored. Reception staff struggle to cope with the workload, largely because of staff being pulled out to fulfil operational duties elsewhere. Wing staff find it difficult to find the time to escort prisoners to Reception to collect property. The problem is critical. Such is the volume of applications and the inherent workload, the IMB is having to limit its involvement with property in the future and we will be advising prisoners who remain dissatisfied about lack of response to complaints or poor-quality responses to approach the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman.

### **Kitchen**

The kitchen management is very strong and has a good relationship with the prisoner workers. They cater for the many special and religious dietary and needs and festivals throughout the year despite being understaffed. The IMB has received no complaints at all about the standard of catering and we believe it to be of a good standard within its capabilities and always delivered to schedule. The cost containment is the lowest across the Long-Term High Security Estate with the figure of £1.67 per prisoner per day and they should be congratulated. The IMB wonders how well they are supported by the SMT. Only two Duty Governors regularly sign the Food Journal.

### **Scanning for illegal substances**

The Board welcomes all measures that are taken to prevent the entry of illegal substances and items into the prison and is pleased to note that the introduction of scanning equipment that detects drugs on paper and clothing has had a significant effect. There is a concern however that the equipment is over-sensitive and innocent correspondence and clothing is being withheld, and the prison now seems unsure about what to do with these items. It is causing a lot of concern from prisoners and their families. The Prison has the problem of a large store of confiscated clothing which has tested positive and the IMB would like to know the plan. The Board is aware that modifications to reduce the sensitivity of the scanner is under way.

For the majority of this reporting period, responsibility for provision of the integrated healthcare services at Gartree was provided through Mitie Care & Custody (Health) Limited. On 1 November 2018, Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (NHFT) took over the responsibility for the delivery of healthcare at Gartree.

Early in this reporting period, the Board produced a report regarding healthcare, due to the increasing concerns of the Board, based on its observations, and concerns raised by prisoners via the Prisoner Council, as experienced service users of both the incumbent and previous suppliers. This report was shared with the Governor and Mitie in January 2018. Concerns over the quality of the provision of healthcare were raised with the IMB by prisoners and officers, and these concerns together with those of the Board were communicated via rota reports to the governors, in Board meetings with the Governor, and directly with the healthcare team throughout this reporting period. The regime has continued to be under considerable pressure, and this pressure has contributed to making it challenging for prisoners and the healthcare team, to manage the health and mental wellbeing of those detained at Gartree. The Board has received an increase in applications relating to healthcare, which have increased by 50% when compared to the previous reporting period.

In November 2017 there was a joint inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) and the Care Quality Commission (CQC), and the report of this inspection was published in March 2018. The CQC identified a breach of Regulation 9, person-centred care, and took enforcement action in the form of a warning notice issued in December 2017. The CQC found breaches in a number of other regulations - good governance and staffing - and issued requirement notices in March 2018. In August 2018 the CQC undertook a further inspection, to follow up on the regulatory breaches and whistleblowing. During this inspection, the CQC identified that insufficient improvements had been made, and risks that had been identified in the previous inspection had not been acted upon. In addition, significant new concerns were identified. During the August 2018 inspection, the CQC did identify that the management of individuals with mental health issues and long-term conditions had improved.

However, the overall conclusion of the CQC in its August 2018 inspection was that Mitie Care & Custody (Health) Limited had not responded adequately to the serious concerns raised during the CQC's 2017 inspection, and the governance systems remained insufficient to assess, monitor and improve the quality and safety of the service. It was announced in October 2018 that NHFT would become the new provider and take responsibility for the integrated healthcare services at Gartree from 1 November 2018.

The IMB continues to hold the view, as expressed in our Annual Report 2016/17 that the prison regime and the health and wellbeing services at Gartree for this reporting period were not designed or resourced to improve health and wellbeing, or tackle health inequalities and the wider determinants of health.

The Board acknowledges that a change in provider was appropriate, and addressing the current inadequacies of the healthcare services is critical. However, the Board is concerned that there will continue to be a lack of strategic development of services that will improve health and reduce health inequalities. The Board looks forward to receiving reassurances and evidence that the strategic direction of healthcare at Gartree will address these concerns.

\* To ensure consistency in reporting the information regarding healthcare has been taken directly from CQC reports.

## 9 EDUCATION AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

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The provision of education and some activities in Gartree 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 and 2 English and maths for those prisoners without these qualifications. In addition, prisoners can opt to undertake a variety of courses such as GCSEs. An A level in classics is now in its second year with eight prisoners enrolled, who will sit their exams in June 2019.

There is a growing emphasis on work-based training in areas such as waste management, barbering, cleaning and hygiene, lifting and handling etc. An interesting innovation is a development called Way2Learn which utilises a channel on a prisoner's TV set to provide learning material for maths and English self-learning sessions. The Board welcomes this initiative and looks forward to reporting on further initiatives on accessing learning.

During the year the education department has reported a retention rate of 99% and a success rate of 92%.

Unfortunately, like most areas of the prison, education has suffered badly from the impact of the ongoing 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. On some occasions barely 50% of the expected turnout have been able to attend because of this. A particular area of concern focuses on those prisoners who are required to sit external exams at fixed times and what would happen if these coincided with a lockdown. More work is needed to ensure that these situations do not arise.

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

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### **Employment opportunities**

A new employment initiative implemented in 2018 has taken the meaningful paid activity sessions that the majority of prisoners are engaged in per week to a maximum of nine and a minimum of seven. This has created an additional 465 jobs and has reduced the unemployment rate from 280 to 56. Although this has meant some prisoners have lost two paid sessions, meaningful activity amongst the entire prison population has benefited.

### **Pay schemes**

The Board is aware that there is a proposal to change payment schemes, and that this is currently being reviewed before final implementation.

### **Purposeful activity**

The prison operates eleven 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.

During the year the industries staff have increased the number of employment opportunities from 540 to 720. This means that, given that some prisoners are physically unable to work or are of retirement age, there are employment opportunities for all prisoners. The industries department is advertising vacancies by 'rolling news bars' on the bottom of some of the channels on prisoners' TV screens.

A new development during the year is the creation of a workshop for renovating abandoned bicycles for subsequent sale, in conjunction with the Sue Ryder charity. When fully operational this will offer 30 employment places. Another interesting opportunity is the 'Message in a Bottle' scheme operated by Leicestershire Police. This provides at-risk people with a bottle, to be kept in their fridge, with a list of all their medications, illnesses etc. which can then be readily accessed by emergency services if required. Prisoners prepare the bottles for this scheme, and this work is available 'in cell' to those who are unable to attend work, via one of the workshops. The industries staff are to be congratulated on creating socially useful work opportunities such as these.

There is a growing emphasis on provision of in-work qualifications in all areas of employment and this is to be commended; these qualifications may well assist a prisoner in gaining employment on their eventual release.

During the year Board members have reported on the adverse effects that the lack of a settled prison regime is having on 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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HMP Gartree is unusual in that it holds only prisoners serving indeterminate sentences. At the time of writing, out of a total population of 703, 646 (92%) are Indeterminate Life Sentenced Prisoners and 57 (8%) are prisoners serving Indeterminate Sentences for Public Protection (IPPs).

As a training prison in the Long Term High Security Estate, Gartree rarely releases prisoners directly into the community. During the past year, ten prisoners have been released directly, of which three were IPPs. Therefore, most of the resettlement support is long term in nature designed to enable progression of prisoners to category C and D prisons prior to their final release. This support comprises education, offending behaviour programmes, learning skills through work, offender supervisor interaction, sentence planning, family contact, the PIPE (Psychologically Informed Planned Environment) unit and so on.

A number of offending behaviour programmes are used at the prison to help reduce the risk of re-offending and assist progression to lower category prisons. During the year, 53 prisoners progressed to category C prisons and 23 to category D.

The prison currently has 59 prisoners who have achieved category C level who are technically able to progress. Whilst the aim is to progress prisoners to category C and D, some transfers can be delayed due to factors including their current education/programmes/medical status and/or capacity issues at the receiving prison.

Unfortunately, during the year the Offender Management Unit suffered due to offender supervisors being redeployed to operational duties. This was mainly due to staff shortages (for instance, the prison has a high level of staff sickness) which continues to affect the regime and a significant number of offender supervisor hours are lost each month. This reduces the time offender supervisors are able to spend working with prisoners, which has a detrimental effect on prisoners and prisoner outcomes.

The Board notes that the new national Offender Management in Custody (OMiC) initiative is in its implementation phase at the prison, with much of the key worker pool identified and trained. The new key worker scheme will cover all prisoners. This will change the way prisoners are supported in reducing their risk of re-offending during their sentence. With this new significant resource, it is hoped that worthwhile improvements will be made over time.

In last year's report, we alerted the Minister to our concern about the number of IPP prisoners being effectively stuck in the prison system, serving indefinite detention. Gartree holds 57 IPPs of whom 45 (79%) are over tariff. The bulk of these prisoners have complex needs and present significant challenges to staff. They have a much higher propensity to self-harm, attempt suicide, be subject to ACCTs, be segregated and assault staff. The Board recognises that IPPs who present a real risk to the public cannot be released but nevertheless believes that the government needs to put (even) greater resource into finding a way to progress these prisoners.

Overall, the Board considers that the Offender Management Unit offers an effective level of support to prisoners at the various stages of their sentences, and sentence planning appears satisfactory. The prison offers effective preparation for progression of prisoners to lower category prisons.

## C Section – The Work of the 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, 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.

<b>BOARD STATISTICS</b>	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	15
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	10
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	9
Total number of visits to the Establishment	556
Total number of segregation reviews attended	392

## D Section - Applications

Code	Subject	Current Reporting Year	Reporting Year 2016/17	Reporting Year 2015/16
A	Accommodation including laundry, clothing & ablutions	9	6	11
B	Discipline including adjudications, IEP, & sanctions	16	10	9
C	Equality	6	3	3
D	Purposeful Activity including education, work, training, library, regime & time out of cell	21	16	9
E1	Letters, visits, phones & public protection restrictions	11	11	15
E2	Finance including pay, private monies & spends			
F	Food and kitchens	4	3	4
G	Health including physical, mental, social care	47	22	23
H1	Property within this establishment	98	70	99
H2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location			
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)			
I	Sentence management including HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-categorisation	27	21	27
J	Staff/prisoner concerns including bullying	25	17	11
K	Transfers	9	7	14
L	Miscellaneous	60	35	18
M	Inappropriate	11	18	6
	<b>Total Number of Applications to the IMB</b>	344	239	249

The IMB received 44% increase in applications in this reporting period. The increase was predominately related to Healthcare and Property. In many instances healthcare applications related to the lack of response to complaints by Healthcare, and in relation to property it was the lack of adequate or informative reply regarding a prisoner's property leaving the Prisoner with unresolved issues.

### Confidential Applications

During this reporting year a total of 33 applications were submitted to the Chair on a confidential basis, compared to the previous reporting year where the Chair received 5 applications. Whilst this represents a high increase it should be noted that the majority of these applications were not deemed confidential when applying the criteria of a confidential application. However, whilst some applications were perhaps trying to 'bypass the complaints process', many towards the end of this reporting period were due to the delay in responding to complaints as outlined in the Prison Service Instruction.