



INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD
ANNUAL REPORT 2014 - 2015
MAGHABERRY PRISON

MISSION STATEMENT

To enhance the quality of prison life, by working to ensure fairness and accountability in prison

Statement of Purpose

Members of the Independent Monitoring Board for Maghaberry Prison are appointed by the Justice Minister under Section 3 of the Treatment of Offenders Act (NI) 1968 and under the Prison Act (NI) 1953.

The Board is required to:

- visit Maghaberry Prison regularly and report to the Justice Minister on the conditions of imprisonment and the treatment of offenders;
- consider requests and complaints made by prisoners to the Board;
- report matters of concern to the Governor or, in serious cases, the Justice Minister; and
- exercise certain powers that are given under the Prison and Young Offender Centre Rules (NI) 2005.
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The Prison Rules further require the Board to satisfy itself as to:

- the treatment of prisoners including provision for their healthcare and other welfare while in prison;
- the facilities available to prisoners to allow them to make purposeful use of their time; and the cleanliness and adequacy of prison premises.

To enable the Board to carry out these duties effectively its members have free access at any time to all prisoners and to all parts of the prison to which they are appointed. The Board shall also have reasonable access to any of the records of the prison.

UK NATIONAL PREVENTATIVE MECHANISM

The Independent Monitoring Board is part of the United Kingdom National Preventative Mechanism (UK NPM) as required by the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT).

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CHAIRPERSON'S INTRODUCTION

I am pleased to introduce the report for the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) for Maghaberry Prison covering the period April 2014 – March 2015.

Once again I would like to thank all the Board members for the time, effort and commitment they bring to a voluntary role especially during the past year when, due to three members resigning because of other commitments, Board member numbers have been drastically reduced. This is against a background of increasing number of prisoners with a subsequent increased number of requests to see an IMB member. Board members also attend case conferences and reviews several times during the average week and also, as part of our role attend any serious incident that occurs within the prison.

I would like to take this opportunity to also thank the Governing Governor, Deputy Governor, and Governors of the various areas within the prison, and staff at all levels who have been both helpful and courteous to the Board at all times. All are willing to meet and discuss issues - not only at our monthly meetings, but as they arise on a daily and/or weekly basis. The Board also appreciates the fact that we are invited to attend various meetings and events within the prison.

The current reporting year unfortunately also saw three prisoner deaths in Maghaberry – two who died in hospital and one who had been released early due to a terminal illness. To each of these families we also extend our sympathy on the loss of a loved one.

It is disappointing to note that there are ongoing problems and issues with healthcare, especially since it was fully taken over by the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust (The Trust). One of the main issues is the retention of staff which can cause pressure on the remaining staff. This situation has not been helped by the level of threats against and intimidation of healthcare staff during the year. However, we welcome the improved working relationship between healthcare and IMB which has benefited all concerned.

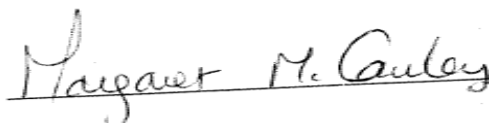
Drugs, both prescription and illegal, remain a huge problem within the prison. Although the Board welcomes the joint Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) and Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) initiative, large quantities of illegal substances still continue to find their way into the prison causing serious problems.

Staffing levels have dropped significantly in the last reporting year. This causes a reduced regime, increased lockdowns and therefore compromises the safety of both prisoners and staff on the landings should a serious incident occur. Sick leave amongst staff is high - in part due to stress and assaults - which increases the pressure on the remaining staff who endeavour to maintain as much of the normal regime as is possible. There has also been a high attrition rate amongst the newly recruited staff. As a Board we have raised our concerns around this issue with senior management on numerous occasions.

As we go into the next reporting year, funding cuts will be implemented to the Northern Ireland Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NIACRO), and the Cruse Bereavement Service is to be withdrawn. Chaplaincy hours have also been cut and the work of all these organisations cannot be commended highly enough.

On a more positive note, unescorted movement continues without any serious incident and gives prisoners some freedom and sense of responsibility. The Family Matters programme continues to be a great success in helping fathers build and maintain good relationships with their children. The former Prisoner Assessment Unit (PAU) re-opened under the new name of Burren House during the year, and has operated very successfully since. There was a very intensive and successful 12 week Drugs Recovery Programme which took place during the year; it is to be hoped that funding will become available to run further similar programmes. The Braille Unit within the prison is also to be commended for the wonderful work they have done in translating the Bible into Braille, and also for the selection of children's stories that have been translated.

Finally the work of the Board would not be possible without the support, assistance and guidance of the IMB Secretariat so I would like to thank them for all the time and effort they put in to ensure our Boards operate smoothly.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Margaret McCauley". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Margaret McCauley
Chairperson

OVERVIEW OF ESTABLISHMENT

1. Maghaberry Prison is a modern high security prison which holds adult male long-term and short-term sentenced and remand prisoners in both integrated and separated units. The regime in the prison is intended to focus on the balance between appropriate levels of security and the Healthy Prison Agenda – safety, respect, constructive activity and resettlement – of which addressing offending behaviour is an important element.

2. The majority of the prisoners are accommodated in seven residential houses on the main site.

- Bann House accommodates mainly committal and prisoners on induction.
- Bush and Roe Houses accommodate separated prisoners on two landings each, with the other two landings used for general prison population.
- The three other original ‘square houses’ Foyle, Lagan and Erne hold a mix of sentenced and remand prisoners.
- Quoile House was opened two years ago. This modern purpose-built house mainly accommodates a drugs-free landing, a family focus landing and Donard landing.
- There is also the new Shimna House which was originally built as a Witness Protection Unit but, given the rising population within the prison, now accommodates the workers’ landing which was previously based in Quoile House.
- There is a separate Care and Supervision Unit (CSU) and the former Healthcare Unit is now renamed Moyola and is a normal landing within the prison.
- Martin, Wilson and Braid Houses are located in the Mourne complex across the road from the main site. Braid House holds mainly life sentenced prisoners and Wilson House is used to house prisoners who are nearing the end of life sentences and have participated in and completed all relevant programmes. Martin House which was classed as the Vulnerable Prisoner Unit (VPU) in the last report has returned to being the Witness Protection Unit.
- At end of this reporting year Glen House is unoccupied, but was used during the year to run a very successful Drug Recovery Programme, which hopefully will receive further funding to enable it to be repeated.
- Burren House, formerly the Prisoner Assessment Unit (PAU) on the Crumlin Road, re-opened during the current reporting year, and usually houses life sentence prisoners who are on the final phase of their sentence prior to release.

There are also plans for a new house which should hopefully be completed in approximately two years.

3. Healthcare for all prisoners is provided by South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust (the Trust). The drug and alcohol service for prisoners who are in need of consultation is provided by Alcohol and Drugs; Empowering People through Therapy (Ad:ept) in partnership with the Trust and NIPS. Education and training is provided by local services.

4. Various charitable and voluntary organisations maintain a presence on site, although at end of reporting year it was disappointing that some will no longer be available due to lack of funding. NIACRO provided guidance through the Jobtrack scheme for prisoners trying to obtain a job on release, and CRUSE provided support in dealing with bereavement issues - both have finished from the end of March 2015. Barnardo's support prisoners with family issues; and Housing Rights staff support prisoners in obtaining housing, benefits and grants when they leave prison. The Quaker Service manages the refreshment facilities in visits and at the visitor centre, and provide transport between the centre and the prison. They also provide help and support to the families and organise seasonal events at the centre for the children.

5. Spiritual and religious matters are the remit of the prison Chaplaincy team, who try to facilitate the practice of all faiths within the prison community, and provide great support to prisoners and their families. Additional help is provided by the Prison Fellowship.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board recommends that:

1. ACCOMMODATION

- a) The square houses are replaced as they are unfit for purpose and a rolling programme of maintenance and redecoration is put in place in the meantime. (Paragraph 1.1)
- b) Some form of purposeful activity is put in place for prisoners on Moyola landing. (Paragraph 1.5)

2. ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- a) That NIPS revisit the format of the Drugs Strategy meeting with a view to allow a clear focus as to what requires discussion. (Paragraph 2.7)
- b) A Drugs Policy is formulated. (Paragraph 2.7)

3. CATERING AND KITCHENS

- a) NVQ qualifications should be made available in order to facilitate employment on release. (Paragraph 3.3)
- b) The serving of the evening meal be delayed to a later and more realistic time. (Paragraph 3.5)
- c) The practice of prisoners eating in cramped shared cells is reviewed. (Paragraph 3.6)

4. CHAPLAINCY

- a) The Chaplaincy hours are reviewed and maintained at prior level if not increased to reflect the rise in prison population. (Paragraph 4.5)

5. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- a) Staff from training and education to visit the individual landings to encourage prisoners to participate in available courses. (Paragraph 5.1)
- b) Steps are taken to ensure prisoners participate in workshops with a view to achieving NVQ's or some accredited qualification. (Paragraph 5.2)
- c) There is a review of the education and workshops available in the Mourne complex. (Paragraph 5.3)
- d) Consideration is given to selling art, crafts, garden furniture, plants etc. produced by prisoners. (Paragraph 5.4)

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

No recommendations.

7. HEALTHCARE AND MENTAL HEALTH

- a) NIPS look at altering the service in the long term, to provide greater emphasis on the general health and well-being of the person. (Paragraph 7.3)
- b) An Action Plan to be put in place to ensure full staffing complement is in place as a matter of urgency. (Paragraph 7.7)
- c) That NIPS look at the question of hygiene in relation to sinks. Whilst we recognise that while cell sharing continues, there will be issues in relation to use of toilet when there is food around, we feel that NIPS should have a risk assessment in place in relation to possible contamination of food. (Paragraph 7.9)
- d) That NIPS and the DHSSPS resolve the issue of the provision of Social Care to the small number of prisoners who may require this service. (Paragraph 7.11)

8. LIBRARY

No recommendations.

9. LIFE SENTENCED PRISONERS

- a) Courses should be available for life sentenced prisoners from commencement of sentence. (Paragraph 9.2)
- b) More work and training is made available specifically for life sentence prisoners. (Paragraph 9.4)

10. PRISONER EARNED PRIVILEGES SCHEME (PREPS)

- a) Reports are updated in a timely manner. (Paragraph 10.3)

11. RECEPTION AND INDUCTION

- a) That there is sufficient staff detailed to work in Bann House to ensure the safety of prisoners and staff. (Paragraph 11.2)
- b) That where possible first time prisoners are not doubled up with repeat offenders. (Paragraph 11.3)
- c) That staff get specific training required to work in Bann. (Paragraph 11.5)
- d) That Bann House is used solely for reception and induction. (Paragraph 11.6)

12. RESETTLEMENT

No recommendations.

13. SAFER CUSTODY

- a) The matter of provision of social care for ageing prisoners is resolved. (Paragraph 13.5)
- b) The funding for CRUSE reinstated as a matter of urgency. (Paragraph 13.11)

14. SEGREGATION – CARE AND SUPERVISION UNIT

- a) The prison does not compromise on maintaining set staffing of the CSU because of the special skills and knowledge required by those looking after highly vulnerable and volatile prisoners. (Paragraph 14.2)
- b) All prisoners entering the CSU are given an exit plan. (Paragraph 14.3)
- c) The adjudication process is looked at with a view to reducing volume. (Paragraph 14.4)
- d) The number of governors hearing adjudications is reduced and regular reviews are conducted to address inconsistency in both awards and procedure. (Paragraph 14.6)

15. SEPARATED PRISONERS

No recommendations.

16. SPORT AND RECREATION

No recommendations.

17. TUCKSHOP

- a) Prisoners who work in the tuckshop should get accredited National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) training. (Paragraph 17.2)
- b) All tuck-shop products are competitively priced. (Paragraph 17.3)

18. VISITS

- a) There is no reduction in the funding for the Quaker service. (Paragraph 18.2)
- b) The process of transferring items left at visits reception is reviewed to lessen the delay in reaching the prisoner. (Paragraph 18.3)

Section 1 – ACCOMODATION

1.1 Several previous reports recommended that the square houses of Bann, Erne, Foyle and Lagan be replaced but unfortunately due to the present economic climate and reductions in budget the Board realises this is unlikely to happen. The increase in the prison population has led to overcrowding in these houses during the year although by utilising other accommodation the numbers in each house had been reduced by end of reporting year. Overcrowding impacts negatively on prisoners as there is little privacy in shared cells - particularly when there are lengthy periods of lock down.

Recommendation: While the Board continues to see these houses as unfit for purpose and recommends they be replaced, in the meantime it once again recommends a rolling programme of maintenance and redecoration until such times as this happens.

1.2 The two linear houses - Roe and Bush - accommodate (in respective houses, in specific wings) separated Republican and Loyalist prisoners. Following the end of the 'dirty protest' in Roe during the last reporting year, major refurbishment of the damaged cells took place and some adjustments have been made this year to facilitate movement of prisoners.

1.3 The Board welcomed the opening of two new houses in 2013 – Shimna and Quoile. Quoile House is a modern purpose-built house which can accommodate 120 prisoners in excellent conditions. Prisoners and staff have given very positive feedback on the modern facilities which are available. Shimna is now being utilised as accommodation for 'workers' which eases pressure on other areas of the prison.

1.4 Martin House in the Mourne complex was refurbished two years ago and became the Vulnerable Prisoner Unit (VPU) with prisoners previously accommodated in Glen House moving there. The refurbishment has created a relatively spacious unit which provides excellent accommodation and a much better regime with access to the garden. However in this reporting year Martin House has once again become the Witness Protection Unit resulting in prisoners from the VPU being housed mainly in Moyola (formerly healthcare) or in other locations throughout the prison.

1.5 As previously stated the Healthcare facility is now being used as another landing (Moyola) within the prison, with mainly prisoners who have been transferred from VPU or ageing prisoners. Unfortunately, given the small numbers that this landing can

accommodate, and the wide range of ages, there is very little for the prisoners to do, and the Board feels more effort should be made to provide purposeful activity for this group of prisoners.

Recommendation: The Board recommends that there is some form of purposeful activity for the prisoners housed in Moyola.

1.6 Glen House is currently unoccupied although a very successful pilot Drug Recovery Programme was piloted there during the year. It is hoped that funding will be available in the near future for further similar programmes.

1.7 Most people would not expect a Category A prison to include in its environs an Area of Special Scientific Interest; beautifully mown green areas complete with plump rabbits; hanging baskets; flower troughs, well-tended gardens, poly-tunnels and vegetable growing areas. At Maghaberry, a lot of care and attention has gone in to creating areas of beauty in an otherwise drab and utilitarian site. The Area of Special Scientific Interest relates to an area of perimeter grasslands which are 'home' to around 30 pairs of breeding lapwings. These birds are becoming very rare in Northern Ireland thus Maghaberry is a very important breeding site. The NIPS must be given credit for recognising the importance of making the outdoor areas as pleasant as possible. Credit also has to go to the instructors, staff and prisoners who carry out the work and tend to the various outdoor areas. It is very heartening to see so many prisoners undertaking outdoor duties, from grass-cutting, to planting. Added to this is the signage which makes the prison estate much more user friendly.

Section 2 - ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

2.1 Illegal substances are part and parcel of a societal problem and it is inevitable that such a problem will follow individuals into the prison setting. For many individuals, illegal substances are a way of life and their use is seen as 'the norm'. As IMB members we have access to every part of the Prison and regularly talk to prisoners and staff either - in the settings of the landings, or whilst walking round the grounds of the prison. Prisoners talk openly about the availability of drugs, the boredom that leads to taking drugs, the drugs debts that they build up and the bullying to hand over prescription medication. Naturally enough, the vast majority of prisoners will not report such bullying and this can often leave a prisoner without their prescribed and necessary medication. Lack of recreational or training opportunities contributes to boredom which in our view, often leads to the temptation to partake of illegal substances.

2.2 On occasions when IMB members have pointed out to staff that a prisoner appears to be under the influence of some illegal substance, the response is often 'he's always off his head'. There is still a (tacit) acknowledgement by some - not all - staff, that prisoners take drugs and that's the way it is. Whilst it would be wrong to state that Maghaberry is 'awash with drugs', there certainly is a drugs problem within the Prison. However, it is clear from reports from IMB colleagues in other regions of Britain, that this is not a problem arising solely in this Establishment.

2.3 As a Board, we are concerned with both the quantity and accessibility of drugs (both illegal, and prescription medication) within Maghaberry. There is some concern that there is an increase in prisoners who are failing drugs tests due to morphine. We acknowledge that the co-operation with the PSNI has been of great benefit and that intelligence led searches have been successful. We are aware that there are some prisoners who are intimidated into smuggling drugs back into prison after home leave and that there are others who will do almost anything, including breaking into drugs cabinets, to try and access prescription medication. Unfortunately, the misuse of drugs, or other illegal substances, does give rise to instances of self-harm and also contributes to other incidents and management problems within the prison.

2.4 There has been a re-emergence of 'hooch' (homemade alcohol) in the Prison, but this has been found during searches by Staff. Our understanding is that some of the finds were quite sizeable. Those involved in the 'manufacturing process' have obviously taken advantage of low staffing levels to work on, and secrete their cache.

2.5 Ad;ept, who undertake the addictions counseling have always got a waiting list, with a growing number of referrals. They have introduced acupuncture to help prisoners who have alcohol and drug addictions, in order to help with relaxation and aid sleep routines. However, this has been so popular that there is a very long waiting list.

2.6 In last year's report we made mention of the proposed Drug Recovery Unit. Glen House was chosen as the venue for this Unit and staff members were given special training to enable them to understand the Recovery ethos. The Drug Recovery Unit opened in August 2014 and was delivered by staff from Ad;ept in conjunction with the specially trained discipline staff. Briefly, the aim is to tackle and address the substance misuse, promote goals for recovery and reduce offending behaviour. The programme

was very successful and participants spoke highly of what they had achieved. We understand that the programme has been positively evaluated, however, it is very disappointing that only the one 'pilot' programme has taken place. It would seem to us that such a programme which is aimed at dealing with substance abuse, giving individuals the tools to help cope with relapses, or thoughts of relapse, and reducing offending behaviour should be run on a rolling basis. Having spoken to the staff who undertook the training, and who were so motivated and enthusiastic about working in the unit, it is doubly disappointing that the unit appears to be 'in limbo'.

2.7 IMB members have sat in on several of the Drugs Strategy Meetings. However, in the main these have been poorly attended, with no real focus or aim to the meeting. It is concerning when the issue of substance misuse is such a high priority within the Prison, that the attendance level is so low. IMB have been raising the issue of the Drugs Strategy at Board level, for many months but we are hopeful that plans are afoot to re-energise this meeting, even if it stretches to a bi monthly meeting.

Recommendation: We would recommend that NIPS revisit the format of the Drugs Strategy meeting to allow a clear focus as to what requires discussion. We are advised that the Drugs Policy is still in the process of being formulated.

Section 3 – CATERING AND KITCHENS

3.1 The catering facility at the prison is a recent build of approximately five years old. Over 1000 meals are prepared twice daily. This number reflects the increased population at the prison this year. The quality of the food served is reasonable and every effort is made on the menus to try and accommodate all diverse cultural and religious needs. Prisoners have an opportunity through meetings of the Prisoner Forum to address comments or complaints with the Catering Manager.

3.2 Staffing in the unit includes 27 prisoners who are drawn from across the population and reflect the various cultures in the prison. Prisoners clearly enjoy working in the kitchen and on the serving areas in the houses. Delivery of the meal trolleys from the kitchen to all the houses continues to be carried out by selected inmates who are given permission to work unaccompanied, and this is working well.

3.3 The Board is pleased to note that a training programme is in operation where prisoners can avail of accredited training in Food Safety and Hygiene. However given the excellent facilities that are available the Board feels that it is unfortunate that

prisoners cannot avail of NVQ qualifications which would provide them with the skills to secure employment on release. Prisoners who attend the Donard Centre are enjoying the opportunity to take lessons in cooking, and learn about healthy diet and food choices as part of their Learning and Skills educational courses.

Recommendation: The Board recommends that NVQ qualifications should be made available in order to facilitate employment on release.

3.4 As reported many times previously, the timing of meals in the prison, especially the evening meal, can be very early and do not reflect normal meal times. It was hoped that when the NIPS established the new core day for staff this would be rectified, but this has not happened. With more 'lock ups' in the evening because of staffing it can be a long time from evening meal to breakfast the next morning.

3.5 Towards the end of the reporting year prisoners were given a 'breakfast pack' when the evening meal is being served. This is to enable them to have breakfast at a reasonable time in the morning, as due to staff shortages breakfast was often delayed. This resulted in prisoners being late for classes, medical appointments and visits often having to make a choice between breakfast and other activities.

Recommendation: The serving of the evening meal be delayed to a later and more realistic time.

3.6 The NIPS are to be applauded for including communal dining areas in refurbished houses and in all new builds, but members regularly observe that prisoners are still taking their meals in their cells. The Board is aware that the prison is overcrowded and space is limited in the dining areas, but find it unacceptable that prisoners have to eat in a confined space that also holds their toilet and washing facilities.

Recommendation: That the practice of prisoners eating in cramped shared cells is reviewed.

Section 4 – CHAPLAINCY

4.1 The Chaplaincy team in Maghaberry is made up of the main faiths represented in the broader Northern Ireland community; Church of Ireland, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, Free Presbyterian and Muslim. To facilitate the ever increasing number of foreign national prisoners, additional assistance is available by way of a Polish and a Lithuanian priest and a Chinese pastor.

4.2 Due to the complex nature of the prison and the various levels of security, Mass and weekly Services have to be held not only in the prison chapel, but also in Moyola (formally Healthcare), Bush and Roe House and in the Mourne complex.

4.3 As the prison population continues to rise in Maghaberry so also do the demands placed upon the work of the chaplains. Every prisoner on committal, will have an opportunity to meet a member of the chaplaincy team and “register” with the chaplain of his desired denomination. This is a most important service because of the vulnerability of prisoners at this point.

4.4 In the IMB annual report of last year we reported our disappointment that the chaplaincy was under review as part of a cost cutting exercise. Eventually NIPS has given its proposals to the churches. These proposals give little regard to improving the service, but are primarily concerned with cutting costs which means cutting hours and this when prisoner numbers are steadily rising. Since the last review into the Chaplains prisoner numbers have risen from 850 to over 1000. The length of the review has also had a detrimental effect on the moral of the chaplains.

4.5 The IMB firmly believe that to cut back the hours in the chaplaincy is to misunderstand and underestimate the importance of their role. They form a vital link in the life of the jail, speaking to vulnerable and needy prisoners, keeping regular contact with the staff and Prison Service management as well as other agencies involved with the welfare of prisoners. In addition to this they assist in the maintenance of family links and are used by the Prison Service to accompany prisoners on temporary release for funerals and other necessary occasions. They can also help defuse situations that arise on a regular basis and quietly sort out complaints and issues that prisoners may have. In practice if chaplains were to stop attending case conferences and meetings where their input is most vital and simply concentrate their efforts on one to one contact with the prisoner, then the Prison Service will be losing out on an extremely important contribution into the welfare and wellbeing of prisoners. The Board already have seen the impact of reduction in chaplaincy hours in attendance at case conferences, where chaplains’ knowledge of the prisoners’ family can be vital. They also provide help and support to the prison staff themselves.

Recommendation: The Board recommends that the Chaplaincy hours are reviewed and maintained at prior level if not increased to reflect rise in prison population.

Section 5 - EDUCATION AND TRAINING

5.1 Education is based in the new Learning and Skills Centre. The main focus is to provide a range of courses in areas such as literacy, numeracy and practical skills development. Each prisoner is tested on arrival for essential skills and deficiencies, and is encouraged to participate in improvement classes as part of their overall resettlement programme. While some of the more popular classes e.g. art, have long waiting lists, it is disappointing to note the poor attendance at some of the classes given the excellent facilities that are available in the new centre.

Recommendation: Once again the Board recommends that staff from Training and Education visit the individual landings and encourage prisoners to participate in available courses.

5.2 Maghaberry workshops provide a range of work and vocational training which can lead to nationally recognised qualifications, such as NVQs. Furniture-making and gardening are very popular, but in the main non-attendance at workshops still causes some concern. Participation in workshops can make a valuable contribution to successful reintegration on release, by giving prisoners the skills to enable them to seek employment.

Recommendation: The Board recommends that steps are taken to ensure that prisoners participate in workshops with a view to achieving NVQs or some accredited qualification.

5.3 The Mourne complex offers wheelchair and bicycle refurbishment workshops as well as having a Braille unit which teaches a very specialised and rare skill. The Board commends the NIPS for setting this up, but there is very little other work or education for the prisoners in the Mourne complex. Given that most of these are life sentenced prisoners this is an area that needs to be looked in greater depth.

Recommendation: The Board recommends a review of the education and workshops available in the Mourne complex.

5.4 The Board has suggested on many occasions that there should be an outlet where the goods such as crafts, garden furniture and plants produced by prisoners, could be sold to generate money for the Governor's Fund. The excellent reception centre for visitors run by the Quakers is an obvious choice, given the large numbers that use the facilities there over the course of a year.

Recommendation The Board again recommends that an outlet where crafts, garden furniture and plants can be sold should be considered

Section 6 - EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

6.1 Foreign national prisoners continue to represent a significant proportion of the prisoner population in Maghaberry. By the end of the reporting period they represented around 10% of the total population and consisted of many different nationalities with Polish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Lithuanian, Romania and Portuguese highest in terms of numbers. Irish Travellers also continue to represent a significant minority group within the population.

6.2 The Equality and Diversity committee has responsibility for eliminating discrimination from Maghaberry. The Board also notes that the committee has responsibility for promoting equality within Maghaberry, and endorses the active steps that continue to be taken towards this. In March 2012 senior management in Maghaberry decided that the Equality and Diversity Committee would be more effective if there was service user involvement at the monthly meetings. The Equality Manager recruited a number of prisoners who were representative of the prison, and the committee has now been strengthened with Chinese, Polish, Lithuanian, Irish Traveller, Portuguese, disabled and older prisoners. All prisoner representatives receive appropriate equality and diversity training. Equality and diversity is overseen by the Prisoner Safety and Support Team (PSST). All of this is welcomed by the Board. Data on complaints, adjudications, prisoner status, home leave, segregation, drug testing and use of force is collected and reviewed at the meetings and any significant statistical deviations are highlighted and discussed to determine areas for improvement. The Board also welcomes the re-establishment of the prisoner forums within the prison with food, residential and education forums now being held bi-monthly.

6.3 In previous reports the Board has continually raised with the appropriate authorities the fact that a noticeable majority of adjudication charges were laid against the Catholic/Nationalist population, as compared to the total of charges laid against other religions. Subsequently the NIPS commissioned an independent research project into this issue, and further examination across all three prison establishments produced no evidence to support this. The Board will continue to monitor this process.

6.4 There has been a significant increase in the usage of the Big Word Translation service due to the increase in foreign national prisoners. It has been identified that while most foreign national prisoners have some English they can experience difficulties in group session work, which can have a detrimental effect on essential courses they need to partake in as part of their sentence and also in a healthcare setting. In general Foreign National Prisoners have reported that they are content with the service, but difficulties have been experienced with the provision for Romanian prisoners. At time of reporting 35 prisoners required day to day assistance and office are aware of these.

6.5 Those that enter custody are given the opportunity to disclose if they feel they have a disability as defined in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Disability Discrimination Order 2006. These disclosures are now referred to healthcare for verification and reasonable adjustments are now made. Foreign National Prisoners entering prison now have an opportunity at committal, to indicate if they require interpretation and translation services to allow them to participate in prison life. All key prisoner documents including job vacancies have now been translated into six foreign languages.

6.6 Key Equality and Diversity related achievements throughout the year have included:

- Improved wheelchair access in PECCS vehicles;
- All job opportunities are advertised weekly and translated into other languages;
- There is greater availability of food for Foreign National prisoners in prison tuck shop with price lists also translated into other languages;
- Free movement of Equality and Diversity Prisoner Representatives;
- Establishment of Food and Residential Forums;
- Comprehensive survey to identify Foreign National Prisoners who require interpretation services;
- Increased use of interpretation service by Healthcare;
- Agreement reached to provide a toilet for disabled prisoners in the Mourne Workshop; and
- Tailored physical exercise programmes on offer for different age groups.

6.7 An event was held in Maghaberry on 4 February 2015 to mark the Chinese New Year. An open forum was followed by a traditional Chinese meal prepared by the

prisoners for the group and their guests from the Chinese Welfare Association, NIPS and the office of the Prisoner Ombudsman.

6.8 Home Office Immigration Services are supposed to visit the prison three times per year, and it is disappointing to note that during this reporting year only one visit has taken place.

6.9 In conclusion the work of the Equality and Diversity Committee is taken very seriously and the regime should be recommended for the genuine effort that is made to ensure fairness is afforded to all prisoners.

Section 7 - HEALTHCARE AND MENTAL HEALTH

7.1 The World Health Organisation states: A prison sentence often entails an increased risk of becoming seriously ill, or a lost opportunity to recover from an existing illness or dependency. Those who enter with a drug or other health related problem often leave without having received proper medical attention.

7.2 There is no expectation that prisoners should receive a more enhanced service from the healthcare providers than that provided to the public in general. However, it should be to the same standard. We do, on occasion, have to remind some prisoners (particularly those longer term prisoners) that financial restraints on the health service in general has meant some diminution in service to the general public and that this will obviously impact on the service provided to prisoners.

7.3 It is a sad fact of life that individuals entering the justice system have a higher degree of mental health problems together with a greater number of physical health issues. Added to that is the number of ageing prisoners presenting with a range of physical health problems, including mobility issues. From colleagues in other IMB regions, we note that one of their healthcare providers is changing the focus of their service from a medical model to a more holistic approach, with the emphasis on general health and well-being. Obviously, this would be an aspiration at the moment, particularly in view of the current staffing issues, but may be something to look at for the future, and which may provide staff with a different outlook on service provision.

Recommendation: To look at altering the service in the long term, to provide greater emphasis on the general health and well-being of the person.

7.4 Requests from prisoners to query a number of aspects of healthcare remain a significant part of our requests during the reporting period. Like our colleagues in other regions of the U.K. we find that the strategy for reducing the amount of medications, such as Tramadol which is prescribed to prisoners, has resulted in many complaints from patients. One of the difficulties is that many individuals have been used to having long term prescribing of medication which is considered 'addictive', and cannot accept the reduction when they come into the prison environment. In addition many advise us that as soon as they leave prison they go back to their own GPs and have no difficulty in obtaining their original dosage. Many prisoners have advised us that they just do not understand why their medication is being reduced when they themselves are convinced that they require their current dosage. There would appear to be an education and communication issue here.

7.5 Due to reasons of confidentiality, it can be difficult for IMB members to discuss a prisoner/patient with healthcare staff. Therefore, we welcome the involvement of the Patient Client Council which has just started to provide a service within the Prison. The IMB have met with a representative of the Patient Client Council and explained the various issues at the interface of prison staff/healthcare staff/patients. The Patient Client Council can take forward unresolved issues. IMB members have displayed information on the Patient Client Council to the various landings on the site, and have started to make referrals. However, this service is in its infancy and we have not received any feedback from either prisoners who have used the service or from the PCC themselves. Our intention, as a Board, is to meet with the PCC on a number of occasions over the next reporting period. We are aware that in some other Prisons, the Healthcare providers have an ongoing Patient Evaluation Survey in place, in order to gauge satisfaction (or otherwise) levels, and those providers have initiated Patient Experience Groups. We will bring this to the attention of the PCC.

7.6 It is extremely concerning to once again report a staffing crisis within healthcare. There have been recruitment drives which have resulted in securing staff, but the retention rate has been low. In addition, some of the GPs recruited during last reporting period have left, together with some of the new nursing staff, following concerns for their safety following threats by some elements within the prison population. At present it is crisis management, and we understand that some clinics have had to be cancelled in order to prioritise the use of nursing staff elsewhere. We are aware that the ongoing short staffing and deployment of, for example, mental health nursing staff to general

duties on occasions, is having an effect on staff morale.

7.7 Whilst we acknowledge that senior management within the South Eastern Trust have been working extremely hard to try and resolve the staffing problems, nevertheless this has been an ongoing issue since the Trust took over the running of the healthcare side of the Prison. We understand that senior nursing management within the Trust are looking at the possibility of having Prison nursing elevated to a specialist element in nursing training. In addition to recruitment and retention issues, there is also a high level of staff sick/absence which also has a detrimental effect on other staff, and patients. This current state of affairs cannot be allowed to continue for a further year. We do acknowledge the high level of commitment shown by the existing staff, but would recommend that the Trust put in place an action plan to ensure that a full staff complement is in place as a matter of urgency.

Recommendation: An Action Plan to be put in place to ensure full staffing complement is in place as a matter of urgency.

7.8 Since the last reporting period we have established that Moyola is no longer a healthcare facility, but a landing which just happens to be located in the Healthcare area. There are a number of individuals who would have previously been accommodated in the Vulnerable Prisoner Unit, others who have mobility problems and some who would benefit from the quieter surroundings of Moyola. The Moyola landing is staffed solely by prison staff and has the usual input from a house nurse that all the other landings have.

7.9 We are aware that infection control made a visit to the Prison recently, but their report/recommendations have not yet been received. We would highlight a matter raised in another part of this report, and that is the hygiene in cells, particularly the use of sinks for washing of both the individual and their dishes. There is also the issue of the use of the toilet in the cell during mealtimes. We realise that this is not a Healthcare issue, but rather one for the NIPS to address.

Recommendation: That NIPS look at the question of hygiene in relation to sinks. Whilst we recognise that while cell sharing continues, there will be issues in relation to use of toilet when there is food around, we feel that NIPS should have a risk assessment in place in relation to possible contamination of food.

7.10 We acknowledge the high level of nursing skills involved in several very serious

incidents over the past reporting period. In addition the Trust representation at hot and cold debriefs has been very beneficial.

7.11 One issue that remains unresolved following the handing over of the healthcare element to the Trust, is Social Care. Reference was made earlier to the growing number of ageing prisoners, some of whom require, or may require in the future, a degree of assistance with personal hygiene or mobility issues. Were such individuals to live in the community, then an element of social care assistance may be provided. We are concerned that the provision of the social care element has not been resolved, and that untrained fellow prisoners are carrying out support duties to prisoners who have considerable needs.

Recommendation: That NIPS and the DHSSPS resolve the issue of the provision of Social Care to the small number of prisoners who may require this service.

7.12 During this reporting period, there have been significant changes in the Prison Health Directorate within the South Eastern Trust. We look forward to working with the new Senior Management Team.

Section 8 - LIBRARY

8.1 The library is a well-stocked facility with books supplied by NI Libraries where prisoners are made to feel at ease and can relax. It provides a choice of several thousand books, magazines and newspapers in a wide range of languages to meet the needs of all prisoners. Approximately 600 prisoners use the facility every month. The library also stocks Law Reference Books which enable prisoners to look up information regarding their own cases. A comprehensive stock of over 500 CD's is also available.

8.2 The library is also the centre of the Book and Tape Club. This enables fathers in prison to record stories to send to their children and is very important in maintaining family links for young children. These can then either be posted out or collected.

8.3 The staff also print out information and designs on handicrafts for prisoners, work for courses and also look up prices of items if necessary. The Board remains impressed with the library and commend the people who staff it.

Section 9 - LIFE SENTENCED PRISONERS

9.1 There are currently approximately 170 life sentenced prisoners in Maghaberry, with some others on various pre-release schemes. The largest numbers are located in Braid and Wilson Houses, with the majority of Category A prisoners located in Erne House. However, most other houses have at least one life sentenced prisoner. Burren House – formerly known as the Prisoner Assessment Unit (PAU) - re-opened this reporting year, and houses approximately twenty prisoners on the final phase of their sentence prior to release. This unit operates very well with prisoners, while having freedom to go to work or to hostels at the weekend, being still closely monitored by the staff. Frequent checks are made to ensure prisoners are adhering to their agreed terms and conditions.

9.2 While in prison, there are several programmes to help those prisoners serving a life sentence, which address issues regarding alcohol and drug abuse, including the new BSR programme (Building Skills for Recovery). Other longer courses include the Sex Offender Treatment Programme, Cognitive Self Change Programme and Motivational Enhancement Group and Anger Management courses. Unfortunately most of these courses only start within 3 years of release, as this is when life sentence prisoners are first reviewed for possible release on parole.

Recommendation: The Board recommends that there should be courses for life sentenced prisoners from commencement of their sentence.

9.3 A large number of life sentenced prisoners have quite low levels of numeracy and literacy skills, and all are encouraged to avail of the education facilities available. The Essential Skills Curriculum ranges from very low educational levels to the equivalent of GCSE, and prisoners can study to degree level. There is also a special Duke of Edinburgh award which is specifically designed to be delivered in prison. However, as the majority of life sentenced prisoners are located in the Mourne Complex, the opportunities for education are limited.

9.4 Given the large numbers of life sentenced prisoners it would be beneficial if there was more work available. Of nearly 300 jobs available in the prison, there are only around 40 available for the life sentenced prisoners, so it can be difficult for them to use their lengthy sentences in a constructive manner.

Recommendation: The Board recommends yet again that more work is made available specifically for life sentenced prisoners.

Section 10 – PROGRESSIVE AND EARNED PRIVILEGES SCHEME (PREPS)

10.1 The NIPS introduced the Progressive and Earned Privileges Scheme (PREPS) a decade ago. It sets out to provide incentives for prisoners which are earned through good behaviour.

10.2 There are three levels in the scheme (basic, standard and enhanced) and prisoners can move up and down levels, based on their behaviour. The scheme enables prisoners to achieve greater privileges including additional telephone credit, more sessions in the gym and increased number of visits.

10.3 A key stated objective of PREPS during its introduction was as ‘a mechanism for building up self-esteem and self-worth, rather than as a mechanism for punishing bad behaviour. There remains a concern that PREPS could in effect operate as a secondary punishment system rather than as a scheme to encourage and reward good behaviour. A number of prisoners have reported to IMB that they have received a double punishment, in the event that they receive punishment at adjudication and also then demotion in the PREPS regime. A prisoner can be reduced from enhanced to standard if they receive two adverse reports in an eight week period, one failed or refused drugs test, or failure to engage in Personal Development Plan. To progress from Standard to Enhanced a prisoner needs to have three successful monthly reports, no adverse reports or guilty verdicts in adjudications in a twelve week period, be fully engaged in Personal Development Plan and have clear drug test. However, IMB members have found that on occasions these reports are not being updated in time, which can have an impact *on the prisoners status and resulting ‘perks’*.

Recommendation: Reports are updated in a timely manner.

10.4 While figures would seem to suggest Roman Catholic prisoners are over-represented on basic and standard levels, and under-represented on enhanced level, an independent research project found no evidence of discrimination.

10.5 Prior to Christmas 2014 the NIPS instigated a de facto amnesty which reset the categorisation of all prisoners on Basic regime to Standard regime. The IMB welcomes this development which enabled basic prisoners make a fresh start in 2015.

Section 11 – RECEPTION AND INDUCTION

11.1 The Reception area is where the prisoners arrive at the prison. Those arriving for the first time can be nervous and apprehensive, so the Board commends the reception staff for their calm and professional manner which helps put the new arrivals at ease.

11.2 When prisoners leave the reception area they are taken to Bann House for induction, which usually lasts a few weeks. For those coming into prison for the first time, this can be a very vulnerable period, and staff need to be alert to these vulnerabilities and observe whether a prisoner leaves his cell and mixes with other prisoners, or stays behind the door. However, staff also need to have time to talk to new prisoners, but increasingly Board members have seen that reduction in staff numbers means they are just too busy, and do not have time to speak to all those who may want to share concerns, or just want a listening ear. For this reason it is essential that Bann House should always be adequately staffed. As the population of this house is constantly changing, staff need to be very vigilant, as they do not have the time to get to know a new prisoner in the way staff in the more 'settled' houses do. For first time prisoners there are a lot of questions about everything from visits, phone calls, showers etc., and staff are constantly under pressure to answer a multitude of questions or sort out issues. As staff cuts become ever more stringent, this is causing visible signs of stress to staff. The Board are increasingly being approached by staff who are concerned they will miss something serious with a prisoner, which could in extreme circumstances lead to the death of a prisoner/ serious incident which would place their career in jeopardy.

Recommendation: The Board recommends that there are sufficient staff detailed to work in Bann House to ensure the safety of prisoners and staff.

11.3 Where possible the Board also recommends that first time prisoners are not doubled up to share a cell with an "experienced" prisoner. Those who have been in prison before know the system, and this can lead to a new prisoners getting into trouble by being bullied into doing things against their will.

Recommendation: The Board recommends that where possible first time prisoners are not doubled up with repeat offenders.

11.4 The Board has concerns about the number of prisoners that are on SPAR (Supporting Prisoners at Risk) in Bann House. A large amount of staff time is taken up checking prisoners and the associated paperwork, to ensure the process is completed effectively. If there are several prisoners on SPAR at any one time, it can fully occupy

one member of staff leaving insufficient staff to cover remainder of work on the landing, and this can lead to a quiet vulnerable prisoner being overlooked as staff are so busy.

11.5 Experience is desirable in this environment, however, with so many new staff it is now inevitable that many will be sent Bann. For this reason the Board recommend that new staff get specific training to work in Bann. As so many of the experienced staff have left under the recent severance package, it is quite common that the most experienced person on the landing may have less than one years' service. This puts undue pressure on new staff who are being constantly faced with new situations with no-one to whom they can immediately refer.

Recommendation: The Board recommends that staff get specific training to work in Bann.

11.6 The Board recognises that due to the increasing number of prisoners, accommodation can be difficult at times, however, there are an increasing number of prisoners who are being housed in Bann on a longer term basis instead of the few weeks needed for induction. While it can be difficult to relocate some prisoners the Board recommends that Bann House should remain solely an induction house.

Recommendation: The Board recommends that Bann remain solely an induction house.

11.7 The Board also again recommends that all induction staff are trained in Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST).

11.8 Despite the problems raised above the Board commend the staff who work in Bann. Every new committal presents a challenge in a busy house with a lot of different demands and their professional manner is appreciated.

Section 12 – RESETTLEMENT

12.1 A successful and efficient resettlement programme minimises the risk of a prisoner reoffending on release. With no supportive network in place on release, prisoners with poor coping skills frequently reoffend in order to return to prison, which they regard as a 'safe' option or environment. The Resettlement team in Maghaberry work with the various groups within the prison, but also rely heavily on working in partnership with many outside agencies. The Board acknowledges the support given by

all the associated agencies in trying to provide a focused and detailed resettlement package for prisoners.

12.2 The team works with both sentenced and remand prisoners, but given the increasing number of prisoners, spaces on programmes are limited. The increase in lockdowns because of staff shortages reduce the time available to carry out these programmes, and with yet further staff reductions due in the coming year, the Board hopes the time will not decrease even further.

12.3 Family support is essential to successful resettlement, so child-centred visits and the family work undertaken by the Family Liaison Team and the Quakers are invaluable. The Board commends the work done by the NIPS in setting up the Family Focus landing in the new Quoile House. Prisoners on this landing get longer visits with their children in the Donard Centre, and the prisoners prepare food for their family. These visits are very informal, and are an excellent opportunity for children to spend time with their father in a more relaxed surrounding than the normal prison visit. Other support staff are on hand to talk to and support partners / wives.

Section 13 - SAFER CUSTODY

13.1 The Justice Minister has written of Safe, Secure and Decent Custody, an aim shared by us, as Board Members of the IMB.

13.2 The Independent Monitoring Board recognizes that Maghaberry Prison, as a high security Category A prison, will have the security of the establishment as its major priority. However, with the increasing number of prisoners presenting with multiple needs and challenges, the Safer Custody side of the NIPS is becoming increasingly relevant.

13.3 Mirroring society in general, addictions - and in particular drug addiction (be it illegal drugs or prescription medication) are a major issue within the Prison. The issue of drugs and the abuse of prescription medication will be reported on separately in this Report. However, the impact on those individuals involved in the taking of such illegal substances is not restricted to the effects of the substances themselves, but it can often lead to bullying in order to acquire, for example, the prescribed medication of another, drug debts and prisoners requesting a move from a specific location to avoid paying their debts. It is a disturbing fact that approximately 80% of prisoners in Maghaberry

were on prescription medication during part of the reporting period.

13.4 A very high proportion of prisoners in Maghaberry suffer from mental health problems, substance misuse problem and very often, both. Such statistics place a heavy burden on support services such as Healthcare and the Prison Safety and Support Team. Prisoners with Personality Disorders pose challenges to the Prison Service, particularly in relation to the often impulsive and risk taking elements of their behaviour.

13.5 Add to the mix the increasing number of ageing prisoners i.e. prisoners entering the prison system in advanced years and with increasing health and mobility problems; prisoners who have a range of learning disabilities; prisoners with physical health problems, and prisoners who are vulnerable due to the nature of their offence, and it is clear that the safety and support of such a wide variety of individuals is a challenge for both NIPS and the Trust. We, as a Board, have raised the issue with NIPS of the future provision of social care staff, to give physical support to the small number of prisoners who may need a higher degree of 'care' than is currently available. However, it would seem that there is an unresolved issue between NIPS and the Trust in relation to the provision of the social care element of healthcare.

Recommendation: As a Board we would recommend that the matter of provision of social care for ageing prisoners be resolved.

13.6 Prisoner numbers remain very high and there is substantial overcrowding. With the reduction in staffing levels and ongoing high levels of staff sick leave, lockdowns are a regular occurrence. In some instances, particularly with remand prisoners, there are occasions when prisoners are locked down for 23 hours a day and this impacts on the, often poor, mental health of prisoners. In addition it is obvious to IMB members when they walk the various landings and talk to prisoners, that there is a significant degree of frustration about lack of time out of their cells, lack of work or recreational opportunities and a general lack of stimulation. We acknowledge the work done by the Senior Officers and staff on the landings who have managed numerous situations during the reporting period, and it is to their credit that so many prisoners were kept safe.

13.7 During this reporting year, those prisoners occupying the Vulnerable Prisoner Unit have been moved into the general population, and although some of those involved are very happy with their current accommodation, others have found it more difficult to

adjust.

13.8 There has been a (slight) rise in the number of SPARS (Supporting Prisoners at Risk) during the 2014 year, according to the Maghaberry Prison Safety and Support Team (PSST) Safer Custody Report. Due to pressures on other agencies working within the Prison Service, often the only attendees at a SPAR review are the Senior Officer, the prisoner and a member of the healthcare staff (where possible). The Safer Custody team has developed a new method of capturing and presenting statistics which can give a rolling comparison over the previous 12 months. In relation to the monitoring of prisoners under the SPAR process, IMB members have expressed concern at the low staff numbers on some landings. We have observed two staff, on occasions, running an entire wing and in addition to their other work, carrying out a number of 15 and 30 minute observations, with all the attendant recording. We would view such low staff numbers as a safety risk to both prisoners, and indeed staff. Our concerns have been brought to the highest level in the DOJ, including the Minister.

13.9 Members of the IMB have sat in on a number of the Strategic Safer Custody meetings. Whilst there is a very good reporting format demonstrated by the statistical information available, the attendance has not been as high as desirable. A representative from IMB has tried to attend as many of the weekly PSST meetings as possible, and has reported an enhanced input from Healthcare, particularly with an identified staff member attending weekly. In addition, the input from landing staff is more comprehensive and the meeting is more outcomes focused. Members of the Chaplaincy attend, when they can, and there is normally a representative from Action on Substances through Education and Related Training (ASCERT). However, other disciplines rarely attend, although on occasions there are written submissions. It would be remiss of us as independent observers not to highlight both the lack of input and attendance from other disciplines. It is clear that the NIPS staff are taking the 'lead' role in working with prisoners who challenge services. The Criminal Justice Inspectorate for Northern Ireland (CJINI) has suggested that perhaps joint chairing of PSST meetings would be advantageous, and we see merit in this.

13.10 The Donard Centre has provided a range of programmes in addition to the daily 'drop in' type facility. Courses have included Relaxation, Well Man Group, and Anger Management. The Centre is well run and the relationships among attendees and staff from all disciplines are good. The Senior Officer in charge of the Donard Centre has a

good handle on the dynamics within the attendee group, and is an integral part of the PSST meetings. We are concerned that funding cuts have ended the work of the art therapist in the Donard Centre. However, at the time of writing this report, efforts are being made to seek alternative funding for this very valuable asset to the Centre.

13.11 We are also very concerned that reductions in funding have resulted in the CRUSE coordinator's post being abolished in Maghaberry. Whilst CRUSE is going to try and provide a service from their headquarters, we would have concerns about the viability of this. There are a number of prisoners who are undergoing counseling and a waiting list. It is unclear at the time of writing what will happen to these individuals. In addition, NIACRO have also lost substantial funding, resulting in some of the workshops closing and thus depriving prisoners of time out of their cells and off the landings.

Recommendation: We would recommend that funding for CRUSE be reinstated as a matter of urgency.

13.12 There have been three deaths during this reporting year: two deaths in custody, where both individuals passed away in an outside hospital, and also the death of a prisoner who was released under special rules as he was terminally ill. IMB attended cold debriefs in both cases of deaths in custody. In addition, there have been a number of 'near misses' during the reporting period and several individuals died post release. As all of the cases are subject to an investigation by the Prisoner Ombudsman, we cannot comment further. IMB members are aware of the impact of deaths in custody on the families of the individuals concerned, fellow prisoners and staff members. During our visits to the establishment, IMB members have brought several safety issues to the attention of the Governor, and we are confident that these have been addressed.

13.13 IMB members have also attended a number of Serious Case Reviews during the reporting period, and have been impressed by the information sharing and the commitment by all present to support the individuals under review.

13.14 The Listener Programme is working well. The Listeners (all prisoners) are trained by the Samaritans and are a valuable asset to the Prison. At the time of writing there are 12 listeners, nine on the main site and three on the Mourne site.

13.15 The Drug Recovery Unit, a pilot programme with the aims of tackling and addressing problematic substance misuse while promoting goals for recovery, thereby

reducing offending behaviour, was initiated in August 2014. This programme was very successful, and has been evaluated and found to have achieved its aims. Unfortunately a second programme has not been put in place at the time of writing, which is very disappointing both for the prisoners who would benefit from undertaking the programme, and the staff, all of whom were specially trained to work in the unit. We would recommend that funding is sought for this programme to run on a rolling basis.

13.16 Over the reporting period, we have become concerned at the short staffing in Healthcare. We have brought our concerns to the Trust directorate, and raised the matter at Board level. At the time of writing, we have been made aware that nurses employed as Mental Health nurses, are being deployed to general nursing to cover gaps in the service. This, in our opinion, reduces the service to vulnerable prisoners who benefit greatly from the input of the mental health staff.

13.17 Bullying has always played a part in prison life. However, the bullying of individuals in relation to prescription medication and other substances is of concern. Prisoners have quite openly discussed the issue of 'being asked to hand over their prescription medication'. Most will not make any sort of complaint or identify the bullies due to fear of repercussions. Part of the weekly PSST meeting is devoted to discussing bullying incidents and the Bullying Incident Report (BIR) booklet being checked to ensure that staff have updated this. The Board will continue to closely monitor this element of Safer Custody.

13.18 As a Board we would commend the work done by the dedicated staff that forms the Prisoner Safety and Support Team. We have been able to observe the skills of the PSST when dealing with highly troubled individuals. It is heartening to see the profile of PSST being raised in all areas of the Prison. We acknowledge the personal input of the team members and are aware that their case load is an ever increasing one.

13.19 As independent monitors we can see on a regular basis, the effects of short staffing, large numbers of prisoners in shared accommodation, and the frustration that long periods of lockdown cause. The lack of stimulation increases low mood in prisoners, and we are unhappy with prisoners having to eat all their meals in their cells - usually two in a cell - where there is a toilet. Prisoners have brought this issue to us, and have raised the question of hygiene. In addition, the question of showering has been frequently raised i.e. some prisoners have stated (and staff have confirmed) that

they have only been allowed one shower a week. When this has been queried with staff, the IMB have been advised that Prison Rules state that this is all that is required. We will keep monitoring this issue, particularly coming into the summer period.

Section 14 – SEGREGATION – CARE AND SUPERVISION UNIT (CSU)

14.1 The Care and Supervision Unit (CSU) exists to hold prisoners apart from normal location within the prison. This can be for a number of reasons; the placement under Prison Rule 32 (generally for the good order and discipline within the prison or for a prisoners own safety based on security information) or for a period of cellular confinement awarded through the adjudication process. In addition to the cellular confinement accommodation within the unit, adjudications and case conferences are held in the board room on the ground floor. There are also dry cells where a prisoner may be held for a number of hours to “cool off”. The CSU is always at full capacity. This year the Board have noticed an increasing number of prisoners who partake in a “dirty protest” for no apparent reason, leaving staff to work in almost constant unhygienic surroundings, and which also has an impact on other prisoners in the unit.

14.2 The regular officers working in the unit continue to exercise extreme professionalism, especially as they are constantly dealing with some of the most challenging prisoners in the prison. The Board seldom receive complaints about staff from the prisoners. However, like other houses in the prison, in recent times, there have been occasions when officers are sent to the unit for a shift to make up shortfalls in staffing. As this is a unit with particular needs, the prison management must not allow the culture of casual staffing to become the norm. However, during the year like other areas in the prison, CSU has suffered from a reduction in staffing levels, which is putting an increasing strain on staff, especially as so many have been injured in the course of their work.

Recommendation: The Board recommends that the prison does not compromise on maintaining set staffing of the unit because of the special skills and knowledge required by those looking after highly vulnerable and volatile inmates.

14.3 The regime in the CSU is extremely restricted with only limited association given to the prisoners who are there for long periods. The Board has always insisted that, because of this restricted regime, prisoners should have an exit plan shortly after their arrival, as it is not a house that is conducive to the good mental wellbeing of the prisoners therein. It is unfortunate that management, whilst they may agree, continue to

hold prisoners for longer than necessary periods and leave prisoners in the CSU as it can become increasingly difficult to find alternative accommodation elsewhere in the prison estate.

Recommendation: The Board recommends that there is an exit plan in place for each prisoner entering the CSU be that on a cellular confinement or held under rule 32.

14.4 The formal disciplinary process for dealing with alleged misconduct by prisoners is adjudication. Adjudications are held most mornings in the CSU. Board members attend as many adjudication hearings as possible, and seek to satisfy themselves that due process has been followed, and that decisions to restrict association etc. are reasonable and fair. However, members have noticed an increasing amount of adjudications over the past reporting year, and feel that staff on the landings could deal with some of these issues before they need to go to the formal process of adjudication, thus reducing the time spent on unnecessary paperwork. In the last year alone, the Adjudication Officer has processed approximately 4000 adjudications. Over a weekend it is not unusual for an Adjudication Officer to have to deal with the paperwork for in excess of 40 adjudications. As all prisoners are taken to the CSU to be 'read over' prior to their adjudications, this makes CSU exceptionally busy. Members do not attend at the request of or to represent a prisoner.

Recommendation: The Board recommends that the Adjudication process is looked at with a view to reducing the numbers.

14.5 Over the reporting year the reduction in staffing levels has inevitably had an impact on the adjudication process, in that fewer staff are available to attend and read their statements. On most occasions the prisoner accepts the statement being read in the officer's absence, but if he disputes the evidence and wishes to question the officer, then the adjudication has to be adjourned until such time as the officer can attend. The prisoner can also choose to speak with his solicitor regarding his adjudication. This creates a backlog which may delay an adjudication hearing for weeks or even months, by which time a prisoner may even be released leading to charges having to be deleted.

14.6 Throughout the year the Board has raised concerns about the consistency of the awards given and the review of the evidence presented. Several different governors hear adjudications, and the scrutiny of evidence and decisions / awards given vary widely across similar charges.

Recommendation: The Board recommends that the number of governors hearing adjudications is reduced and regular reviews are conducted to address inconsistency in both awards and procedure.

Section 15 – SEPARATED PRISONERS

15.1 In 2003 the UK Government accepted the Steele Review recommendation that Republican and Loyalist prisoners with paramilitary affiliations should be accommodated separately from each other and from the rest of the prisoner population on a voluntary basis within Maghaberry Prison. Throughout this reporting year the numbers of both republican and loyalist prisoners held in ‘separated’ conditions continued to rise.

15.2 This reporting year some modifications were made to landings in Roe House to facilitate ease of movement. This leads to prisoners being very verbally abusive and threatening to staff for a period of time and also to the healthcare staff on the landings.

15.3 The Board notes that separated republican and loyalist prisoners continue to benefit from a greatly enhanced regime in comparison to the remainder of the prison population. This can understandably cause friction and resentment with other prisoners who may be locked for increasing periods of time.

Section 16 - SPORT AND RECREATION

16.1 Over the last year the sport and recreation facilities have been used extensively by all prisoners. The Board commends the increase in these facilities with the building of additional football pitches. The gym facilities are also very good.

16.2 The Board receive few complaints with regard to sport and recreation. This is due to the high quality of diverse programmes on offer, which are designed to cater for all inmates irrespective of age or fitness level. It is also a testament to the commitment of the PE staff.

Section 17 - TUCK SHOP

17.1 The Tuck Shop provides remains a crucial and integral part of the prisons operation. It provides prisoners with extra products of their choosing by way of a weekly delivery. The shop is well managed and carries a good range of stock items, which is revised regularly to meet general prisoner requests and the needs of the foreign national

prisoners with different religious and cultural needs. Additional seasonal food items are available at Christmas and Easter.

17.2 Staffing in the facility includes prisoners who assemble orders. Prisoners employed in the shop enjoy the work and usually stay for a long time. The Board have said over the past few years that these prisoners would benefit from NVQ accredited training which could help them secure retail employment upon release.

Recommendation: The Board recommends that NVQ accredited training is made available.

17.3 As stated in previous reports prisoners feel that Tuckshop prices are high and they have the opportunity to bring this to the Prisoner Forum meetings for discussion. The Board has been advised that prices are subject to contract but continues to monitor the situation.

Recommendation: The Board recommends that that all goods are priced competitively.

Section 18 – VISITS

18.1 For those who lose their freedom, family ties are important and many studies have shown the value to prisoners of regular family visits. Several voluntary organisations support families' visits in various ways.

18.2 For many coming to visit Maghaberry, transport can be a problem. NIACRO supported by the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI) provide a minibus service from several areas of the province charging economical fares. The Quakers also provide a bus link to the local train station twice a day, and try to facilitate those who find the journey difficult. The Family Centre which provides a café, crèche, advice and assistance for visitors, is also run by the Quakers as is the tea bar in actual visits. Leaflets are provided in a number of languages to facilitate foreign national visitors. The Board is very concerned to note that NIACRO have lost a large part of their funding and that the Quaker service is also up for tender in the forthcoming year. The service that these organisations provide is vital to families trying to maintain relationships when someone is in prison.

Recommendation: The Board recommends that there is no reduction in funding for the Quaker service.

18.3 Family Support Officers are available at the reception area where families who have concerns or issues about their relative can talk to an officer in private. Visitors can leave in money, cards, clothing etc. at the reception area, but there are times when it takes a considerable time to reach the prisoner they are visiting. The Board has noticed over the past reporting year that there are increased complaints about the time taken for parcels to get from reception to prisoner, and also for personal belongings to get to reception when a prisoner is being released. The officer who should be on duty is often taken off to do other duties, but this creates difficulties for prisoners who are frequently left without their own clothes for 5/6 days.

Recommendation: The Board recommends that the process of items left at reception for prisoners is looked at to lessen the delay in prisoner receiving them.

18.4 Visits in Maghaberry take place in the main visits area and also in Braid House within the Mourne complex. The visiting areas must strike a balance between facilitating families and the need for security. All visitors are subject to testing by a passive drug dog and at least three prison officers supervise the area. In previous years the Board has recommended that the CCTV system in visits is upgraded, so is pleased to see that new surveillance cameras have been installed in both the segregated visits area and ordinary visits area. Despite the secure setting the visitors' arrival area, endeavours to present a "family friendly" image and during the summer holiday period additional activities are organised for children. The Board is also aware that there are plans to look at the further at upgrading the visiting area in the future.

18.5 Child-centred visits operate throughout the year, enabling fathers and children to play in a supported, supervised manner and bond in a way that is not always possible during a normal visit. Since inception these visits have been jointly delivered by Quaker Service and prison staff. For prisoners on the Family Focus landing, extended visits with their children are arranged on a monthly basis and held in the Donard Centre. These are made possible by the Prison Visits team, Family Officers and the Quakers. This is an example of different organisations working together for the benefit of prisoners and their families, and the Board commends these initiatives.

18.6 While many prisoners receive regular visits from friends and family there are a significant number who serve their sentence with little or no contact with anyone outside. As previously mentioned the Quaker Service operates the "Quaker Connections" which provides visits to these prisoners.

18.7 In conclusion, the NIPS and the agencies and organisations which provide visit services should be commended for the help and support given to visitors on a daily basis.

MAGHABERRY BOARD MEMBERS 2014-2015

			Appointed
1.	Mrs Margaret McCauley	Chair	05/07/10
2.	Mr Phillip Lees	Vice chair	02/07/10
3.	Mrs Sally Cunningham	Resigned 03/07/14	
4.	Mrs Valerie McConnell	No change	05/07/10
5.	Mrs Bernadette McCollum	No change	20/07/10
6.	Mr Patrick McGonagle	No change	20/05/13
7.	Mrs Lynn Nevin	No change	10/06/13
8.	Mrs Hazel Baird	Resigned 01/12/14	
9.	Mr Andrew Hayes	No change	10/06/16
10.	Mrs Shelley Maybin	No change	10/06/13